

FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT, March 10, 2019



St. Thomas Aquinas - Thomas, West Virginia



Our Lady of Mercy - Parsons, West Virginia

SAINT THOMAS AQUINAS PARISH

Mission: OUR LADY OF MERCY

Pastor: Rev. Timothy J. Grassi, P.O. Box 300, Thomas, WV 26292 Tel: (304) 463-4488 www.sttsite.com

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

Please contact the priest to make arrangements. Instructions for both parents are required. Sponsors from outside the Parish need a letter of eligibility from their Pastors.

SACRAMENT OF MATRIMONY

Arrangements should be made with the Pastor at least six months in advance of the intended date of marriage. Preparation classes with the Pastor are required.



SACRAMENT OF ANOINTING OF THE SICK

Please contact the priest to make arrangements. Instructions for both parents are required. Sponsors from outside the Parish need a letter of eligibility from their Pastors.

SACRAMENT OF PENANCE

Saturday 4:00 – 4:50 p.m., and 30 minutes before all weekday Masses and anytime upon request.

HOLY COMMUNION: *We welcome to the Holy Mass all who share our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. While all are welcome here, we cannot extend to all an invitation to receive Holy Communion. This is not for lack of Christian hospitality. Rather, it is the recognition by the Catholic Church that real divisions of faith and practice do sadly exist among Christians. Practicing Catholics who go to Confession whenever needed are invited to receive Holy Communion. Non-Catholic Christians and those Catholics who should not receive Holy Communion (including those married outside the church and those in need of the sacrament of Penance) are asked to pray for a spiritual communion with the Lord Jesus and for the unity of His Church. Those who are not receiving Holy Communion but who would like to receive a blessing are invited to indicate this desire by crossing their arms across their chests as they approach the priest in the Communion procession.*

NO GREATER LOVE: A BIBLICAL WALK THROUGH CHRIST'S PASSION

Our bible study will begin this Tuesday, March 12th at 5:30pm at St. Thomas Aquinas Church and this Wednesday, March 13th at 3:30pm at Our Lady of Mercy Church.

2ND COLLECTION TODAY

BLACK & INDIAN MISSIONS: Mandated by the III Plenary Council in 1884, the 125-year-old National Collection for Black and Indian people continues as the embodiment of the Church's concern for evangelizing the Black and Indian peoples of the US. The funds are distributed as grants to dioceses throughout the US, supporting and strengthening evangelization programs which otherwise would cease.

JOIN US FOR A COVERED DISH DINNER

To welcome the seminarians and rector from St. John Paul II in Washington, DC we will have a covered dish dinner after the 11am Mass in Parsons today, Mar. 10th.

LENTEN FISH FRY

Come join the Knights of Columbus for our Lenten Fish Fry's! Dinner includes an 8 oz fish fillet with tartar or cocktail sauce; dinner roll with butter; coleslaw; greenbeans; macaroni n'cheese; fruit dessert; coffee or punch.

Cost: Adults \$8.00 - Kids 12 & under \$4.00

CARRY OUTS AVAILABLE!

The dinner will be at both locations from 4:00pm - 6:00pm, At the St. Thomas Center and Our Lady of Mercy Church social hall on: Mar. 15, Mar. 22, Mar. 29, Apr. 5 and Apr. 12.

LENTEN SACRIFICE

During Lent, the Knights of Columbus suggest one of these sacrifices:

- a) 40 Cans of Food for the Food Pantry
- b) a Monetary donation, (suggested donation: \$20).

(Of course any amount of canned foods or money is greatly appreciated, the important thing is that all of us can have the opportunity to practice the corporal works of mercy, one of which is feeding the Hungry.)

EVENTS ON THE HORIZON!!!


MAR. 10 - Covered Dish Dinner immediately after the 11am Mass

MAR. 12 - Bible Study on the Passion in Thomas at 5:30pm

MAR. 13 - Bible Study on the Passion in Parsons at 3:30pm

MAR. 13 - Knights of Columbus meeting at 7pm in Parsons

PRO-LIFE CORNER



*I was weak,
and I gave
up on my
child. That
will always
be my biggest
regret...*

LENT SCHEDULE

~ Stations of the Cross ~

WEDNESDAYS: Immediately after 5:00pm Mass at Our Lady of Mercy Church . (Wednesday Mass during Lent will be at 5:00pm.)

FRIDAYS: Immediately after 5:00pm Mass at St. Thomas Aquinas Church.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR March 03, 2019

St. Thomas: \$2,057.44

Our Lady of Mercy: \$1,179.00

FOOD PANTRY

BLACKWATER MINISTERIAL FOOD PANTRY: The Food Pantry is in need of "valued" food items. This month we are seeking chicken soup. In subsequent months we will let you know what items are needed and ask your assistance in this need for our community.

DELIVER US FROM EVIL

by: *Scott Hahn*

Deliver us from evil is a somewhat misleading translation. In the Greek New Testament, there is a definite article before the word evil. So Jesus actually commanded us to pray for deliverance from the evil or, more precisely, the evil one. It makes a difference, and a rather large one at that. For there is only one evil, and that is sin. I don't mean to be dismissive of other sufferings loneliness, rejection, grief, cancer, physical disability, mental illness. These can be horrific trials. But they cannot defeat us if we remain strong with God's own strength. Even if disease or murderers should take our lives, we will not die indeed, we will never die as long as we keep faith. The only real danger, the only reality that deserves the name death, is evil. The only thing we really need to be delivered from is not trial, temptation, suffering, or the grave. The only real enemy is sin.

All sin traces its ancestry to the sin of Satan, the fallen prince of angels. Before Adam and Eve faced him in the garden, he had already refused to serve God and enticed a third of heaven's angels to follow him in rebellion. Ever after, he has vainly waged war against God and all His works. He tempted our first parents and so cooperated in bringing the curse of death upon the world. Till now, he has never ceased his attacks against God's children. "Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking some one to devour" (1 Pet. 5:8). The Devil lives to oppose God's will. He tempts us at every turn so that we might follow him in rebellion. For God does not will that anyone should ever sin. We don't have to look long or far to see that the Devil succeeds often in temptation. Perhaps he also succeeds often in the final devouring of souls.

Yet his work is perpetually futile. For God is omnipotent, and so His will is inexorable. God's plan will be accomplished. Almighty God, says St. Augustine, "would never allow any evil whatsoever to exist in His works if He were not so all-powerful and good as to cause good to emerge from evil itself." Even the greatest evil in history, the torture and murder of God's only Son, "brought the greatest of goods: the glorification of Christ and our redemption" (Catechism, no. 312). In the words of St. Paul, "where sin increased, grace abounded all the more" (Rom. 5:20). Thus, the Devil's works are worse than futile. They are self-defeating. For when we resist his temptations, we grow stronger in virtue, and we gain divine life through grace. Even if we succumb to his empty promises, but then return to God in sorrow, we grow stronger still. As long as we remain united to Christ, we need fear nothing from our trials, for they can only work to our benefit.

Pope John Paul II summed it up well in his August 20, 1986, general audience. Satan, he said, "cannot block the construction of the Kingdom of God. . . . Indeed, we can say with St. Paul that the work of the evil one cooperates for the good (cf. Rom. 8:28) and that it helps to build up the glory of the 'chosen' ones" (cf. 2 Tim. 2:10).

The Scriptures give us proof positive in the Book of Job. The Devil afflicts Job with disease and poverty, and he brutally takes the lives of Job's children and his livestock. But Job remains steadfast in his faith in God's goodness. Through the ordeal, Job grows in wisdom, and he proves his love for God when such love seems, by a purely human standard, most difficult to give. In the end, Job is holier, wiser, and even richer than he had ever been before; and so he is happier. Who gets the credit? Should we give the Devil his due? Except for God Almighty, no one worked harder to bring holiness to Job than did the Devil, and no one wanted it less.

The "evil one" works no differently in your life than in Job's. No one is working harder for your holiness than the Devil, but no one wants it less. His work in an individual life is always a gamble. If he succeeds in tempting us to despair or to commit mortal sin, we consent to our own true death, the death of our soul. But if we, like Job (and, more, like Jesus) cling to "Our Father . . . in heaven" rejecting Satan and all his works and all his pomps we, too, will be holier, wiser, and richer in the end. We pray for deliverance from Satan because we know that we cannot defeat him in a game of one-on-one; nor do we trust our weak faith. We gladly pray the prayer of realists, the prayer of weaklings, for that is what we are. "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." Amen! St. Cyprian points out that these petitions are comprehensive insurance policies, providing coverage against every moral and physical evil. "When we have once asked for God's protection against evil and have obtained it, then we stand secure and safe against everything which the Devil and the world work against us. For what fear does a man have in this life, if his guardian in this life is God?" And He is not merely our Guardian, but our Father.

What is a Solemnity?

By: Jonathan Mann

“Today is a great day, and on great days God gives great graces.”

A few years ago, I heard a priest begin Mass on the Solemnity of the Annunciation with these words, and since then they have often returned to my mind. What is a solemnity? Why is it important, and what makes it a great day?

As we all know, Sunday is set apart from the rest of the week as the Lord’s Day. It is reserved for worshipping God, spending quality time with family and friends, performing acts of charity, and resting from our labors. There are many liturgical observances of lower rank that fall on other days of the week—like memorials of saints, memorials and feasts of our Blessed Mother—but a few very special days take highest rank among the Church’s observances. These are called solemnities (or solemn feasts). Along with the celebration of Christ’s Passion, death, and Resurrection during the Easter Triduum, solemnities commemorate the most important and central mysteries of our divine faith. Hence they share the high rank of Sunday



regardless of where they fall in the week. Examples include Christmas (Dec. 25), All Saints (Nov. 1), and the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Aug. 15). These three solemnities may be familiar to us as holy days of obligation, but there are also several other solemnities throughout the year, including the two which approach this month. On March 19th we celebrate St. Joseph, and on March 25th we celebrate the Annunciation of the Lord. For these two days, as for several others, there is no obligation to attend Mass for Catholics in the United States. Yet all solemnities remain great holy days, and so it is right that we reflect upon the Church’s intention in placing them on the liturgical calendar, and upon her vision for our observance of them.

Whether or not an obligation to attend Mass is in force, Holy Mother Church’s first recommendation for such days is that we do participate in the Eucharistic Sacrifice. Though it may not be a holy day of obligation, every solemn feast is by its nature a holy day. We are encouraged to regard such days as holy days of opportunity—the opportunity to commemorate the great mysteries of our faith, to ponder them more deeply, and to enter into these great mysteries by assisting at the Holy Sacrifice. The Church, rightly called our Mother, takes care that we, her children by Baptism, are given occasion in the course of her liturgical year to commemorate and celebrate the central mysteries of our faith. We do so above all by participating in the Mass and receiving Holy Communion—granted, in the state of grace and with proper preparation. Thus do we read in the Catechism that “the Church strongly

encourages the faithful to receive the holy Eucharist on Sundays and feast days, or more often still, even daily" (CCC 1389, emphasis added). Thus, far from a suggestion for the select few, participation in the holy Eucharist on feast days is Holy Mother Church's recommendation to all of her children. Similarly, the Church intends that we allow the joy and the glory of a solemn feast to inform the way we spend the entire day. To the extent that our earthly responsibilities and circumstances may allow, we are encouraged to seek rest and refreshment, and to spend time with family and friends. We all know what it is to look forward to birthdays, holidays, and vacations: to mark our calendars, to plan special events for these meaningful times. To treat holy days this way—to plan ahead in order to spend time with Christ on days that are specially His—is to act according to the mind of the Church and according to our very identity as Catholic Christians. It is a fundamental truth that, as one fashions the habit of life, so goes the heart. When we shape the culture of our lives after the pattern of the Church's liturgical observances, the particular graces associated with these mysteries elevate and sanctify our lives, not only on these great days, but always.

The two solemnities that approach this month present wonderful mysteries for us to ponder and celebrate. St. Joseph is a model for all men, especially husbands and fathers, as well as for all who work. He also plays a pivotal role in the coming of our Savior, both as protector of the Christ Child and His Mother, and as Christ's link to David's royal line. He is patron both of the Universal Church and of our Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston. The Annunciation, meanwhile, is the great mystery of Christ's becoming man within Holy Mary's virginal womb while remaining God, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity. On this great occasion we welcome our God to our hearts and to this world, and we see in His Blessed Mother our model for doing so. She is also the greatest of models for virgins, wives, and mothers—indeed, for all women. After her Son, she is the greatest example of holiness for everyone.

And so we return to our initial consideration. A solemnity is "a great day," on which "God gives great graces." Jesus invites us to respond to His Coming by asking for and embracing the graces that He has won for us as our Savior. In our secular culture it is often a challenge to keep holy days as the Church envisions, for work schedules, school, and a ceaseless onslaught of activity tend to compete with opportunities for Mass, prayer, and quiet reflection. Let us think about the deep, rich meaning of these solemn feasts and consider how we might celebrate them. Here in our parish there will be Mass in Parsons at 12:00 noon and in Thomas at 6:00 p.m. on these two upcoming holy days. And all day Christ in the Blessed Sacrament welcomes visitors. Let us fervently call to mind the treasures of grace that Jesus, our Divine Lover and Best Friend, desires to grant to our souls. Let us eagerly anticipate that encounter with Him by which He brightens our souls and deepens our union with Himself.

MASSES FOR THE WEEK

1st Sunday of Lent

Mar. 11 Monday	Edward & Mary Baptista	7:15 AM Thomas
Mar. 12 Tuesday	Dec. mem. of the Spillane, Cronin, Daily & Wallace families	5:00 PM Thomas
Mar. 13 Wednesday	Sr. Pat Marren	5:00 PM Parsons
Mar. 14 Thursday	Don Woods	5:00 PM Thomas
Mar. 15 Friday	*Virginia Hickey	5:00 PM Thomas
Mar. 16 Saturday	Joan Harmon	9:00 AM Parsons
Mar. 16 SATURDAY VIGIL	George White	5:00 PM Thomas
Mar. 17 SUNDAY	J. Pat Nichols	9:00 AM Thomas
Mar. 17 SUNDAY	People of the Parish	11:00 AM Parsons

THOMAS

<u>DATE</u>	<u>EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS</u>	<u>READERS</u>	<u>ALTAR SERVERS</u>
03/16	Kathy & Pat Kotten	Kathy Supak	Any available
03/17	Mary Sagace	Michelle Snyder	Aaron Quattro

PARSONS

<u>DATE</u>	<u>EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS</u>	<u>READERS</u>	<u>ALTAR SERVERS</u>
03/17	Lillian Plumley & Dee Oldaker	Tom Gutshall	Any available

Cleaning: 03/10 – 03/16: Pat Usnik & Debbie Scarberry

The Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston is committed to the protection of its children and young people. The Diocese complies with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People by maintaining an Office of Safe Environment. To report an incidence of suspected child sexual abuse, please contact your local law enforcement agency, or you may confidentially contact the West Virginia Bureau for Children and Families/Child Protective Services by calling the Child Abuse Hotline at 800.352.6513.

To report suspected cases of sexual abuse by personnel of the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston to the Diocese, please contact one of the Bishop's designees at 888.434.6237, (toll free) or 304.233.0880: Sister Ellen Dunn, ext. 264; Mr. Bryan Minor, ext. 263; Msgr. Frederick Annie, ext. 267, or Msgr. Anthony Cincinnati, 270. For more information on the Diocese's Office of Safe Environment, please go to www.dwc.org, then click the "Diocese" tab, then click "Office of Safe Environment" under the "Offices" menu. To learn more about the Catholic Church's efforts in preventing sexual abuse of children in the United States, please visit <http://www.usccb.org>. Under "Issues and Action," click "Child and Youth Protection" from the drop down menu.

THE TRADITIONAL LATIN MASS

During the month of February,
the Tridentine Mass will be
offered at the following times and
church:

St. Thomas - 7:30am,
(Low Mass) 03/10/19
Our Lady of Mercy - 12:30pm,
03/17/19 only when
requested in advance

If you would like to place someone
on our prayer line call
Mary Frances Evans (304) 463-4413
Susie Gutshall (304) 478-3217
Or Cindy Long (304) 478-4833

Let us remember in prayer all
of our sick and shut-ins:

Champ Sedmock, "Sob"
Gennantonio, Eleanor James, Vincent
DiBacco, Mary Johnson, Joanne
Michael, Leo Pase Jr., Jean Sagace, Ed
Kepner, Loretta DiMaio, Martha
Wolf, & Jimmy Quattro.

**We offer a hearty welcome to all
of our visitors! If you would
like to make a contribution to
our parish, please use the
visitor's envelope in the pew.**