

The Roman Catholic Parishes of
St. Thomas the Apostle
in St. Thomas

St. Cecilia
in Meta

www.stthomasapostle.net

www.stceciliameta.net

PO Box 146
St. Thomas, MO 65076

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

DECEMBER 18, 2016

Pastor: Very Reverend Jeremy A. Secrist, V.F.
jasecrist@yahoo.com
Rectory Phone: 573-477-3315

St. Thomas Bookkeeper:
Mrs. Jenny Becker
jbeckeroffice@gmail.com

St. Cecilia Bookkeeper:
Mrs. Doris Stumpe
dorisstumpe@att.net



School Principal: Mr. Leroy Heckemeyer
lheckemeyer@embarqmail.com
School: 573-477-3322 Fax: 573-477-3700

St. Thomas Secretary:
Mrs. Diane Lueckenhoff
stthomasoffice@embarqmail.com

School Website:
www.stthomasapostleschool.net

St. Thomas Parish Office hours: Tuesdays 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.; Thursdays 8:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
School Office hours during school year: Monday - Friday 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Confessions: Saturdays 4:00 - 4:45 p.m. at St. Thomas; Sundays 7:30 - 7:50 a.m. at St. Cecilia;
or anytime by appointment, just call Father.

Saint Thomas the Apostle

Mass Schedule for the Week of December 18-25:

Saturday 5:00 p.m. – Ralph Hirschman
Sunday 10:00 a.m. – People of our Parishes
Tuesday 7:45 a.m. – Clete Matheisen
Wednesday 7:45 a.m. – Sylvanus Hoecker
Thursday 7:45 a.m. – Lawrence & Ursaline Oligschlaeger
Friday **6:00 a.m.** – Jim Reinkemeyer
Saturday 5:00 p.m. – Pat Kliegel
Midnight – Philip & Alma Boessen
Sunday 10:00 a.m. – People of our Parishes

Your Sunday Offering:

Offertory Budget for 2016-2017: \$305,000.00
Offertory Goal through Month End: \$152,502.00
Actual Collection for 2015-2017: **\$133,460.95**
Offertory Difference Year to Date: - \$ 19,041.05
Offertory Goal per month: \$ 25,417.00

Collection in Church:

December 4 \$ 4,534.00
December 11 \$ 6,762.75
December 18 \$
December 25 \$

Collection Online:

December total to date: **\$ 16,240.75**
Difference for December - \$ 9,176.25

St. Thomas the Apostle Expansion & Building Fund

Total Expansion Project expenses paid: \$2,273,475.34
Income from parishioners for FY 2016-2017
(via the yellow "Building Fund" envelope): **\$15,184.00**
Loan payments to date for FY 2016-2017: **\$46,138.70**
(Principal) \$37,536.01 (Interest) \$8,602.69
Parish Building Expansion Debt remaining: **\$458,559.96**

St. Thomas Cantor / Organist

Saturday 5:00 p.m. – Amanda Wooten/ Annette Kehner
Midnight – Choir/Jackie
Sunday 10:00 a.m. – Lisa Wieberg/Annette Kehner

St. Thomas Reader/ Petitions

Saturday 5:00 p.m. – Kathy Rackers
Midnight – Jim Lueckenhoff
Sunday 10:00 a.m. – Alan Reinkemeyer

St. Thomas Altar Servers

Weekday – Henry Schroeder & Aiden Brenneke
Saturday 5:00 p.m. – Cameron & Chesney Luebbering,
Ethan Rackers, Lilly Schulte, Lane & Kenzie Libbert,
Jeremy Stockman, Grace Boessen, Ava Morris
Midnight – Ely & Dawson Wieberg, Ben & Emma Luebbering,
Isaac Prenger, Klint & Mason Luebbering
Sunday 10:00 a.m. – Austin & Brie Heckman, Molly Suthoff

Saint Cecilia

Mass Schedule for the Week of December 18-25:

Saturday 7:00 p.m. – Joe Platt
Sunday 8:00 a.m. – Lawrence "Dick" Rehagen

Wednesday 6:30 p.m. – Francis J. "Fritz" Luebbert

Saturday 7:00 p.m. – Larry Stumpe

Sunday 8:00 a.m. – Rosaline Bisges

Your Sunday Offering:

Offertory Budget for 2016-2017: \$60,500.00
Collection Total for 2016-2017: **\$28,622.99**
Offertory Goal per month: \$ 5,041.00

Collection in Church:

December 4 \$ 1,189.00
December 11 \$ 981.00
December 18 \$
December 25 \$
December total to date: \$ 2,170.00
Difference for December: - \$ 2,871.00

Please remember your parish in your last will & testament.

St. Cecilia Collection Counters

December – Pam Libbert & Marie Lueckenotto

St. Cecilia Reader / Petitions

Wednesday 6:30 p.m. – Dorothy Rehagen
Saturday 7:00 p.m. – Betty Hagenhoff
Sunday 8:00 a.m. – Dominic Plassmeyer

St. Cecilia Altar Servers

Saturday 7:00 p.m. – Zachary & Alex Even,
Carson Libbert & Gavin Holterman
Sunday 8:00 a.m. – Will & Melina Derkum, Sophie Bock

***IF YOU ARE NOT ABLE TO FULFILL YOUR
LITURGICAL ASSIGNMENT,
IN YOUR KINDNESS & CHARITY,
PLEASE FIND A REPLACEMENT.***

St. Thomas Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion

December 24-25

Saturday 5:00 p.m. – Mark & Barb Graessle, Mike & Sheri Wieberg, Bill Lueckenhoff
Midnight Mass – Emily Luebbering, Gilbert & Hermina Strope, Jan Heckemeyer
Sunday 10:00 a.m.– Millie Wieberg, Bill & Betty Jo Luebbering, Lillian Lackman

December 31-January 1

Saturday 5:00 p.m. – Betty Schellman, Leeroy Budnik, Lora Boessen
Sunday 10:00 a.m. – Shirley Volmert, Keith Kliethermes, Randy Buschjost

St. Thomas Greeters/Ushers

December 24-25

Saturday 5:00 p.m. – Mark Graessle, Bill & Jason Lueckenhoff, Doug Stockman, Isaac Rackers, Madi Buschjost, Chase & Grace Luebbering
Midnight Mass – Richard Heckemeyer & Keith Kliethermes
Sunday 10:00 a.m. – Eric & Keith Boessen, Mattheuw Prenger, Fayeth Prenger

December 31-January 1

Saturday 5:00 p.m. – Mark Boessen & Gregg Boessen
Sunday 10:00 a.m. – Mike Buschjost & Tom Backes

St. Thomas Presentation of Gifts at Mass

December 24-25

Saturday 5:00 p.m. – Bryan & Renee Braun Family
Midnight Mass – Richard & Jan Heckemeyer Family
Sunday 10:00 a.m. – Scott & Tracy Suthoff Family

December 31-January 1

Saturday 5:00 p.m. – Gilbert & Betty Schellman
Sunday 10:00 a.m. – Larry & Linda Lueckenhoff

St. Thomas Collection Counters

December 24-25 – Jennifer Schroeder & Stephanie Cortvrient
December 31-Jan. 1 – Rosalyn Wieberg & Donna Schellman
January 7-8 – Sonya Henson & Millie Wieberg

Rosary before Mass at St. Thomas

Tuesday 7:25 a.m. – Alex & Joann Heckman – Sorrowful
Wednesday 7:25 a.m. – Pat Loethen – Glorious
Thursday 7:25 a.m. – Viola Boessen – Luminous

SCRIP: Visit www.stthomasapostleschoolnet/scrip for more information about the Scrip program.

No Scrip Sales on December 24-25.

Please remember to purchase Scrip cards for all your holiday shopping and gift giving needs. We have a large variety of cards in various denominations in stock and available for purchase. Scrip is available for purchase after every weekend Mass in St. Thomas and available during the week by contacting the school office at 573-477-3322. You can also contact Lindsay Luebbering at 573-680-4920 or Karen Luebbering at 573-301-5835 to purchase anytime.

A NOTE OF THANKS: I want to take this opportunity to thank all of our younger parishioners who made their First Confession this past week. You were all very recollected and well prepared. Additionally, thank you to all of the parents and family members who made use of the opportunity to encounter the Lord's mercy in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. For all other parishioners, a Penance Service with at least four other priests coming will be **Tuesday, December 20** beginning at **7:00 p.m.** and continuing for all long as necessary. Please plan on coming!
Yours in Christ, Fr. Secrist

RORATE MASS – FRIDAY, DECEMBER 23: There is an ancient custom during the season of Advent to celebrate Mass in the early morning before sunrise in anticipation of the coming of the Light of the World at Christmas. Mass will be offered by candlelight at St. Thomas the Apostle at **6:00 a.m.** on **Friday, December 23.** Hospitality will be offered in the Vitae House following the Rorate Mass.

2016 CHRISTMAS/SEMINARY ASSESSMENT: Our assessment for Seminarian Formation & Priest Retirement is - **\$1,114.00** for St. Cecilia & **\$3,661.00** for St. Thomas the Apostle Parish. Please support the formation and education of our diocese's future priests.

CHRISTMAS MASS SCHEDULE

ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE:

Mass will be celebrated on December 24, 5:00 p.m. & Midnight
December 25, 10:00 a.m.

ST. CECILIA:

December 24, 7:00 p.m.
December 25, 8:00 a.m.

MARY, MOTHER OF GOD MASS SCHEDULE

ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE:

Mass will be celebrated on December 31, 5:00 p.m.
January 1, 10:00 a.m.

ST. CECILIA:

December 31, 7:00 p.m.
January 1, 8:00 a.m.

PARISH CALENDARS FOR 2017 are available at the entrances to Church. These free calendars indicate our parish's Sunday Mass times, the dates for Holy Day of Obligation and other feasts throughout the coming year.

2016-2017 CATHOLIC STEWARDSHIP APPEAL (CSA): The Catholic Stewardship Appeal (CSA) videos for this year's Catholic Stewardship appeal is available at: www.diojeffcity.org. The CATHOLIC STEWARDSHIP GOALS for 2016 are:

St. Cecilia Parish: \$2,000.00. So far **\$1,092.00** (48%) has been contributed.

St. Thomas the Apostle Parish: \$8,000.00. So far **\$5,742.00** (72%) has been contributed. Thank you for your generosity!

SEND SOME CHRISTMAS JOY You are encouraged to remember our parishioners who are living in nursing homes, retirement centers and in residences elsewhere with a Christmas card or note. Please find below those who would love to hear from you.

Margie Herigon, Westphalia Retirement Center, 1899 Hwy 63, Westphalia, MO 65085

Teresa Kaiser, Jefferson City Nursing & Rehabilitation, 1221 Southgate Lane, Jefferson City, MO 65101

Ginny Libbert, 1030 Edmonds St., Jefferson City, MO 65019, Room 215.

Celestine Stegeman, 42114 Pinehurst Ct., Jefferson City, MO 65109.

ST. THOMAS CEMETERY ASSOCIATION has voted to raise the cemetery dues. The new dues will be \$10.00 per family (\$5.00 for single persons). Family members becoming the head of a separate household are not covered under their parent's membership. Also, anyone after their 21st birthday must pay their own dues of \$5. Please note: Anyone falling in arrears over 5 years must pay \$100.00 to rejoin plus current dues. Please put your payment in the collection basket marked "Cemetery Dues" or mail to: St. Thomas Cemetery Association, C/O Lisa Lackman, 2222 Upper Bottom Road, St. Thomas, MO 65076. You may contact Lisa, if you have questions about your current or past dues, at 573-338-2703.

ST. THOMAS PRAYER LINE REQUESTS should be emailed to Jenny Becker at jbeckeroffice@gmail.com or by calling (573) 690-0642. The Prayer Line exists to communicate prayer intentions for those in need of healing. Out of respect for individuals' privacy, only necessary information is communicated.

DVD'S OF THE PFEFFER PIPE ORGAN REDEDICATION held on October 2nd, are now available for \$15. These DVD's were recorded and edited by the videographer and sportscaster Rod Smith. Please contact Fr. Secrist or Diane Lueckenhoff to obtain a copy. Proceeds will go for the continued care and maintenance of the historic instrument.

PENANCE SERVICES AROUND THE AREA DURING ADVENT:

December 18 4:00 pm St. Elizabeth

December 20 7:00 pm St. Thomas

December 21 7:00 pm Loose Creek

December 22 7:00 pm Linn

YOUNG ADULT VOLUNTEERS FOR YOUTH EVENTS: Looking for a way to give back to your community and grow in your faith? Young adult volunteers are needed to help with multi-parish Catholic Youth Events in Osage county. Volunteers will help by leading small groups, helping with games and other community and faith building activities. Ages 18-30+ welcome. If interested, contact Kristen Bexten at catholicyc@gmail.com or text 573-342-9621. Our events are scheduled for the 3rd Wednesday of each month. The first event is January 18th at 7 pm.

ST. THOMAS SCHOOL/PSR DROP OFF & PICK UP REMINDER: For the safety of everyone, please remember to ENTER from Park Street and EXIT from the Church parking lot ONLY. This will keep our children safe and the traffic flowing smoothly.

ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE PRESCHOOL: If you have a preschool aged child, please email Mrs. Kirkweg for information on how to get your child enrolled. mkirkweg@embarqmail.com

PLEASE CONTINUE TO SAVE: Box Tops for Education, Coke Points & Best Choice Labels.

COPY PAPER: St. Thomas School is in need of copy paper, clean on one side and staple free. Please drop off paper at school or call the school office.

ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE SCHOOL UPCOMING EVENTS:

December 21 – K-8 caroling at Mid-America Bank, bowling party, Early Release K-8 1:20 car-riders, 1:30 bus riders.
End of 2nd Quarter

22 – Christmas break December 22 – Jan. 2 – K-8

January 3 – School Resumes K-8

ST. THOMAS HERITAGE BOOK: In the near future, the Sesquicentennial Team will be asking each family household to write a short narrative for inclusion in the heritage book. There will be four topics that you choose to write about in less than 260 words: tell us about your family, tell us about your family's occupation, tell us about family traditions, and tell us about anything special that defines your family. We will also ask for two photos, one family photo and one of your choice. Have fun preparing your narrative and photos.

RECOGNIZING OUR COLLEGE GRADUATES in the bulletin. If you are a college or technical school graduate this semester, please let us know by emailing or calling the school at 573-477-3322, or the Parish Office on Tuesday or Thursday mornings at 573-477-3315. The names will be published in the December 24-25 bulletin.

TRIVIA NIGHT & SILENT AUCTION is Friday, January 20, 7:00 – 10:00 p.m. at the Helias High School Commons. Ten rounds of spirited trivia, silent auction, games of chance throughout the evening. Cost: Teams of 10 people - \$100.00, Individuals welcome \$10.00. For additional information and registration, <http://helias.com/pdfs/trivianight.pdf> or Mike & Mary Ellen Shimmens at 573-821-4855 or meshimmens@gmail.com Hosted by Helias Catholic & InterParish Bands.

CHRISTMAS LETTER FROM THE BISHOP:

Christmas 2016

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

"Do not be afraid." The message spoken to the shepherds by an angel nearly two millennia ago still holds true for us today. God wanted to draw the hearts of all people to Himself, and so He appeared as an innocent, humble baby in a manger. That plan continues to bear fruit, as we see so many families pause to visit the manger scene in their churches and reflect on God's love for them.

Could you imagine what the world would be like if all of us became fully aware that we were created in the likeness of this same Lord? Let us together pray for this peace in our lives, that only the Prince of Peace can give through His grace, as we celebrate His glorious birth. With best wishes for a Merry Christmas and a blessed New Year, I am

Sincerely yours in Christ, Most Reverend John R. Gaydos

BLESSING OF A CHRISTMAS TREE

The origins of the Christmas tree are found in the medieval plays that depicted the tree of paradise and the Christmas light or candle that symbolized Christ, who is the Light of the world. According to custom, the Christmas tree is set up before Christmas and remains in place until at least the Solemnity of Epiphany, or in some parts of the world, even until the Feast of the Presentation. In the home, the Christmas tree may be blessed by a parent, perhaps in connection with the evening meal on the Vigil of Christmas.

Lord God, let your blessing come upon us as we illumine this tree.

May the light and cheer it gives be a sign of the joy that fills our hearts.

May all who delight in this tree come to the knowledge and joy of salvation.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

R/. Amen.

THE "O ANTIPHONS" OF ADVENT

The Roman Church has been singing the "O" Antiphons since the earliest centuries; the 6th century writer Boethius mentions them. They are the antiphons that accompany the *Magnificat*, the great prayer of Mary in Luke 1:46-55, during Vespers (Evening Prayer) from December 17-23. They are a magnificent theology that uses ancient biblical imagery drawn from the messianic hopes of the Old Testament to proclaim the coming Christ as the fulfillment not only of Old Testament hopes, but present ones as well. Their repeated use of the imperative "Come!" embodies the longing of all for the Divine Messiah.

The first letters of each of the titles in Latin, starting with the last and working back to the first will spell: ERO CRAS... "I will be tomorrow". The Latin versions of each of the titles of the Messiah are: *Sapientia* (Wisdom), *Adonai* (Lord), *Radix* (Root), *Clavis* (Key), *Oriens* (Dawn), *Rex* (King), and *Emmanuel* (Emmanuel).

The song "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" is simply a reworking of the seven *O Antiphons*. When you sing it, you are joining yourself to a vast throng of Christians stretching back across centuries and spanning the whole of the earth who prayed as all Christians do, "Come, Lord Jesus!" (Revelation 22:20)

December 17

O Wisdom of our God Most High,
guiding creation with power and love:
come to teach us the path of knowledge!

December 18

O Leader of the House of Israel,
giver of the Law to Moses on Sinai:
come to rescue us with your mighty power!

December 19

O Root of Jesse's stem,
sign of God's love for all his people:
come to save us without delay!

December 20

O Key of David,
opening the gates of God's eternal Kingdom:
come and free the prisoners of darkness!

December 21

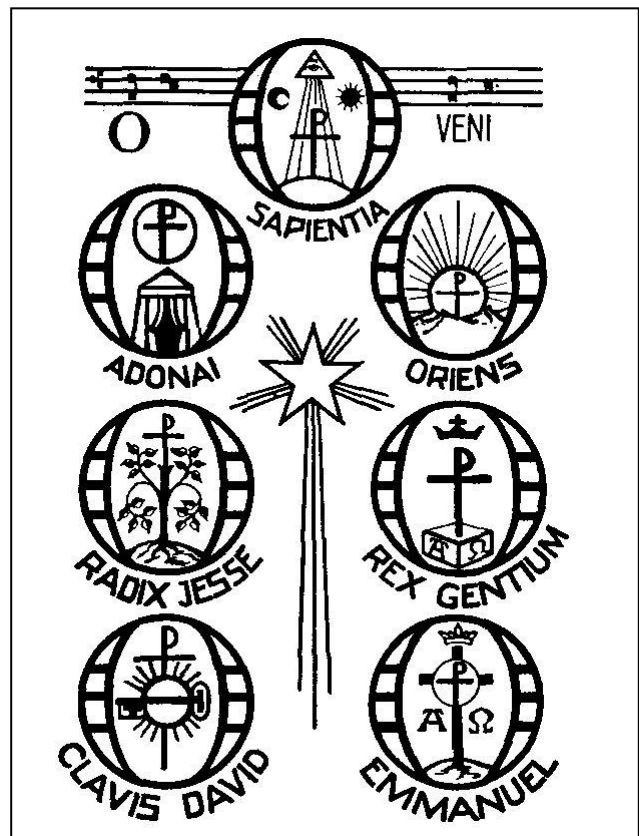
O Radiant Dawn,
splendor of eternal light, sun of justice:
come and shine on those who dwell in darkness and in the
shadow of death.

December 22

O King of all nations and keystone of the Church:
come and save man, whom you formed from the dust!

December 23

O Emmanuel, our King and Giver of Law:
come to save us, Lord our God!



BLESSING OF CHRISTMAS CRÈCHE

The custom of displaying figures depicting the birth of Jesus Christ owes its origin to St. Francis of Assisi, who made the Christmas crèche or manger for Christmas Eve of 1223. The blessing of the Christmas manger or nativity scene may take place on the Vigil of Christmas.

All make the sign of the cross.

Then then the leader says: **Our help is in the name of the Lord.**
R/. **Who made heaven and earth.**

A text of sacred Scripture may be read, for example, Luke 2:1-14.

The leader prays:

**God of every nation and people,
from the very beginning of creation
You have made manifest your love:
when our need for a Savior was great
You sent your Son to be born of the Virgin Mary.
To our lives He brings joy and peace,
justice, mercy, and love.
Lord, bless all who look upon this manger;
may it remind us of the humble birth of Jesus,
and raise our thoughts to him,
who is God-with-us and Savior of all,
and who lives and reigns forever and ever.
R/. Amen.**