

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

Parish Staff

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

Emergency only (217) 242-9669

E-Mail: 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

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

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

<https://stthomascp.formed.org>

LITURGICAL SCHEDULE

Monday, January 1 – 8:00 a.m.

AT HOLY FAMILY

The Octave Day of the Nativity of the Lord Solemnity of Mary, The Holy Mother of God
Numbers 6:22-27; Galatians 4:4-7; Luke 2:16-21

Charles Koch
(By Norma Hufnagel)

Monday, January 1 – 10:00 a.m.

AT ST. THOMAS

Jim Stout
(By St. Thomas Men & Women's Society)

Tuesday, January 2 – 7:00 a.m.

Sts. Basil the Great & Gregory Nazianzen, Bishops and Doctors of the Church
1 John 2:22-28; John 1:19-28

John Yeakel
(By Mary Kassing)

Wednesday, January 3 – 7:00 a.m.

The Most Holy Name of Jesus
1 John 2:29-3:6; John 1:29-34

Dwight Armstrong
(By Cathy Black)

Thursday, January 4 – 7:00 a.m.

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Religious
1 John 3:7-10; John 1:35-42

Paul, Frances & Larry Schenk
and Ruth James
(By Bob & Judy Schenk & Family)

St. Thomas – 5:30 p.m.

Don Sharow
(By Pat Sharow)

Friday, January 5 – 8:30 a.m.

(School Mass)

St. John Neumann, Bishop
1 John 3:11-21; John 1:43-51

Robert Koch
(By Mike, Alan, Glen, Diane & Families)

FIRST FRIDAY - ST. THOMAS – 6:00 p.m.

Barb Kuhn
(By Norma Weiman)

Saturday, January 6 – 5:30 p.m.

Christmas Weekday; St. Andre Bessette, Religious
1 John 5:5-13; Mark 1:7-11

Norbert, Mary Jo and Linda Busen
(By Tony Busen)

Sunday, January 7 – 8:00 a.m.

Isaiah 60:1-6; Ephesians 3:2-3a, 5-6; Matthew 2:1-12

Parishioners of Holy Family
and St. Thomas

St. Thomas – 10:00 a.m.

Russell & Esther Sherman
(By their Daughters)

HOLY FAMILY TITHE TO THE LORD:

December 16-17, 2023

Holy Family: \$2,704.00

School Support: \$90.00

Sister Parish: \$5.00

Cemetery: \$305.00

Debt Reduction: \$3,700.00

Immaculate Conception Holyday: \$10.00

Peter's Pence: \$10.00

Holy Family weekly budgeted amount: \$6,500

ST. THOMAS TITHE TO THE LORD:

December 17, 2023

St. Thomas: \$2,133.00

Christmas Flowers: \$40.00

Christmas offering: \$25.00

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, January 6 beginning at 10:00 p.m. and concluding on January 7 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:

Bud Bordenkircher † Jeff Kozak †

Jim Duvendack † Marilyn Clark †

John Colgan † Dan Ray † Sheila Thompson †

Dick Bordenkircher † Connie Boling †

ST. THOMAS LITURGICAL ROLES

January 7, 2023 - 10:00 a.m.

Sacristan:	Jonah Coggeshall
Greeters:	Matt & Laura Evans Family
Lector:	Laura Evans
Gift Bearers:	Greg & Elizabeth Likes
Eucharistic Minister:	Pat Sharow
Collection Counters:	Dale & Sindy DeRousse
Ushers:	John Brady, Denny Campbell

From the Pastor's Desk

Merry Christmas to all of you! You may think that's a little late but not at all. We not only remain in the Season of Christmas, but we remain in the Octave of Christmas. We will not conclude the Christmas Season until the celebration of the Baptism of the Lord, this year on Monday, January 8. So again, Merry Christmas to you!

Today the Church celebrates the Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph. At Holy Family Parish, this is elevated to a Solemnity. Today's celebration reminds us that family life is rooted in the unconditional love of God as witnessed by the Holy Family. In our optional readings for today, we are reminded that, mindful of His covenant, God blesses the faith of Abraham and Sarah in their son, Isaac. We also hear in the optional Gospel of the child Jesus and his parents being blessed by Simeon.

As we celebrate this Feast/Solemnity, let us be mindful that our families should reflect the life and holiness of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph. Let us pray for families and family life. Let us be open to ways that we can strengthen our own families and all families in the faith and in the Truth of Jesus Christ. When families are honored and family life as God intended is revered, our faith and our culture is strengthened. There are many attacks against the family. May we always support families and family life.

-LITURGICAL CELEBRATIONS THIS WEEK:

-Monday, January 1 - Solemnity of Mary, The Holy Mother of God, and the Octave Day of Christmas.

"Mary's divine motherhood broadens the Christmas spotlight. Mary has an important role to play in the Incarnation of the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity. She consents to God's invitation conveyed by the angel (Luke 1:26-38). Elizabeth proclaims: "Most blessed are you among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And how does this happen to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?" (Luke 1:42-43, emphasis added). Mary's role as mother of God places her in a unique position in God's redemptive plan.

Without naming Mary, Paul asserts that "God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law" (Galatians 4:4). Paul's further statement that "God sent the spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying out 'Abba, Father!'" helps us realize that Mary is Mother to all the brothers and sisters of Jesus.

The precise title “Mother of God” goes back at least to the third or fourth century. In the Greek form Theotokos (God-bearer), it became the touchstone of the Church’s teaching about the Incarnation. The Council of Ephesus in 431 insisted that the holy Fathers were right in calling the Holy Virgin Theotokos. At the end of this particular session, crowds of people marched through the street shouting: “Praised be the Theotokos!” The tradition reaches to our own day. In its chapter on Mary’s role in the Church, Vatican II’s Dogmatic Constitution on the Church calls Mary “Mother of God” twelve times.

Other themes come together at today’s celebration. It is the Octave of Christmas: Our remembrance of Mary’s Divine Motherhood injects a further note of Christmas joy. It is a day of prayer for world peace: Mary is the mother of the Prince of Peace. It is the first day of a new year: Mary continues to bring new life to her children—who are also God’s children.” (Franciscan Media)

-Tuesday, January 2 - Obligatory Memorial of Saints Basil the Great and Gregory Nazianzen, Bishops, and Doctors of the Church.

Basil was a hermit who became Bishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia and is noted for his learning and being a foe of Arianism. He wrote a rule of monasticism and is the source of Eucharistic Prayer IV. Along with Saints Gregory Nazianzen Athanasius and John Chrysostom, Basil is considered one of the four Great Doctors of the Eastern Church. Basil died on January 1, 379.

Gregory Nazianzen was Patriarch of Constantinople. He is noted for his knowledge of Sacred Scripture and his outstanding teaching abilities and eloquence. He died on January 25 in either the year 389 or 390.

Saints Basil the Great and Gregory Nazianzen, Pray for us!

-Wednesday, January 3 - Optional memorial of the Most Holy Name of Jesus. Through the particular efforts of St. Bernadine of Siena, devotion to the Holy Name of Jesus was promoted through

the inscription of the monogram of the Holy Name, HIS (an abbreviation of the Greek name for Jesus) and the addition of the name of Jesus to the Hail Mary.

-Thursday, January 4 - In the United States, obligatory Memorial of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Religious. Elizabeth Ann Seton was raised Episcopalian. She was a wife and mother of five children. She was the foundress of the first congregation for women religious in the United States of America in 1812, the Sisters of Charity, who were devoted primarily to the education of the poor and to teaching in parochial schools. She died in 1891. Canonized in 1975, she was the first native-born citizen of the United States to be canonized. St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Pray for us!

-Friday, January 5 - In the United States, obligatory Memorial of St. John Neumann, Bishop. St. John Neumann was a missionary from Bohemia and named Bishop of Philadelphia. He was known for his holiness and learning and was a great promoter of parochial schools. He authored two German Catechisms. He died in 1860. Canonized in 1977, he was the first American bishop to be canonized. St. John Neumann, Pray for us!

-Saturday, January 6 - In the United States, optional memorial of St. Andre Bessette, religious. St. Andre Bessette was orphaned at the age of twelve. He spent four years in the United States as a mill worker. He is known as a healer and the “Miracle Man of Montreal” where he founded the Oratory of St. Joseph to whom he was dedicated and fostered devotion to. He died on January 6, 1937, and over one million people paid their respects at his death. He is the patron of caregivers. St. Andre Bessette, Pray for us!

-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.

-NEW YEAR - As we enter into the new calendar year of 2024, I wish each of you a Happy and Blessed New Year. May this be a year of holiness and spiritual growth for all of us.

-FIRST FRIDAY - Friday, January 5 is First Friday. We will have our First Friday Devotion at St. Thomas. Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament will be at Noon and Adoration will go until 5:45 p.m. Benediction will be at 5:45 p.m. followed by Mass at 6:00 p.m. Confessions will be available from 5:00 p.m. - 5:45 p.m. As always, I encourage everyone to take some time to spend in prayer in front of the Blessed Sacrament and to make the celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation a regular part of your life.

-NOCTURNAL ADORATION - At Holy Family beginning Saturday night, January 6 at 10:00 p.m. and running through the night until 7:45 a.m. Benediction at 7:45 a.m. followed by our regularly scheduled 8:00 a.m. Mass.

-THANK YOU - I want to express again my sincere thanks and appreciation to each and every one of you and especially for the cards, gifts, and kind words and gestures for this Season of Christmas. As I've mentioned before, it is a blessing for me to be the Pastor at Holy Family and St. Thomas Parishes and St. Mary School.

-CATHOLIC TIMES - You should have received an offering envelope in your regular packet of envelopes for Catholic Times. I urge you to consider making a contribution toward the publication of this official newspaper of the Diocese. It is an excellent publication. If you do not have an envelope, you can place your contribution in an envelope marked "Catholic Times" and place in the regular collection basket.

-VOTIVE CANDLE OFFERING - I mentioned in last week's bulletin that we continue to see a rise in the cost of our votive candles and Altar candles. I would like to ask you that if you are able, to

please include an offering for the votive candles that you light. I know many of you already do, so thank you. At Holy Family the large 7-day devotional candles that we use are now at a cost of \$2.50. I ask you to consider this when making an offering. At St. Thomas, we use much smaller devotional candles right now and the increase in cost has not been quite as noticeable, just yet anyway.

The lighting of votive candles has been a long-standing practice in the Church and it is a good practice so I encourage it. Making a monetary offering for the candle that is lit if one is able to do so does a couple of things...it, of course, helps to offset the cost of the candle itself. But the offering also is a gift of our self, a small way of handing one's self over to the Lord and His Will for the intention of the prayer and lighting of the candle. I recently read an article about candles in Church. The following is an excerpt from the article. I hope to include other information about Church candles (and other items) in future bulletins because as we come to understand these kinds of elements that we use in the Church, we can come to know and understand the Church more fully, Her Liturgies, the Sacraments, and God Himself.

"In the Catholic church, light has always had a special significance because it represents Christ. We know that Jesus called himself the light of the world. Additionally, St. John's Gospel connects Christ with the imagery of light in John 1:4: "In Him was life; and the life was the light of men."

With this in mind, we understand why, during the Sacrament of Baptism, the priest presents a candle, which was lit from the Paschal candle, and tells the newly baptized to receive the light of Christ. And at Easter, the Paschal candle is lit as a sign of the risen light of Christ. It cannot be put out, and shines into the world as a symbol of hope and love.

In our churches today, we light candles before a statue or sacred image of our Lord or a saint. The light signifies our prayer, which is offered in faith, entering the light of God. It also shows reverence

and our desire to remain present in prayer even as we continue on our day.

Burning votive candles are a common sight in most Catholic churches. These candles are seen as an offering that indicates we are seeking some favor from the Lord or the saint before which the votive is placed.

Lighting a candle for someone is a way to both extend your prayers and show solidarity with the person the prayer is being made on behalf of. The faithful also light candles as a sign of gratitude to God for answered prayers.”

-DAY OF PRAYER - In the United States, January 22, 2024, marks the Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children. Throughout the month of January especially, let us pray for the protection of all human life in all forms from conception to natural death.

The murder of children in the womb is a great tragedy and one that we cannot become complacent with. So too is the aiding and speeding up of death for anyone. God is the Author of all life. It is His gift given to us, not to be used in any way we want or to be disposed of at will but to be honored, respected, and protected at ALL stages.

-FIDUCIA SUPPLICANS, BISHOP PAPROCKI'S STATEMENT - Bishop Paprocki released a statement concerning the declaration recently issued by the Vatican's Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith. He is preparing more detailed instructions concerning the document . Following is the statement released by Bishop Paprocki on Tuesday, December 19, 2024:

“On Dec. 18, 2023, the Vatican's Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith issued a declaration titled, “Fiducia Supplicans,” On the Pastoral Meaning of Blessings. Bishop Thomas John Paprocki of the Diocese of Springfield in Illinois issued this statement in response:

“This document offers ministers of the Church instruction on how to offer blessings to those people who are in irregular relationships while avoiding any

real or perceived intent to bless the irregular unions themselves. Regrettably, many media headlines regarding this document have been factually inaccurate and misleading. The document does not approve the blessing of same-sex unions and reinforces unchangeable Church teaching regarding marriage and sexuality. I encourage all those with questions to read the actual text of the document. I also join my brother bishops in our joint statement from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops in noting that this declaration supports our efforts to accompany people through the imparting of pastoral blessings because each of us needs God's healing, love, and mercy in our lives.”

Since this time of year bulletin material must be submitted earlier than usual, I have not had an opportunity to read the actual text of the document in its entirety. I will say this though as an attempt to clarify any confusion that reporting on this document may be causing. Marriage is a life-long bond between one man and one woman. No one can change that. Regardless of what anyone or any civil authority tries to call it or how they may try to define it, marriage remains an unbreakable bond between one man and one woman. Any other “unions” are not marriage. Additionally, some relationships or “unions” are seriously sinful and remain so. The Church does not and cannot bless such “unions” or relationships. Sadly, there has been much confusion about this for a variety of reasons including a lack of knowledge of the fullness of Truth and a lack of acceptance of that Truth. The Church and Her Sacraments were not established by Christ to make people feel good or to affirm sinful behavior but rather to bring people to repentance and conversion for the eternal salvation of their souls. This is serious, folks!

I urge you to pray for the Holy Father and for all Bishops, Priests, and Deacons. Pray too for good and holy vocations to married life and that folks may open their hearts to the fullness of the Truth of Christ. Make no doubt about it, those who strive to remain faithful to the teachings

of Christ, whether that be Bishops, Priests, Deacons, Religious, or the lay faithful, will be ridiculed, criticized, threatened, accused, and even exiled. We have seen that throughout the centuries especially in many of the saints. But the Lord has made great promises to those who follow Him.

-HOLY FAMILY FALL COLLECTION - As I mentioned in previous bulletins, each year Holy Family Parish embarks on what has come to be known as the Fall Collection. Since I have been delayed in getting this prepared as we normally do it, we will formally begin the collection sometime soon. However, if you'd like to make a contribution toward this collection right away, 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 to the parish office: PO Box 252, Mt. Sterling, IL 62353. Thank you for your generosity and your patience.

-SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS - If you have an interest in subbing in the classrooms at St. Mary School, please contact our Principal, Mrs. Melissa Obert, to find out more. The school phone number is (217)-773-2825 and Melissa's e-mail address is mobert@smseagle.org.

If you have an Associate's Degree, love children, and have the desire to teach, you could be a substitute teacher for St. Mary School!

Thank you for your continued prayers for me, one another, our parishes and school, and the Universal Church. May the joy of Christmas fill your homes and your hearts today and every day. Please be assured of my daily prayers for you. May you have a most blessed week.

-Fr. Aaron

HOLY FAMILY BOSCO KIDS

No classes will be held on January 1.

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). Thanks!



MT. STERLING CATHOLIC CEMETERY

The Mt. Sterling Catholic Cemetery will be closing their books for 2023 shortly. If you wish to make an additional contribution, please drop in the collection or mail to: Mt. Sterling Catholic Cemetery, P.O. Box 252, Mt. Sterling, IL 62353.

POT OF GOLD

Friends of St. Mary School is again selling Pot of Gold tickets. The profit from this fundraiser helps FOSM pay for field trips, give teachers \$300 to help pay for items in their classrooms, etc. See any school family to purchase your Pot of Gold tickets. The first drawing will be during Catholic Schools Week beginning January 29.

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