

St. Thomas the Apostle Parish Staff

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msgrgray@stthomas-church.net

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DeMeulemeester.....(x1430)
frpat@stthomas-church.net

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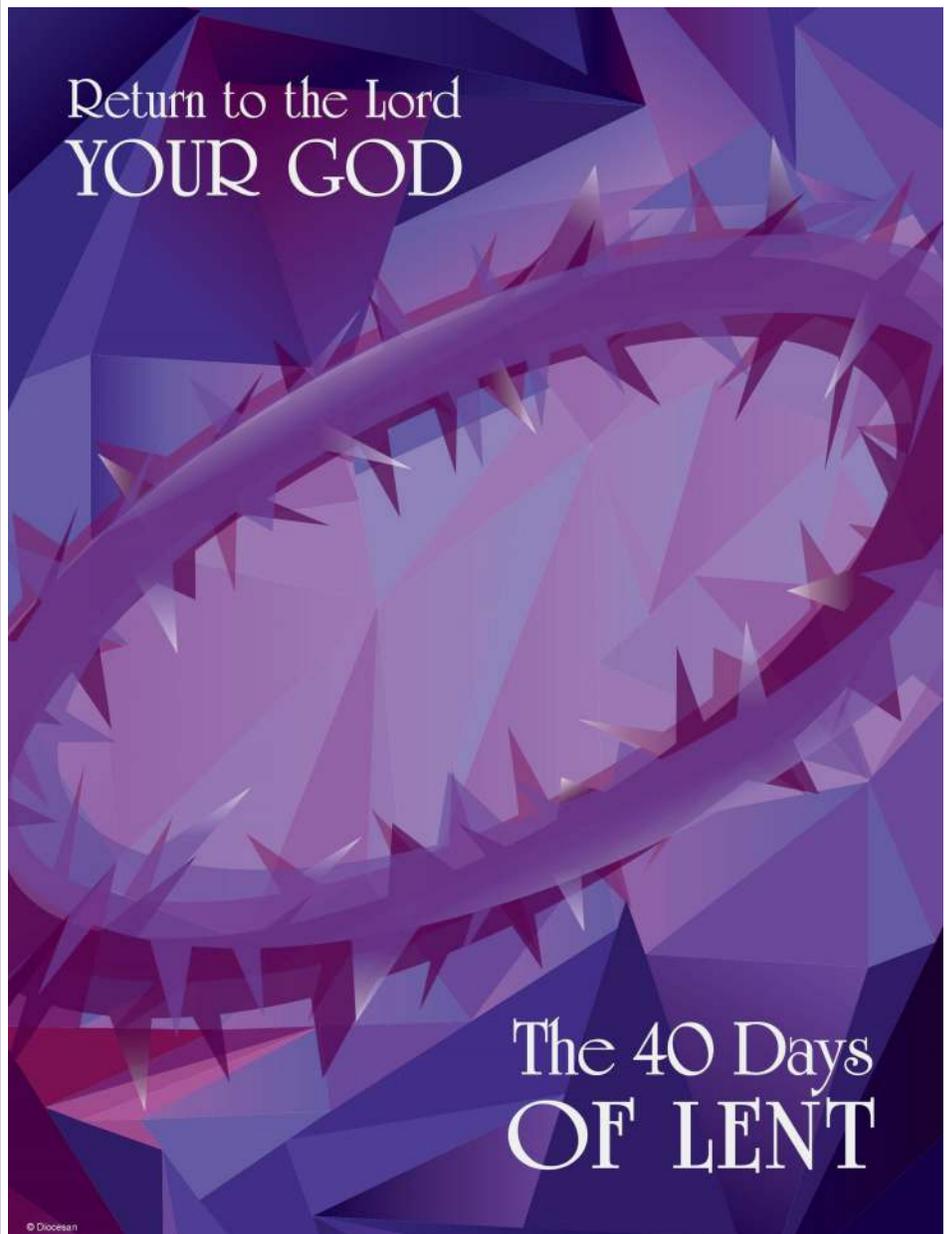
St. Vincent de Paul Society *HelpLine*.....
(309) 264-5815

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).



February 22, 2026
First Sunday of Lent





From Our Pastor

We are entering fully into the Lenten season. I encourage you to take advantage of added confession times, to join us for daily Mass, to pray the Stations of the Cross, or to take part in one of the retreats or other Lenten activities that make this a sacred time.

Please pray for those preparing to enter the Church. We have a large number in our OCIA class and look forward to baptizing and receiving them into the Church at Easter.

We look forward to the Men's Club Fish Fry which I believe is the best one in town. You can help by purchasing your Fish Fry tickets in advance after Masses before March 6.

We will soon be looking for a new music director and pianist or organist. Please encourage anyone who might be interested to contact me and I will provide more information.

Finally, we look forward to the Beatification of Archbishop Fulton Sheen. I am exploring the possibility of adding a mosaic of the new Blessed to our church. We already have Sheen's characteristic JMJ for Jesus, Mary, and Joseph in our Narthex. It will be wonderful to add an image of the Blessed for our devotion and prayer.

- Msgr. Gray



Readings for the Week of February 22, 2026

Sunday	First Sunday of Lent Genesis 2: 7-9; 3: 1-7; Romans 5: 12-19; Matthew 4: 1-11
Monday	St. Polycarp, Bishop & Martyr Leviticus 19: 1-2, 11-18; Matthew 25: 31-46
Tuesday	Isaiah 55: 10-11; Matthew 6: 7-15
Wednesday	Jonah 3: 1-10; Luke 11: 29-32
Thursday	Esther C: 12, 14-16, 23-25; Matthew 7: 7-12
Friday	St. Gregory of Narek, Abbot & Doctor of the Church Ezekiel 18: 21-28; Matthew 5: 20-26
Saturday	Deuteronomy 26: 16-19; Matthew 5: 43-48
Sunday	Second Sunday of Lent Genesis 12: 1-4a; 2 Timothy 1: 8b-10; Matthew 17: 1-9

Mass Intentions

Monday, February 23, 2026

- 7:00 a.m. Intentions of Dr. Gary & Vivette Miller/Kevin Morrissey
- 8:00 a.m. Nancy Wilson, 1st Anniv./Dcn. Ed & Cathy Mallow

Tuesday, February 24, 2026

- 7:00 a.m. Bruce Treder/John & Amy Kelly
- 8:00 a.m. Tho Dang/Tan Tran

Wednesday, February 25, 2026

- 7:00 a.m. Kathy Hudson/Kathy Nauman
- 8:00 a.m. Jerry McDonough/Eileen McDonough

Thursday, February 26, 2026

- 7:00 a.m. Mark Olson/Bill & Ann Fulton
- Sch Mass Hop Nguyen/Phan & Tam Vu

Friday, February 27, 2026

- 7:00 a.m. Teresa McCabe/Catholic Women's League
- 8:00 a.m. Norman Stahl/Pat Stahl

Saturday, February 28, 2026

- 8:00 a.m. Mary Ann O'Neill/Patty Crotz
- 5:00 p.m. David & Frieda Stahl/Nancy Becker

Sunday, March 1, 2026

- 8:00 a.m. For the People
- 10:00 a.m. Mary Ann O'Neill/Family
- 5:00 p.m. Thomas Yock/The Pilat Family



Week of February 22

MEN'S CLUB FISH FRY TICKET SALES After all Masses February 21/22

ROSARY Tuesday, February 24, 10:00 a.m., Chapel

MILLIONS OF MONICAS Tuesday, February 24, 7:00 p.m., Chapel

PARISH COUNCIL Tuesday, February 24, 7:00, Parish Office

CCD Wednesday, February 25, 6:00 p.m., School

OCIA Wednesday, February 25, 7:00 p.m., Parish Hall

WOMEN OF THE WORD Thursday, February 26, 7:00 p.m., Parish Hall

TMIY Friday, February 27, doors open 6:00, program 6:30 a.m., ends by 7:30 a.m., Parish Hall

ADORATION/CONFESSIONS Friday, February 27, 6:00 p.m., Church

STATIONS OF THE CROSS Friday, February 27, 7:00 p.m., Church

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

MEN'S CLUB FISH FRY TICKET SALES After all Masses February 28/March 1

UPCOMING EVENTS

Divine Mercy	March 3
Adoration	March 6
Men's Club Fish Fry	March 6

Pray with the Pope

February 2026

For Children With Incurable Diseases

Let us pray that children suffering from incurable diseases and their families receive the necessary medical care and support, never losing strength and hope.



Weekly Collection

February 15, 2026

		Fiscal YTD
Collections needed.....	\$20,400.....	\$673,200
Sunday Collections.....	\$14,906.....	\$448,913
Electronic Collections.....	\$3,710.....	\$211,855
Total Collected.....	\$18,616.....	\$660,768
Over/(Short).....	\$(1,784).....	\$(12,432)

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. Thank you for your support.

Our Sympathy

Please pray for those who have died this week

Baptism Congratulations

David LaHood, son of
Camille & David LaHood

Lucy Hulteen, daughter of
Rachel & Matthew Hulteen

Lenten Devotions

Every Friday in Lent from Feb. 20th through
Mar 27th

6 pm - Adoration and confession;
7 pm - Stations of the Cross

Holy Hour for the Unborn and their Mothers!

March 25th marks the anniversary of St. John Paul II's Evangelium Vitae, The Gospel of Life. In it, he appeals to all that we must respect, protect, love, and serve every human life. Join Pro-life Prayer Warriors and Knights of Columbus at a Holy Hour for the Rights of the Unborn on **Monday, March 2, from 7:00-8:00 pm at St. Mark's Church**, Peoria. The Holy Hour includes Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, the rosary, adoration, and benediction.

OCIA Schedule

Feb 25: Commandments 2-3-4

Mar 4: Commandments 5, 7, 8

Mar 11: Commandments 6, 9, 10

Mar 18: Biblical History, Bible Timeline

Mar 25: History of the Church, Preparation for confession

Apr 1: Practice

Apr 4: Easter Vigil

Apr 15: Mystagogia

Sponsor of the Week

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You may be familiar with the Image of *Divine Mercy*, but do you know the history, the inspiration and the extraordinary Graces tied to the devotion to *Divine Mercy*? If you're intrigued, or you're looking for something to help you grow

spiritually during Lent, or you just have some free time on Tuesday evenings, then join us on **Tuesdays, March 3rd** and **March 17th**, at 6:30 pm. We will cover the history behind Divine Mercy, explain the Image, and review the Revelations made to St. Faustina. *The Second Greatest Story Ever told* ties Divine Mercy to St. Pope John Paul II, Fatima, and much more. We will meet in the St. Thomas Parish Hall. To register or if you have questions, contact George Burek via email at georgeburek@yahoo.com.



SAVE THE DATE



Catholic Spirit Radio is hosting a Wisconsin pilgrimage on **August 10-12, 2026** to The Basilica of St. Josaphat (**Year of St. Francis Indulgence Site**) in Milwaukee, Holy Hill – Basilica and National Shrine of Mary Help of Christians in Hubertus, The Shrine of Our Lady of Champion in Franken, and The Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe in LaCrosse. There will be pickups in Normal and Rockford. Details for registration will be announced later. For questions, please contact Carolyn at (309) 830-4164 or Kathy at (309) 828-6554

Congressional Resolution in Support of Catholic Schools Week

Rep. Darin LaHood introduced a resolution in the US House of Representatives honoring the 52nd anniversary of National Catholic Schools Week and celebrating the lasting contributions of Catholic Schools to our nation.

Resolved, that the House of Representatives—

(3) supports—

- (a) the dedication of Catholic schools, students, parents, and teachers across the United States toward academic excellence; and
- (b) the key role they play in promoting and ensuring a brighter, stronger future for the United States.



2026 Souper Bowl Kick-Off



Let's team up for a **Souper Bowl** win against hunger! Please help us reach our goal of 1000 cans of soup donated to the St. Thomas Food Pantry by the end of February. The food pantry dispenses an average of 350 cans of soup per month, so 1000 cans will get us through the rest of winter and on into spring. Bringing just a few cans to each mass you attend from now until the end of February will go a long way towards helping us achieve our goal. Donations may be placed in the **Feed The Hungry** box in the church narthex. Thank you so much for helping us score in the fight against food insecurity!



When you go to the poor, you encounter Jesus

A few weeks ago, on February 7, the church celebrated the Feast of Sister Rosalie Rendu D.C. Sister was a member of the Daughters of Charity and she served the poor of the slums of Paris for 54 years in the early part of the 19th century. She found that she never prayed so well as when traveling those streets to help another family. Two thirds of the poor families lacked enough firewood, food or clothes. She continually found ways to help using all her skills and creativity. The Daughters of Charity was an order of sisters living according to the example and teachings of St. Vincent de Paul. He shared these words with the sisters, *You will go and visit the poor ten times a day, and ten times a day you will find God there!*

Blessed Sr. Rosalie was a great influence at the start of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. When our founder, Frederic Ozanam and his companions decided to serve the poor, he asked for Sr. Rosalie to direct them. She began by giving them a list of poor families, but later instructed them in the manner and skills needed to serve them with dignity and compassion. She has taught us over the years that *It is Jesus himself we are going to serve*. Our members are reminded of this charge each time we receive a call to help. We honor Blessed Rosalie Rendu along with our founders and patron each time we meet.

Thank you for your support of the work of St. Vincent de Paul. Your prayers and financial support are much appreciated and we pray for you often.

~ Tom Pilat

Catholic Charities
Diocese of Peoria

Lenten RETREAT

With Fr. Donald Roszkowski

As we enter the sacred season of Lent, we invite our senior community to mark your calendars for a special time of prayer, reflection, and spiritual renewal. Journey of the Heart will be a gentle and meaningful retreat focused on deepening faith, finding peace, and renewing the spirit.

\$30
Per Person

Saturday, March 21, 2026
10:00 am - 2:30 pm

Sacré-Coeur Retreat Center
8508 county rd 100 north, Magnolia, IL

Sister M. Clare Key, DSF
(309) 218-3714

Rosary for Peace

Every Tuesday at 10:00 a.m.

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
a Few Spontaneous
Intercessory
Prayers



Duration: 30
minutes or
free to leave

early
All parishioners and
friends welcome



Come Magnify the Lord

A Lenten Morning of Prayer for All

First Saturday
Saturday, March 7, 2026
St. Mary's Church, Metamora

All are warmly invited – parishioners and friends from the wider community –
to step away for a few sacred hours this Lent for prayer, reflection, and worship.

This morning is designed for anyone seeking a time of spiritual renewal.

Morning Schedule

- ✠ 8:00 AM Eucharistic Adoration
(Rosary to honor Mary for First Saturday, with Confessions Available)
- ✠ 9:00 AM The Most Holy Mass – Celebrant:
Father David Kijfer

*Come as you are.
Bring your heart.*

Step away, be renewed, and encounter the Lord.

Cookies & Coffee to follow

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!



MEETING INVITATION

We warmly invite you to join us for our March Meeting

Monday **March 02** **2026**

10:00 AM, SPALDING PASTORAL CENTER

This meeting is an opportunity to learn more about who we are, what we do, and how you can be part of our mission and ministry serving the women of the Diocese of Peoria. Whether you are curious or feeling called to be more involved, we welcome you.

For those who are unable to travel or live too far to be physically present, we are pleased to offer the opportunity to participate via ZOOM. Connection details will be shared upon RSVP.

RSVP: April Adams 309-369-5110 or Peoriadccw@gmail.com

We look forward to connecting with you!



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Fish Fry Dinner!

Help raise funds for the St. Thomas School
Counseling Fund

Friday
March 6th

at St. Thomas Catholic School
5:00 PM - 7:00PM

\$15 Dinner includes: fried fish, french fries, coleslaw, bread, salad bar and drink

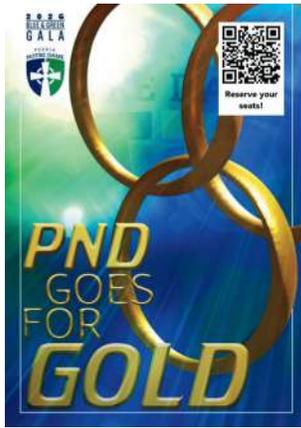
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Desserts provided by
the Women of St. Thomas

PND GALA

Join us for the 43rd Annual **PND Blue & Green Gala**. The fun evening which will include dinner and entertainment will take place on **Saturday, March 21** in the PND gym. Start gathering your friends and reserve a table for the event at <https://pndhs.ejoinme.org/pndgala2026>. This year's theme is **PND Goes for Gold**. Ready, set, go!



The Women's Care Center's

Luxury Bingo

event will be held on **April 29th at the Country Club of Peoria**. All proceeds benefit the Peoria Women's Care Center and their incredible programs. Please visit: www.luxurybingopeoria.com for more information or to purchase tickets contact Rachel Kress at Ra-chel.a.kress@gmail.com with any sponsorship questions. The evening will include food, drinks, bingo games (with luxury prizes!) and a short presentation.

St. Vincent de Paul Women's Guild

Women's Lenten Retreat

Discerning and using your charisms to be a disciple of Christ

Featuring national speaker *Jill Simons*

Saturday, March 21, 2026
7:45 am to 12:30 PM

Registration Fee \$35 includes charism assessment and lunch
 Check, cash or Venmo @svdpwg

SCHEDULE
 7:45 AM - Mass in church
 8:30 AM - Light breakfast & speaker to follow in SVdP Parish Hall
 11:30 AM - Lunch
 12:30-2 PM - Confession and Adoration available

Register by *March 12*

Contact svdpwomensguild@gmail.com with questions.

SAINT JUDE Knights of Columbus - St. Clement Council

FRIDAY NIGHT LENTEN FISH FRY

Hettinger Hall · 5:00 - 7:00 pm
 10811 N. Knoxville Ave., Peoria

KID'S MEAL (Served with chips) \$5

- Fish Sandwich
- Cheese Pizza

FAMILY DEAL 2 Adult Meals & 2 Kid's Meals \$37

SEAFOOD MEALS (Served with baked potato, vegetable and slaw)

- Fried Catfish \$15
- Baked Lemon Cod
- Deep Fried Shrimp

FISH PO'BOY SANDWICH (Served with chips and slaw) \$12

2026 Dates & Beneficiaries:

February 20	Knights of Columbus Charities and Parish and Religious Intentions
March 6	Parish Youth Activities and Military Chaplain Scholarship
March 13	Pre-Life Support (Women's Care Center & Destiny for Women)
March 20	St. Jude Catholic School to PND Scholarship
March 27	Community Charities (Christ Child Society / American Wheelchair Mission)

Lenten Retreat

with Catholic Speaker AJ De La Rosa
 St. Sharbel Parish | Peoria

Saturday, February 28

The day begins with Divine Liturgy at 8am and will include two presentations by AJ, along with breakfast & lunch, concluding with Adoration at 3pm.

We kindly request that you **RSVP by the end of day on Wednesday, February 25**, to help us prepare for the meals. RSVP at stsharbelchurch.org - thank you!

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. Under **About** open the *New Parishioner Registration*, complete and submit the form.

Last Name _____

First Name(s) _____ Mr ___ Mrs ___ Ms ___

Email _____

Phone _____

Address _____

City _____ ZIP _____

Phone _____

New Parishioner _____ Change of address/phone _____

JOIN THE PEORIA TEENS ENCOUNTER CHRIST (TEC)

BOYS TEC #382 - FEBRUARY 14-16, 2026
 GIRLS TEC #383, JUNE 2026 and BOYS TEC #384, JULY 2026

TEC IS A SPIRITUAL MOVEMENT FOR TEENS AND YOUNG ADULTS.

IT BEGINS WITH A RETREAT WEEKEND FILLED WITH DYNAMIC REFLECTIONS, MUSIC, SACRAMENTS, ADORATION, SMALL GROUP DIALOGUE, AND PRAYER. AFTERWARDS, THE TEC COMMUNITY EVOLVES INTO A NETWORK OF SUPPORT THAT BOTH REINFORCES PARISH INVOLVEMENT AND PERSONAL SPIRITUAL GROWTH.

LEARN MORE AND REGISTER ONLINE AT PEORIATEC.ORG

ALL DENOMINATIONS WELCOME!

How to Submit Bulletin Information
Send information for the bulletin to 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.

Diocesan is proud to be printing
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