

The Roman Catholic Communities of

St. James the Greater
75 River Road
Montague, New Jersey

and

St. Thomas the Apostle
210 Route 206 North
Sandyston, New Jersey

Office for both parishes is located at
210 Route 206 North
Sandyston, NJ 07826

Parish Office: 973-948-2296
Fax: 973-948-4634
E-mail address: stjamesthomas@aol.com
Website address: saintjamesthomas.org
Rectory: 973-293-7582

Office Hours:
Monday through Friday
8:30 AM – 2:30 PM

PASTOR: Father Wayne Varga
DEACON: Mr. Wayne von Doehren
CRE: Mrs. Mary Flexer
PASTORAL ASSOCIATE: Mrs. Patricia Hope
PARISH SECRETARY: Mrs. Rosemarie Briegel

Mass Schedule at St. James
Sunday: 8:00 AM and 11:30 AM
Saturday: 8:00 AM

Mass Schedule at St. Thomas
Saturday: 4:30 PM – Vigil
Sunday: 9:30 AM
Mon., Tues., Wed. and Fri.: 9:00 AM

Sacrament of Reconciliation
St. Thomas the Apostle - Saturday - 4:00 PM - 4:20 PM or by appointment

Religious Education for children (CCD):
Religious Education/Youth Office and classes are located at the Msgr. Gacquin Youth/ Religious Education Center,
122 Layton-Hainesville Road, Sandyston (mail should be sent to parish office address listed above)
Phone: 973-948-7004 ~ Fax: 973-948-7007

Children's Liturgy of the Word (September through April):
At St. Thomas the Apostle Church as part of the 9:30 AM Mass.

New parishioners are invited to fill out a registration form which can be found in the vestibule of the Church. Often when a Catholic is asked to be a Godparent for baptism or sponsor for Confirmation a letter from the pastor of their parish is requested. This can only be given to registered and active members of the parish.

The Sacrament of Baptism is celebrated during Mass providing that liturgical norms do not dictate otherwise. Please contact the office to schedule a Baptism and to make arrangements for preparations especially for first time parents. Baptisms may be scheduled at other times if extenuating conditions apply. Godparents must be practicing Catholics.

Part of our ministry is to **visit the sick** in hospital or at home. Privacy laws do not allow us to visit or pray publicly for the sick unless permission is given by the individual or their health care proxy. Please inform us of the needs of the sick, and we will be happy to respond as best we can.

Pregnancy Assistance
Call 1-800-395-HELP or Tri-State Pregnancy 570-491-5151
Good Counsel: 1.800.723.8331 for pregnant mothers in need anytime, anyplace.
www.goodcounselhomes.org
Post Abortion Healing:
Project Rachel 973-777-8818, ext. 272
Lumina: Hope and Healing After Abortion: 1.877.LUMINA1 (877.586.4621)
www.postabortionhelp.org
Adoption Services:
Adoption@CatholicCharities.

The Schools of The Catholic Academy of Sussex County
973-729-6125 X225
Rev. George A. Brown School (Pre-K to Gr. 4)
Pope John XXIII Middle School (Gr. 5 to 7)
Pope John XXIII High School (Gr. 8 to 12)

Welcome -We Are a Tithing Parish

HELPING THE KINGDOM TO GROW

"Of its own accord the land yields fruit."

Mark 4: 28

Are you familiar with the Chinese bamboo tree ? This fascinating plant grows to a height of ninety feet and can be used for everything from home construction to furniture, from paper to pipes. It also has a very unusual growth pattern. It takes five years for a bamboo seed to sprout, but once it does, that tiny sprout reaches its full height in only six weeks—almost overnight ! During those first five years, the farmer must water the seed every single day, all the while never seeing any growth. You can imagine an inexperienced farmer wondering if anything will ever happen. He might even give up.

Just as with the bamboo tree, the same is true both in the Kingdom of God and in our own spiritual life: the most important growth is invisible. In Jesus' Gospel parable, (Mark 4: 26—32), the farmer plants a seed. But that seed doesn't become a plant overnight. It takes the right combination of soil, water, and the most important ingredient, God's grace, to turn that seed into the "largest of plants." In the end it looks awfully impressive, but most of the work has already happened underground !

This is the encouraging message of the Gospel: God is always working beneath the surface. He is always providing the nourishment of His grace so that we can grow and blossom. Yes, we need to cooperate with that grace, but like the bamboo tree, the growth that we experience will far outstrip the effort we put into it.

Because most of God's important work happens unnoticed, we should be careful to water that seed of faith even when we don't see impressive results right away. We can trust that God will bring the growth in His time and in His fashion.

So imagine yourself as that bamboo farmer. Every time you pray, you're going to the well to get water. Every time you repent, you're improving the soil. You may not be seeing or feeling much growth right now. But every day that you come to Jesus, growth is occurring. God is making you holy. One day you, too, will stand tall with the saints.

*"Lord, I trust you to bring about my growth.
Help me to cooperate with Your work of grace."*

--taken from: "The Word Among Us"
January 2017

FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
February 5, 2017

St. James the Greater

The Sanctuary Lamp this week burns in
Memory of Ralph & Anna Gioielli at the
Request of their Children

SATURDAY, February 11

8:00AM – Mary Hanratty

SIXTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
February 12

8:00AM – Grace Edna Clark
req. by Jane & Doug Sandberg

11:30AM – Gloria DaSilva
req. by Christine

ST. JAMES THE GREATER

\$1,072.00 – Regular Collection – January 29, 2017

\$2,477.00 – Weekly Budget Need

\$1,289.00 – Regular Collection – January 31, 2016

Consider a gift to St. James Parish in your will.

Rosaries for Peace

Please join us Sundays before 9:30am Mass for recitation of the First Glorious Mystery of the Holy Rosary. The remaining mysteries will be recited immediately after Mass. Rosary beads are available in the Gathering Space.

The Saturday eve Mass will also be preceded by a Rosary for Peace, beginning at 4:10 p.m. May we ask our Blessed Mother, Patroness of our Nation, to help us find peace in our nation and in the world.

Pilgrim Virgin of Fatima Statue/Legion of Mary

This beautifully adorned statue is a visible reminder of the love God has shown in the Blessed Mother. Placing such a beautiful image in your home turns hearts to prayer and brings grace to those who open their hearts to any image of God's love. If you would like to have the statue of Our Lady of Fatima in your home, or need any further information about the Legion of Mary in our parishes, please contact Diana, Legion of Mary, at 973-948-7601. *Pray the Family Rosary*

TO CHRIST THE DIVINE HEALER WE PRAY FOR:

Margaret Accordino, Al, Mary Cunico, Derya Dimertas, Rachel Gibbs, Mary Guimes, Barbara Haggerty, Carmen Howell, Jennifer, Clara Kane, Angela Lanzalotta, Jeff Librizzi, Betty Mastrelli, Sonny Mastrelli Sandy Matthews, Brian McKenna, Darrin O'Keefe, Danielle Parker, Flo Puccio, Alex Sepiol, Baby Teddy, Jen Vaughn, Lorraine Verga, Tarra Wagner, Thomas Walsh, Joan White and Robert Woodcock



The Legion of Mary meets every **Friday** morning at 10:00a.m. in St. Thomas the Apostle Church. Men and women of both parishes are invited to consider Auxiliary or Active membership. For further information, please contact the parish office.

St. Thomas the Apostle

The Sanctuary Lamp this week burns for the
Intentions of Sean Bastian at the
Request of his Family

MONDAY, February 6

9:00AM – Marie Connors and Eric Boehm
req. by Ray & Mary Flexer

TUESDAY, February 7

9:00AM – Deceased Members of the Iovino Family
req. by Luisa & Dan
-Angelo Damone
req. by his daughter, Frances Demalderis

WEDNESDAY, February 8

9:00AM – Intentions of Charles Jensen
Recovery of Surgery
req. by his wife, Julia

THURSDAY, February 9

No Mass

FRIDAY, February 10

9:00AM – Intentions of Marilyn Peterson
For Healing

SATURDAY, Vigil, February 11

4:30PM – Marge & Larry LaRusso and Harry Johnson
req. by Ray & Mary Flexer
- Intentions of the Legion of Mary
req. by the Legion of Mary

SIXTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
February 12

9:30AM – Jim Mahon
req. by his wife, Gerry

ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE

\$2,109.00 – Regular Collection – January 29, 2017

\$4,410.00 – Weekly Budget Need

\$1,947.00 – Regular Collection – January 31, 2016

Consider a gift to St. Thomas Parish in your will.

St. James Rosary & Altar Society If any ladies in the parish are interested in joining, please call Joan Henn at 973-293-3690 or Linda Spinaplice at 973-293-7031.



Saint of the Month – St. Josephine Bakhita

Josephine Bakhita was born in Darfur, Sudan in 1869. Sold into slavery at age 9, she eventually was purchased by an Italian merchant and moved to Italy. While there, the merchant put her in the care of the Canossian Sisters in Venice where she learned about Christianity. When the merchant wanted to take her back to Africa, she refused to reenter slavery, and the Italian courts decided in her favor. She entered the Church shortly thereafter and eventually became a sister herself. She received her first Eucharist from the future Pope Pius X. She died on February 8, 1947 and was canonized in 2000.

St. Josephine Bakhita, pray for us!

Catechist Meeting

A meeting will take place on **Thursday, February 9th** at either 11:00AM or 7:00PM for your convenience. All catechists are encouraged to attend one of these sessions.

First Reconciliation Retreat and Sacrament Reception

Please keep the young members of our parish in your prayer as they come together for a morning of retreat before they receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation for the very first time on **Saturday, February 11th** from 10:00am until 2:00pm.



Catholic Teens

Our Lady Queen of Peace, St. Thomas the Apostle and St. James the Greater have formed a new youth group for all teens in High School. **Come join us and see what's going on!!!** Our next gathering will take place at Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish **today, Sunday, February 5th from 6:00- 8:00pm.** There will be plenty of fun, games, music, events and prayer.

The Religious Education Inclement Weather Policy is that the cancellation of classes due to inclement weather will be announced and posted on www.wsus1023.com. If it is not possible for you to check there, you can always call the Religious Education Office at 973-948-7004 and listen to any cancellation message there.

Soup on a Saturday was a huge success. We sold 149 quarts of soup/chili and, with some extra donations, we raised \$1,068.00 for St. James. Thank you to the soup makers: Art & Maria Henn, Mike & Linda Spinapolice, Bill & Joan Henn and Bill & Valerie Ricciardi. There were no expenses since the chefs donated the ingredients, containers and their time. Thank you also to the parish for supporting this fundraiser!



A FRESH PERSPECTIVE ON THE SUNDAY READINGS
HIS WORD TODAY by Rev. William J. Reilly

Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time February 5, 2017

“Thus says the Lord: Share your bread with the hungry, shelter the oppressed and the homeless; clothe the naked when you see them, and do not turn your back on your own... you are the salt of the earth... you are the light of the world.”

It is hard for us to escape the direct teaching of Jesus and the prophet Isaiah. A familiar biblical question ‘what are we to do?’ finds a ready answer in these two scripture sources.

What Christian cannot be moved when we see images of the millions of refugees fleeing the wars in Iraq and Syria, drowning in the Mediterranean. How few Christians respond with compassion and empathy, afraid to take the risk to care for suffering humanity. Do I forget that they too are made in the image and likeness of God? Even if some have less than noble intentions, do we let all suffer?

How is it I live as salt of the earth? How can I be light of the world? Agencies do incredible work aiding those in need. Our church is at the forefront. Consider Jesuit Refugee Services, Catholic Relief Services, Doctors Without Borders, CNEWA and Aid to the Church in Need and countless others responding generously. Why do I sit back as others need the salt and light that we are?

More than the financial aid you might give is the attitude of grave concern in these moments of crisis.

The Columbiettes wish to thank all who donated to our diaper drive. It is most appreciated. We are now collecting toiletries for women’s shelters. There is a basket in the Gathering Space.

St. Thomas History – Bishop McLaughlin named Rev. Matthew J. Sharkey as Administrator of the Western Sussex Missions - effective January 1, 1945. From a letter written on stationery from St. Bartholomew's, Msgr. Kupke relates that Father applied for a pastorate which had come open and was made the pastor of St. Vincent de Paul on February 24th, 1945.

This Week in Our Parishes

STC – St. Thomas Church or Fr. Lewis Center

SJC – St. James Church or Church Hall

REC – Fr. Gacquin Religious Ed. Center

Sunday, February 5, 2017

5th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Blessing of St. Blaise at all Masses

8:00 a.m. SJC Coffee Hour after Mass

9:30 a.m. STC C.L.O.W.

11:30a.m. SJC Coffee Hour after Mass

6:00 p.m. Youth Group (at O.L.Q.P. till 8 p.m.)

Monday, Feb. 6

11:00a.m. REC Prayer Shawl & Ros. Makers' Mtg

Tuesday, Feb. 7

10:00a.m. STC Reflection on Readings

4:00 p.m. REC Relig. Ed. Gr. 1 & 2

Wednesday, Feb. 8

4:00 p.m. REC Relig. Ed. Gr. 3, 4 & 5

7:00 p.m. STC Adoration & Rosary with K of C

7:30 p.m. STC Knights of Columbus Mtg.

Thursday, Feb. 9

Friday, Feb. 10

9:00 a.m. STC Adoration of Blessed Sacrament
after Mass, till 12 Noon

10:00a.m. STC Legion of Mary Mtg.

1:00 p.m. STC Montague Seniors Mtg.

Saturday, Feb. 11

10:00a.m. STC 1st Reconciliation Retreat

1:00 p.m. STC First Reconciliation

4:30 p.m. STC Confirmation Prep at REC
--after Mass at STC

Sunday, February 12, 2017

6th Sunday in Ordinary Time

National Catholic Schools Week

9:30 a.m. STC Coffee Hour after Mass

9:30 a.m. REC Mass & Class Gr. 6, 7, 8

10:30a.m. STC Columbiettes

6:00 p.m. Youth Group (at O.L.Q.P. till 8 p.m.)

Next Sunday's Readings: 6th Ord.

1st Reading: *Sirach 15: 15--20*

Resp. Psalm: *Psalm 119*

2nd Reading: *1 Corinthians 2: 6--10*

Gospel: *Matthew 5: 17--37*

"Building on Our Past; Securing Our Future"

Our Increased Offering Campaign

This week you will receive a brochure in the mail detailing the *Increased Offertory Program* which our parishes will be participating in over the next few weeks. This informative brochure is intended to explain the financial needs of our parishes and why we are having a dedicated focus on our parish offertory.

Commitment Sunday for this program is next week-end, Feb. 11th and 12th.

We ask all parishioners to spend some time in prayer this week, and in discussion with your family about your current level of giving to your parish. We will explain more and invite your commitment next week-end. If you have any questions regarding the Increased Offertory Campaign, please feel free to contact our parish office. Every parish of our Diocese is involved in this program.

Blessing of St. Blaise. This week-end at all Masses we are offering the Blessing of Saint Blaise. With two candles (unlit) the priest will offer a blessing for your throat, and for your general health in body and soul.

This blessing recalls the times of St. Blaise, a bishop of Sebaste in Armenia during the fourth century. Very little is known about his life. According to various accounts he was a physician before becoming a bishop. His fame spread throughout the entire Church in the Middle Ages because he was reputed to have miraculously cured a little boy who nearly died because of a fishbone in his throat. From the eighth century he has been invoked on behalf of the sick, especially those afflicted with illnesses of the throat.

To grow in faith: Visit: FORMED.org;

Parish Code: HCVWQC; Password: formed

From a FORMED user somewhere: "What you are doing at the Augustine Institute is absolutely, breathtakingly amazing! On behalf of our parish, I would like to thank you for the treasures of FORMED. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, we are slowly and steadily evangelizing our parish and those around us. I believe that this is taking place all over the country because of the fruits of your work."

Two Questions:

1. How much time do you spend on Facebook each day?
2. How much time do you spend in the Bible each day?