

Catholic Church Community of

Sharing
the Spirit
of Love

St. Thomas More

115 Kings Highway, Hauppauge NY 11788

FEBRUARY 18TH, 2024



Parish Mission

St. Thomas More Roman Catholic Church is a parish community striving to share the Spirit of Love through Prayer, Worship, the Sacraments, the Teachings of the Church, and our concern for others, through Christian Stewardship.

FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

Parish Resources

Website:

<https://www.stmli.org>

Instagram:

@stm_church

@stm_yg

Facebook:

StThomasMoreChurchHauppauge

Flocknote:

Text SPIRITOFLOVE to 84576



Office Contacts

Rectory:

(631) 234-5551

rectory@stmli.org

Religious Education:

(631) 234-0397

reled@stmli.org

Outreach:

(631) 234-3149

outreach@stmli.org

Masses February 17th- February 25th, 2024

Saturday, February 17th:

5pm- Eileen Daly *by The Feeney Family*

Berta Jacome *by Her Children*

Sunday, February 18th: First Sunday of Lent

8am- Dominick Mancuso *by Mr & Mrs Donach*

9:30am- Marie & George Marra *by JoAnn Moretti & Mary Romano*

11:30am- Richard Stout *by Sydney*

Monday, February 19th:

9am- Sondra Cronin *by The Cronin Family*

Tuesday, February 20th:

9am- Thomas Magrane *by Joann & Curt Keely*

Wednesday, February 21st:

9am- Robert Stanvione *by Sylvia Graf*

Thursday, February 22nd: The Chair of St Peter the Apostle

9am- Daisy O'Neill *by Tom Dalton & Laurie*

Friday, February 23rd:

9am- Margaret Cussen *by James Cussen*

Saturday, February 24th:

5pm- Diane Daves *by Frank & Vivianne Latorre*

Sunday, February 25th: Second Sunday of Lent

8am- Kalena Ruth Fuentes *by Her Ohana*

9:30am- Mary Hartnett *by Margaret McGinley*

11:30am- Donald Cabella *by Ginny Heim*

Mark 9:2-10 (Lent 2)

Jesus took Peter, James, and John and led them up a high mountain apart by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, and his clothes became dazzling white, such as no fuller on earth could bleach them. Then Elijah appeared to them along with Moses, and they were conversing with Jesus. Then Peter said to Jesus in reply, "Rabbi, it is good that we are here! Let us make three tents: one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." He hardly knew what to say, they were so terrified. Then a cloud came, casting a shadow over them; from the cloud came a voice, "This is my beloved Son. Listen to him." Suddenly, looking around, they no longer saw anyone but Jesus alone with them.

As they were coming down from the mountain, he charged them not to relate what they had seen to anyone, except when the Son of Man had risen from the dead. So they kept the matter to themselves, questioning what rising from the dead meant.

Focus Questions for 2/25/24

Mark 9:2-10

- 1: Describe a time when you were transformed by reflecting on something Jesus did.
- 2: Relate a way God has entered your life in a cloud.
- 3: What challenging thing is God asking of you now?

Family & Children's Question:

Describe an experience of beauty or love that captured your attention.

Readings for This Week

February 18th, 2024 (Lent 1)

Genesis 9:8-15

Psalms 25:4-5,6-7,8-9

1 Peter 3:18-22

Mark 1:12-15

Readings for Next Week

February 25th, 2024 (Lent 2)

Genesis 22:1-2,9a,10-13,15-18

Psalms 116:10,15,16-17,18-19

Romans 8:31b-34

Mark 9:2-10

Return
to the
LORD
your God.
Joel 2:13

Fr. Antony's Letter

Dear Friends,

A driver tucked this note under the windshield wiper of his car: “I’ve circled the block for twenty minutes. I’m late for an appointment and if I don’t park here, I’ll lose my job. ‘Forgive us our trespasses.’”

When he came back, he found a parking ticket and this note: “I’ve circled the block for 20 years and if I don’t give you a ticket, I’ll lose my job. ‘Lead us not into temptation.’”

We started the Season of Lent wearing ashes. This is the first Sunday of Lent. The readings speak about the Temptation. Temptation is the occasion where we have to choose between ‘what we desire to do’ and ‘what we should do.’ Every temptation is the difficult time of making decision against ‘what we desire to do.’ Paul explains this very eloquently writing to the Roman Christians, “I know that good does not dwell in me, that is, in my flesh. The willing is ready at hand, but doing the good is not. I do not do the good I want, but I do the evil I do not want.” (Romans 7:18-19) When we decide to do ‘what we should do’, we say we won the temptation. This is one way of dealing with temptations.

Today’s Gospel narrates how Jesus dealt with temptation. As a human person Jesus too was tempted. But he did not yield to temptation and began to preach the Good News of the Kingdom of God among us. Jesus shows to us that every temptation is an occasion and an opportunity to bring out the best of oneself. Every time we are tempted, we are exposed to an opportunity to be selfishly the worst of us or generously to be the best of us.

Temptation exposes us to choose between our selfish desire of reducing ourselves to do what we want to do or our spiritual potential of growing to be the best of ourselves. Temptation is the moment of deciding either to bend everything around us to meet our selfish desire or to placing oneself at the service of announcing and realizing God’s Kingdom in and around us. As we start the time of Lent, let us take some time to reflect upon all the moments we failed to grow to be the best of ourselves. Let us take this time of Lent as an opportunity to bloom the best of our nature.

During Lent we pray the Stations of the Cross every Friday at 7:00 pm in the church for a particular intention. This Friday February 16th at 7:00 pm we will pray for those who are sick and disabled and for all those who serve them.

Every Lent, our parish does a Lenten project of helping the poor: As Pope Francis says, “Charity is creative.” Lent renews us spiritually and energizes us creatively to participate in the lives of those who are in need of our support. This year we help The Alzheimer Disease Resource Center, Hauppauge, a local non-profit center. For further information please refer to the bulletin and the display in the Narthex. Let us make the Lent spiritual moments of getting closer to God and our neighbors.

With love and prayers,
Fr. Antony



His Presence Is Real - Reflections on the Eucharist by Deacon Matt

The Mass: Liturgy of the Eucharist - Part VI

As we begin to look more deeply at the Eucharistic Prayer portion of Mass, we should take a high level view of its structure. The Roman Missal prescribes four Eucharistic Prayers (we will cover each in future articles). For now, let's look at what all of these have in common, and their significance.

All Eucharistic Prayers are addressed to God the Father. The elements we reviewed last week form the introduction to the prayer. These were a *thanksgiving* (the Preface), and an *acclamation* (the *Sanctus*, or "Holy, holy, holy..."). At some point in the Eucharistic Prayer will come the first *epiclesis*. This is the calling down of the Holy Spirit by the priest upon the gifts of bread and wine. You will notice that we deacons don't kneel at the start of the main part of the Eucharistic Prayer. Instead, we kneel at the first epiclesis. There will be a second epiclesis in which the Holy Spirit is referenced as the One who unites all who are gathered at the Mass.

The *Institution narrative* describes what Jesus did at the Last Supper. The *Consecration* is the action by which the bread and wine are changed into Jesus' Real Presence.

We also find an *anamnesis*. This means "remembering," but not simply recalling what took place in the Upper Room. Christ becomes truly present in the offering, the unbloody

sacrifice given as an *oblation* once again to the Father, who returns Jesus to us in the Eucharist. There are also *intercessions*, in which the priest prays on our behalf for the Church and its ministers, as well as those who have died. The Eucharistic Prayer always ends with a *doxology* ("Through him, with him ..."), in which we express our praise to the Father in terms of the Holy Trinity.

"We carry out this command of the Lord ["Do this in memory of me"] by celebrating the memorial of his sacrifice. In so doing, we offer to the Father what he himself has given us: (...) bread and wine (...) which become the body and blood of Christ. Christ is thus really and mysteriously made present." – *Catechism of the Catholic Church no. 1357*.

Questions?
Comments?
Suggestions?
Contact me at
eucharist@stmli.org.



Parish Information

Staff

Pastor

Father Antony Asir

Contact

pastor@stmli.org

Deacons

Deacon Matthew T.J. Surico
Deacon Edward Vigneaux
Deacon Robert D. Weisz

deacon.matt@stmli.org

Rectory

Theresa Recce (sacraments)
Dottie Castaldo (finance)
Alex White (operations)

theresa@stmli.org
finance@stmli.org
rectory@stmli.org

Religious Education

Mary Ellen Carroll, DRE
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Joanne Anelli

mecarroll@optonline.net
reled@stmli.org

Youth Ministry

Noelle LaFontaine

youthgroup@stmli.org

Music Ministry

Emilia Savarese, Director

631-724-8820

Ministry

Parish Outreach

Marti White

outreach@stmli.org

Pastoral Council

Barbara & Joe Fratamico

bjfrat1@gmail.com

Altar Servers Ministry

Deacon Matt Surico

altarservers@stmli.org

Eucharistic Ministers

Patty Citro

pcitro78@yahoo.com

Lector Ministry

Mike Petagna

mpetagna22@gmail.com

Hospitality Ministry

Ellie Stout

gram11@optonline.net

Consolation Ministry

Eileen Weidig

631-724-2462

OCIA

Ann Russo

redaa@aol.com

Young at Heart

Anna Beltrani

631-234-0714

Prayers for Our Community

Pray for the Sick

Daniel Atkinson	Frank Loporto
Gregory Bennett	Ildy Loverde
Barbara Cassetta	Jim Marquette
Joseph Cassetta	Ellen Murphy
Joseph Christiana	Matt O'Connell
Kathryn Douglas	Deacon Al Pankus
Bill Dowd	Patricia Parker
Linda Dowling	Joanne Pelletier
Thomas Dwyer	George Pflugel
Barbara Foberg	Nunzio (Steve) Puleio
Pat Golembiewski	Rosalie Rocchio
Linda Heller	Richard Ronning
Jean Herlihy	Noah Simonetti (2 yrs)
Richard Landi	John Spadaro
Maryanne Landi	Peggy Stepanek
Don Larney	Lorraine White
	John Zuzzolo



*this listing will expire on March 31st, 2024

Pray for the Deceased

Donald Larney

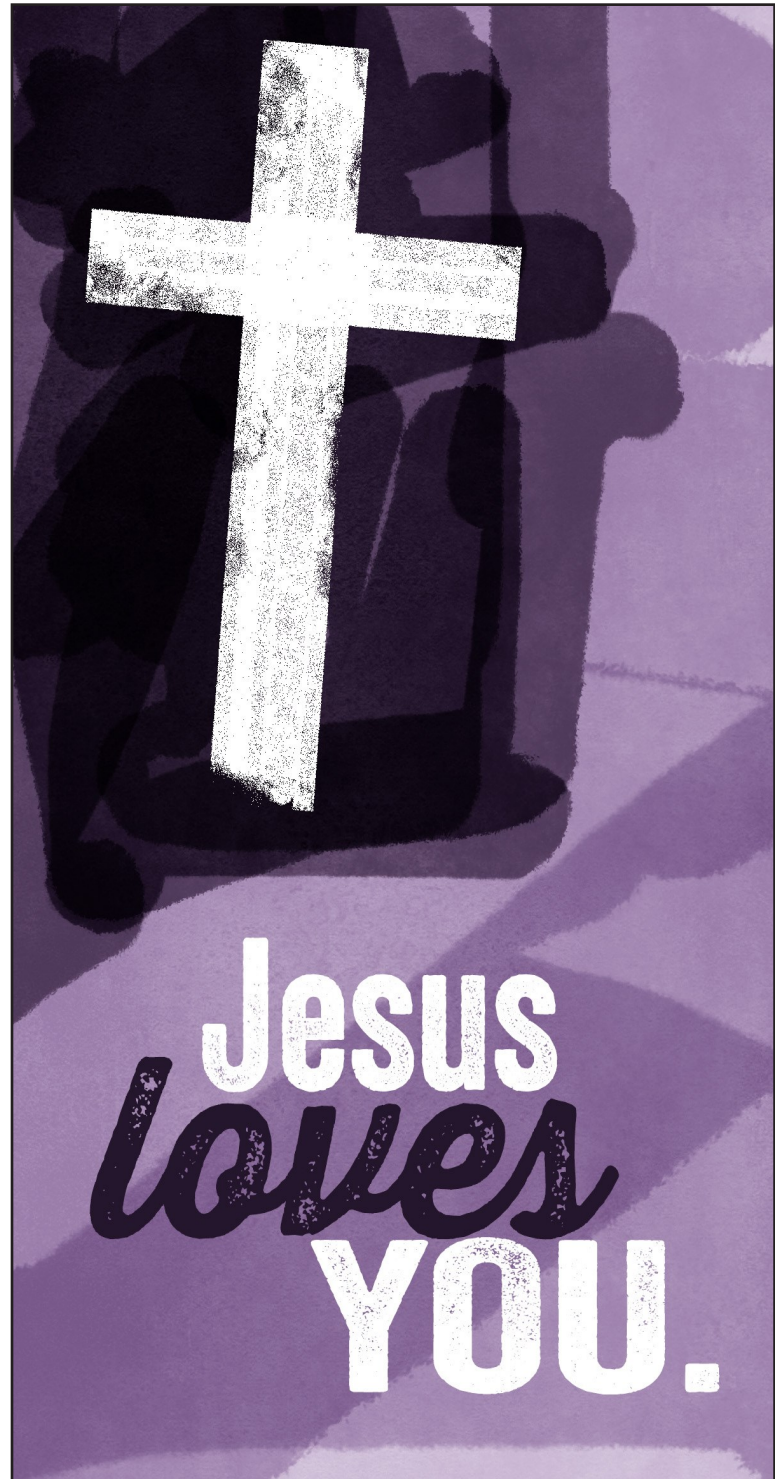
Lisa Rose Morin

Rosemary Corsi

Bruce Link

WELCOMED HOME

We continuously pray for our deceased loved ones.



Pray for Our Military

Please continue to pray for the brave members of our parish family who serve our country:

Troy A. Maida	Joseph Kirsch
Connor Hendrickson	Allen Kirsch
Evan Hendrickson	Nicholas Gajda
Christopher Sidor	Alexandria Feys Gajda
Ryan Smith	Andrew Lynch
Will Maley	



We also pray for our veterans, that they receive the support they need here at home.

Altar Bread & Wine Memorial

2/19-2/25

In memory of
Eleanor Meineke
by Charlotte Meineke



To arrange the memorial for the Altar Bread & Wine, contact the Rectory. Donation for the week is \$50.

Parish Operations

SUPPORT COLLECTION

Collection from:
February 10th & 11th

\$5541

Weekly Goal: \$6700

*St. Thomas More Parish needs your support
now more than ever!*

Rectory Office Hours
Monday-Friday
9:30 A.M. - 3:00 P.M.

If in need of the immediate attention of a priest during non-office hours please call (631) 234-5551 and choose option 4

*All other calls received after office hours
will be returned the next business day.*

Calendar Club

Thank you to everyone who enrolled in the Calendar Club 2024. The support our parish receives from this program is fundamental to our operation.

January winners are posted at the end of the bulletin. Congratulations to the winners!

Tax Season Comes Soon

It's never too early to get started with the paperwork! If you would like a copy of your 2023 parish contributions for tax purposes, please fill out the form at the back of the bulletin. We will start mailing statements towards the end of January.

If you donate with Faith Direct, you can print your paperwork directly from their website.

An illustration at the bottom of the page shows a stylized hand holding a prayer card. The prayer card is white with a blue border and a green vertical stripe. To the right of the hand is a blue coffee cup filled with dark coffee. The background is a dark teal color with green and blue geometric shapes.

**Pray Every Day
with Hallow.**

Parish Social Ministry

"A portion of the harvest is set aside for the poor and the stranger" Leviticus 19:9-10



Monday – Thursday 10AM to 2 PM
631-234-3149
Outreach@stmli.org

Our immediate needs for this week...

Pasta Sauce
Instant Potatoes
Pancake Mix
Coffee

We appreciate all of your donations!

Please remember that it is difficult for us to use large cans, bottles, bags of rice, etc. as many of our neighbors do not have the ability to store extra food. Packages for 2-4 people are ideal.



Please reach out to Parish Outreach if you are, or know of someone, in need of support. Keep our elderly neighbors in mind and let us know if there is anyone you would like us to reach out to.

Who you helped last month...

During the month of January, Parish Outreach was able to provide food to 68 families, including 114 children and 108 adults.

During this season of Lent, we encourage you to "eat simply"...

If you give up sweets for Lent, donate the money saved to we can purchase cookies and snacks for those families who can't afford special treats...

Discuss what a "simple meal" means in your household. Is it soup and bread? Maybe a peanut butter and jelly sandwich. A simple meal for us can be a gourmet treat for some families struggling to make ends meet...

Please do not leave other items such as clothing or household items in the donation bins. Clothing can be placed in the St. Vincent de Paul box at the back right corner of the parking lot. Please contact Outreach regarding other donations. Thank you!



In the Gospel today, Jesus overcomes the temptations to wealth, power, and esteem. As we begin Lent, may we open our hearts to the grace of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving.

In January, your donations to SVdP enabled us to help several families with arrears in rent; oil deliveries for heat; car insurance and utilities. On their behalf, your conference of SVdP says Thank You!

To contact us, call 631-648-2760 or email svdp.stm@aol.com

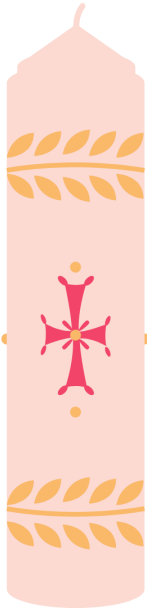
In Our Parish

Youngat Hart

New Members Always Welcome!
Next Meeting: Fri February 23rd, 2024

Call Anna @ 631-234-0714

Paschal Candle 2024



As Lent begins, the parish is looking for sponsors for our 2024 Paschal Candle. Sponsorships can be *in memoriam* or on behalf of your family. Contact the Rectory for more information!

Fun Fact: The Paschal Candle is lit for all of Easter, as well as at all Baptisms and Funerals.



Presentation of Babies

As always, we ask you to keep these beautiful children in your prayers as they are soon to join the next generation of Catholics! If there's one thing we can say for certain, our Deacon's love to baptize babies!



Support Drive

Life Center of Long Island

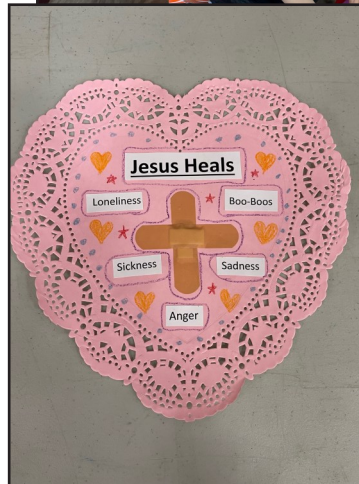
On the weekend of Feb 17/18, our 6062 Council of the Knights of Columbus will be launching a support drive for the Life Center of Long Island. The Knights will be handing out baby bottles that they ask you take home, and fill with spare change and loose dollars. The bottles can be returned March 16/17.

These funds will go to help the Life Center support new moms and dads with the much needed basic essentials for their newborn babies.

Keep an eye out, Feb 17th & 18th!

Children's Liturgy!

Children 4-8 are welcome to join us, Sundays @ 9:30 This week we learned how Jesus heals!



Happening at St. Thomas More

Coming Up @ STM

Wed Feb 21st, 7:00pm
Knights of Columbus
Social Meeting

Thur Feb 22nd, 5:30pm
Children's Choir Rehearsal

Thur Feb 22nd, 7:00pm
Choir Rehearsal

Fri Feb 23rd, 12:30pm
Young at Heart

Fri Feb 23rd, 7:00pm
Stations of the Cross

Sun Feb 25th, 12:30pm
Youth Group
War & Peace

Weekly Mass Schedule

Monday-Friday
9:00 AM

Saturday
5:00 PM

Sunday
8:00 AM
9:30 AM
11:30 AM

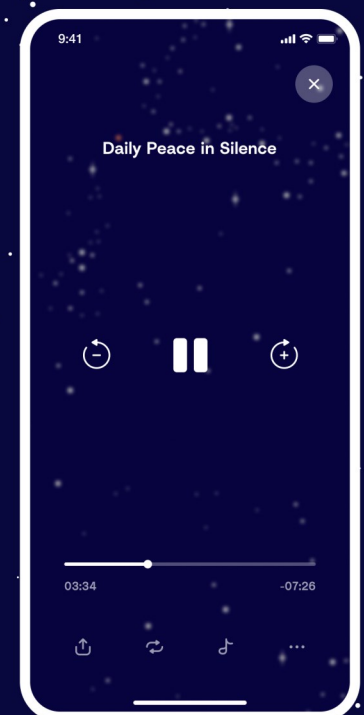
Confessions
Every Saturday
4:00 PM-4:45 PM



Find Peace. Find God.

Hallow

Catholic Prayer and Meditation App



Hallow UPDATES

For the remainder of Lent, this page will exist to offer updates and tips using the Hallow app to expand your prayer life.

As always, if you have any questions or issues with the app, feel free to reach out to Alex in the rectory...623-234-5551 or rectory@stmlt.org

For some reason, not all sign ups are being added to the church. Please double check that you are joined as part of the parish. Head to the “community” tab on the Hallow app, and add our parish by searching for Hauppauge!

This will take you to a menu, allowing you to join, find friends, and create a username. Once you put in your name and create a username, you will be officially a part of the Parish Community!

If you use your email to sign up for the parish program, make sure you use the same email to sign into the app. Likewise, if you use your phone number to sign up for the parish program, make sure to log into the app using your phone number.

*If you’ve already signed up and logged in using different credentials...open the Hallow app. On the bottom right, select “me”. In the top right, select “settings” (looks like a gear). Click on your name, and either add a phone number or add an email. This should reconnect you to the Parish Program

The people at Hallow have decided to extend the parish program. All those who are signed up through our parish will now have access to Hallow Plus through PENTECOST!

Did you know there is daily trivia available on Hallow? Check it out, and test your knowledge. Maybe even learn something new about our faith and history.

Hallow LENT

He Leadeth Me

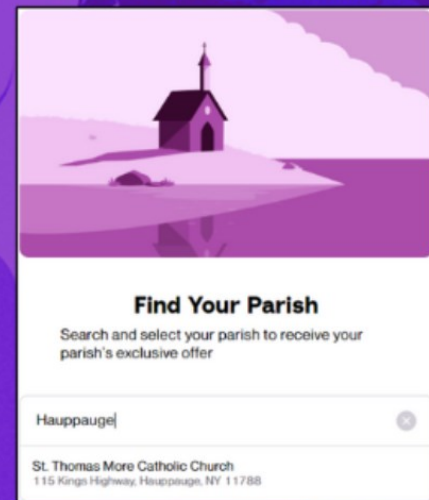


How to Access Hallow Plus through Easter:

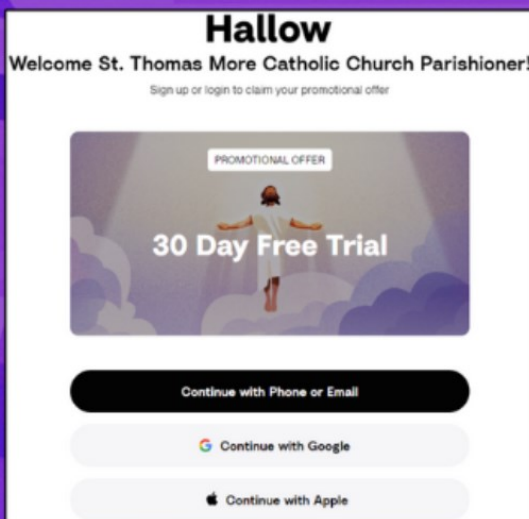
1: Scan the QR code or go to <http://hallow.com/holyday>



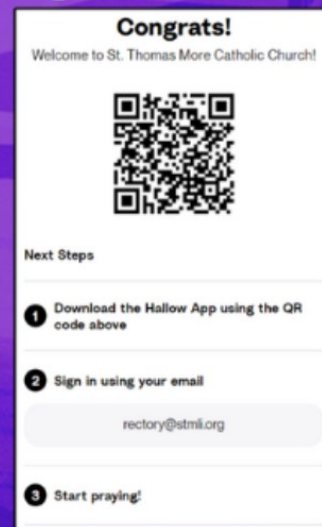
2: Search for “Hauppauge” and select our Parish



3: If you see this screen, create an account! We recommend using your phone number!



4: Use the QR code, or search Hallow in the app store to download. Then just sign in, and start praying!



Stations of the Cross

Every Friday at 7pm

2/16: for the Sick and the Disabled, and those who help ease their burden.

2/23: for the Addicted, and those struggling with Temptation.

3/1: for our Children, and all who are responsible for guiding them.

3/8: for those affected by Natural Disasters.

3/15: for Peace in our community, country, and world.

3/22: for all who Hunger, in body and heart and mind and soul.

*to be preceded by a Soup Supper at 6pm in Walden Hall

St. Thomas More Lenten Project 2024

This year we will be supporting...



A Long Island based nonprofit providing resources and support for those impacted by cognitive decline.

Please see more info about ADRC on the bulletin board in the Narthex, and consider giving to this wonderful organization.

COMING ON WEDNESDAY
MARCH 27TH @ 7:30PM



The Way of the Cross

with Jesus and Mary, from
Golgotha to the Resurrection

by Fr Slavko Barbaric OFM

LED BY LECTORS AND THE ADULT CHOIR

LENTEN MASS OF HEALING

Sunday, March 10th at 11:30am
anointing of the sick to follow



· BY HIS STRIPES WE ARE HEALED ·



MON 3/25 RECONCILIATION DAY

Confession available from 3:00pm-9:00pm at St Thomas More, as well as all parishes in the Diocese.

TUES 3/26

Chrim Mass at 4pm at St. Agnes Cathedral. Blessing of the Holy Oils for the next year.

WED 3/27

Choir Cantata at 7:30pm. The Way of the Cross reflected through Mary, with music by the STM Choir

THUR 3/28 MAUNDY THURSDAY

Morning Prayer (no mass) at 9:00am

Mass of the Lord's Supper at 7:30pm in the Church. This mass is always followed by the Solemn Procession to the Altar of Repose. Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament in Repository will be available until 10:00pm

HOLY WEEK

AT ST THOMAS MORE

For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

JOHN 3:16

FRI 3/29 GOOD FRIDAY

Morning Prayer (no mass) at 9:00am

Stations of the Cross at 12:00pm

Stations of the Cross for Young People at 1:30pm

Liturgy of the Lord's Passion and Death at 3:00pm in the Church

Tenebrae at 7:30pm in the Church. A presentation of the Lord's Passion with neotraditional Chant

SAT 3/30 HOLY SATURDAY

Morning Prayer (no mass) at 9:00am

Blessing of the Easter Food at 10:00am in Walden Hall

*NO 5:00pm MASS

Mass of the Easter Vigil at 7:30pm in the Church



LENTEN SCHEDULE 2024
ST. THOMAS MORE



Fasting & Abstinence

Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are obligatory days of fasting and abstinence for Catholics. In addition, Fridays during Lent are obligatory days of abstinence.

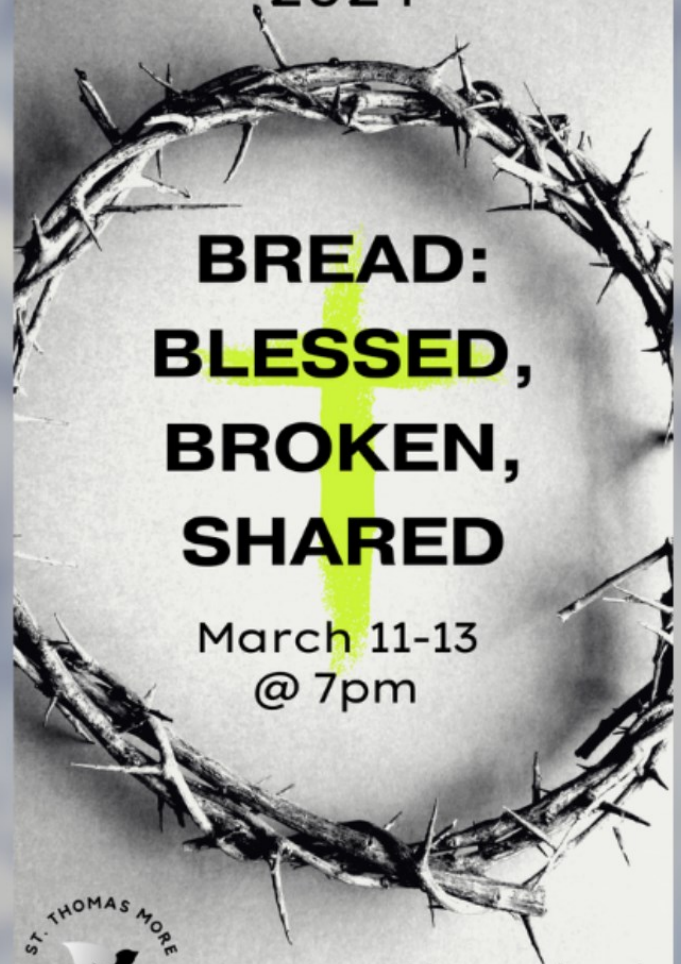
See the guidelines below!

- Fasting is obligatory for ages 18-59 inclusive.
- Fasting constitutes no more than one full meal, as well as two smaller meals that together are less than a full meal.
- Abstinence is obligatory for all Catholics aged 14 or older.
- Abstinence is to avoid eating meat (chicken, pork, beef, etc). Fish is allowed.
- Please remember to drink lots of water!



If possible, the fast on Good Friday can be continued until the Easter Vigil as the "paschal fast" to honor the suffering and death of our Lord Jesus and to prepare more fully for his Resurrection.

PARISH RETREAT 2024



BREAD: BLESSED, BROKEN, SHARED

March 11-13
@ 7pm



Presented by our local
Capuchin Friars

ross

m
on

DIR

MORE



RCH

TENEBRAE

GOOD FRIDAY, 7:30PM

JOIN US FOR A READING OF
THE LORD'S PASSION WITH
NEOTRADITIONAL CHANTING

LED BY DEACON MATT
COMPOSED BY ALEX WHITE
SUNG BY NOELLE WHITE



Easter Weekend

7:30PM (SAT)
8:00AM (SUN)
9:30AM (SUN)
11:30AM (SUN)



HE IS NOT HERE: FOR HE IS RISEN.



LENTEN SCHEDULE 2024
† ST. THOMAS MORE †



St. Thomas More Lenten Project

This year's Lenten Project will support ***Alzheimer's Disease Resource Center*** on Long Island

ADRC is a Long Island nonprofit providing resources and support for those impacted by cognitive decline.

ADRCs mission is to provide care, support, and educational programs for families in need, and to be advocates for local families who are coping with Alzheimer's Disease and other dementias.

By offering life-enrichment activities, ADRC helps those with cognitive decline express themselves and their creativity. Programs offered include Art, Music, Equine, Memory Cafes, Museum Programs, and much more. Participants and caregivers enjoy activities together, creating new memories.

ADRC provides care consultations, information & referrals, education, support groups, therapy programs for caregivers and their loved ones. They provide educational training to professional healthcare workers, graduate students, and other organizations throughout Long Island.

Please see more information about ADRC and their services and supports on the bulletin board in the Narthex.

Any donation will be greatly appreciated. Checks can be made out to St. Thomas More and placed in the little house by the bulletin board, placed in the collection basket, or dropped off at the Rectory. Please note "Lenten Project" in the memo line.

Calendar Club 2024

Our first set of winners!

*February winners will be posted in the 3/3 bulletin

Jan 1	\$50	140	Tracy & Chris Rossi
Jan 2	\$25	1190	Barbara Pein
Jan 3	\$25	1196	Joan Smith
Jan 4	\$25	1031	Judy Coyle
Jan 5	\$25	731	Annette & Vincent Vinelli
Jan 6	\$25	602	Lewis G Bernard
Jan 7	\$50	85	Christian Castellano
Jan 8	\$25	1138	Mary Romano
Jan 9	\$25	561	Tom & Clara Datre
Jan 10	\$25	694	Allison Madison
Jan 11	\$25	914	Allison Felice
Jan 12	\$25	1097	Al & Eileen Weidig
Jan 13	\$25	590	Lorraine Toomey
Jan 14	\$50	642	Clay & Cathy Chin
Jan 15	\$25	1253	James Cussen
Jan 16	\$25	247	Al & Eileen Weidig
Jan 17	\$25	148	Maxwell Chin
Jan 18	\$25	125	Anne Gavigan
Jan 19	\$25	524	Tracy & Chris Rossi
Jan 20	\$25	703	Barbara Pein
Jan 21	\$50	370	Louise Soldo
Jan 22	\$25	1445	Theresa Lilly
Jan 23	\$25	224	Helen & Charlie Beisel
Jan 24	\$25	130	Marie & Ross Bracco
Jan 25	\$25	1229	Daniel P Umali
Jan 26	\$25	385	Fran Donato
Jan 27	\$25	1198	Paulette DiMarco
Jan 28	\$50	392	Marilyn Amodio
Jan 29	\$25	622	Annette & Vincent Vinelli
Jan 30	\$25	1195	Ralph Giambruno
Jan 31	\$25	129	Jaclyn & James Cotgreave

KNIGHT'S OF COLOMBUS

Msgr. Francis S. Midura Council 6062

ST. PATRICK'S DAY DINNER!

Saturday, March 16th at 6:00pm
(following the 5pm mass)

**Tickets are \$20
per person**

Sold at all masses, ending March 10th

Contact Ed Rogan PGK with questions at
631-366-1085 or email **eroganjr@verizon.net**

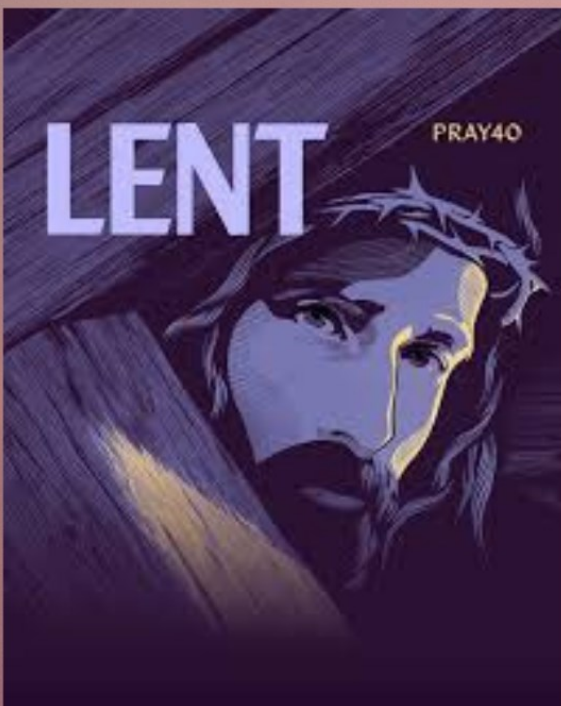
NO TICKETS SOLD AT THE DOOR

Youth Group - Shrovetide

February 11th, 2023



We all signed up for the Hallow app!



Upcoming Meetings

Sundays 12:30-2:30

February 25th-

War & Peace

March 3rd-

Lent Check-In

Follow us on Instagram!

@stm_yg

@stm_church



DIOCESE OF ROCKVILLE CENTRE

WESTERN VICARIATE

42 Dover Street

Williston Park, New York 11596

Phone: 516.744.6850 Fax: 516.746.6900
westernvicariate@drvc.org

Lent 2024

*...We need our prayer to rise with greater insistence to the Father,
So that He may hear the voice of those who turn to Him
on the confidence of being answered... Pope Francis*

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

On Sunday, January 21 of this year, Pope Francis inaugurated a Year of Prayer ahead of the 2025 Jubilee Year. The Holy Father is calling on the faithful “to pray more fervently to prepare ourselves to live properly this grace-filled event and to experience the power of hope in God.” This Year of Prayer, the Holy Father explained, is dedicated “to rediscovering the great value and absolute need for prayer, prayer in personal life, in the life of the Church, prayer in the world.”

In response to the Holy Father’s initiative, together with Bishop Barres, all the Bishops and I would like to encourage you, especially during this 2024 Season of Lent in particular, to focus on prayer. Traditionally, during this time all Christians are called to practice fasting, prayer, repentance, and almsgiving as a way of drawing us closer to God and reflecting on the meaning of Jesus' death and resurrection in anticipation of the gift of new life at Easter. All pillars of Lent complement and support each other. Customarily, fasting is a way of disciplining ourselves and expressing our repentance for our sins. By abstaining from certain foods or activities, we show our love for God and our gratitude for His mercy. Fasting also helps us to empathize with those who are less fortunate and to share our resources with them. In fact, prayer binds all these Lenten practices all together, giving them an extra strength and direction. In days to come, as we prepare for the celebration of Easter, let us take this great opportunity to renew ourselves in the life of prayer, making it not just a duty or an obligation but also as a privilege and a joy.

Prayer is a gift from God, connecting us with Him and allowing us to experience His love in our lives. It is a ground for an authentic encounter which God uses to transform us and to make us more like Christ to one another. It is also a power that God grants us to overcome sin and evil and to advance His cause in the world, especially very much needed peace as we reflect these days on the situations in Ukraine, the Holy Land, Syria, Congo, and many other troubled places.

Personal Prayer. A classic description says that prayer is “the raising of our mind and heart to God.” We all might have our own experiences of prayer, and we can define prayer in our own and unique ways. However, most important is the fact that during sacred time of the year each of us should make the best effort to make a time for prayer, short or longer, in our daily lives. There are many ways in which we can engage with it during Lent. Many people might continue to follow a lectionary and other materials that provide Scripture readings and reflections for each day of Lent and be led by it to prayer. It is possible use prayer books, journals, apps, or online resources that offer different forms of prayer, such as meditation, contemplation, praise, worship, adoration, thanksgiving, and supplication. In some

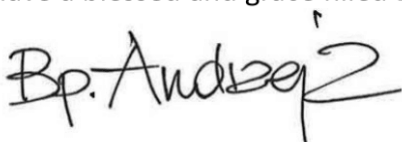
places there are groups of friends, or parishioners, who join prayer meetings, retreats, or online communities that share prayer requests and support each other in prayer. Most people create a prayer space in their home or workplace that helps them to focus on God. We should all look for an opportunity to pray without distractions and practice silence or solitude as a way of listening to God and being attentive to His presence. Whatever method or style of prayer we choose, the important thing is to pray with sincerity of heart, humility, honesty, and openness. During Lent, we should pray especially for the grace of conversion, so we can be inspired to experience the need of repentance and change and be led to encounter Jesus in the Sacrament of Penance. May we all grow in a deep desire to know the Lord more intimately and to love him more fully with the hunger for his grace and a thirst for his Spirit.

Communal Prayer. Time spent in prayer is never only personal. We all know that every individual action of one person has an impact on the whole community. Together in prayer, as we walk a synodal way, we grow in a deep sense of awareness that every act of love or time of common worship can profoundly strengthen and sanctify the whole Christian community and the whole human family. We are all connected in a special way as members of the Body of Christ, and we share the same mission and vision by celebrating of the Eucharist. This is the most profound and ultimate way of prayer. At each Mass we engage personally with the Paschal Mystery of the Lord and make it our own to be led by him, through the sacrifice of the cross to the glory of his Resurrection and our life in Him. The mystery of the Cross and the mystery of love Jesus shares with us can be understood in a deeper sense through prayer. Renewing our commitment to attend the Mass every Sunday would be the best step to renew ourselves in the life of prayer.

Prayers for the World. Both the celebration of the Eucharist and our personal daily prayer nourishes our faith, strengthens our hope, and increases our charity towards others. During Lent and beyond we are called to share our gifts and resources with the world around us, especially with those who are in need. We are to take care of the poor, the oppressed and the marginalized, and are to join them in their struggle for justice and dignity in the best way we can. Every good deed is always inspired and properly executed with the assistance of our continuing prayers, making us God's instruments of peace, justice, and mercy, which is so much needed in the world today.

Dear Friends, prayer is basically a conversation with God who is waiting for us. It doesn't have to be made up of loads of words as it is all about the conversion of heart. It's not just "saying prayers", it is more about living by them, letting our heart declare our love for God and others. Let this Lent be for all of us a sacred time of our spiritual renewal in prayer so we can all become who we are supposed to be in relationship with God and with each other. Our life prayer is a statement about who we are. The future of the world depends on our prayers and begins in us. Even though our prayers do not give any extra reverence to God, they certainly make us more revered before Him so we walk "humbly with the Lord."

Have a blessed and grace filled Lent,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bp. Andrzej Zglejszewski". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large, prominent 'Z' at the end.

Bishop Andrzej Zglejszewski
Episcopal Vicar