

The Roman Catholic Communities of

St. James the Greater
75 River Road
Montague, New Jersey

and

St. Thomas the Apostle
210 Route 206 North
Sandyston, New Jersey

Office for both parishes is located at
210 Route 206 North
Sandyston, NJ 07826

Parish Office: 973-948-2296
Fax: 973-948-4634
E-mail address: stjamesthomas@aol.com
Website address: saintjamesthomas.org
Rectory: 973-293-7582

Office Hours:
Monday through Friday
8:30 AM – 2:30 PM

PASTOR: Father Wayne Varga
DEACON: Mr. Wayne von Doehren
CRE: Mrs. Mary Flexer
PASTORAL ASSOCIATE: Mrs. Patricia Hope
PARISH SECRETARY: Mrs. Rosemarie Briegel

Mass Schedule at St. James
Sunday: 8:00 AM and 11:30 AM
Saturday: 8:00 AM

Mass Schedule at St. Thomas
Saturday: 4:30 PM – Vigil
Sunday: 9:30 AM
Mon., Tues., Wed. and Fri.: 9:00 AM

Sacrament of Reconciliation
St. Thomas the Apostle - Saturday - 4:00 PM - 4:20 PM or by appointment

Religious Education for children (CCD):
Religious Education/Youth Office and classes are located at the Msgr. Gacquin Youth/ Religious Education Center,
122 Layton-Hainesville Road, Sandyston (mail should be sent to parish office address listed above)
Phone: 973-948-7004 ~ Fax: 973-948-7007

Children's Liturgy of the Word (September through April):
At St. Thomas the Apostle Church as part of the 9:30 AM Mass.

New parishioners are invited to fill out a registration form which can be found in the vestibule of the Church. Often when a Catholic is asked to be a Godparent for baptism or sponsor for Confirmation a letter from the pastor of their parish is requested. This can only be given to registered and active members of the parish.

The Sacrament of Baptism is celebrated during Mass providing that liturgical norms do not dictate otherwise. Please contact the office to schedule a Baptism and to make arrangements for preparations especially for first time parents. Baptisms may be scheduled at other times if extenuating conditions apply. Godparents must be practicing Catholics.

Part of our ministry is to **visit the sick** in hospital or at home. Privacy laws do not allow us to visit or pray publicly for the sick unless permission is given by the individual or their health care proxy. Please inform us of the needs of the sick, and we will be happy to respond as best we can.

Pregnancy Assistance
Call 1-800-395-HELP or Tri-State Pregnancy 570-491-5151
Good Counsel: 1.800.723.8331 for pregnant mothers in need anytime, anyplace.
www.goodcounselhomes.org
Post Abortion Healing:
Project Rachel 973-777-8818, ext. 272
Lumina: Hope and Healing After Abortion: 1.877.LUMINA1 (877.586.4621)
www.postabortionhelp.org
Adoption Services:
Adoption@CatholicCharities.

Welcome -We Are a Tithing Parish

REASONS to Rejoice

*“Rejoice in the Lord always ! I say it again: Rejoice !!
Everyone should see how unselfish you are. The Lord is near.”*

--Philippians 4: 4–5

Today we celebrate the joyfulness that colors (or should color) our lives, just because we are Christians. This day, the Third Sunday of Advent, is traditionally known as *Gaudete Sunday*—the Sunday of Rejoicing. We rejoice because the Lord is near. Like children who just can't wait for Christmas morning to get here, we too are already anticipating the happiness that Christmas promises. The Lord will be with us. We have nothing to fear. Even the Advent Wreath has a brighter rose or pink-shaded candle for us to light today. We begin to anticipate the great joy of the shepherds and the angels as they recognize God-among-us.

With the Lord comes security. We know that we are safe in His care. With security comes confidence, that the Lord will help us and guide us in every situation. With confidence comes a readiness to re-direct our lives and to open ourselves more fully to what the Lord asks of us. And with this openness to the Lord comes a willingness to offer His very love to others, by our own actions of love.

Jesus has shown us how to bring joy to others: by our acceptance of others; by showing ourselves to be people who can be trusted and depended upon. As He carried out His mission on earth, Jesus strengthened the weak, He enabled the blind to see, He helped the deaf to hear and the mute to speak up. He gave to each—a new hope and a reason for rejoicing.

Today many others, many even from our parishes, donate to the needy, bring food for the hungry, visit the sick, educate the young and even make Christmas Day brighter by providing gifts. And daily, people offer themselves in countless acts of selflessness for the good of others. And with each of these actions, God's Kingdom draws just a little closer. There are so many reasons to rejoice.

Happy “Gaudete Sunday.” Do something special to celebrate !

God bless you,
Father Wayne

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT
December 11, 2016

St. James the Greater

The Sanctuary Lamp this week burns in
Memory of Ryan Bubigkeit at the
Request of his Family

SATURDAY, December 17

8:00AM – Thomas & Laura Shea
- Mass of Thanksgiving

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT
December 18

8:00AM – John Klimkiewicz
req. by Jane & Doug Sandberg
- William J. Pagano
req. by his Children

11:30AM – Don Martin
req. by his Family

ST. JAMES THE GREATER

\$1,937.00 – Regular Collection – December 4, 2016

\$2,477.00 – Weekly Budget Need

\$1,507.00 – Regular Collection - December 6, 2015

Consider a gift to St. James Parish in your will.

Rosaries for Peace

Please join us Sundays before 9:30am Mass for recitation of the First Glorious Mystery of the Holy Rosary. The remaining mysteries will be recited immediately after Mass. Rosary beads are available in the Gathering Space.

The Saturday eve Mass will also be preceded by a Rosary for Peace, beginning at 4:10 p.m. May we ask our Blessed Mother, Patroness of our Nation, to help us find peace in our nation and in the world.

Pilgrim Virgin of Fatima Statue/Legion of Mary

This beautifully adorned statue is a visible reminder of the love God has shown in the Blessed Mother. Placing such a beautiful image in your home turns hearts to prayer and brings grace to those who open their hearts to any image of God's love. If you would like to have the statue of Our Lady of Fatima in your home, or need any further information about the Legion of Mary in our parishes, please contact Diana, Legion of Mary, at 973-948-7601. *Pray the Family Rosary*

TO CHRIST THE DIVINE HEALER WE PRAY FOR:

Margaret Accordino, Al, Mary Cunico, Derya Dimertas, Rachel Gibbs, Mary Guimes, Barbara Haggerty, Carmen Howell, Jennifer, Clara Kane, Angela Lanzalotta, Jeff Librizzi, Betty Mastrelli, Sonny Mastrelli Sandy Matthews, Brian McKenna, Darrin O'Keefe, Danielle Parker, Marguerite Phillips, Flo Puccio, Alex Sepiol, Baby Teddy, Jen Vaughn, Lorraine Verga, Tarra Wagner, Thomas Walsh, Joan White and Robert Woodcock

St. Thomas the Apostle

The Sanctuary Lamp this week burns in
Memory of Dale R. Briegel at the
Request of his son, Dale

MONDAY, December 12

9:00AM – Mary Jane Cicchino
req. by Carol McCallum

TUESDAY, December 13

9:00AM – Edward Lundy
req. by Dawn Ann Fugger

WEDNESDAY, December 14

9:00AM – Ryan Bubigkeit
req. by his Family

THURSDAY, December 15

No Mass

FRIDAY, December 16

9:00AM – Leslie Wojcik
req. by her Aunt Josephine

SATURDAY, Vigil, December 17

4:30PM – Theresa & Walter Hoffman
req. by the Wainwright Family

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT
December 18

9:30AM – Edward Lundy
req. by Gerry Mahon & Family

ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE

\$2,365.00 – Regular Collection – December 4, 2016

\$4,410.00 – Weekly Budget Need

\$2,415.00 – Regular Collection – December 6, 2015

Consider a gift to St. Thomas Parish in your will.



The Legion of Mary meets every **Friday** morning at 10:00a.m. in St. Thomas the Apostle Church. Men and women of both parishes are invited to consider Auxiliary or Active membership. For further information, please contact the parish office.

St. James Rosary & Altar Society If any ladies in the parish are interested in joining, please call Joan Henn at 973-293-3690 or Linda Spinapolic at 973-293-7031.



The Advent Wreath

Perhaps the most vivid symbol of Advent, the Advent Wreath, reflects our collective anticipation for Christ, our Light, to come into the world. Each week, another candle, a little brighter, we are a little closer to the moment when, laid in a manger and wrapped in swaddling clothes, He is born, the Christ Divine!

❖ **The Third Week of Advent** –Light the pink candle.

Advent Family Prayer when Lighting the Candle – Dear God, help each person in our family to understand the true meaning of Christmas. Fill us with joy. Make us more loving. Amen.

Follow that Star! – This week, look for stars wherever you go. Each time you see a star, think about how Christ is guiding your life, just like the star of Bethlehem guided the Magi to the manger.

The Nativity Scene Family Activity

Set up a crèche or Nativity scene in your home this week. Usually, the scene progresses as the Advent and Christmas season progresses. You can begin with Mary and Joseph traveling from afar. Animals and shepherds can be added through the Advent season. The Baby Jesus can be placed in the scene on Christmas Day, with the Three Kings arriving on Epiphany. There are many different types of Nativities available, including ones that young children can play with.

Blessed Advent – Don't miss it.



Children's Christmas Pageant

Children of the parishes in Grades 1 through 6 are encouraged to participate in the Children's Christmas Pageant on **Sunday, December 18th at 3:00PM** at St. Thomas Church. Following the pageant, we will be lighting our Christmas Tree and enjoying cookies and punch. We look forward to many of our children taking part in this beautiful "birthday gift" to Our Lord.



Catholic Teens

Our Lady Queen of Peace, St. Thomas the Apostle and St. James the Greater have formed a new youth group for all teens in High School. **Come join us and see what's going on!!!** Our next gathering will take place at Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish **today, December 11th from 6:00-8:00pm**. There will be plenty of fun, games, music, events and prayer.

With a great sense of God's goodness, we are pleased to announce that the annual **St. James Christmas Bazaar** has raised over \$2,600.00. Thank you to all of our volunteers, crafters, bakers, and contributors whose generosity of time, talent, and donations helped make this possible. A special thank you to all the committee chairs and co-chairs who work on this event throughout the year: Event Chairperson-Linda Spinapolice; Publicity-Art and Maria Henn; Flea Market-Diane Johnson; Crafts and Raffles-Joan Henn and Virginia Madden; Bake Sale-Norma Lange and Janice Cerra; Kitchen-Mike Spinapolice, Art Henn, and Bill Ricciardi; Books and Toys-Jennifer Olenick. A big thank you to all the volunteers who made the day successful including: Wendy, Corrine, and Aidan Wesighan, Doug and Jane Sandberg, Bill Henn, Diane and Harry Cole, Michelle Henn, Marilyn Zukowski, Michelle Llanaeza, Betsy Gardner and Louise Backus. Thank you and Merry Christmas to all!

Please note that there will be no 8:00AM Coffee Hour at St. James in January. There will; however, be Coffee Hour on January 8th after the 11:30AM Mass. Come and join us.

St. Thomas and St. James Food Pantry

Thank you to all who contribute to our food pantry throughout the year and especially during the holidays. The food you donate is greatly appreciated by the families in our area in need of help. Let us be glad that we are able to help them in this way. God bless you for your support.

The Msgr. Gacquin Columbiettes are sponsoring a Membership Drive. Any Catholic female age 18 and over may join. If you are interested in joining or have any questions, stop by and see them or contact Membership Chairlady, Dawn Hall, at 201-317-3379.

The next St. Thomas Pot Luck Dinner will be on Saturday, December 17th after the 4:30pm Mass. A sign-up sheet is in the Gathering Space. Come and join us.

2016: St. Thomas 75th Anniversary Year 1941-2016

St. Thomas History – Our current church building was dedicated on November 25, 2000 with Bishop Rodimer presiding. The old church was then vacated. During Father Lewis' tenure, the Msgr. James F. Gacquin Knights of Columbus Council No. 12,974 was formed and chartered in August 2001.

This Week in Our Parishes

STC – St. Thomas Church or Fr. Lewis Center

SJC – St. James Church or Church Hall

REC – Fr. Gacquin Religious Ed. Center

Sunday, December 11, 2016

Third Sunday of Advent

9:30 a.m. STC C.L.O.W.

9:30 a.m. REC Mass & Class Gr. 6, 7, 8

9:30 a.m. STC Annual Christmas Pancake
Breakfast (after Mass)

10:00a.m. Confirmation I Retreat

--at Camp Auxilium, Newton

6:00 p.m. Youth Group (at O.L.Q.P. till 8 p.m.)

Monday, Dec. 12

Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe

Tuesday, Dec. 13

10:00a.m. STC Reflection on Readings

4:00 p.m. REC Relig. Ed. Gr. 1 & 2

Wednesday, Dec. 14

4:00 p.m. REC Relig. Ed. Gr. 3, 4 & 5

7:00 p.m. STC Adoration & Rosary with K of C

7:30 p.m. STC Knights of Columbus Mtg.

Thursday, Dec. 15

Friday, Dec. 16

9:00 a.m. STC Adoration of Blessed Sacrament
after Mass, till 12 Noon

10:00a.m. STC Legion of Mary Mtg.

Saturday, Dec. 17

4:30 p.m. REC Conf. Prep after Mass Gr. 9 & 10

Sunday, December 18, 2016

Fourth Sunday of Advent

9:30 a.m. STC C.L.O.W.

9:30 a.m. REC Mass & Class Gr. 6, 7, 8

10:30a.m. STC Columbiettes Mtg.

3:00 p.m. STC Christmas Pageant

--presented by children of parish

4:00 p.m. STC Lighting of Christmas Tree

6:00 p.m. Youth Group (at O.L.Q.P. till 8 p.m.)

Next Sunday's Readings: 4th Advent

1st Reading: *Isaiah 7: 10—14*

Resp. Psalm: *Psalm 24*

2nd Reading: *Romans 1: 1--7*

Gospel: *Matthew 1: 18—24*

The Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, on **Mon. Dec. 12**, is one of those feast days that has been growing in popularity during our lifetime. It recalls the time when Our Blessed Mother appeared to (now Saint) Juan Diego in Mexico in 1531, and called upon him to urge the Bishop of Mexico to build a chapel to her honor at Guadalupe. The Bishop was finally convinced when Juan Diego brought to him a huge bouquet of roses--very unexpected at that time of year. And on Juan's cloak was the image of the Blessed Mother, of which we are familiar today. Since the image appeared as a Mexican woman of the times, the faith she represented, the Catholic faith, began to take hold among the people of Mexico. Today, Our Lady of Guadalupe is the Patroness of the Americas.

Confession before Christmas. St. John the Baptist calls us to "*Repent, for the Kingdom of God is at hand!*" There will be two special opportunities to receive this Sacrament before Christmas. They are:

Mon. Dec. 12 7 p.m.--8:30 p.m. at St. Thomas

Mon. Dec. 19 7 p.m.--8:30 p.m. at St. James

Make Confession a highlight of your Advent Season.

Christmas Schedule. To help with your planning for Christmas, here is our schedule of Masses for Christmas Eve and Day:

4:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Mass at St. Thomas

6:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Mass at St. James

11:30 p.m. Lessons & Carols Service at St. Thomas

12 Mid. Midnight Mass at St. Thomas

9:30 a.m. Christmas Day Mass at St. Thomas

11:30 a.m. Christmas Day Mass at St. James

Keep Christ in Christmas To remind ourselves and our neighbors what this season is all about, Yard Signs with this message are available at both parishes. Cost: only \$ 5.00 for sign and stand. Use it as an opportunity to evangelize your neighborhood and all who drive through.

Christmas Trees. **St. Paul's Abbey**, on Route 206 one mile south of Newton, has thousands of Christmas trees ready to choose & cut. Open 7 days a week from now until Dec. 23, 9 a.m.—4 p.m. each day. We also have the Abbey Gift Shop with many items that make ideal Christmas gifts, including books, statues, jewelry & more. Call 973-383-2470.