

## DECEMBER: MONTH OF THE DIVINE INFANCY

### SATURDAY 24 DECEMBER: CHRISTMAS EVE

8:30AM (Saint Thomas): *James McEnery, r.i.p., by William & Kathy Fogarty*  
4:00PM (Saint Thomas: Vigil): *Christmas Flower Intentions*  
6:00PM (Saint Joseph: Vigil): *Celebrant's Intentions*  
8:00PM (Saint Thomas: Vigil): *Celebrant's Intentions*

### SUNDAY 25 DECEMBER: SOLEMNITY OF THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD

7:30AM (Saint Thomas): *Celebrant's Intentions*  
9:00AM (Saint Thomas): *Celebrant's Intentions*  
11:00AM (Saint Thomas): *Celebrant's Intentions*  
12:30PM (Saint Joseph): *Celebrant's Intentions*

### MONDAY 26 DECEMBER: FEAST OF SAINT STEPHEN (THE FIRST MARTYR)

#### **BOXING DAY**

#### **THE PARISH OFFICE IS CLOSED**

8:30AM (Saint Thomas): *Kenny & Serraino Families by the Kenny Family*  
6:30PM (Saint Joseph): *Eric Nedwetsky, r.i.p., by Richie & Donna Hamel*

### TUESDAY 27 DECEMBER: FEAST OF SAINT JOHN, APOSTLE

8:30AM (Saint Thomas): *Sloan Clair McKenna, r.i.p., by William & Mary McKenna*

### WEDNESDAY 28 DECEMBER: FEAST OF THE HOLY INNOCENTS

8:30AM (Saint Thomas): *Dolores Melendez, r.i.p., by Mary & Jim Ward*

### THURSDAY 29 DECEMBER: MEMORIAL OF SAINT THOMAS of CANTERBURY

8:30AM (Saint Thomas): *Thomas Starkey, r.i.p., by the Mullins Family*

### FRIDAY 30 DECEMBER: FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY

8:30AM (Saint Thomas): *Lauren & Mike Carnright Ziegelhofer by Mary King*

### SATURDAY 31 DECEMBER: MEMORIAL OF SAINT SYLVESTER I

8:30AM (Saint Thomas): *James Mahler, r.i.p., by Ann Marie Binazeski*  
4:00PM (Saint Joseph): *Celebrant's Intentions*  
5:30PM (Saint Thomas: Sunday Vigil): *Celebrant's Intentions*

### NEXT SUNDAY 1 JANUARY: SOLEMNITY OF MARY, THE HOLY MOTHER OF GOD

7:30AM (Saint Thomas): *Celebrant's Intentions*  
9:00AM (Saint Thomas): *Celebrant's Intentions*  
11:00AM (Saint Thomas): *Celebrant's Intentions*  
12:30PM (Saint Joseph): *Celebrant's Intentions*



*r.i.p.* (requiescat in pace: rest in peace), *a.i.d.* (ad intentionem donoris: for the intention of the donor)  
*pro sal.* (pro salutem: for health), *pro populo* (for the people)

*Madeleine L'Engle*

#### **LAST WEEK'S OFFERING:**

*Sunday Regular: \$11,179.06*  
*Immaculate Conception: \$87.00*  
*Flowers: \$480.00*  
*Pantry: \$581.62*

#### **12 MONTHS OF CHRISTMAS DRAWING**



We will begin a new year of prizes this month. Please pick up a raffle entry, complete it, place it in an envelope along with your \$20, return it to the office, or drop it in the collection plate.

#### **December's Winner\*:**

*Maria Rose*

#### **January's "Ring in the New Year" prize:**

*"Wish Believe" Champagne Flutes  
with a New Year's Surprise*

"This is the irrational season,  
When love blooms bright and wild.  
Had Mary been filled with reason,  
There'd have been no room for the child."

by Waterford (MSRP: \$130)

### CHRISTMAS EVE MUSIC

Please Come to Saint Thomas at **7:30PM** on Christmas Eve for a period of Christmas Meditation in song.



### CHRISTMAS MASS SCHEDULE

**Saint Thomas Church**                      **Saint Joseph Church**

**Christmas Eve:**                                      **Christmas Eve:**  
4:00PM    6:00PM  
8:00PM

**Christmas Day:**                                      **Christmas Day**  
7:30AM    12:30PM  
9:00AM  
11:00AM

### SOLEMNITY OF MARY (NEW YEAR'S)

**Saint Thomas Church**                      **Saint Joseph Church**

**Vigil:**    **Vigil:**  
5:30PM    4:00PM

**New Year's Day**                                      **New Year's Day**  
7:30AM    12:30PM  
9:00AM  
11:00AM

### "BRITISH LANDSCAPES" PARISH TRIP WITH FATHER DOUGHTY

Come to know the best of England, Scotland and Wales on this 10-day tour (October 19<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup>). Enjoy the



beauty of the Lake District, York, Stratford-upon-Avon, Edinburgh, the Borders Region and so much more. Extend your tour 3 more nights by taking the Eurostar Chunnel to Paris. Brochures with more information are located in the vestibule of the church. Contact Mary Ellen at [metiernan@comcast.net](mailto:metiernan@comcast.net) with questions. See the parish website for registration information: [ststomasjoseph.com](http://ststomasjoseph.com)

### PARISH DEACON

On Friday, December 16<sup>th</sup>, our Deacon candidate, John Hanley, was installed at Joseph's Seminary in the *Ministry of Reader in the Catholic Church*. This is another canonical step in the Deaconate Formation process. Next year will be his final year

before ordination in June of 2018. Please continue your prayers and support for John and his wife, Laurie.

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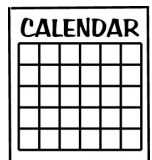
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### 2017 CALENDARS

Both Quigley's & Brooks Funeral Homes have provided our parish with beautiful calendars for the new year. We ask that each family just take one. Thank you.



### RESOLVE TO LEARN MORE ABOUT YOUR FAITH THIS NEW YEAR

1) On Tuesday Jan. 10, the Tuesday Night Study Group will begin a new 8-part study, *Ephesians: Discover Your Inheritance*. You can join us live in the old school building or do the study online at your convenience. Register and order your workbook (\$25) [HERE: http://tinyurl.com/Jan2017Study](http://tinyurl.com/Jan2017Study) or contact Theresa Trella for more information NO LATER than Jan. 2 (text/call: [845-667-1772](tel:845-667-1772) or email [hummingbird828@gmail.com](mailto:hummingbird828@gmail.com)).

2) ALSO, you can start your own study with as little as 4 participants with free online access to 38 studies at [www.ascensionpress.com](http://www.ascensionpress.com)!

3) Join the Tuesday group on Jan. 3 from 7-9pm in the old school for a special viewing of "Our Tainted Nature's Solitary Boast: Mary the Mother of God" in celebration of the Feast of Mary, Mother of God.

### FOOD PANTRY NEEDS

Canned meats & tuna, jelly, cereal, Bisquick, syrup, detergent, toilet paper, paper towels.



### CDA 12 MONTH RAFFLE WINNER'S DECEMBER

Ann Simoni # 244: \$50.00  
Fran Clifford #053: \$75.00

**SPECIAL DECEMBER DRAWING:**

Heidi Reyes #292: \$200.00

Peggy McGinnis #022: \$400.00

**EXACTLY AS IT SHOULD BE**

God never leaves anything to chance. In pondering the mystery of the God-among-us (*Emmanuel*) in the Word made flesh at Christmastime, we should not find the setting in which He chose to live surprising: to be like us in every way but sin means to become a member of a human family. Yet neither should we take this necessity for granted. The stories about the birth of Jesus that St. Matthew and St. Luke give us in the gospels tell us that God had everything planned out. The angel Gabriel was adamant that God wanted Mary to give birth to His Son. Joseph would serve as his earthly father and guardian, giving him the name Jesus. According to Micah (chapter 5, verse 1) Bethlehem was the place where he would be born (what the Magi were told!). There would be danger - because the child was a threat to the power and wealth of those who called themselves kings - and exile to a foreign land, but God would take care of that. Afterwards, they would live a life of obscurity in humble circumstances as other families do. God wished that salvation should rest in the heart of the family and, apart from any sentimentality, that this should mean something to us.

In *Familiaris Consortio*, St. John Paul II wrote: "the Christian family constitutes a specific revelation and realization of ecclesial communion." What this means is that in the human family God reveals his very presence to us and for that reason, the family can be described as "a domestic church." A community of faith, hope, and charity, the family is a *privileged* community, (from *The Catechism of the Catholic Church*) a sign and image of the Father and the Son in the Holy Spirit... called to partake of the prayer and sacrifice of Christ.... The Christian family has an evangelizing and missionary task." In other words, like the Holy Family, every human family is central to the salvation and redemption of all creation!

More than any other institution, the modern family has been beset by profound and rapid changes in society and culture. Poverty and war, and all the ills of our world have always been a challenge to sustaining the communion of love that characterizes family life. Yet, both the wood of the manger and the wood of the Cross tell us that in conquering sin and death, the only real threats to love, the loves of family and friends reclaim their eternal value. The late attempts to redefine the human family cannot promise that.

Christmas, of course, is a special day for families. Our feast celebrates the great mystery through which God made us part of His family. We might set our hearts and minds, perhaps, on allowing our families to become what God wants them to be, modeling them on the Holy Family and trying to live in His Presence. Going to Mass, praying together (especially the Rosary) and the reading scripture should be as natural to every family as gathering for meals or going on vacations together.

*On behalf of our clergy and staff, I extend our prayers and blessings to you, the parish family of St. Thomas and St. Joseph, for a holy and joy-filled Christmas.*

*Father Doughty*

**GUIDELINES FOR RECEIVING COMMUNION**

**For Catholics:** We fully participate in the celebration of the Eucharist when we receive Holy Communion. We are encouraged to receive Communion devoutly and frequently. In order to be properly disposed to receive Communion, participants should not be conscious of grave sin and normally should have fasted for one hour. A person who is conscious of grave sin is not to receive the Body and Blood of the Lord without prior sacramental confession except for a grave reason where there is no opportunity for confession. In this case, the person is to be mindful of the obligation to make an act of perfect contrition, including the intention of confessing as soon as possible (canon 916). A frequent reception of the Sacrament of Penance is encouraged for all.

**For fellow Christians:** We welcome our fellow Christians to this celebration of the Eucharist as our brothers and sisters. We pray that our common baptism and the action of the Holy Spirit in this Eucharist will draw us closer to one another and begin to dispel the sad divisions which separate us. We pray that these will lessen and finally disappear, in keeping with Christ's prayer for us "that they may all be one" (Jn 17:21). Because Catholics believe that the celebration of the Eucharist is a sign of the reality of the oneness of faith, life, and worship, members of those churches with whom we are not yet fully united are ordinarily not admitted to Holy Communion

**For non-Christians:** We also welcome to this celebration those who do not share our faith in Jesus Christ. While we cannot admit them to Holy Communion, we ask them to offer their prayers for the peace and the unity of the human family.



