

Saint Thomas More Catholic Church

4 Convent Road, Morristown, New Jersey 07960

973- 267-5330

www.stmnj.org

info@stmnj.org

We exist for one reason: to come to know and be formed by the Word of God and the Message of Jesus. When we gather in prayer and worship, in service and community, we assemble as disciples and friends with the Lord in our midst. Rooted in our Roman Catholic tradition, we are proud of our parish heritage and hopeful for our future.

The Baptism of the Lord - January 10, 2021

Parish Staff

Fr. Thomas Fallone, J.D.
Pastor
tfallone@stmnj.org

Fr. Joe Davis
Weekend Assistant

Fr. Daniel Chajkowski
In Residence
lionheartdan@gmail.com

Frank Miles
Trustee

Mary Murphy
Trustee

Parish Facility Closures:

Except for limited, public Masses as announced on our website, and office hours by appointment, the church, the parish office and all parish grounds will remain closed until further notice. We look forward to updating you when we can resume with scheduled ministries and events.

Celebration of the Eucharist

See our website each week for the most up-to-date information on limited public Masses to be celebrated on weekends and applicable sign-up information.

Sacrament of Reconciliation (Penance)

All parish activities and events, including Penance Services and scheduled Confessions, are suspended until further notice.

Additional Sacraments and Celebrations

Baptism: Baptisms are permitted with certain restrictions, including limited attendance. All are to keep the recommended social distance. Please email info@stmnj.org for more information and to make arrangements.

Funeral Rites: Funeral Masses are permitted with certain restrictions, including limited attendance. All are to keep the recommended social distance. Please contact Father Tom for more information and to make arrangements.

Marriage: Please contact Father Tom to discuss arrangements.



Blast from the Past(or)
The Baptism of the Lord
January 10, 2021

Not crying out, not shouting, not making His voice heard in the street...

As we conclude Christmas with the celebration of the Baptism of Jesus, Isaiah touts something often inimical to our culture: humility. And, what's more, the highlighted humility is practiced by God Himself. Crazy, right? Christ embodies this virtue, in His washing of the feet, or in His hanging out with those not approved by polite society: the sinners, the prostitutes and the tax collectors, those considered deplorable, if you will. Christ's Humility is of course fully displayed as He assumes human nature and is born as a defenseless baby in straw poverty only to later suffocate on the Cross for us. But the Baptism we celebrate today also triggers pause at the humility of God. Why would The Christ be Baptized? The action reminds us that Divine Life is not to be kept to ourselves. It is to be given to others. Many years ago, I was at a directed retreat with Bishop Serratelli in the Holy Land. One of the lecture sites was the Jordan River. I was nervous to go in to the river because I cannot swim and I had not packed my Underdog Floaties. But I sucked it up and went in. Anywho, Bishop pointed out that in the Gospel of Mark, which we hear today, Jesus' Baptism involves a voice directed to Him alone. Yet in the Gospel of Matthew, the voice is directed to the bystanders. All the people see the dove. What is the point of all this? We begin the New Year together, in the Jordan, to be prepared for prepared for growth. Let us share with others what we have been given as a Gift. May the Lord use us for His Glory and Honor in the year to come!

God Bless you!!!!!!!!!!



This Week's Daily Mass Schedule

This week we will have daily Masses on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday at 8:15 am. ***Please remember advanced registration is requested.*** Sign-up information for Mass attendance and necessary volunteers will be sent via Flocknote and posted to our website, www.stmnj.org.

Parish Office

As a reminder, due to the pandemic, we do not have regular parish office hours at this time but are instead open by appointment. Please send an email to info@stmnj.org or leave a message at 973-267-5330 and someone will get back to you as soon as possible. Thank you.



Monday, January 11: Blessed William Carter

Florence Kearney

Tuesday, January 12: Saint Marguerite Bourgeoys

Mike Murphy

Wednesday, January 13: Saint Hilary of Poitiers

Michael Christie

Thursday, January 14: Saint Gregory Nazianzen

Reverend Gregory White

Friday, January 15: Saint Paul the Hermit

Jackie Macaluso

Saturday, January 16: Saint Berard and Companions

Mary Lou Schieber

Sunday, January 17: Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

Frank Griffin

Mass Intentions

Although we are not yet able to offer public Masses every day, Father Tom or Father Daniel continue to say Mass daily for all Mass intentions. If you would like to request that a Mass be said for a loved one or another intention, please email Sue Marshall at smarshall@stmnj.org.



Mass Cards - New Online Request Form

You can now request a Mass Card online! Simply go to: <https://stmnj.org/request-a-mass-card> or click on the link on our home page. Please try to provide at least 24 hours' notice to give us time to prepare one for you. If you have trouble with the online form, you can also always send an email with the requested Mass information to info@stmnj.org or leave a message at 973-267-5330. In your request please let us know if you'd like us to mail the card to you or directly to the recipient, or to leave it for you to pick it up.



Prayers for the Sick

Please join us in praying for all who are ill in our community, and in a particular way for Chris Auger, Phil Barrett, Bob Bass, Rose DeMarco, Fred Donikowski, Florence Kearney, Barbara Kline, Anne Morrison, Patty Meyers, Lorraine Zedalis Moschini, John O'Neil, Bobby Polidore, Christopher Popp, Flynn Sullivan and Marlene Widmer. May God bring them and their families His healing, comfort and peace. If you would like to have your name or that of a loved one included in (or removed from) the request for healing prayers in our weekly bulletin, please send an email to Sue Marshall at smarshall@stmnj.org.



Renewal of Baptismal Promises

As we celebrate the Baptism of Jesus today, it is also a good time to remember and perhaps even renew our own Baptismal promises. An example of one way to do this is below:

V. Do you renounce sin, so as to live in the freedom of the children of God?

R. I do.

Lord...I want to reject the unloving choices I have made, and the sinful failures to love anywhere in my life. I reject all injustice, all violence, all that disrespects the dignity of all human life.

V. Do you reject the lure of evil, so that sin may have no mastery over you?

R. I do.

Lord, I admit that some evil has a hold on me: it is attractive, it has such powerful rewards, it has become a habitual way for me to be myself. Lord, I renew my commitment this day to turn from that evil and from letting any disordered attachment, any empty promises, master me, and try to separate me from You. By this promise, I commit myself to greater courage in acting justly and refusing to let unjust systems and structures numb my conscience or dull my heart.

V. Do you reject Satan, the author and prince of sin?

R. I do.

Lord, as I renew the promises that accompany my becoming one with You in the baptism of dying to sin and rising to life, I know that an enemy tries to tempt me to sin and to many dark patterns. I now promise to you, and to my sisters and brothers who depend upon my fidelity, that I renew my commitment to reject that enemy, and all his ways of subverting your reign and the coming of your kingdom.

V. Do you believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth?

R. I do.

Lord, you made me and give me life every day. I believe in You, I turn to You, and I place my life, and the graces I need each day, in Your loving hands.

V. Do you believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was born of the Virgin Mary, suffered death and was buried, rose again from the dead, and is seated at the right hand of the Father?

R. I do.

[continued in right-hand column]

Jesus, my Lord and Savior, my life is in Your hands. I believe in You, I turn to You, I commit myself to growing closer to You, placing myself with You, in love--compassionate, self-sacrificing love-- for others.

V. Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting?

R. I do.

Holy Spirit of Jesus, Jesus promised not to leave us orphans. I so desire to be enkindled with the fire of Your love, that I might be renewed in courage. I believe in and renew my commitment to Your work among us. I want to contribute to the unity that You desire for us. I promise to be merciful, for I have known Your mercy. And I pledge to live my life each day on this earth, full of faith in the resurrection Jesus gained for me.

V. And may almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who has given us new birth by water and the Holy Spirit, and bestowed on us forgiveness of our sins, keep us by His grace, in Christ Jesus our Lord, for eternal life.

R. Amen.

Lord, Our God, this year's journey to the waters of baptism has renewed me. I have come to know more intimately the complexity of my weakness and the depths of your love for me. By your grace, I have come to experience the mystery of the gift of life you offer. Please help me to remain free and faithful that I might grow as a servant of Jesus' own mission. I ask this with growing faith in the name of Jesus, my Lord.

Text of the Renewal of Baptismal Promises from the New Roman Missal, 3rd Edition. Taken from: <https://onlineministries.creighton.edu/CollaborativeMinistry/Lent/baptismalpromises.html>.



Supporting St. Thomas More

A continued "thank you" to all who have continued to support our parish during these challenging times. For those looking for a way to provide financial support, you can contribute through the following channels:

- Collections can be dropped in the basket at Sunday Mass.

- You can mail your contribution to the parish office at St. Thomas More Parish, 4 Convent Road, Morristown, New Jersey 07960

- You can quickly set up a one-time or recurring donation online by going to: <https://stthommore.weshareonline.org/>

- You can set up a contribution online through the Diocese's site, at helpmyparish.thankyou4caring.org. Select "St. Thomas More Church - Convent Station" and make either a one-time gift or a weekly recurring donation.



We need your Help!

We know how much everyone missed being able to come together to celebrate during the pandemic closures earlier this year, so as we continue to do our best to offer as many public Masses as possible, we are asking for your help...

- **PLEASE, PLEASE BE SURE TO SIGN UP IN ADVANCE FOR EACH MASS, DAILY OR SUNDAY, PRIOR TO COMING.** This not only helps us manage attendance but also enables us to have the proper resources in place and to engage in contact tracing if needed. Sign up via Flocknote, by calling the office or by emailing Sue Marshall at smarshall@stmnj.org. As a reminder, due to the limited number of spots available, we are unfortunately unable to reserve any spots on an ongoing basis, and you will need to sign up each week.

- **PLEASE CONSIDER VOLUNTEERING TO ASSIST AT MASS IF AT ALL POSSIBLE.** Each Mass requires a number of people to help— as greeters, hand sanitizers, seaters and, for daily Masses, cleaners. The same few people have been helping each week; we really would appreciate additional hands to give them a break. The more help we have, the more quickly we will be able to offer more Masses. People have asked how they can help; truly this is our greatest need for volunteers. Given all of the protocols to be followed, each Mass takes a great deal of effort to coordinate. Any additional assistance would be greatly appreciated. Please sign up on the weekly volunteer lists via Flocknote or feel free to email Sue Marshall at smarshall@stmnj.org to either sign up or to request more information.

Thank you to all for your stewardship of your parish and helping to support it during these challenging times!



As a Reminder, Here are our Weekly Mass Procedures for the Current Time:

As we continue our slow reopening, each week we will reassess what Masses and other events we will be able to hold based upon many factors, such as available resources, volunteers and attendance. We will post each week's schedule on our website, so please check back every Monday for an update.

The weekly process for Mass sign-ups will be as follows:

Daily Masses:

A Flocknote will be sent over the weekend (or early in the week) to all registered for St. Thomas More Flocknotes with the sign-up links for each daily Mass and also to volunteer to assist at each Mass.

Sunday Masses:

Tuesday: A Flocknote will be sent to registered parishioners by email requesting volunteers to be greeters, hand sanitizers and seaters at each Mass.

Wednesday: A Flocknote will be sent to registered parishioners with sign-ups for that weekend's Masses. Each Mass will be limited to 60 people. Registered parishioners will have the first opportunity to sign up until a set time on Thursday mentioned in the Flocknote. Any registered parishioner who does not have access to a computer, tablet or smartphone can call the office and request a reservation which will be granted on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Thursday: After the deadline, a link will be posted on our home page (www.stmnj.org) to the sign-ups for the remaining spots for that weekend's Masses. Again, anyone who does not have access to a computer, tablet or smartphone can call the office and request a reservation which will be granted on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Friday Afternoon, 4 pm: Sign-ups will be closed so we can plan for the Masses.

Saturday/Sunday: People who have not signed up may stop by but will only be admitted if there are spots remaining for that Mass. As a reminder, to be admitted, everyone must bring a mask/face covering and wear it for the entire Mass.

If you have any questions, please email Sue Marshall at smarshall@stmnj.org.

Thank you for your continued patience as we work through this new process!

UPDATED LIMITED PUBLIC MASS RE-OPENING PROCEDURES

[These procedures are subject to revision upon receipt of any additional guidance from Bishop, the Governor and/or any other governing entity, as well as any ways we find to improve the process as we go along.]

Welcome back! We are excited to be able to welcome those of you who will be able to join us. As we reopen our church in phases, we wanted to explain the procedures we are putting in place that will help keep you and those around you safe during Mass. Please be patient with each other and us as we learn these new procedures. Good humor, understanding and patience are very much appreciated and will add to our joy as we welcome each other back. Please remember this is a new world for all of us and we are doing our very best.

Remember:

*Please follow CDC recommendations regarding your own health. If you are at higher risk for severe illness according to the CDC (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-at-higher-risk.html>) we strongly encourage you to stay home and join us for Mass online. We will continue to post Sunday Mass on our website (www.stmnj.org) and our YouTube Channel. We are encouraging you to stay home because we care about you! **If you are sick or symptomatic, taking care of someone who is ill, or living with a sick or symptomatic person you must stay home.** Additionally, if for any reason you are unable or unwilling to abide by each of these procedures, we must also ask you to remain home. Each person who enters our doors is relying on compliance with these guidelines to make us all as safe and comfortable as possible. Please respect the health of those around you as well as your own by following these procedures.*

As a reminder, Bishop Sweeney has continued to dispense the obligation to attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation. The purpose is to enable anyone who chooses not to or is unable to attend Mass because of COVID-19 or other concerns to be serenely free. We are continuing to consider options for distribution of Communion for those who are at greater risk or will not be able to come to Mass. Please pay attention to the website and Flocknotes for further information.

MASS SIGN-UPS:

We will celebrate public Masses at a capacity of **no more than 60 people** at each Mass. We will begin with Sunday Masses only. The number of Masses each weekend will vary, starting at first with only one as we attempt a “soft reopen” to work through the system. **Initially, only those who have registered or contributed as parishioners and have provided an email address will receive a Flocknote with the link for sign-ups. Each individual will need to be signed up separately, even if part of the same family, so we can accurately gauge capacity. Please take care to avoid duplicate signups so we can allow as many people to come as possible. Please also take note of the signup cutoff time that will be referenced in the email. After that deadline we will open any remaining spots to non-registered parishioners. Also, if you reserve a spot but later cannot come, please cancel your reservation to allow someone else the opportunity to attend.**

Any online sign-up will be confirmed immediately. Any registered parishioner without access to a computer may leave a message on the parish voicemail at 973-267-5330 requesting to sign up for a specific Mass. Voicemail requests will be granted on first come, first serve basis, subject to availability. Those who have left a voicemail will receive a call letting you know if your requested Mass was available. To avoid any unnecessary trips, if you request a reservation by phone, please do not come to Mass unless you receive a call confirming your reservation.

Once we get a better feel for the demand for Mass, if we find additional spaces are available, we will also post the sign-up on our website. **While we hope to be able to accommodate everyone who wishes to attend, if we find any Mass is reaching capacity, we may institute a weekly rotation system to confirm that everyone has equal opportunity to attend Sunday Mass.**

WHEN ATTENDING MASS:

Before you arrive at church:

Before you arrive for Mass, please wash your hands for 20 seconds with soap and water. Please use the restroom before coming to church. Our restrooms will be available only in case of emergency and will be cleaned before and after each Mass. If you do need to use the restroom, please allow for only one occupant at a time (with the exception, of course, for an infant, young child or anyone else needing assistance).

Arrival at church:

Please remember to bring and wear a face mask that completely covers your mouth and nose. Unfortunately, Greeters are required to turn away anyone who does not have a face mask for the safety of all.

Please note only the front, main entrance to the church will be open. All other doors will remain locked. This door will be open 20 minutes prior to the start of Mass to ensure time to sanitize and clean the church. This also allows time to have our volunteers ready to serve you. Please remain in your vehicle until the front door has been unlocked and opened. **As you approach the church please keep a six-foot distance from anyone outside of your household.**

Please bring your own hand sanitizer to use during Mass. Greeters will check you in on the reservation list and dispense sanitizer on your hands at the entrance of the church as you enter.

In the church, every third pew will be available for seating. *Please note this important change: For now, each family will be seated by a Seater who will be responsible for filling the Church starting from the front and finishing in back. Please understand this means you will not be able to choose a preferred or "regular" seat.* Once seated, please do not leave your pew for the entirety of Mass absent an emergency. For the safety and comfort of all, we must require that no one gather in the vestibule, Sacristy or anywhere else inside the church other than in your assigned seat. Please note unfortunately the priest will not be able to meet with anyone before or after Mass. If you would like to set up a time to speak with Father Tom or another priest, please call or email to schedule a separate appointment.

If the seating in the church reaches our 60-person capacity, the Greeters will not be permitted to allow anyone else into the church. If this happens, you may return for a later Mass (when available) or watch online. Our registration for Mass should help to eliminate this problem. Greeters will be checking people in and asking those who have not registered to wait in their cars to see if a seat is available.

During Mass:

All are required to wear a face mask, fully covering their nose and mouth, for the duration of Mass. A collection will not be taken during the offertory, but a collection basket will be placed close to the entrance for your convenience. If you have not already, we strongly encourage you to set up your donations through online giving. Online giving is dependable, safe and of course much lower risk for possible transmission of COVID-19. You can sign up for online giving here: <https://stthommore.weshareonline.org/>.

We have been informed that singing expels significantly more droplets into the air and therefore increases the risk of spreading COVID-19. In response, the Diocese has determined that it is best to discourage congregational singing. Additionally, per Diocesan directives, Altar Servers will not assist at the Altar until a later date when the risk of contagion is further ameliorated. There will also be no Lectors or Eucharistic Ministers until further notice.

There should be no physical contact between different households before, during or after Mass. There will be no sign of peace, and we ask that you do not hold hands with anyone outside of your household during the Our Father. During the Communion Rite of the Mass, only the celebrant will receive Communion. *However, Holy Communion will be distributed immediately following the final blessing, as described below.*

Reception of Holy Communion:

Please note the distribution of the Precious Blood remains discontinued for the foreseeable future. The Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Christ is received under either species. If you would like to receive Holy Communion, after the final blessing and dismissal please remain in your seat and kneel or be seated. The celebrant will announce if he will come to each pew or direct you somewhere else, depending upon the number of people present. *Please do not approach for Holy Communion until you are directed to do so.*

Reception of Holy Communion will take place in this way: A volunteer will dispense sanitizer on your hands before you approach the priest. He will hold up the Host and say through his face mask, "The Body of Christ." Please reply "Amen," and then remove your face mask. Extend your hands at a distance with one hand flat and the other underneath it. Please do not wear gloves as they are unbecoming of the Blessed Sacrament. Receive Communion. Then please depart immediately.

If the priest has touched the hand of a communicant, he will re-sanitize his hands before distributing to the next communicant.

The Diocese has indicated that Communion should be received on the hand during this time. If that is not possible for you, please indicate this to your Seater before Mass so alternate arrangements may be made. Likewise, please notify your Seater before Mass if you require a Low Gluten Host so those arrangements can be made as well.

Departure:

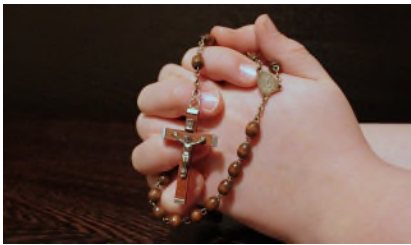
Please do not linger in or outside the church or in the parking lot. We know everyone is excited to be back and see each other, but we need to continue our social distancing efforts as we slowly re-open. There will be no hard copy bulletins at this time or collection envelopes in the vestibule. Bulletins will continue to be available online.

Let us continue to pray for one another in preparation for the day when COVID-19 is far less of a threat and all of us can be reunited (physically) in prayer and worship.

We are greatly looking forward to seeing you again!

Praised be Jesus Christ now and forever!





Ways to Stay Spiritually Connected When not Attending Mass in Person

1. **View Mass Online or on Television:** Check out our parish website to view Mass each Sunday celebrated by Father Tom. You can also view daily and weekend Masses at www.catholicstv.org or on television on EWTN.

2. **Make an Act of Spiritual Communion:** This beautiful practice has been part of the lives of countless saints who found it drew them closer to God on a daily basis. Below is a traditional prayer of spiritual communion which can be prayed while watching Mass online or on television, in the midst of your daily work, or at any time during the day, lifting up your thoughts to God.

My Jesus,

*I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament.
I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul.*

*Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally,
come at least spiritually into my heart.*

I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You.

Never permit me to be separated from You.

Amen.

3. **Pray the Rosary:** Appealing to our beloved, Blessed Mother and uniting with other Catholics throughout the world by praying the Rosary is a profound way to find peace and strength during these difficult times. A number of resources are available to assist in praying the Rosary at home, in the car, or wherever your social distancing might take you.

Apps: (Free, available in the Apple and Google Play stores)

Laudate App- Combines a large number of Catholic resources such as Daily Mass, prayers (including the Rosary), the Bible, Stations of the Cross, the Catechism and much more.

Mary App- Created by the Marian Fathers of the Immaculate Conception, this app is a helpful resource on our Blessed Mother and includes, among many other things, an interactive Rosary with an audio option.

Family Rosary's Mobile Rosary- Offers the traditional Rosary with the text of each prayer. You can pray in silence or with the companion voice of Venerable Patrick Peyton.

iRosary- Displays a fully-animated set of Rosary beads which displays each prayer as you move each bead with your finger, like a standard Rosary.

YouTube: There are many videos of people praying the Rosary that you can join. One popular example is that of the Dominican Sisters of Mary Mother of the Eucharist, which can be found through a YouTube search or at: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCijy_J5ozpFLoxo4vZ4RRYA.

Online: The Rosary Center & Confraternity website offers a number of resources and options for praying the Rosary, including, "Praying the Rosary Without Distractions," "Scripturally Based Rosary," and "In Stained Glass." You can find a description of the Rosary and prayer links here: <https://www.Rosarycenter.org/homepage-2/Rosary/how-to-pray-the-Rosary/>

4. **Participate in Virtual Stations of the Cross:** Various examples can be found online, but here is one: <https://bustedhalo.com/video/virtual-stations-of-the-cross>.

5. **Even Washing your Hands Can Lead to Prayer:** Instead of singing *Happy Birthday*, try reciting the *Hail Mary* two times as you scrub. It's a great way to keep us centered while we're keeping safe.



Prayer of Pope Francis for Protection and Help

O Mary,

you always shine on our path
as a sign of salvation and of hope.

We entrust ourselves to you, Health of the Sick, who at the cross
took part in Jesus' pain, keeping your faith firm.

You...know what we need,
and we are sure you will provide
so that, as in Cana of Galilee,
we may return to joy and to feasting
after this time of trial.

Help us, Mother of Divine Love,
to conform to the will of the Father
and to do as we are told by Jesus,

Who has taken upon Himself our sufferings and carried our
sorrows to lead us, through the cross, to the joy of the
resurrection. Amen.

Under your protection, we seek refuge, Holy Mother of God. Do
not disdain the entreaties of those of us who are in trial, but deliver
us from every danger, O glorious and blessed Virgin.