

## 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 18 – 7:00 a.m.

Jeremiah 23:5-8; Matthew 1:18-25

Communion Service

### Tuesday, December 19 – 7:00 a.m.

Judges 13:2-7, 24-25a; Luke 1:5-25

Mary Margaret Bullard  
(By the Family)

### Wednesday, December 20 – 7:00 a.m.

Isaiah 7:10-14; Luke 1:26-38

Linda Blickhan  
(By Mary Koch)

### Thursday, December 21 – 7:00 a.m.

St. Peter Canisius, Priest and Doctor of the Church  
Song of Songs 2:8-14; Luke 1:39-45

Lucille Wagner  
(By Richard Ryan)

### St. Thomas – 5:30 p.m.

Barb Kuhn  
(By Jim & Barb Carlson)

### Friday, December 22 – 8:30 a.m.

**(School Mass)**

1 Samuel 1:24-28; Luke 1:46-56

Raymond & Marie Koch Family  
(By Joan Zurita)

### Saturday, December 23 – 5:30 p.m.

St. John of Kanty, Priest  
Malachi 3:1-4, 24-24; Luke 1:57-66

Kay Downey  
(By Larry Volk)

### Sunday, December 24 – 8:00 a.m.

2 Samuel 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16; Romans 16:25-27;  
Luke 1:26-38

Parishioners of Holy Family  
and St. Thomas

### St. Thomas – 10:00 a.m.

Martha Koettters  
(By Carl & Marcia Taylor)



### Sunday, December 24 – 4:00 p.m.

Isaiah 62:1-5; Acts of the Apostles 13:16-17, 22-25;  
Matthew 1:1-25

### AT HOLY FAMILY

John & Mary Louise Moorman  
and Jim McKeown  
(By Tammy)

### Sunday, December 24 – 6:30 p.m.

### AT ST. THOMAS

Larry Balzer  
(By Liz Balzer and  
the Jeremy Smith Family)

### Sunday, December 24 – 9:00 p.m.

### AT HOLY FAMILY

Vic Kassing  
(By Mary Kassing & Family)

*Come early before the 9:00 p.m. Mass and  
listen to Christmas carols by the choir. They  
will start at approximately 8:45 p.m.*

### HOLY FAMILY TITHE TO THE LORD:

#### December 9-10, 2023

Holy Family: \$6,796.00

School Support: \$300.00

Sister Parish: \$337.00

Cemetery: \$490.00

Debt Reduction: \$871.00

Immaculate Conception Holyday: \$370.00

Retirement: \$625.00

Catholic Children's Home: \$75.00

All Soul's: \$5.00

Campaign for Justice: \$20.00

Christmas: \$100.00

Holy Family weekly budgeted amount: \$6,500

### ST. THOMAS TITHE TO THE LORD:

#### December 10, 2023

St. Thomas: \$2,525.00

Flowers: \$110.00

Immaculate Conception: \$285.00

Retirement for Religious: \$325.00

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 † Dan Ray † Sheila Thompson †

Dick Bordenkircher †

## ST. THOMAS LITURGICAL ROLES

***December 24, 2023 - 10:00 a.m.***

<b>Sacristan:</b>	Brent Obert
<b>Greeters:</b>	Maurice & Clara Schmidt
<b>Lector:</b>	Laura Evans
<b>Gift Bearers:</b>	Tod Perry Family
<b>Eucharistic Minister:</b>	Jim Clausius
<b>Collection Counters:</b>	Jerel Mock Family
<b>Ushers:</b>	Jerry Herkert, Andrew Llewelyn

## From the Pastor’s Desk

Today the Church celebrates the Third Sunday of Advent which is traditionally known

as Gaudete Sunday, so-called from the first word of the Antiphon at the Introit. Gaudete means “Rejoice” and sets a tone of joyful expectation for the Lord’s Second Coming and the celebration of His Birth as does the permitted rose-colored vestments for this day.

As a side note, December 17 is the latest possible date for Gaudete Sunday on the calendar in contrast to last year when it fell on the earliest possible date (December 11). Again, you never know, you may just need that bit of information in a round of Jeopardy some day. This year, our Fourth “Week” of Advent will last just one day. Indeed, there are always four Sundays of Advent but not necessarily four full weeks of Advent.

In our readings for Mass today, John the Baptist witnesses to One who is to come, One far mightier than he, One who will proclaim freedom and deliverance from sin and death. As we await His coming again in glory, let us join with Mary in singing the praises of God!

-LITURGICAL CELEBRATIONS THIS WEEK:

-Thursday, December 21 - Optional memorial of St. Peter Canisius, Priest and Doctor of the Church.

“The energetic life of Peter Canisius should demolish any stereotypes we may have of the life of a saint as dull or routine. Peter lived his 76 years at a pace which must be considered heroic, even in our time of rapid change. A man blessed with many talents, Peter is an excellent example of the scriptural man who develops his talents for the sake of the Lord’s work.

Renowned as a popular preacher, Peter packed churches with those eager to hear his eloquent proclamation of the gospel. He had great diplomatic ability, often serving as a reconciler between disputing factions. In his letters, one finds words of wisdom and counsel to people in all walks of life.

Peter’s untiring efforts are an apt example for those involved in the renewal of the Church or the growth of moral consciousness in business or government. Teachers can see in his life a passion for the transmission of truth. Whether we have much to give, as Peter Canisius did, or whether we have only a little to give, as did the poor widow in the Gospel of Luke (Luke 21:1-4), the important thing is to give our all. It is in this way that Peter is so exemplary for Christians in an age of rapid change when we are called to be in the world but not of the world.” (Franciscan Media)

St. Peter Canisius, Pray for us!

-Saturday, December 23 - Optional memorial of St. John of Kanty, Priest.

“John was a country lad who made good in the big city and the big university of Kraków, Poland. After brilliant studies he was ordained a priest and became a professor of theology. The inevitable opposition which saints encounter led to his being ousted by rivals and sent to be a parish priest at Olkusz. An extremely humble man, he did his best, but his best was not to the liking of his parishioners. But in the end, he won his people’s hearts.

John was a serious man, and humble, but known to all the poor of Kraków for his kindness. His goods and his money were always at their disposal, and time and again they took advantage of him. He kept only the money and clothes absolutely needed to support himself. He slept little, ate sparingly, and took no meat.

John of Kanty is a typical saint: He was kind, humble, and generous, he suffered opposition and led an austere, penitential life. Most Christians in an affluent society can understand all the ingredients except the last: Anything more than mild self-discipline seems reserved for athletes and ballet dancers. Christmas at least is a good time to reject self-indulgence.” (Franciscan Media)

St. John Kanty, Pray for us!

-ADVENT - We remain in the Season of Advent and 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. In the busyness of life and especially in the hustle and bustle of these days leading up to Christmas, let us remain vigilant to the Season of Advent.

-ADDRESSES - A few updates and additions to some addresses provided in the bulletin:

Teresa Brady should have been included on the insert in the bulletins at St. Thomas last week. Her address is: 102 E Park St., Camp Point, IL 62320.

The address for Fr. John Patrick Day, C.P. has been updated with the most recent information we have. Please see the updated address in the section of addresses included in the bulletins again this week.

Matt Heldt is in Formation for the Permanent Diaconate. His address is: 1062 1050E St., Mt. Sterling, IL 62353.

-CONFESSIONS - I will be offering some additional times for Confessions this week:

At St. Thomas, Thursday, December 21, 4:30 p.m. -5:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m. (Mass is at 5:30 p.m.).

At Holy Family, Friday, December 21, 7:45 a.m. - 8:15 a.m., Noon - 12:30 p.m., and 5:30 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.; Saturday, December 23, 7:15 a.m. - 7:45 a.m. (Weekday Mass at 8:00 a.m.), 4:30 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. (Mass celebrating the 4th Sunday of Advent at 5:30 p.m.).

If I do not have a Mass following the end time for Confessions, I will stay as long as there are people present wishing to celebrate the Sacrament. If I need to stop and celebrate Mass and there are folks still wishing to celebrate the Sacrament, I will do so immediately following the Mass.

Please know also that you can call me anytime to schedule a time to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

There is also a Penance Service with individual Confessions scheduled this Sunday, December 17 at St. Francis in Quincy beginning at 2:00 p.m. A number of priests will be present to hear Confessions.

-CHILDREN’S PROGRAM - The kids at St. Thomas have been preparing for a brief program before the Christmas Eve Mass at St. Thomas. They will begin around 6:00 p.m. If you’re able, please come and listen. Any questions, contact Alicia Schmidt.

-THANK YOU - The St. Thomas Christmas party last week was quite enjoyable. Those who were able to be there seemed to really enjoy it. It was good to gather together as a parish. Thank you to everyone who helped put this together.

-O ANTIPHONS - According to the Universal Norms, number 42, beginning on December 17 each year, the Advent Weekdays are intended to serve to prepare more directly for the celebration of the Lord’s Nativity (Birth). At weekday Mass, we will now begin to use Advent Preface II (we have been using Advent Preface I) and we will begin hearing the “O Antiphons”... ..O Wisdom, O Sacred Lord, O Flower of Jesse’s Stem, O Key of David, O Radiant Dawn, O King of All Nations, O Emmanuel (O God is With Us). It is no coincidence that the hymn, O Come, O Come

Emmanuel has seven verses as each verse picks up on one of the seven O Antiphons.

There is much that one can continue to learn about the O Antiphons. Some of the following I've shared before but it is always a good review. From the USCCB, "The Roman Church has been singing the "O" Antiphons since at least the eighth century...They are a magnificent theology that uses ancient biblical imagery drawn from the messianic hopes of the Old Testament to proclaim the coming Christ as the fulfillment not only of Old Testament hopes, but present ones as well. Their repeated use of the imperative "Come!" embodies the longing of all for the Divine Messiah."

And from Catholicculture.org, "The 'O' Antiphons are ancient antiphons that all begin with the invocation 'O.' They call to mind the ancient longing and pleading of the people of the Old Testament for a Savior to come, invoking different Christological titles on the seven days before Christmas Eve. In praying these we remember the original yearning for the First Coming of Christ at Bethlehem and echo the same waiting and supplication for the Emmanuel to come at Parousia, His Second Coming. The 'O' Antiphons take us through chronological order from before Creation to the birth of Christ at Bethlehem.

The O Antiphon for each day are as follows, in Latin and English: December 17: O Sapientia (O Wisdom); December 18: O Adonai (O Lord and Ruler); December 19: O Radix Jesse (O Root of Jesse); December 20: O Clavis David (O Key of David); December 21: O Oriens (O Dayspring); December 22: O Rex Gentium (O King of Nations); December 23: O Emmanuel (O God with Us). What I find so very interesting is that by the time we reach December 23, the backwards acrostic of the Latin initials of the Christological titles (the first letter of each Latin title) spell ERO CRAS which means "Tomorrow I will come."

Again, there is so much to learn about the O Antiphons. One more quick thing I want to point out is the "O" itself. It may seem that this is nothing more than the start of an invocation. However, the "O" points to fullness. Again, from Catholicculture.org, "The circle is just a simple closed geometric shape, but in context with these 'O' Antiphons it is more than a shape or letter of the alphabet. The 'O' is all encompassing. The 'O' denotes fullness, completeness, wholeness, ripeness. The 'O' symbolizes eternity, no

beginning or end. This simple letter plumbs the depths and speaks to the final fulfillment in the Second Coming of Christ at Parousia."

-ADVENT GIVING TREE - I will be removing the Advent giving trees from the churches this week. If you would still like to take an ornament and purchase an item, please do so. Please bring items to church as soon as possible.

-SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION - Please keep in your prayers those who are preparing to receive the Sacraments of First Reconciliation, Confirmation, and First Holy Communion. We have a number of children from both parishes preparing for these Sacraments in the spring.

-SCHOOL/PSR - We either have or soon will be taking a short break from school and PSR. I thank all of our teachers, staff and catechists for all they do. Always remember that these formal meetings, while both necessary and important, are but one element of our faith formation. Faith formation itself never stops and so I ask you to consider how you are continuing your faith formation each and every day. This question is not just for our school and PSR families. It is a question for each and every one of us. If you cannot answer the question specifically, take some time to pray and reflect on it. Your continual faith formation is critically important to the eternal salvation of your soul which is of utmost importance.

Again, thank you to all of our "formal" catechists in each parish who are so very dedicated in teaching the faith. We have a group of excellent catechists!

-HOLY FAMILY FALL COLLECTION - Each year Holy Family Parish embarks on what has come to be known as the Fall Collection. As I mentioned in a previous bulletin, I have been delayed in getting this prepared as we normally do it. We will have the collection beginning after Christmas. However, if you'd like to make a contribution toward it before the end of the calendar year, simply place your contribution in an envelope and mark it "Fall Collection" and place it in the collection basket at church. Or you can also mail your contribution into the parish office: PO Box 252, Mt. Sterling, IL 62353. Thank you for your generosity and your patience.

-CHRISTMAS FLOWER DONATIONS - You can still make a contribution toward the flowers for Christmas, St. Thomas



parishioners should have an envelope for this in the regular set of envelopes (or use your own envelope and mark it "Christmas Flowers). For Holy Family, please place your contribution in an envelope marked "Christmas Flowers." The envelopes can be placed in the collection basket or mailed in to the office. These contributions are often made in memory of someone so please include the name(s) with your contributions. I will keep these folks in my prayers in a special way and I encourage all of our parishioners to do the same.

-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.

-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, Saturday, December 25 - 9:00 a.m.

A reminder that the faithful are obliged to participate in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass for both 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 the Nativity of the Lord (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.

-SOLEMNITY OF MARY, THE HOLY MOTHER OF GOD - This is celebrated every year on January 1, the Octave Day of Christmas. It is a Holy Day of Obligation. Since it falls on a Monday this year, the Obligation has been lifted. However, it remains an important and significant celebration. I would hope that we would all participate in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass that day without having an obligation attached to it. I am planning to celebrate Mass at both parishes that day...8:00 a.m. at Holy Family and 10:00 a.m. at St. Thomas.

-ST. MARY SCHOOL STAFF - I wanted to take the opportunity to thank Mrs. Rhonda Koch who had taken on the role of school cook at St. Mary School for the last couple of years. Rhonda has decided to step away from this role. We appreciate all she has done, and we wish her all the best. I am grateful that Mrs. Rosemary Trinkle has agreed to take on the role as school cook. Rosemary has already been working in the kitchen and we welcome her to the St. Mary School staff.

While I am speaking of our St. Mary School staff, I want to acknowledge what a great faculty and staff we have...what a gift and a blessing! I sincerely appreciate all their efforts and dedication to the school.

This school year we have a few new faces that I don't recall mentioning before in the bulletins. So that you are aware, Mrs. Ashley Behymer joined St. Mary School this year as one of our Pre-K teachers and Miss Ally Heldt joined St. Mary School this year as our Kindergarten teacher. Both of these ladies have been doing an excellent job in their classrooms. Lavonne Newton also joined St. Mary School this year as a part time aide and has been a great addition to the staff.

I want to mention too my appreciation for those who serve as substitutes when needed. Their help and contributions are so very important.

I cannot help but also mention specifically our exceptional School Principal, Mrs. Melissa Obert. Melissa does an incredible job overseeing our school which you all know is such a great blessing to us. And again, along with Mrs. Obert, St. Mary School has a group of excellent teachers and staff who are so very dedicated to the school, one another, our students, and their families.

-CHRISTMAS CARDS - As of this writing, there were still a few boxes of beautiful and solidly Catholic Christmas Cards available in the back of each Church if you need them. If you'd like to make a contribution toward them, use the marked envelopes and place them in the regular collection basket.

-END-OF-YEAR CONTRIBUTIONS - Often times, folks wish to make a year-end contribution to the parish. If you would like to make such a contribution, I ask you to make those as soon as possible so that we can get them recorded in this calendar year.

Additionally, folks are sometimes required to take a withdrawal from a retirement account each year. In many cases, if the withdrawal goes directly to a charitable organization, there are significant tax advantages. If this applies to you, I encourage you to speak to a tax professional soon and consider a contribution to the parishes or to St. Mary School.

Thank you for your continued prayers and support for me, one another, our parishes and school, and the Universal Church. Please be assured of my continued daily prayers for you. May you have a most blessed week and Advent Season!

-Fr. Aaron

### Holy Family Choir Practice

#### Attention Choir!

Christmas choir practice will be:

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

Fr. John Patrick Day, C.P.  
c/o Passionist Monastery  
1924 Newburg Road  
Louisville, KY 40205  
(\*NEW ADDRESS\*)

**KASSING**  
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**RANDY E. FRESE**  
STATE REPRESENTATIVE  
99TH DISTRICT  
3601 E. Lake Centre Drive, Suite 200  
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repfrese@adams.net

**Channel**   
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Office: 217-696-4658  
Cell: 217-430-2865

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