

Bulletin Short for
Thirty-Fourth or Last Sunday
in Ordinary Time
Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the
Universe, Solemnity – 20 November 2022

Who Is This Beloved Son? In today's gospel, we hear the conversations of the two thieves with Jesus. It is talk about the Kingdom of Heaven. The second reading is worth rereading all week long. It describes what we believe about this beloved Son, this firstborn from the dead, this Jesus the Christ.

- Spend time with the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds that affirm what we believe.
- How can I fall more and more in love with this beloved Son?
- What can I do and say to make my way to heaven?

Announcements from the Holy Family
Parish Coordinator of Religious
Education (Ann O'Sullivan--
aosullivan2031@gmail.com or
217-257-2516)

Bosco Kids

Classes are held every Wednesday night in the school convent for grades K-6 from 6:15-7:30. There is no class on Wednesday 11/23. Classes will resume on 11/30 with grades 3-6 receiving the Sacrament of Reconciliation followed by regular class.

RCIA

RCIA classes are for those interested in learning more about the Catholic religion and/or coming into the Catholic Church. Please let me or Father Aaron know if you are interested in attending these classes or have any questions about the Catholic Faith.

Youth Group

The Youth Group will meet on Sunday night, November 20th for Grades 7-12 from 6:00-7:30 p.m. at the KofC Hall and meet every other week. We look forward to seeing all of our youth again.

Catholic Heart Work Camp is July 9-15 in Nashville, TN. We are working with St. Thomas Parish. Please let me know ASAP if you plan to

attend. The registration fee is \$100 and we will raise funds for the rest of the cost.

Adult Faith Formation

Adult Faith Formation sessions on Unlocking the Mysteries of the Bible will start on Tuesday, November 29, December 6 and 13 in the school cafeteria from 7:00-8:30 p.m.

This Bible study program helps you to get the "big picture" of the Bible by showing how fourteen narrative books of the Bible tell the complete story from Adam and Eve to Christ and the Church. In this study, presenter Jeff Cavins will show you how to read the Bible so that you can actually understand it. Aided by a unique color-coded Bible Timeline Chart that arranges the key people, places, and events of Scripture in chronological order, Unlocking the Mystery of the Bible will help you discover the story of salvation history and understand how you fit into God's plan.

Please let me know if you plan to attend so I can order enough books. I am facilitating the discussions.

Have a blessed week.

CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS

Holy Family Women's Guild is again accepting donations for Christmas poinsettias in memory of loved ones. Donations may be placed in the collection (*checks should be made payable to Holy Family Women's Guild*). Please include a note with the name of your loved ones.

COMMUNITY BAND & CHOIR

The Community Band and Choir will host a concert on Sunday, November 20 at 2 p.m. in the Brown County High School Auditorium.

The concert will feature patriotic and Christmas selections and is free to attend. The band and choir are sponsored by the Mt Sterling Community Center YMCA.

Please join them in starting off the holiday season!

LITURGICAL SCHEDULE

Monday, November 28 – 7:00 a.m.

Isaiah 4:2-6; Matthew 8:5-11

Communion Service

Tuesday, November 29 – 7:00 a.m.

Isaiah 11:1-10; Luke 10:21-24

Becky Hill
(By Mary Kassing)

Wednesday, November 30 – 7:00 a.m.

St. Andrew, Apostle
Romans 10:9-18; Matthew 4:18-22

Floyd (Scotty) Blentlinger
(By Barb Lehne)

Thursday, December 1 – 7:00 a.m.

Isaiah 26:1-6; Matthew 7:21, 24-27

Fr. Thomas Henseler
(By Leon & Linda Urven)

Friday, December 2 – 8:30 a.m.

(School Mass)

Isaiah 29:17-24; Matthew 9:27-31

Raymond & Bette Geisler
(By Wm. & Joan Ray)

FIRST FRIDAY - ST. THOMAS – 6:00 p.m.

Edwin Schulte
(By Robin & Claudia Coggeshall)

Saturday, December 3 – 5:30 p.m.

St. Francis Xavier, Priest
Isaiah 30:19-21, 23-26; Matthew 9:34-10:1, 5a, 6-8

Matt & Mary Volk
(By Dawn Dunn)

Sunday, December 4 – 8:00 a.m.

Isaiah 11:1-10; Romans 15:4-9; Matthew 3:1-12

Bob & Sylva Dixon and Julie Link
(By Cheryl Dillard)

St. Thomas – 10:00 a.m.

Parishioners of St. Thomas & Holy Family

HOLY FAMILY TITHE TO THE LORD:

November 19-20, 2022

Holy Family: \$4,389.00
School Support: \$615.00
Sister Parish: \$40.00
ACSA: \$100.00

Holy Family weekly budgeted amount: \$6,500

ST. THOMAS TITHE TO THE LORD:

November 20, 2022

St. Thomas: \$2,480.00
Sister Parish: \$50.00

St. Thomas weekly budgeted amount: \$2,635

UPCOMING EVENTS

- ❖ **Legion of Mary** meets each Tuesday at 5:00 p.m. in the convent. All are invited to pray the rosary with us and learn more about the Legion. "With Mary's help we guide, console and enlighten others."
- ❖ **Nocturnal Adoration:** Saturday, December 3 beginning at 10:00 p.m. and concluding on December 4 at 7:45 a.m.

Please contact Tammy at (217) 773-2825 or tmckeown@smseagle.org with any information you wish to have placed in the bulletin. I will need any information by Monday at 2:00 p.m. for insertion into the next weekend's bulletin.

OFFICE HOURS

School Office hours will be Monday - Friday - 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Our phone number is: (217) 773-2825.

The rectory phone number is: (217) 773-3233.

SPECIAL PRAYER REQUESTS

Please keep the following in your prayers:

All Caregivers † The shut-ins of our parish and community † Matthew Bishop † For the safety of all of our military † For a Special Intention † Gay Gunn † Don & Marie Hendren † Jolene Lawson † Sharon Johnson † Gavin McDaniel † Boyd Tenhouse † Janice Leverton † Margo Pool † Gary Shields † Carroll Hedden † Abby Schuhardt † Betty (Koch) Atteberry † Jim Steinkamp † Heather Poppy † Stanley Harms † Sheila Thompson † J. J. Gronewold † John Norkus † Jim Wort † Marilyn Wort † Carolyn Kassing † Cal Noelke † Kimberly McKinny † Bryce Shank † Elaine Parkin & family † Sheila Roberts † Kay Downey † Marilyn Clark † Jim Heaton † Vera Marie Rolf † Nancy Salrin † Christine Colgan Moore † Maddy Perry † Dwayne Koch † Lori Bradshaw † Susie Parker Campbell † Debra Parker Baker † Jeanette Shields † Connie Johnson † Tom Langan † Oakley Ham † Cameron Francis † Norma Herbster † Fritzi Harper † Rick Flatt † Elizabeth "Libby" Tichy † Mark Carlock † Jeff Kozak † Carol Likes † Rob Dresden † Jennie Neisen † Roger Busen † Carol Walker † Sandy Smith † Janice Hendricks † Kendall Harper Passmore † Rick Kunkel † Marissa Atteberry † Mark Ebbing † Joan Weilbacher † Roger Lanz † Brian Zurita † Aaron Koch † Rex Kindhart

ST. THOMAS LITURGICAL ROLES

December 4, 2022 - 10:00 a.m.

Sacristan:	Brent Obert
Greeters:	D. Wagner Family
Lector:	Alicia Schmidt
Gift Bearers:	Butch Obert Family
Eucharistic Minister:	Alicia Schmidt
Collection Counters:	Coggeshall
Ushers:	Tod Perry, Elijah Perry

From the Pastor's Desk

Today marks the First Sunday of Advent and the beginning of a New Liturgical Year. The primary color of violet indicates the repentant nature of the Season. Advent Liturgies take on a more somber tone and the Gloria is absent from the celebration of Masses (except on Solemnities such as the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception on December 8 which is a Holy Day of Obligation). Decoration of the church buildings and Sanctuary is minimal and music during Advent liturgies should be moderate, without anticipating the full joy of Christmas.

The purpose of the Advent Season is to prepare the Church for the Lord's Second Coming. All too often we look at Advent only as a time to prepare for Christmas and by prepare we mean making ourselves busy getting everything ready for "the big day." This is not Advent at all. In fact, we should be emptying ourselves, making ourselves less busy, spending time in prayer and penance, in anticipation of Christmas joy, yes, but really to prepare ourselves for Jesus' Second Coming. Let us all make an effort to carry that out more fully.

Speaking about the coming of the Son of Man, the Lord told His disciples to "take heed, watch, for you do not know when the time will come." The Church, following the Lord's command, sets aside these weeks of Advent to call to mind the Lord's promised return and to exhort us to repent and turn our lives back to Him. In our Gospel readings for Advent, we hear St. John the Baptist preaching repentance and calling the People of Israel to reform their lives. His words call us to change our lives and be ready for Christ's return. We look forward to Jesus' coming with great hope because He will bring with Him the fullness of the Kingdom of Heaven. Again, Advent is a time of genuine conversion and reform of life. The violet color of Advent recalls the importance of

penance and change of heart. Acts of penance and fasting are encouraged during the Advent Season. I am not condemning the celebrations that many have in this Season but we should be mindful, at the same time, that need for repentance and conversion that the Season really calls us to.

In the Advent Liturgy, we are to experience deep spiritual hunger and the need for the grace of salvation. It is a Season of preparation so that we will recognize and embrace the Lord when He finally comes again.

The Season of Advent will prepare us, too, for the Christmas Season but this happens later in the Season...beginning December 17 when we experience that noticeable shift.

May we all have a most blessed and holy Advent Season as we prepare ourselves for the Lord as He has commanded.

And now just a few notes:

-LITURGICAL CELEBRATION THIS WEEK:

-Wednesday, November 30 - Feast of St. Andrew, Apostle. Andrew was the brother of Simon Peter and disciple of John the Baptist. Tradition holds that he preached north of the Black Sea and in Greece and died bound to an X-shaped cross at Petra, Greece in the First Century. He is mentioned in the Roman Canon (Eucharistic Prayer I) and is the patron of Russia, Scotland, and the fishing industry. St. Andrew, Pray for us!

-Saturday, December 3 - Obligatory Memorial of St. Francis Xavier, Priest. Francis Xavier was from Navarre and was one of the founding Jesuits. He preached India, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, and Japan. He died in 1552 at the age of forty-six on the island of Sancion off the China coast. Along with St. Therese of the Child Jesus, he is co-patron of the Apostleship of Prayer and of the foreign missions. St. Francis Xavier, Pray for us!

-PRAYER TO OBTAIN FAVORS - It is piously believed that whoever recites the following prayer fifteen times a day from the feast of St. Andrew (November 30)

until Christmas will obtain what is asked.

This prayer carries an Imprimatur, +MICHAEL AUGUSTINE, Archbishop of New York, New York, February 6, 1897. Like any prayer, it is not magic or anything of the like but is to be prayed with great piety, devotion, faith, and hope.

“Hail and blessed be the hour and moment in which the Son of God was born of the most pure Virgin Mary, at midnight, in Bethlehem, in the piercing cold. In that hour, vouchsafe, I beseech Thee, O my God! to hear my prayer and grant my desires, through the merits of Our Savior Jesus Christ, and of His Blessed Mother. Amen.”

-SCAMS - The scams that abound are nothing new but it is worth mentioning as a reminder. One scam that is popular is the sending of messages that appear to be from a priest. I have heard from a number of folks recently who have received e-mail messages or text messages that appear to be from me. These messages often take on similar form. They may ask you to contact me discreetly by responding back to that particular message or asking you not to use a normal mode of contacting me such as my work e-mail or rectory phone number. The messages often indicate that I am in need of some kind of assistance. If not right away, eventually the messages, if responded to, will likely ask for money or gift cards.

If you ever receive a message that appears to be from me and has this kind of format, DO NOT respond to the message. Rather, contact me directly through a method that you know you are communicating with me...for example, a phone call to the rectory phone number that you initiate or face-to-face contact with me. If you are ever in doubt about any message that appears to be from me, do not hesitate to contact me independently of the message received (in other words, do not respond back to the message but rather contact me directly).

Please note that I will never ask for money or gift cards by an e-mail message or a text

message. For the most part, you will not receive text messages from me at all since I do not text except in very very rare occasions.

-SNOW REMOVAL - With winter coming upon us, we are in need of folks to help with snow removal.

At St. Mary School especially, we are perhaps looking for someone to oversee this for us and a number of folks to help with it when needed. Please contact Melissa in the school office (217)-773-2825 if you would be able to help out.

For Holy Family and St. Thomas, we normally have folks each year who graciously work to clear the sidewalks around the churches. If you are able to help out from time to time, please let me know.

-ADVENT TREE - There was some interest in having an Advent Giving Tree at St. Thomas. We are starting somewhat small this year. As of writing this, we are planning to have a small tree in the vestibule of St. Thomas with Advent "ornaments." If you'd like, take one or more ornaments and purchase the item listed on the ornament. Return the item to church on December 11 or, I may, in conjunction with the Christmas Party on December 11, ask folks to bring the items to the parish hall. Either way, we'll get the items to where they can be used.

-POPE'S INTENTION - the Holy Father's intention for December is for volunteer not-for-profit organizations. We pray that volunteer non-profit organizations committed to human development find people dedicated to the common good and ceaselessly seek out new paths to international cooperation.

-FIRST FRIDAY - Friday, December 2 is First Friday and so we will have our First Friday Devotion at St. Thomas with Exposition and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament beginning at Noon and going until 5:45 p.m. Benediction will be at 5:45 p.m. followed by Mass at 6:00 p.m. The Sacrament of Reconciliation will be available from 5:00 p.m. - 5:45 p.m. As

always, I encourage all of us to spend some time in prayer in front of the Blessed Sacrament and to enter into the Sacrament of Reconciliation. What a wonderful opportunity for all of us.

-NOCTURNAL ADORATION - Nocturnal Adoration at Holy Family will begin on Saturday evening, December 3 at 10:00 p.m. It will go overnight as usual and end with benediction at 7:45 a.m. on Sunday morning followed by the regularly scheduled 8:00 a.m. Mass. Again, I encourage everyone to come and spend some time in prayer in front of the Blessed Sacrament.

-DONUT SUNDAY - Next Sunday, December 4, is the first Sunday of the month which is "Donut Sunday" for St. Thomas. Plan to join us in the hall after Mass.

-UPCOMING LITURGIES - Below is the anticipated schedule of some upcoming special liturgies for both parishes:

AT HOLY FAMILY:

-Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception - Vigil Mass on Wednesday, December 7 at 5:30 p.m., Masses on Thursday, December 8 at 8:30 a.m. (with the school children) and 7:00 p.m.

-Christmas Eve, Saturday, December 24 - 4:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m.

-Christmas Day, Sunday, December 25 - Midnight and 7:00 a.m.

AT ST. THOMAS:

-Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception - Vigil Mass on Wednesday, December 7 at 7:00 p.m., Masses on Thursday, December 8 at 7:00 a.m. and 5:30 p.m.

-Christmas Eve, Saturday, December 24 - 6:30 p.m.

-Christmas Day, Sunday, December 25 - 9:00 a.m.

-RECONCILIATION - I am looking at having additional opportunities for the Sacrament of Reconciliation at both parishes during Advent. Please keep an eye out for that. In the meantime, and anytime, I am happy to schedule a time to celebrate the

Sacrament with you. Do not hesitate to call me at the rectory to set up a time if you need to.

-ST. THOMAS CHRISTMAS PARTY - Mark your calendar for St. Thomas Men's and Women's group parish Christmas party for all St. Thomas parishioners on Sunday, December 11 in the parish hall. They are planning to have folks sign-up so that they can plan accordingly so please be on the look-out for that and other information. I do hope that you will be able to join us.

-MINISTRY CONTACTS - The ministry contact sheets are in the back of church at St. Thomas. These sheets list the folks who signed up for particular roles along with phone numbers and e-mail addresses. There is a sheet for each role, separated into folders. In order to make it easier for you to get a substitute if you are unable to be present on the day you are assigned, please take a sheet for each role you signed up for and keep for your reference. As a side note, if you did not sign up back in October and wish to participate in one of the roles, just let us know and we will get you added to the rotation list for scheduling.

-CHRISTMAS CARDS - There are still plenty of Christmas cards available at both churches. I encourage you to use them if you'd like. There are envelopes marked "Christmas Cards" by the boxes if you are able to make a contribution toward them. The envelopes can be given to me or placed in the collection basket.

-MISSION APPEAL - If you recall, in August we had Fr. Alwin with us at all the weekend Masses for the Mission Appeal. I don't think I ever mentioned the generosity that each parish had toward his appeal. Earlier this fall we sent into the Diocesan Missions Office the funds contributed to this particular appeal. St. Thomas collected and sent in \$869. Holy Family collected and sent in \$2,537 for a total between the two parishes of \$3,406. Thank you for your generous support. It was a joy to have Fr. Alwin here with us.

-COATS FOR KIDS - I do not have the exact figures, but I do know that the Mt. Sterling Knights of Columbus was able to purchase 60 children's coats to be distributed to those who need one. This was due largely to the generous donations of folks in the parishes. Around \$1,200 was collected for this. There has been distribution of the coats but there may still be some available. If you or someone you know is in need of a child's winter coat, let me know and I will check to see what is available. Again, thank you for your generosity.

-IMMACULATE CONCEPTION - As noted above, next Thursday, December 8 is the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. This is a Holy Day of Obligation. The faithful are obliged (required) to participate in the celebration of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass on this day (or at a Vigil the night before in anticipation of the day). It is seriously sinful to completely disregard this obligation. There are a number of Masses scheduled at both parishes which should give everyone ample opportunity to carry out this obligation. Mass times for each parish are listed previously.

-PRAYERS - There are many things to keep in our prayers. Please continue to pray for: the sick, especially of our parishes; the Holy Father and all Bishops and Priests; Holy Vocations to Marriage, Priesthood, and Religious Life; the sanctity of marriage and family life; the protection of respect for all human life in all stages from conception through natural death; the conversion of sinners including our very selves; the salvation of souls.

We live in a culture that mostly attacks the Truth of Jesus Christ from all angles. That same society glorifies most everything except God who is the source of all that is good. It is God alone who should be praised and honored and glorified. As God is dismissed from the public square and even the lives of many, we spiral out of control. In that, the devil himself is quick to act, encouraging, even in subtle ways, self-glorification. Folks eagerly buy

into the devil's deceit. Non-truth and heresy abounds even within some members of the Church. There is an attempt to normalize seriously sinful behavior and to make people "feel good" but at the risk of the eternal salvation of souls which many disregard completely. Those who speak the Truth of Christ and try to live that Truth out are ridiculed, mocked, attacked. Let us pray always that we may know the Truth of Christ revealed by Him and be courageous witnesses to the fullness of that Truth even in trial and difficulty and persecution.

Once again, thank you for your continued prayers for me, one another, our parishes and school and the Universal Church. Please know of my continued daily prayers for you. May you have a most Blessed week and Advent Season.

-Fr. Aaron

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Bosco Kids

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RCIA

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Youth Group

The Youth Group will meet on Sunday night, December 4th for Grades 7-12 from 6:00- 7:30 p.m. at the home of Kent and Leighann Boylen for a Christmas Party. We will also meet on Sunday, 12/18 from 5:30-7:30 at the KC Hall and go carolling at the nursing home and other places. Dress warmly. We look forward to seeing all of our youth again.

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THANK YOU

Thank you to all who mowed the church and school grounds this past summer. We greatly appreciate you!

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