Mission Statement:
We are a Roman Catholic parish in a university community, joining students of all ages, joining people from all walks of life and from all corners of the world through Jesus Christ, our Lord.
The angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the house of David, and the virgin’s name was Mary. And coming to her, he said, “Hail, full of grace! The Lord is with you.” Luke 1:26-28

As we enter this final week of Advent, I ask for your prayers. Please pray for all who will come and worship with us in the Christmas Season. May they experience the love of Jesus Christ in everyone they meet. And for all who don’t practice their faith regularly, let us pray that they will receive the grace to come join us in this New Year.

This has been a tough year, and we are all eager to get back to normal in so many ways. Our Christmas traditions are part of that sense of normalcy, and so I ask your assistance in making this a safe and grace-filled Christmas for all. Obviously, with our social-distancing requirements, our churches cannot seat their usual crowds. We have sign-up forms on our parish website to help estimate the attendance, but we cannot guarantee seating any more than we can assume that everyone coming has actually signed-up in advance. Please note that the 4:00pm Mass at St. Thomas is already FULL.

For those coming on Christmas Eve or Christmas, please be patient and keep safe by wearing your masks and maintaining social distancing. Some may be asked to move to overflow seating (or—worse yet—turned away if we exceed capacity), and I apologize in advance if that happens to you. Let’s work together to celebrate these special liturgies safely and reverently. And please do sign-up in advance to help us estimate attendance: www.elcatholics.com/christmas

The Outreach Mass will air on TV (ABC 53 / WLAJ) at 9am on Christmas in addition to our livestream options on Facebook. By the way, the Outreach Mass celebrates its 36th anniversary on Christmas Eve and is in the process of moving to HD (high definition video). Thank you to Lisa and Tom Dobson for your hard work every weekend! God bless you both! We have a Seniors Only Mass at 8am on Christmas Day at St. Thomas with Fr. Jerry too.

The bishop has dispensed us from our Sunday and holy day Mass obligations until mid-February, so—if you are worried about crowds—consider attending any of the weekday Masses between Christmas and New Year’s Day.

Let us rejoice that God is with us and share his love generously!

Fr. Gordon

A Gift for Jesus

MATCHED GIVING CAMPAIGN ENDS CHRISTMAS DAY

God blessed us with the greatest gift ever given, His Son, Jesus. Out of extravagant love and overflowing generosity He sent Him to us to live like us. This Christmas, parishioners are asked to make a special sacrificial gift in response to all that God has given us.

In order to encourage our community to remember to make a sacrificial Christmas gift, some of your fellow parishioners have offered to match any gifts made before Christmas Day dollar for dollar, up to $80,000! Make your special Christmas gift go twice as far. Any contribution, of any size, is important because your Gift for Jesus will be doubled!

- Donate online at elcatholics.org/gift-for-jesus
- Mail in or drop off a check at either church with the memo, Gift for Jesus

The goal of this campaign is to see the Parish end the year on budget and continue all of the work that we do. Through the pandemic we have been continually working to provide worship, sacraments, faith-building and even safe, socially distanced community building events.

Please help us capture the full $80,000 pledged by donating today. These are difficult times. Thank you to each of you who prayerfully consider making a special donation to the Gift for Jesus Fund between now and Christmas Day.
Seating at St. Thomas and St. John
CHRISTMAS MASSES
will be extremely limited due to the need
for physical distancing.

To plan for the Christmas Masses in a safe manner,
we are asking people to SIGN UP BY NOON
on Wednesday, December 23.
Call either office or go to elcatholics.org/christmas

We cannot guarantee seating any more than we can
assume that everyone coming has actually signed-up
in advance. Currently the 4:00pm at STA and the
7:30pm at SJSC are at capacity for the church.

Please consider attending the 7pm or 10pm at STA
on Christmas Eve or Christmas morning Mass.

Also Available:
Livestream Mass: 4:30pm on Christmas Eve
Outreach Mass: 9:00am Christmas Day on TV.

Bishop Boyea has dispensed our Holy Day obligation
until Sunday, February 14, 2021.

You are welcome to attend ANY of our liturgies
between Christmas and New Year to celebrate
the coming of Christ! Most of the daily Mass
readings during the Christmas Season celebrate the
precious gift of Christ.

Christmas Welcome!
We invite visitors and
parishioners at our Christmas
Masses to pick up a copy of the
book, Do Something Beautiful
for God, as a gift from our
parish.

Do Something Beautiful for God is a
collection of 365 short daily
reflections from Mother Teresa.
This book is easy to read and as intimidating as Mother
Teresa was herself. How did this tiny woman become
so much to so many people? Little by little. Small acts
performed with great love.

Her encouraging words begin on January 1st! We
hope this gift serves as a resource to inspire your daily
prayer for all of 2021.

Not Able to Attend Mass in Person?
Many people will understandably not be attending
Mass in person for Christmas. Please plan to attend
Mass virtually to experience Jesus in the readings and
the Eucharistic prayers.

At 4:30pm on Christmas Eve,
Mass will be live streamed from
St. John at on Facebook. (You do not
need an account to watch.) At
9:00am on Christmas Day, the
Outreach Mass will air on Lansing
(WLAJ) and Flint (WBSF). It is also
available online at ioceseoflansing.org/
outreach-mass

Feast of Mary, Mother of God

St. Thomas
Thursday, January 31 Vigil
4:30pm, 7:00pm & Midnight

Friday, January 1
10:00am

St. John
Friday, January 1
12:15pm
As the Covid-19 pandemic rages and governmental assistance dwindles, we are receiving increased requests for assistance. People need help now with eviction prevention, utility payments, transportation, medicine, basic furniture, and clothing.

We appreciate your past support and ask your help with the approaching tsunami of requests.

Please donate:
- use of church poor boxes
- check to St. Vincent de Paul Soc. sent via the church office with memo STA.
- on-line at elcatholics.org/st-vincent-de-paul

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**St. John Food Cupboard**

Feeding People in Our Community

Thank you to everyone who donated to the Food Cupboard this Advent. On Saturday, we were able to distribute food, personal items and a Meijer gift card to each of our guests. Your generous love of neighbor is assisting them in creating a merry Christmas for their families.

The Food Cupboard is closed for Christmas, but will reopen on Saturday, January 9. You can still drop off food and personal items when you come for Mass.

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**If you Itemize your Deductions**
The new Adjusted Gross Income limitation for charitable contributions has been raised from 60% to 100%. You can now deduct your cash or cash-equivalent contributions from your entire income.

**If you don’t Itemize your Deductions**
You are now able to claim a charitable deduction of up to $300, even if you were unable to claim any charitable deductions last year.

**Gifts of Appreciated Stock**
If you have appreciated stock you can deduct the entire market value of the stock as a charitable deduction by donating the stock directly to STA/SJSC.

**Charitable Rollovers from an IRA**
Many parishioners are making direct distributions from their IRAs. If done correctly, the income won’t be added to taxable income and you can make an impactful gift to support our many parish ministries.

**There are lots of benefits** to making a gift before January 1. For details, please contact parish Director of Advancement Joshua Ginepro at 517-351-7215 or jginepro@elcatholics.org.
It's not too late!

Join people around the Diocese in reading the book of Matthew. The daily text include reflections over the reading and videos are shared periodically.

Spiritual Reading for Students
over Christmas Break

Are you interested in borrowing a book to read over Christmas break? Check out the Library, downstairs at St. John Catholic Student Center! We would point our students toward the Spiritual Starters shelf in particular! If you see a MULTIPLE COPIES of a book, it is because our Campus Ministers highly recommend it!

Also find our online Library Catalogue at:
https://www.librarycat.org/lib/StThomasYM.
The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, RCIA, is a process which helps people learn about the Catholic faith, and, if they wish, eventually join the Church. Sessions are interactive and engaging with lots of questions asked, pondered, and answered. Session will be offered in person with social distancing if possible and there will also be an online option.

If you, or someone you know, has any questions about the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, or would like to discuss the possibility of joining the next group of inquirers, call Pete at 517-351-5460, or pries@elcatholics.org. A new group of inquirers will begin on Sunday, January 17, 2:00 - 3:30 p.m., at St. John Church and Student Center.

Due to COVID affecting many this year through job losses and layoffs, there is an even greater need for baby items or financial donations for Shared Pregnancy Services. This program helps mothers with infants who have limited income resources. Your unwrapped gift would be a wonderful way to honor baby Jesus on his birthday and help those on need.

Please leave your unwrapped gift in the Shared Pregnancy bins at either church. You can find the bin at St. Thomas by the statue of St. Joseph. Look under the clock in the gathering space at St. John.

Thank you for your generosity to these mothers and their babies.

Thank you for your continued support, care and compassion of new mothers.

Current needs: diapers in sizes four, five, and six, formula and baby clothes. Gently used baby items are always welcome. If you have any questions or need assistance, contact Noel, noeldoss@me.com or Ann, annzyg@gmail.com

"Inspire and Light a Fire" Weekend Retreats at St. Francis Retreat Center, DeWitt

Women’s Retreat: January 8-10
Men’s Retreats: January 15-17 or January 22-24

Step away from the chaos of the world and spend a weekend with the Lord. Based on the book “To Light a Fire on the Earth” by Bishop Robert Barron, this retreat will highlight evangelization as the center of every Catholic’s mission. Check in begins at 6pm on Friday. Suggested donation for the weekend is $185. Register online or view other upcoming retreat date options at www.stfrancis.ws. You can also register by calling St. Francis at 517-669-8321.

If you are a teen or adult interested in discerning your readiness for the Sacrament of Confirmation at our parish, please go to elcatholics.org/Confirmation to learn more and get started today!

Our program runs 365 / 24 / 7 so we invite you to discern with us at any time!

CONFIRMATION
Virtual Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekend Opportunity

Give her what she really wants for Christmas—better communication, more romance, stronger faith, and you! AND in your own home! Add a little sparkle to your marriage by attending a VIRTUAL Worldwide Marriage Encounter weekend Jan.29-31, 2021. Apply at wwme.org.

Need a different weekend date? Check out wwme.org for all live virtual experiences being offered around the country.

Questions? Contact Chris & Darla Vinton at 269-953-8287.

Creighton Model FertilityCare System

Are you looking for a method of family planning that has no side effects, promotes better communication and connection between spouses, and works for all women? Learning the Creighton Model Fertility Care System helps couples avoid and achieve pregnancy and helps couples experiencing infertility.

Are you struggling with issues with your gynecological health? Are you tired of having the birth control pill recommended for the treatment of nearly every woman’s health problem? The Creighton Model can help single and married women identify health issues and connect with NaPro health providers who will address the underlying issues without the use of birth control.

Julie Javorka, a FertilityCare Practitioner Intern and parishioner, is offering personalized instruction at St. John Church and Student Center or remotely for all women and couples who would like to learn the Creighton Model System.

To learn more and this safe and inexpensive system with NO side effects or to schedule an introductory session, contact Julie at juliegracefc@gmail.com or call at 708-527-7014.

GIVING AN ACT OF WORSHIP

Our Catholic Church is at work - and each of us is vitally important to the charitable, educational, and pastoral ministries of the Church. To support our ministry, donations can be made

- online at elcatholics.org/give
- text the word GIVE to 517-348-0351

OFFERTORY NUMBERS - SUNDAY 11/29

Actual: $ 30,479.09
Budgeted: $ 39,883.04
Year to Date: $ 771,598.25
Budgeted YTD: $ 942,258.65
Deficit: $ - 170,660.40

December 20 & 27 Advent House Ministries

Since 1987, Advent House Ministries has provided food, housing, education and employment assistance to those struggling with poverty and homelessness in our Greater Lansing community. The services offered through Advent House are designed to help people succeed and thrive. Its core is weekend assistance serving more than 34,000 hot meals to more than 2,200 people annually and providing community resources, learning opportunities and engagement. Our parishioners help prepare and serve a meal one Sunday each month.

Semester Transfer Students at LCHS

Lansing Catholic High School is currently accepting applications for transfer students into grades 9, 10 and 11 for second semester. Families who would like more information should contact Admissions at admissions@lansingcatholic.org or 517-267-2102.

LCHS – Application Information

Application information has been sent to 8th families who currently have a student enrolled at one of the Lansing area Catholic schools. If you have an 8th grader who does not attend a Catholic school, but would like to receive application information, please contact LCHS’s admissions office at 517-267-2102 or admissions@lansingcatholic.org to be added to the mailing list.
Please Keep In Your Prayers This Week

Heavenly Father, we give you thanks and praise for Your Son, Jesus Christ. Send Your Holy Spirit to inspire holy, faithful men to minister as priests. Lord, we pray for Your grace to encourage and support our seminarians as they endeavor to become priests. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Riley O’Shea, St. Michael, Grand Ledge

Heavenly Father, we give You thanks and praise for Your Son, Jesus Christ. Send your Holy Spirit to inspire holy, faithful women to become Brides of Christ and serve Your people. Lord, we pray that Your grace and love be enough for this woman in discernment of consecrated life. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Daughters of St. Paul
Sr. Danielle Victoria Lussier

Across the United States, hundreds of religious communities lack financial resources sufficient to meet the retirement and health-care needs of aging members. Many elder religious worked for years for small stipends, leaving a large gap in retirement savings. At the same time, fewer religious are able to serve in compensated ministry.

Like many Americans, religious communities face the monumental challenge of funding eldercare. Today, retired religious outnumber wage-earners by nearly three to one.

To give to those who have given a lifetime, envelopes are available in the envelope packets, you can write a check to St. Thomas with RFR in the memo, or you can go to shareinthecare.org. Each year, proceeds from the annual RFR appeal are distributed to nearly 30,000 senior women and men religious.

Bishop’s Year of the Bible Readings

| Monday, Dec. 21 | Matthew 12 |
| Tuesday, Dec. 22 | Matthew 13 |
| Wednesday, Dec. 23 | Matthew 14 |
| Thursday, Dec. 24 | Matthew 15 |
| Friday, Dec. 25 | Matthew 16 |
| Saturday, Dec. 26 | Matthew 17 |
| Sunday, Dec. 27 | Matthew 18 |

Enter more fully into the Mass by preparing for next Sunday’s liturgy (December 27), The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph. For commentary, go to elcatholics.org/adult-faith-formation.

Sirach 3:2–6, 12–14 or Genesis 15:1–6; 21:1–3 Those who honor their father will have joy in their own children, and when they pray they are heard.

Colossians 3:12–21 or Colossians 3:12–17 or Hebrews 11:8, 11–12, 17–19 And over all these put on love, that is, the bond of perfection.


- Does my family know how to gracefully encounter trying times?
- What attitudes allowed the Holy Family to have peace amidst the crosses?

Winter Break Mass Schedule

There is no daily Mass at St. John between 12/28 and 12/31. Monday, Wednesday, Friday Mass resumes 1/4. The 8:45 Mass will resume on 1/12.

We wish everyone a happy & safe Christmas break.
Mass Intentions

Monday, December 21, 2020
6:30am (St. Thomas)  
Int. of our Benefactors req. by The Parish Family
5:30pm (St. John)  
Bonz Collar req. by The Family

Tuesday, December 22, 2020
9:00am (St. Thomas)  
John Wills req. by Rick & Julie Bryce

Wednesday, December 23, 2020
6:30am (St. Thomas)  
Kim Watters req. by The Bullock Family
5:30pm (St. John)  

Thursday, December 24, 2020
9:00am (St. Thomas)  
Int. of James Hornberger req. by Gail Ganakas
4:00pm (St. Thomas)  
People of the Parish
4:30pm (St. John)  
People of the Parish
7:00pm (St. Thomas)  
Fr. Jake Foglio req. by The Parish Family
7:30pm (St. John)  
The Benington Family req. by The Ganakas Family
10:00pm (St. Thomas)  
Maryalice Abood req. by The Bullock Family

Friday, December 25, 2020
8:00am (St. Thomas) Senior Mass  
People of the Parish
10:00am (St. Thomas)  
Marie Pettigrew req. by Melanie Burger
10:00am (St. John)  
Gloria Spagnuolo req. by Jon & Roseann Zumbrink
11:00am (St. Thomas)  
Andre Quintero req. by The Family
12:00pm (St. John)  
Conrad Henke req. by Helen Henke
7:00pm (St. John)  
People of the Parish

Prayers of the Faithful

For all who are ill: that God will ease their pain, heal them according to His will, and restore them to their communities of family and friends. We pray for our television, radio and online community, Mary Ellen O’Doherty, Marie King, Marie Theis, Gwen Ahlrich, Mary Dillon-Dowsett and those listed in our book of Prayer.

For all who have died: that the Good Shepherd will gather them into the peace and joy of God’s presence forever. We remember: Donald McInnis and Mary Rapelije.

Outreach Mass

Watch the Sunday Mass at STA on the Outreach Mass channel. It airs twice every Sunday morning at 6:00am and 10:00am on WLAJ-TV Lansing ABC 53 and once at 10:00am on WBSF-TV Flint CW 46.

The Mass and homilies are also available on the web at dioceseoflansing.org/outreach_mass. You can also listen to the Radio Outreach Mass on WJIM Radio AM 1240 Lansing Sundays at 11:00am, and Good Shepherd Catholic Radio Jackson Sundays at noon.

Please pray for those who watch the Outreach Mass. This ministry has been even more crucial during quarantining and social distancing.

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Amazon even reminds you if you forget and go to regular Amazon.com. The browser will prompt you, “Would you like to open this page in Amazon Smile?” Click Yes and all your shopping can benefit parish programs for all ages.
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