

## St. Thomas the Apostle Parish Staff

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DeMeulemeester  
OSF Chaplain

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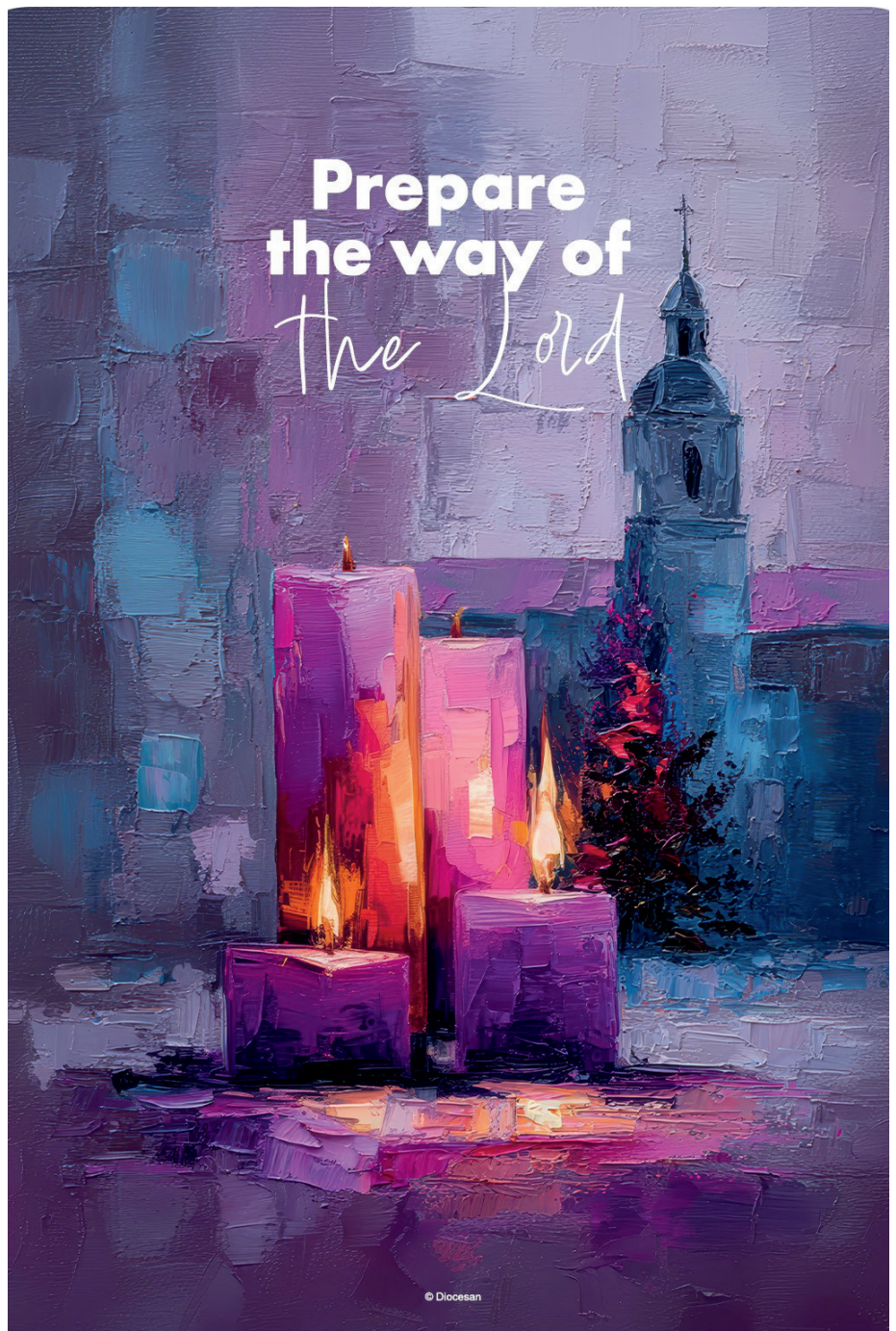
St. Vincent de Paul Society HelpLine.....  
(309) 264-5815

### Stay in Touch

1. Join Msgr. Gray for OCIA Class. Link can be found on the parish website, stthomaspeoria.org or the My Parish App
2. Download My Parish App to receive push notifications (Visit myparishapp.com/download).
3. Receive the Bulletin and announcements in weekly emails from the parish. (Email parishoffice@stthomas-church.net to sign up).
4. Bookmark the parish webpage (stthomaspeoria.org).



*December 7, 2025*  
*Second Sunday of Advent*





## From Our Pastor

As we enter into Advent and approach the holidays, please be aware of scams that are common at this time of year. Neither I nor any staff member at St. Thomas will ever email you, text you, or call you to ask for gift cards. The scam works by asking for the gift card numbers, often to help "a sick cancer patient" or for some other fictional need. This is simply an attempt to take advantage of your good will and steal your money. If the crisis is presented as an "emergency" requiring your immediate response, you are being scammed.

This first Sunday of December is a Donut Sunday, and we invite you to come downstairs for coffee and refreshments after the Sunday morning Masses.

Next weekend, we will have our traditional Open House which is a time to thank everyone in the parish for your support and your volunteerism at St. Thomas. More elaborate refreshments will be served after all weekend Masses. We also welcome the Franciscan Sisters of John the Baptist to sell their crafts as they have done in the past. We will set up tables with information for a Ministry Fair. By stopping at the tables, you can learn about activities or groups you can join to support St. Thomas or the other needs in our community. Please come downstairs and explore what is available.

This week, on Monday, December 8<sup>th</sup>, we have a Holy Day of Obligation for the Immaculate Conception. Even though this Solemnity is on a Monday, it is still obligatory. Please note the special Mass schedule, including 7:00 a.m., 12:15 p.m., 5:30 p.m. and our school Mass.

I will travel to New York on December 9<sup>th</sup> to celebrate an anniversary Mass for Archbishop Fulton Sheen to take place at St. Agnes Church where Sheen preached. I will represent Peoria and the Fulton Sheen Foundation and look forward to promoting his cause during my visit to New York City.

- Msgr. Gray

## Pray with the Pope

December 2025

### For Christians in Areas of Conflict

Let us pray that Christians living in areas of war or conflict, especially in the Middle East, might be seeds of peace, reconciliation, and hope.



## Readings for the Week of December 7, 2025

<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Second Sunday of Advent</b> Isaiah 11:1-10; Romans 15:4-9; Matthew 3:1-12
<b>Monday</b>	<b>The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary</b> Genesis 3: 9-15, 20; Ephesians 1: 30, 11-12; Luke 1: 26-38
<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>St. Juan Diego Cuauhtlatotzin</b> Isaiah 40: 1-11; Matthew 18: 12-14
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Our Lady of Loreto</b> Isaiah 40: 25-31; Matthew 11: 28-30
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>St. Damasus I, Pope</b> Isaiah 41: 13-20; Matthew 11: 11-15
<b>Friday</b>	<b>Our Lady of Guadalupe</b> Zechariah 2: 14-17; Luke 1: 26-38
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>St. Lucy, Virgin &amp; Martyr</b> Sirach 48: 1-4, 9-11; Matthew 17: 9a, 10-13
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Third Sunday of Advent</b> Isaiah 35: 1-6a, 10; James 5: 7-10; Matthew 11: 2-11

## Mass Intentions

### Monday, December 8, 2025

7:00 a.m.	Gary Smith/The Sarmiento Family
12:15 p.m.	Sherry Weisbruch/Catholic Women's League
Sch Mass	Kurt Rostetter/Paul Sauer
5:30 p.m.	Peter Portman/Denise McCormack

### Tuesday, December 9, 2025

7:00 a.m.	Souls in Purgatory/Angela Kenny
8:00 a.m.	Nancy Wilson/Dayton & Mary Stephens

### Wednesday, December 10, 2025

7:00 a.m.	Christine Pilat/Adora Taylor
8:00 a.m.	Dolores Oppe/Warren Oppe

### Thursday, December 11, 2025

7:00 a.m.	Dave Lang/John Crowley
8:00 a.m.	Stanley & Clara Walega/James Snyder

### Friday, December 12, 2025

7:00 a.m.	Tom Burek/George & Connie Burek
8:00 a.m.	Melvin & Lucille Noe/Mary Ann Noe

### Saturday, December 13, 2025

8:00 a.m.	Gary Parmelee/Denise McCormack
5:00 p.m.	Thomas Penn/David & Laurie Williams

### Sunday, December 14, 2025

8:00 a.m.	Remidios Tolentino/The Sarmiento Family
10:00 a.m.	For the People
5:00 p.m.	Bob Pruitt, Stepfather of William Schlisler/Cathleen Schlisler



## Week of December 7

**ST. VINCENT DE PAUL & PANTRY COLLECTIONS** this weekend

**COFFEE & DONUTS** Sunday, December 7, following morning Masses

**LIFETEEN** Sunday, December 7, 6:00 p.m., St. Vincent de Paul

**THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY** Monday, December 8, Masses at 7:00 a.m., 12:15, School Mass, & 5:30 p.m.

**ROSARY** Tuesday, December 9, 10:00 a.m., Chapel

**CCD** Wednesday, December 10, 6:00 p.m., School

**OCIA** Wednesday, December 10, 7:00 p.m., Parish Hall

**ST. IGNATIUS BIBLE STUDY** Thursday, December 11, 6:00 p.m., Parish Hall

**MEN'S CLUB** Thursday, December 11, 6:30 p.m., Sullivan's in the Heights

**CHRISTMAS SING** Thursday, December 11, 6:30 p.m., School

**THAT MAN IS YOU** Friday, December 12, doors open 6:00, program 6:30 a.m., ends by 7:30 a.m., Parish Hall

**PARISH OPEN HOUSE** December 13/14 following all Sunday Masses

**CHURCH CLEANING** Saturday following 8:00 a.m. Mass, Church

### UPCOMING EVENTS

*Millions of Monicas  
TMIY Resumes*

*December 23  
January 23*



**Advent Confessions** Before Christmas confession times include:

Saturday, Nov. 29; Dec. 6, 13, & 21, 4:00 – 4:45 p.m. and 6:00 p.m.  
Sunday, Nov. 23 & 30; Dec. 7, 14, & 20, 9:00 & 11:00 a.m. & 6:00 p.m.

**Christmas Masses** will be offered **Dec. 24**, Christmas Eve at 5:00, 7:00, and 10:00 p.m. and **Dec 25**, Christmas Day at 8:00 and 10:00 a.m.

## Weekly Collection

November 30, 2025

		Fiscal YTD
Collections needed.....	\$20,400.....	\$408,000
Sunday Collections.....	\$11398.....	\$260,411
Electronic Collections.....	\$17,037.....	\$112,988
Total Collected.....	\$28,435.....	\$373,399
Over/(Short).....	\$8,035.....	\$(34,601)

Your support of St. Thomas Parish is important to sustain our mission. Please remember to contribute regularly with your envelopes or checks in our regular Sunday collection. Electronic contributions can be made through direct debit, or by using the Giving tab on our parish website: [stthomaspeoria.org](http://stthomaspeoria.org). Thank you for your support.

## Our Sympathy

Rose Sullivan

Barbara Craig

Beverly Tillman, mother of Art Tillman

Don Strieder

## *The Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary*

**Masses for the Feast Day will be offered**

7:00 a.m.

12:15 p.m., the School Mass, & 5:30 p.m.

This is a Holy Day of Obligation

## Giving Tree



The Giving Tree is an important tradition at St. Thomas. The gift tags can be found in the baskets in the narthex. We ask you to take one or more of the tags and purchase the requested gift. Please give new gifts only.

### RETURN YOUR GIFTS IN GIFT BAGS WITH THE

**ORIGINAL TAG ATTACHED.** You may leave them under the Giving Tree in the Narthex, or deliver to the Parish Office. Your generosity providing gifts under the Giving Tree has been incredibly helpful in the past. Last year we were able to distribute gifts to almost 300 individuals. This includes St. Thomas Families, Foster Children, Catholic Charities, and neighbors in our community.

**MONETARY DONATIONS** This year a monetary donation might work best for many people. You can make your donation on our website: [stthomaspeoria.org](http://stthomaspeoria.org). Go to GIVING, then DONATE NOW. As you complete the form please Apply your Donation to The Giving Tree.

Please make your monetary donation as soon as possible so our elves have time to shop before the deadline.

**PLEASE RETURN GIFTS BY DECEMBER 8<sup>TH</sup>.** Thank you for your kindness and generosity!

Sponsor of the Week





# Christmas Open House

A THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS  
SUPPORT ALL YEAR LONG

SATURDAY DECEMBER 13  
SUNDAY DECEMBER 14  
AFTER ALL MASSES

PLEASE JOIN US IN THE LOWER  
LEVEL OF THE CHURCH



VOLUNTEER  
SIGN UP



## St. Thomas - Food Pantry

Items needed at this time are: Rice, Mac and Cheese, Crackers, Pasta Sauce, Cereal, Canned Meat, Peanut Butter & Jelly, Canned Fruit and Vegetables, Pancake Mix, Syrup, Canned or Dry Beans (Legumes), Hamburger/Chicken/Tuna Helper

Thank you!

## The Sheen Experience

*More than just a tribute....*

The Sheen Experience offers an inspiring, interactive look at the life, faith, and legacy of Venerable Fulton J. Sheen. Through storytelling, artifacts, and multimedia, visitors are invited to encounter his profound impact on the Church and the world in a fresh and engaging way.

Watch the Sheen Experience [The Experience — Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen Foundation](#)

## OCIA Schedule

**Dec 10:** Orders, Religious Life

**Dec 17:** Marriage

**Dec 24:** No Class

**Dec 31:** No Class

**Jan 7:** Liturgical year, Church tour, Mass practice

**Jan 14:** Great Commandments; Divine/Natural Law; Commandment 1

## Food Pantry Family Advent Calendar of Giving

In the spirit of the preparation of our hearts for the coming of our Savior, here is a meaningful way to share our treasures with neighbors who are struggling with food insufficiency. Place one food item in a box each day from December 1<sup>st</sup> through December 24<sup>th</sup>. When the box is complete, bring it to the church as a donation to the food pantry. The items below are representative of the canned goods each food pantry family receives each month.

**Merry Christmas to you and yours from the Food Pantry!**

**12/1** Mac and Cheese  
**12/2** Mac and Cheese  
**12/3** Bag of Rice  
**12/4** Boxed Side Dish  
**12/5** Box of Cereal  
**12/6** Box of Saltines  
**12/7** Can of Meat  
**12/8** Pasta Sauce  
**12/9** Can of Fruit  
**12/10** Can of Fruit  
**12/11** Peanut Butter  
**12/12** Skillet Dinner Kit



**12/13** Dry Pasta  
**12/14** Can of Soup  
**12/15** Can of Soup  
**12/16** Can of Veggies  
**12/17** Can of Veggies  
**12/18** Can of Veggies  
**12/19** Can of Veggies  
**12/20** Can of Veggies  
**12/21** Bag of Dried Beans  
**12/22** Jelly  
**12/23** Can of Chili or Stew  
**12/24** Box of Cereal Bars

Join us for Coffee and  
Donuts after morning  
Mass this weekend



COME MEET  
**Santa Claus!**

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 6TH FROM 9-11 AM

CELEBRATE THE SEASON WITH FACE-PAINTING,  
BALLOON ANIMALS, ARTS AND CRAFTS, GREAT  
FOOD, AND PHOTOS WITH SANTA!

ADULTS - \$6 | KIDS - \$4 | FAMILY - \$20







## When you go to the poor, you encounter Jesus

Our December bulletin article is dedicated to you, our St. Thomas parishioners. We thank you so much for your prayers and your generous contributions to the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. Your prayers and financial support are what enable us to help the poor. You are the foundation of our mission. We couldn't do this without you.

The St. Vincent de Paul Society at St. Thomas helps approximately 40 to 45 families per month. Their needs are many, generally due to a situational change in their lives such as a job loss, a reduction in work hours, costly car repairs, an illness, an accident, or sometimes simply due to the circumstances of their birth. Your donations are spent helping the needy get their situational setback resolved. Your generosity prevents evictions, water or Ameren shut-offs, helps buy furniture for the homeless who are finally able to rent an apartment, and the list goes on. We tell those whom we serve that you are their source of help. They pray for you and are most grateful to you.

Those of us involved in the Society of St. Vincent de Paul say the following prayer at the end of every meeting. We want to share this prayer with you, as it reflects the spirit of our Vincentian Family.

*Lord Jesus, you who willed to become poor, give us eyes and a heart directed toward the poor; help us recognize you in them, in their thirst, their hunger, their loneliness, and their misfortune.  
Enkindle within our Vincentian Family, unity, simplicity, humility, and the fire of love that burned in St. Vincent de Paul.  
Strengthen us, so that faithful to the practice of these virtues, we may contemplate you and serve you in the person of the poor, and may one day be united with you in your Kingdom.  
Amen*

Again, we thank you. God bless you.

Al Barhorst, Bettsey Barhorst, Brian Barkley, Edie Brereton, Mary Brennan, Cissy Carlson, Chris Clemons, Jim Clemons, John Galbreath, Jane Golowski, Mark Golowski, Cynthia Hall, Mike Hallar, Loretta Hardgrove, Nancy Higgins, Mike Hinchman, Kim Jaegle, Diana Janda, J. T. Kellock, Kim Kellock, Mark Kelsch, Marlynn Kelsch, Brian Kemp, Colleen Matarelli, Jim Matarelli, Brian Medendorp, Nancy Medendorp, Mary Jennifer Meister, Rosemary Muchow, Mike Phelan, Mary Kay Pilat, Tom Pilat, Pat Pusey, Clarissa Rhode, Dave Schlicksup, Terri Schlicksup, Cindy Smith, Don Smith, Jan Smith, Joan Utley, Michael Villena, Linda Waible, Nanette Westerhold, Walter Wilkins, and Laurie Williams.

If you are interested in joining the St. Vincent de Paul Society, please call the church office at 688-3446, and a member who can answer your questions will contact you. Those of us who serve the needy through the Society know that we receive much more than we give.

~ Edie Brereton

**GIRLS TEC #381 - JAN 17-19, 2026**  
**BOYS TEC #382 - FEB 14-16, 2026**



**Sign up today at [Peoriatec.org](http://Peoriatec.org).**  
**All denominations welcome.**  
**Scholarships available.**




## Volunteers Needed

A few good women, or men, are needed to fill Usher positions at the 8:00 a.m. Sunday Mass.

You can sign up for one, or more, Sundays each month. Go to: [Login](#) for the Ministry Scheduler Pro (link is also on the Parish website) and register if you are a new user, or sign-in, and choose your dates.

If you have any questions about Ushering please see any of our current Ushers.



**ROSARY FOR PEACE**

Every Tuesday at 10:00 AM

Where: Small Chapel - St. Thomas Church

"Where two or three gather in My name, I am there among them" Matthew 18:20

Prayers offered: Rosary, Chaplet of Mercy, and Few Spontaneous Intercessory Prayers

Duration: 30 minutes or free to leave early  
All parishioners and friends welcome



## Holy Hour Knights of Columbus 4th Degree

**Tuesday, December 9, 2025 7:00 pm**  
**Chapel**

**Fr. Leo will lead the Holy Hour**



  
**CHESTERTON ACADEMY**  
**OF THE SACRED HEART**  
**ADVENT**  
**CHOIR CONCERT**  
*"A Spotless Rose"*  
**Thursday,**  
**December 11, 2025**  
**7:00pm**  
**Sacred Heart Church**  
**504 Fulton St.**  
**Peoria, IL**  
**Admission is Free -**  
**Donations are appreciated**

## Explore our Five Foundations with Bishop Lou

We are delighted to share with you a new series available through the Hallow app: **The Five Foundations**, led by Bishop Lou.

Get the Hallow app: **#1 App for Christian & Catholic Prayer, Meditation, Bible + Sleep | Hallow**



### Simbang Gabi Masses



#### 2025 Simbang Gabi Masses:

Sunday, December 14, 5:30pm: Cathedral of St. Mary, Peoria (Father Bill Miller)  
 Monday, December 15, 6pm: St. Mark, Peoria (Bishop Louis Tylka)  
 Tuesday, December 16, 6pm: St. Monica, East Peoria (Father Matt Deptula)  
 Wednesday, December 17, 5:30pm: St. Vincent, Peoria (Father Willard)  
 Thursday, December 18, 6pm: St. Thomas, Peoria Heights (Monsignor Gray)  
 Friday, December 19, 6pm: St. Jude, Peoria (Father Jack Watt)  
 Saturday, December 20, 6:30pm: Blessed Sacrament, Morton (Father Achilleus)  
 Sunday, December 21, 5pm: St. Anthony, Peoria (Father Charles Klamut)  
 Monday, December 22, 5pm: Holy Family, Peoria (Father Greg Jozefiak)



## Parish Registration

Complete this form and drop it in the collection basket, **or** mail to the Parish Office **or** Register on our website at [stthomaspeoria.org](http://stthomaspeoria.org). Under About open the New Parishioner Registration, complete and submit the form.

Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

First Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Mr \_\_\_ Mrs \_\_\_ Ms \_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

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### How to Submit Bulletin Information

Send information for the bulletin to [parishoffice@stthomas-church.net](mailto:parishoffice@stthomas-church.net) with subject *Bulletin*.

Submissions are due by Friday noon, one full week prior.

Send images or logos separately as attachments.

Submissions may be edited for content and length. Please, DO NOT send PDFs.

### Sacrament of Baptism

Parents participate in a Baptism class before the Baptism of their first child. Contact the Parish Office to schedule the class.

### Confessions

Saturday 4:00-4:45pm  
&  
6:00 p.m.-until last confession heard.

## Parish Office Hours

The Parish Office is open Monday-Friday from **9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.** Staff are also available by email or voicemail. To leave a message, call 309-688-3446, and at the prompt, press:

- 3 - Msgr. Gray
- 0 - Tracey - Administrative Assist.
- 1341 - Sheris—Finance & Tuition
- 1310 - Kate—Faith Formation
- 1301 - Peggy—Bulletin

If you have items to deliver for the Parish Office, you are welcome to put them through the mail slot of the Office downstairs in the Church, or under the door of the main Sacristy upstairs. The Church is open from 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. every day.

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