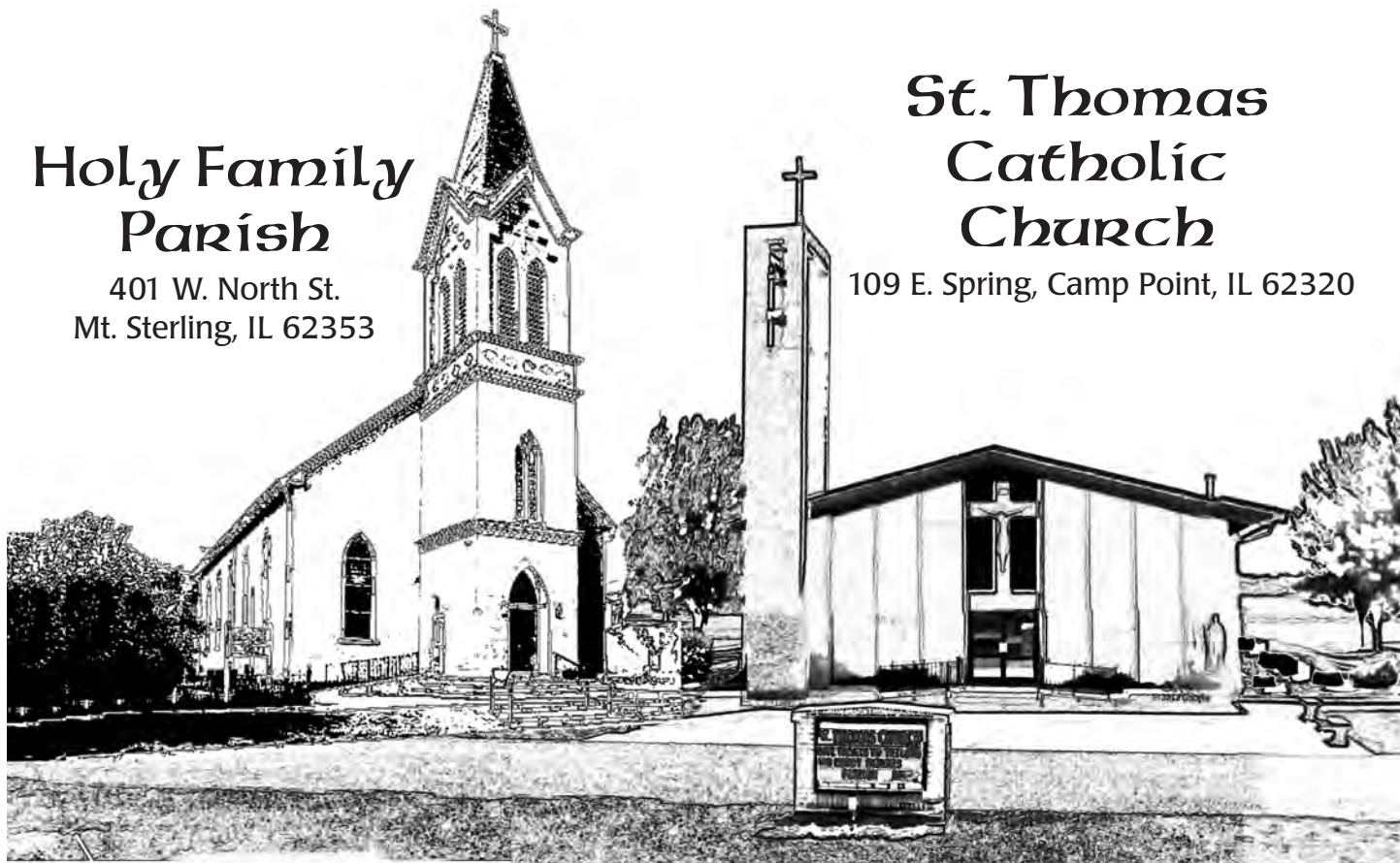


## Holy Family Parish

401 W. North St.  
Mt. Sterling, IL 62353

## St. Thomas Catholic Church

109 E. Spring, Camp Point, IL 62320



Rectory: (217) 773-3233

E-mail: [holy.family@smseagle.org](mailto:holy.family@smseagle.org)

### Parish Staff

Rev. Aaron Kuhn, Pastor – (217) 773-3233

*Emergency only* (217) 242-9669

*E-Mail:* [akuhn@dio.org](mailto:akuhn@dio.org)

Deacon Michael P. Ellerman

Ashley Guthrie, Bookkeeper

Tammy McKeown, Parish & School Secretary

Cheryl Dillard, Liturgical Music Coordinator

Ann O'Sullivan, C.R.E.

School: St. Mary (217) 773-2825

Website: [www.smseagle.org](http://www.smseagle.org)

Principal: Melissa Obert

### Mass Schedule

Daily: 7:00 a.m. Tuesday-Thursday - 8:30 a.m. Friday

Saturday: 5:30 p.m.

Sunday: 8:00 a.m.

Holy days: Will be Announced

Sacrament of Penance

Saturday: 4:30-5:00 p.m. - Anytime by appointment

Eucharistic Adoration

First weekend of month

Phone (217) 593-6685, (217) 773-3233

E-mail: [stthomascp@gmail.com](mailto:stthomascp@gmail.com)

Parish Secretary: Pat Sharow

Renting of Hall: Cathy Holtschlag – 217-430-7493

Community for Christ Assistance Center Board Member:

Dorothy Obert – (217) 593-6520

Ministry Schedule: Bobbi Mock – (217) 430-2859

CHWC Director: Karen Janssen – (217) 242-5283

D.R.E: Laura Evans – (217) 316-1734

Sunday Mass 10:00 a.m.

Holy Day: Will be Announced

First Friday Adoration of the Eucharist 12:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

First Friday Mass 6:00 p.m. with

Reconciliation prior 5:00 - 5:45 p.m.

Ladies Bible Study Wednesday 9:30 a.m.

PSR classes Wednesday 6:30 p.m.

Men & Women's Society Meeting 1st Thursday 7:00 p.m.

Parish Pastoral Council Meeting – 2nd Thursday 6:00 p.m.

Website: [www.stthomascp.org](http://www.stthomascp.org)

<https://stthomascp.formed.org>

## LITURGICAL SCHEDULE

### Monday, December 11 – 7:00 a.m.

St. Damasus I, Pope  
Isaiah 35:1-10; Luke 5:17-26

Communion Service

### Tuesday, December 12 – 7:00 a.m.

Our Lady of Guadalupe  
Revelation 11:19a; 12:1-61, 10ab; Luke 1:39-47

Mary Louise Moorman  
(By Tammy)

### Wednesday, December 13 – 7:00 a.m.

St. Lucy, Virgin & Martyr  
Isaiah 40:25-31; Matthew 11:28-30

Beth Clark  
(By Jim & Marilyn Wort)

### Thursday, December 14 – 7:00 a.m.

St. John of the Cross, Priest & Doctor of the Church  
Isaiah 41:13-20; Matthew 11:11-15

Amy Ormond Lucky  
(By Larry Volk)

### St. Thomas – 5:30 p.m.

Esther & David Coggeshall  
(By Robin & Claudia Coggeshall)

### Friday, December 15 – 8:30 a.m.

#### (School Mass)

Isaiah 48:17-19; Matthew 11:16-19

Bill O'Sullivan  
(By John & Linda Colgan)

### Saturday, December 16 – 5:30 p.m.

Sirach 48:1-4, 9-11; Matthew 17:9a, 10-13

Janet Yakle  
(By Mary Kassing & Family)

### Sunday, December 17 – 8:00 a.m.

Isaiah 61:1-21, 10-11; 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24;  
John 1:6-8, 19-28

Parishioners of Holy Family  
and St. Thomas

### St. Thomas – 10:00 a.m.

Russell Sherman & Edward Sherman  
(By their Daughters & Granddaughters)

## HOLY FAMILY TITHE TO THE LORD:

December 2-3, 2023

Holy Family: \$6,316.00  
School Support: \$1,137.00  
Sister Parish: \$20.00  
Cemetery: \$100.00

ACSA/Parish Tithe: \$35.00  
Debt Reduction: \$276.00

Immaculate Conception Holyday: \$60.00  
Retirement: \$30.00

Holy Family weekly budgeted amount: \$6,500

## ST. THOMAS TITHE TO THE LORD:

December 3, 2023

St. Thomas: \$2,488.00  
Flowers: \$390.00

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."

Please contact Tammy at (217) 773-2825 or [tmckeown@smseagle.org](mailto: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:**

Bud Bordenkircher † Jeff Kozak †

Jim Duvendack † Marilyn Clark † John Colgan †

## ST. THOMAS

**St. Thomas Christmas Party** - Get ready for some festive fellowship and fun! Our St. Thomas Christmas party will be Sunday, December 10 after the 10:00 a.m. mass. A full meal will be provided. Plus, you can expect lots of laughs and a chance to take home a homemade cake. We're having a CAKE WALK! Don't forget to sign up. We'd sure like everyone to come.

## ST. THOMAS LITURGICAL ROLES

***December 17, 2023 - 10:00 a.m.***

**Sacristan:** Denise Taylor  
**Greeters:** Tod Perry Family  
**Lector:** Bobbi Mock  
**Gift Bearers:** Justin & Emily  
Obert Family  
**Eucharistic Minister:** Elizabeth Likes  
**Collection Counters:** Dale & Sindy DeRousse  
**Ushers:** Jerry Herkert, Andrew Llewelyn

## From the Pastor's Desk

Today the Church celebrates the Second Sunday of Advent. Our readings today remind us that as we await new heavens and a new earth, we need to make clear the way of the Lord by being servants of justice, truth, and peace.

-LITURGICAL CELEBRATIONS THIS WEEK:

-Monday, December 11 - Optional memorial of St. Damasus I, Pope. Damasus was known to have preserved the papal archives and to have been devoted to the relics and resting places of the martyrs. He combatted the anti-pope Ursinus as well as Arian and Donatist heresies. He was the first pope to speak of Rome as the Apostolic See. He encouraged St. Jerome to produce a new translation of the Latin Bible and later to form the main part of the Vulgate. He died in 384.

“To his secretary Saint Jerome, Damasus was “an incomparable person, learned in the Scriptures, a virgin doctor of the virgin Church, who loved chastity and heard its praises with pleasure.” Damasus seldom heard such unrestrained praise. Internal political struggles, doctrinal heresies, uneasy relations with his fellow bishops and those of the Eastern Church marred the peace of his pontificate.

Damasus started as a deacon and served as a priest in what later became the basilica of San Lorenzo in Rome. He served Pope Liberius (352-366) and followed him into exile.

When Liberius died, Damasus was elected bishop of Rome; but a minority elected and consecrated another deacon, Ursinus, as pope. The controversy between Damasus and the antipope resulted in violent battles in two basilicas, scandalizing the bishops of Italy. At the synod that Damasus called on the occasion of his birthday, he asked them to approve his actions. The bishops' reply was curt: “We assembled for a birthday, not to condemn a man unheard.” Supporters of the antipope even managed to get Damasus accused of a grave crime—probably sexual—as late as A.D. 378. He had to clear himself before both a civil court and a Church synod.

As pope, his lifestyle was simple in contrast to other ecclesiastics of Rome, and he was fierce in his denunciation of Arianism and other heresies. A misunderstanding of the Trinitarian terminology used by Rome threatened amicable relations with the Eastern Church, and Damasus was only moderately successful in dealing with that challenge.

During his pontificate, Christianity was declared the official religion of the Roman state, and Latin became the principal liturgical language as part of the pope's reforms. His encouragement of Saint Jerome's biblical studies led to the Vulgate, the Latin translation of Scripture which 12 centuries later the Council of Trent declared to be “authentic in public readings, disputations, preaching.”

The history of the papacy and the Church is inextricably mixed with the personal biography of Damasus. In a troubled and pivotal period of Church history, he stands forth as a zealous defender of the faith who knew when to be progressive and when to entrench.

Damasus makes us aware of two qualities of good leadership: alertness to the

promptings of the Holy Spirit and service. His struggles are a reminder that Jesus never promised his Rock protection from hurricane winds nor his follower's immunity from difficulties. His only guarantee is final victory." (Franciscan Media)

St. Damasus I, Pray for us!

-Tuesday, December 12 - In the United States, Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe. This Feast recalls the apparitions of Mary at the hill of Tepeyac from December 9 - 12, 1531 to the native convert, St. Juan Diego whose memorial we celebrate on December 9. Our Lady of Guadalupe is known to the Aztecs as Tecoatlaxope (or de Guadalupe in Spanish) which means "she will crush the serpent of stone." Our Lady of Guadalupe was declared Patroness of the Americas by Pope Pius XII. This celebration was raised to a Feast for all the countries of the Americas by the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments on March 25, 1999, and is ordinarily observed as the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe. Mary, the Mother of God is a great and powerful intercessor for us. As a loving Mother, she always points us to Christ. May we look upon her with confidence and model her life of service to God's Will.

"The feast in honor of Our Lady of Guadalupe goes back to the 16th century. Chronicles of that period tell us the story.

A poor Indian named Cuauhtlatohuac was baptized and given the name Juan Diego. He was a 57-year-old widower and lived in a small village near Mexico City. On Saturday morning December 9, 1531, he was on his way to a nearby barrio to attend Mass in honor of Our Lady.

Juan was walking by a hill called Tepeyac when he heard beautiful music like the warbling of birds. A radiant cloud appeared, and within it stood an Indian maiden dressed like an Aztec princess. The lady spoke to him in his own language and sent him to the bishop of Mexico, a Franciscan named Juan de Zumarraga. The bishop was to build a chapel in the place where the lady appeared.

Eventually the bishop told Juan to have the lady give him a sign. About this same time Juan's uncle became seriously ill. This led poor Juan to try to avoid the lady. Nevertheless, the lady found Juan, assured him that his uncle would recover, and

provided roses for Juan to carry to the bishop in his cape or tilma.

On December 12, when Juan Diego opened his tilma in the bishop's presence, the roses fell to the ground, and the bishop sank to his knees. On the tilma where the roses had been appeared an image of Mary exactly as she had appeared at the hill of Tepeyac.

Mary's appearance to Juan Diego as one of his people is a powerful reminder that Mary—and the God who sent her—accept all peoples. In the context of the sometimes rude and cruel treatment of the Indians by the Spaniards, the apparition was a rebuke to the Spaniards and an event of vast significance for the indigenous population. While a number of them had converted before this incident, they now came in droves. According to a contemporary chronicler, nine million Indians became Catholic in a very short time. In these days when we hear so much about God's preferential option for the poor, Our Lady of Guadalupe cries out to us that God's love for and identification with the poor is an age-old truth that stems from the Gospel itself." (Franciscan Media)

Our Lady of Guadalupe, Pray for us!

-Wednesday, December 13 - Obligatory Memorial of St. Lucy, Virgin and Martyr. Because of her name which comes from the word meaning "light," St. Lucy is the patroness of those afflicted with diseases of the eye and she is associated with the festival of light especially in Scandinavia. She is mentioned in the Roman Canon (Eucharist Prayer I) and is also patroness of Syracuse and all of Sicily. St. Lucy was martyred under Diocletian around the year 304, likely in Sicily.

"Every little girl named Lucy must bite her tongue in disappointment when she first tries to find out what there is to know about her patron saint. The older books will have a lengthy paragraph detailing a small number of traditions. Newer books will have a lengthy paragraph showing that there is little basis in history for these traditions. The single fact survives that a disappointed suitor accused Lucy of being a Christian, and she was executed in Syracuse, Sicily, in the year 304. But it is also true that her name is mentioned in the First Eucharistic Prayer, geographical places are named after her, a popular song has her name as its title, and down through the centuries many thousands of little girls have been proud of the name Lucy.

One can easily imagine what a young Christian woman had to contend with in pagan Sicily in the year 300. If you have trouble imagining, just glance at today's pleasure-at-all-costs world and the barriers it presents against leading a good Christian life.

Her friends must have wondered aloud about this hero of Lucy's, an obscure itinerant preacher in a far-off captive nation that had been destroyed more than 200 years before. Once a carpenter, he had been crucified by the Romans after His own people turned Him over to their authority. Lucy believed with her whole soul that this man had risen from the dead. Heaven had put a stamp on all He said and did. To give witness to her faith she had made a vow of virginity.

What a hubbub this caused among her pagan friends! The kindlier ones just thought her a little strange. To be pure before marriage was an ancient Roman ideal, rarely found, but not to be condemned. To exclude marriage altogether, however, was too much. She must have something sinister to hide, the tongues wagged.

Lucy knew of the heroism of earlier virgin martyrs. She remained faithful to their example and to the example of the carpenter, whom she knew to be the Son of God. She is the patroness of eyesight.

If you are a little girl named Lucy, you need not bite your tongue in disappointment. Your patron is a genuine authentic heroine, first class, an abiding inspiration for you and for all Christians. The moral courage of the young Sicilian martyr shines forth as a guiding light, just as bright for today's youth as it was in A.D. 304. (Franciscan Media)

St. Lucy, Pray for us!

-Thursday, December 14 - Obligatory Memorial of St. John of the Cross, Priest, and Doctor of the Church. St. John of the Cross was born around 5142 in Fontiveros, Spain. He was a mystic and a poet and an ally of St. Teresa of Avila in founding the Discalced (Reformed) Carmelite Friars (O.C.D.) He suffered imprisonment by the unreformed Carmelites of the Observance. He wrote several pieces including *The Ascent of Mount Carmel*, *The Dark Night of the Soul*, *The Spiritual Canticle*, and *O Flame of Living Love*. He is known as the Mystical Doctor. Today the Discalced Carmelites number about 4,000 religious. St. John of the Cross died around the year 1591.

"John is a saint because his life was a heroic effort to live up to his name: "of the Cross." The folly of the cross came to full realization in time. "Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me" (Mark 8:34b) is the story of John's life. The Paschal Mystery—through death to life—strongly marks John as reformer, mystic-poet, and theologian-priest.

Ordained a Carmelite priest in 1567 at age 25, John met Teresa of Avila and like her, vowed himself to the primitive Rule of the Carmelites. As partner with Teresa and in his own right, John engaged in the work of reform, and came to experience the price of reform: increasing opposition, misunderstanding, persecution, imprisonment. He came to know the cross acutely—to experience the dying of Jesus—as he sat month after month in his dark, damp, narrow cell with only his God.

Yet, the paradox! In this dying of imprisonment John came to life, uttering poetry. In the darkness of the dungeon, John's spirit came into the Light. There are many mystics, many poets; John is unique as mystic-poet, expressing in his prison-cross the ecstasy of mystical union with God in the *Spiritual Canticle*.

But as agony leads to ecstasy, so John had his Ascent to Mt. Carmel, as he named it in his prose masterpiece. As man-Christian-Carmelite, he experienced in himself this purifying ascent; as spiritual director, he sensed it in others; as psychologist-theologian, he described and analyzed it in his prose writings. His prose works are outstanding in underscoring the cost of discipleship, the path of union with God: rigorous discipline, abandonment, purification. Uniquely and strongly, John underlines the gospel paradox: The cross leads to resurrection, agony to ecstasy, darkness to light, abandonment to possession, denial to self to union with God. If you want to save your life, you must lose it. John is truly "of the Cross." He died at 49—a life short, but full.

In his life and writings, John of the Cross has a crucial word for us today. We tend to be rich, soft, comfortable. We shrink even from words like self-denial, mortification, purification, asceticism, discipline. We run from the cross. John's message—like the gospel—is loud and clear: Don't—if you really want to live!" (Franciscan Media)

St. John of the Cross, Pray for us!

-ADVENT - As we have entered into and remain in the Season of Advent, I encourage you to remain mindful of this Season each day. Advent calls us to prepare, to quiet our minds and our hearts as we reflect on God's presence and His coming. Advent also calls us to repentance and conversion. In the busyness of life and especially in the hustle and bustle of these weeks, let us remain vigilant to the Season of Advent.

-ST. THOMAS CHRISTMAS PARTY - Just a reminder, the St. Thomas Parish Christmas party for all St. Thomas parishioners is this Sunday, December 10 in the parish hall following the 10 a.m. Mass.

-CALENDARS - 2024 calendars are now available in the back of both churches while they last. Hendricker Funeral Home in Mt. Sterling provides these calendars for our parishes. I thank them for continuing to provide these for our parishioners. If you see Jamie, Tracy, or Nick, please thank them or send them a note thanking them for the calendars.

There is just one style this year...Feasts and Saints. These are excellent calendars to have as they give a lot of information concerning Liturgical celebrations and norms.

Feel free to take one for yourself and/or for anyone you know who may be homebound or in a nursing home or otherwise unable to get one from the church. We are also planning to send one home with each St. Mary School Family as well.

-THANK YOU - Thank you to all who participated in any way with the recent food drive at Holy Family. Your generosity and care for others is greatly appreciated.

-SCAMS - Just a reminder, one popular scam is the sending of messages that appear to be from a priest. These messages often take on a 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 for very very rare occasions.

-ADVENT GIVING TREE - A reminder that there is an Advent giving tree in the back of each church with Advent "ornaments." The ornaments list baby items that we will collect and give to a pregnancy center. There is also a short prayer on the back of each ornament that I encourage you to pray.

If you'd like, take one or more ornaments and purchase the item(s) listed on the ornament. Return the item(s) to church by Sunday, December 17 (or as soon as possible thereafter). Please do not wrap the items and please keep the ornament and pray the prayer that is on it.

There are many needs and many opportunities to give. This is but one way to help those in need. I will keep the trees up until after Masses on December 17.

-CHRISTMAS LITURGIES - Below is the anticipated schedule of Christmas Liturgies for both parishes:

At Holy Family, Christmas Eve, Sunday, December 24 - 4:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m.

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

At St. Thomas, Christmas Eve, Sunday, December 24 - 6:30 p.m.

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

A reminder that the faithful are obliged to participate in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass for the Fourth Sunday of Advent either at a Vigil Mass on December 23 or a Sunday Mass on December 24 celebrating the Fourth Sunday of Advent AND for Christmas either at a Vigil Mass on December 24 celebrating Christmas or at a Mass on Christmas Day. The parishes will celebrate Masses for the Fourth Sunday of Advent according to the regular schedule that we follow. The Mass times for Christmas are above.

-CHRISTMAS CARDS - Beautiful and solidly Catholic Christmas Cards are available in the back of each Church while they last. If you'd like to make a contribution toward them, use the marked envelopes and place it in the regular collection basket.

-CHRISTMAS FLOWER DONATIONS - If you would like to make a contribution toward our Christmas flowers, St. Thomas Parishioners should have an envelope for them in their regular set of offertory envelopes. If not, simply place your contribution in an envelope marked "Christmas Flowers. At Holy Family, please place contributions in an envelope and mark clearly on the outside "Christmas Flowers."

Please be assured of my prayers for you each day and thank you for your continued prayers for me, one another, our parishes and school, and the Universal Church. May you have a most holy and blessed week and Advent Season.

-Fr. Aaron

### Holy Family Choir Practice

#### Attention Choir!

Christmas choir practice will be:

Wednesday, December 13: 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday, December 20: 6:00 p.m.

All are welcome!

### HOLY FAMILY BOSCO KIDS

No classes will be held on 12/18, 12/25, and 1/1.

### RAGS & BAGS

St. Mary School is selling rags and bags. Dishcloths are 6 for \$12. Trash bags are \$25 per box - a box contains 100 bags that fit 30 gallon containers and have a thickness of 1.5 mil. Contact your favorite SMS student or call the office (773-2825) to purchase!

### Snow Removal

We are in need of volunteers for snow removal around the school once it starts snowing. If you are interested in helping with snow removal, please let Melissa know (217-773-2825 or [mobert@smseagle.org](mailto:mobert@smseagle.org)). Thanks!



### CHRISTMAS CARD ADDRESSES

Below are addresses for the convenience of those wishing to send Christmas cards to clergy and deacons:

Fr. Aaron Kuhn  
P. O. Box 252  
Mt. Sterling, IL 62353

Deacon Mike Ellerman  
2322 St. Charles Drive  
Quincy, IL 62305

Deacon Paul Koch  
7 Highland Park Drive  
Mt. Sterling, IL 62353

Fr. John Beveridge  
1017 Meadows Ct.  
Maryville, IL 62062

Fr. Charles Edwards  
St. Jude Parish  
P.O. Box 47  
Rochester, IL 62563

Fr. Stephen Thompson  
Holy Family Parish  
2606 Washington Ave.  
Granite City, IL 62040

Fr. David Beagles  
202 South Lincoln  
Robinson, IL 62454

Fr. John Patrick Day  
829 Valley View Dr.  
Sparta, TN 38583

Fr. James O'Shea  
IL Presbyterian Home  
2005 W. Lawrence Ave., Room 64  
Springfield, IL 62704

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Jim Henrick, Owner  
Cell: 217-617-3956  
mtsterlingmonuments@frontier.com  
212 West Main Street  
Mt. Sterling, IL 62353  
Ph.: 217-773-2026 Fax: 217-773-2975

  
**RANDY E. FRESE**  
STATE REPRESENTATIVE  
99TH DISTRICT  
3601 E. Lake Centre Drive, Suite 200  
Quincy, Illinois • 217-223-0833  
repfrese@adams.net

**Channel**   
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Doug and Karen Janssen  
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Office: 217-696-4658  
Cell: 217-430-2865

**JIL TRACY**  
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senatortracy@adams.net

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