

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.

The Schools of The Catholic Academy of Sussex County
973-729-6125 X225
Rev. George A. Brown School (Pre-K to Gr. 4)
Pope John XXIII Middle School (Gr. 5 to 7)
Pope John XXIII High School (Gr. 8 to 12)

Welcome -We Are a Tithing Parish

The Three Stars of Advent



Can you name the three persons of the Bible who influence us the most during the Season of Advent ? They are three very different individuals, whom God had called to have important roles in the coming of His Son into the world. These days we celebrate the convergence of all three. They are: **Isaiah the Prophet, the Virgin Mary and John the Baptist.**

Isaiah lived more than 500 years before Jesus. He was called by God to rouse the Hebrew people back to faith and to the Covenant. In his own faith, and in his prophecies, Isaiah foresaw clearly the one whom God had promised to send to save Israel. Many of his prophecies were incorporated into Saint Matthew's Gospel—the Gospel which was written specifically for a Hebrew audience. Matthew's Gospel shows that the prophecies which Isaiah spoke centuries before, were all fulfilled in Jesus. We read many of Isaiah's prophecies during these weeks of Advent.

Tomorrow, we will be honoring the **Blessed Virgin Mary** in the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. (*Because December 8th falls on a Sunday this year, this Feast is not a holy day of obligation this year.*) On this day, we celebrate that Mary was conceived—without the stain of Original Sin—in the womb of her mother, Saint Anne. God, in His infinite wisdom, knew that Mary, later on as a young girl, would freely and willingly consent to be the mother of His Son. And from the details we know of from the Gospels, Mary lovingly and tenderly raised the child that would, one day, save his people.

John the Baptist had the unique task of introducing Jesus to the world. He had no direct, concrete evidence that the Savior was on the way. But in listening closely to the Lord speaking to his heart, in the silence of the desert, John came to understand that the Savior was on the horizon. With the deepest faith, he prepared the people by urging them to repent. He convincingly proclaimed that the Savior was about to appear. And at the proper moment, as Jesus came up for his baptism in the Jordan River, the voice from heaven was heard: *“This is my beloved Son; listen to Him.”*

Isaiah, Mary and John call out to us during these days of Advent. Their words are as current as the words you heard in your last cellphone call. And they give us the strong witness of their personal examples. As we see, their faithfulness to God's wishes enabled Jesus to come into the world. What can our faithfulness to the Lord accomplish today ?

God bless you,
Father Wayne

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT
December 8, 2019

St. James the Greater

The Sanctuary Lamp this week burns for the Intentions of Brian & Ann Benson at the Request of their Family

SATURDAY, December 14

8:00AM – Dale R. Briegel
req. by his son, Dale

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT
December 15

8:00AM – Elsie Spinapolic
req. by Linda & Michael Spinapolic

11:30AM – Theodore & Helen Kowinsky
req. by their Daughter

ST. JAMES THE GREATER

Collection amounts will be reported in next bulletin.
Consider a gift to St. James Parish in your will.

For On-Line Giving: log onto our website:
saintjamesthomas.org Then go to On-Line Giving link.

The 8:00am St. James Coffee Hour takes place the first Sunday of the month except for July, August and September.



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 Altar & Floral 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.

TO CHRIST THE DIVINE HEALER WE PRAY FOR:

Agnes Ciesielski, Bill & Teresa Mantini, Joshua Murch, Shirley Strong, Jen Vaughn and Ricky Wunder



Pray for the Military

We ask your continued prayers for the following men and women of our parish who are serving our country in the Armed Forces: Brandon Heimall, Nicholas and Karissa Kealy, Joseph Mannion, Hunter Olenick, Christopher & Ana Sarao, Nicole Sarao, Peter Spinks and James Orr.

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.

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 9

9:00AM – Intentions of the Legion of Mary
req. by the Legion of Mary
-Intentions of Michael Toth
req. by his Mother

TUESDAY, December 10

9:00AM – Protection of unborn babies in the womb and their families
req. by 20/20 Project

WEDNESDAY, December 11

9:00AM – People of the Parish

THURSDAY, December 12

No Mass

FRIDAY, December 13

9:00AM – Deceased Pastors & Parishioners

SATURDAY, Vigil, December 14

4:30PM – Ed Higgins
req. by his sister, Chris
-William Pagano
req. by Sheila Elias

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

December 15

9:30AM – Richard Deeble
req. by Mary Jorgenson
-Dorothy Holly
req. by Wayne & Lyse von Doehren

ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE

Collection amounts will be reported in next bulletin.
Consider a gift to St. Thomas Parish in your will.

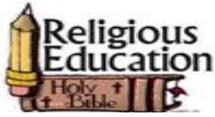
For On-Line Giving: log onto our website:
saintjamesthomas.org Then go to On-Line Giving link.



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*

Anyone can visit the Facebook page for The Parishes of St. Thomas the Apostle & St. James the Greater:
<https://www.facebook.com/StJamesThomas/>



The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary

The miracle of Mary being born without sin is usually celebrated on December 8th, but this year it is moved to Monday to allow the Second Sunday of Advent to be observed. This is also the Patronal Feast day of the United States of America. Try to attend the 9:00AM Monday morning Mass at St. Thomas, if that is possible. If not, pray a Rosary as a family today.



Catholic Zoomers

Our next gathering will take place at Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish **today, Sunday, December 8th from 6:00PM until 8:00PM. We will be making Christmas cookies!** All of our Confirmation Candidates are encouraged to participate in this Catholic teen group as often as possible. **Also, if you have not already paid for the trip to NYC (Mass at St. Patrick's Cathedral, Ice skating in Central Park and the Christmas Tree at Rockefeller Center), please do so ASAP.**



Advent Sacrament of Reconciliation

All Mondays During Advent – Sacrament of Reconciliation for Confirmation Candidates at 7:00PM alternating between St. Thomas Church (Dec. 2nd & 16th) and St. James Church (Dec. 9th & 23rd). Sign in book will be in back of Church.



Children's Christmas Pageant

Our parish Christmas Pageant, Tree lighting and Cookie Challenge (with the Knights of Columbus) will take place on **Sunday, December 15th at 3:00PM at St. Thomas the Apostle Church.** All parishioners in grades 1 through 6 and their Parents are encouraged to participate as: Pageant Actors: Grades 1 through 6; Choir: Confirmation Candidates; Pageant Narrators, Stage Crew and Costume Handlers: Parents/Confirmation Candidates. For more information or to help, please call Mary at the REC at 973-948-7004.

"SOUP MAKERS WANTED"....The St. James the Greater "Soup on a Saturday" committee is soliciting soup makers for the next event on Saturday, January 25, 2020. If you are willing to make and donate from 5-20 quarts of soup, please contact Bill Ricciardi at 845-341-3686 by text or call. Containers will be supplied. We would love to have some different soups to supplement the past favorites.

Adult Continuing Formation:

All adult parishioners are invited and encouraged to meet at St. Thomas after the 9:30AM Mass on December 15 in the conference room for a lively questions and answers discussion. This will be an opportunity to ask all the questions you might have and will be answered to the best of our and the Catechism of the Catholic Church ability. Discussion will be led by Alex Sousa and Pat Hope, and we look forward to welcoming all.

In His Peace, Pat Hope

2019 Bishop's Annual Appeal "For I Was Hungry..."

As the year comes fast to an end, and many are planning on how to make a final year-end charitable contribution that has the most impact, please consider the many lives that are helped because of the support given to the Bishop's Annual Appeal. These are your neighbors, your friends, our senior priests and seminarians and urban school students. All of us can play a part in the Bishop's Annual Appeal – as either a contributor to the cause or as a recipient of its mission – and all are blessed as a result. Please make the Bishop's Annual Appeal a priority in your year-end philanthropy. Gifts can be made by check, credit cards, through gifts of securities or on-line at www.2019appeal.org. If you are 70 ½ or over and have an IRA, you can receive a tax benefit by instructing your IRA investment manager to donate your required minimum distribution to the Bishop's Annual Appeal. Please call the Bishop's Annual Appeal office at 973-777-8818, ext. 218 for additional details and also consult your tax or financial advisor for more information.

The Columbiettes are collecting new toys to be delivered to Project Self Sufficiency for underprivileged children at Christmas. There is a basket in the gathering space. We will be collecting toys until Sunday, December 15th. Thank you for your generosity.

The Columbiettes are sponsoring a campaign for parishioners to offer one million Hail Mary's for the salvation of souls. If you wish to be a part of this, please write down how many Hail Mary's you have said on the sheets of paper provided. Your name is optional. You may also email your tally to hailmarysforsos@gmail.com. Thank you.

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 8, 2019

2nd Sunday of Advent

8:00 a.m. SJC Coffee Hour after Mass
9:30 a.m. STC K of C Pancake Breakfast after Mass
6:00 p.m. Youth Group Mtg. at O.L.Q.P

Monday, Dec. 9

Feast of the Immaculate Conception (not a Holy Day this year)

Tuesday, Dec. 10

10:00a.m. STC Reflections on Readings
4:00 p.m. REC Relig. Ed. Gr. 1 & 2
7:00 p.m. STC K of C Rosary, B-diction, Mtg.

Wednesday, Dec. 11

Anticipation of

Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe

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

Thursday, Dec. 12

Friday, Dec. 13

10:00a.m. STC Adoration of Bl. Sac. (till Noon)
10:00a.m. STC Legion of Mary Mtg.
1:00 p.m. STC Montague Seniors Mtg.

Saturday, Dec. 14

4:30 p.m. STC Mass & Conf. II Faith Sharing
4:30 p.m. STC Pot Luck Supper after Mass

Sunday, December 15, 2019

3rd Sunday of Advent

9:30 a.m. STC Mass & Faith Sharing--Conf. I
9:30 a.m. STC C.L.O.W.
10:30a.m. STC R.C.I.A.
--Topic: You ask/ we answer (All welcome)
11:00a.m. STC Columbiettes Mtg.
3:00 p.m. STC Childrens' Christmas Pageant;
Tree Lighting; Cookie Challenge

Next Sunday's Readings: 3rd Advent

1st Reading: *Isaiah 35: 1--6a, 10*

Resp. Psalm: *Psalms 146*

2nd Reading: *James 5: 7--10*

Gospel: *Matthew 11: 2--11*

"Ignorance of Scripture is ignorance of Christ."

--St. Jerome, 347--420 A.D.

Feast of Immaculate Conception, Dec. 8th

As our nation's patronal feast, our country has been placed under the protection of the Blessed Mother. Since this year the date is a Sunday—the Sunday of Advent takes precedence. We celebrate this feast on the next available day—Dec. 9th. *It is not a holy day of obligation this year.* However, what better way can there be to ask our Blessed Mother's intercession for our nation than by attending **Mass, at 9 a.m. at St. Thomas, on Dec. 9th.** May we pray that we, and all people, take on the humility and self-sacrifice that enabled the Savior to come into the world.

Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

This feast celebrates the Blessed Mother's appearance to the young man, Juan Diego in Mexico, as she requested a chapel to be built for prayer to her. She appeared as an Indian peasant, caused the miracle of the roses in winter, and impressed her image on Juan Diego's cloak. It was from this point on that the Catholic faith mushroomed in the land, after decades of lack of results from Spanish missionaries seeking to convert the native peoples. **We will celebrate all this on Wednesday, Dec. 11th, at 9 a.m.** Our Lady of Guadalupe is the Patron Saint of All the Americas.

Christmas Schedule.

To help in your planning, we announce this schedule of Masses at our churches for 2019. (Remember that we alternate the times of the Christmas Eve Masses.)
Christmas Eve: 4 p.m. at St. James; **6 p.m.** at St. Thomas. **11:30 p.m.** Lessons & Carols by the choir, followed by **Midnight Mass** at St. Thomas.
Christmas Day: 9:30 a.m. at St. Thomas;
11:30 a.m. at St. James.

Confessions during Advent.

"Prepare the way of the Lord" is John the Baptist's advice to us. We do that best by the Sacrament of Reconciliation. The Sacrament is available from **7 p.m. till 8 p.m.** on the **Mondays of Advent** according to this plan: on Dec. 9 St. James; Dec. 16 at St. Thomas; Dec. 23 at St. James.

Plan to use Advent well: Spend ½ hour each day

with a resource from FORMED.org. Our education in faith should never end. Free to you as a parishioner. Simply go to our parish website: saintjamesthomas.org. At the home page, scroll down to the FORMED banner to register.