



The Saint Thomas Times
Church of Saint Thomas of Aquin
Ogdensburg, New Jersey



2015

Dear Parish Family,

Well, as we begin the first week of September we realize that the summer season is coming to a quick end. It was a grand one weather wise, with many comfortable days, very few humid days and heat waves.

I hope that you all had a relaxing summer, are fully refreshed in mind, body and spirit, ready to return to your regular schedules. September is that pre-autumn month when we get a little taste of summer and fall weather. The days are less humid, the nights get a bit cooler and we know that winter is on the horizon. This month is also the start of another academic year, so I wish all the students of our Parish Family in pre-school, grammar school, high school and college much success as you return to school. Be assured of my prayers for you each day.

I look forward to our **Annual Parish Family Picnic** and the drawing of our **Annual 50/50 Raffle** next Sunday, September 13th. The afternoon festivities will begin with an outdoor Liturgy at 12 Noon. Join your fellow parishioners for an afternoon of fellowship and fun along with some good food and drink! The Raffle drawing will be held at 3:00 PM. Just as a reminder: the 50/50 Raffle is an important fund raiser for our parish, so I ask that you please sell your tickets and return them to the Parish Office or drop them in the collection basket this weekend. Thank you for your support!

We also look forward to the beginning of our Parish Activities: **Religious Education and Confirmation Classes** for the 2015/2016 academic year begin the week of September 14th. **Coffee And...** will start up again on Sunday morning, September 20th after the 8:00 AM and 10:30 AM Liturgies. Plans are in the working with our Rosary Society who will be sponsoring a **Family Communion Breakfast** on Sunday, October 4th and again plan to conduct the **Christmas Wreath Sale** in November. The Holy Name Society is in the planning stages for a **Beefsteak Dinner** to be held in October. So folks, it looks like a busy fall season ahead!

Now to a topic that is difficult for you to hear, and certainly difficult for me to bring up and that is parish finances. As you have probably noticed in the collection report in the weekly bulletin, our weekly collections go up and down, sometimes they are at a steady level, sometimes they drop, this is due to the fact that Sunday Mass attendance fluctuates, some weekend's attendance is good, others weekend's it is low, causing a drop in the collections. I understand that we have family commitments, illnesses, vacations, emergencies arise etc. and you will miss a weekend every now and then. Believe me I VERY MUCH APPRECIATE your continued generosity. So, I kindly ask that if you miss a weekend, *to please consider* making up your contribution the following weekend as this will greatly help with our financial obligations in the daily operation of our parish. I wish to express *my sincere thanks* to all of you for your continued support with your time, talent and treasure to our wonderful parish.



POPE FRANCIS VISIT TO THE UNITED STATES: We look forward with much anticipation to the Papal visit of our Holy Father, Pope Francis to the United States from September 22nd - 27th. He will be visiting Washington, DC, New York City and Philadelphia, where he will attend the 2015 World Meeting of Families. *"The presence of Pope Francis at the World Meeting of Families in our country will be a joyful moment for millions of Catholics and people of good will. Our great hope has been that the Holy Father would visit us to inspire our families in their mission of love,* said Archbishop Joseph E. Kurtz, President of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. Unfortunately there will be no tickets or transportation from any of the Dioceses in New Jersey to the events of the Papal Visit. My suggestion: it would be best to watch all the events on that innovative invention called the television. So, as we prepare for Pope Francis' visit, I ask that we all pray for his safe journey and successful visit to our country.



DAILY MASS: There is no better activity that anyone of us can do than attend Mass daily, and receive Jesus in the Eucharist for daily spiritual nourishment. Attending Mass during the week helps further strengthen our relationship with God and provides us with a continued opportunity for spiritual growth. Taking about 20 minutes of our time, at the start of our day to attend Mass helps to reinforce the value of God in our lives. Daily Mass is a spiritual exercise that will renew and strengthen us and our performance throughout the entire day. So folks, why not take advantage of all the spiritual blessings you will receive by attending as many Daily Masses as possible. Just as daily exercise is good for the heart; daily Mass attendance is good for the soul! As a reminder: Daily Mass is celebrated at 7:30 AM on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday unless otherwise noted in the Bulletin.



Eucharistic Adoration Just a reminder: our monthly Eucharistic Adoration is held on the First Friday of each month. As Bishop Serratelli reminds us: *"Adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament is an authentic expression of faith in the Eucharist. It helps us recover the sense of the sacred in the liturgy and also in life. By adoring the Most Blessed Sacrament, we come to know not simply intellectually but experientially the meaning of Jesus' final words in Mathew's gospel: 'Behold I am with you always even until the end of time.'" (Matthew 28:20). Thus, we become aware of how sacred all life truly is..."* With these words from our Bishop, I invite you to come spend some time in prayer before our Lord truly present in the Eucharist on the next First Friday, October 2nd, beginning with the Celebration of the Eucharist at 7:00 PM followed by Eucharistic Adoration until 8:15 PM.

FEAST DAYS IN SEPTEMBER



The Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary (September 8th). The Feast of the Birth of the Blessed Virgin Mary has been celebrated in the Church at least since the 8th Century. The birth of Mary was also miraculous. She was conceived without sin as a special grace because God had selected her to become the mother of His Son.



The Exaltation of the Holy Cross (September 14th). This feast celebrates a double anniversary: the discovery of our Lord's cross by the empress, St Helena in 320 and the dedication of the Constantinian basilicas at the sight of the Holy Sepulcher and of Calvary in 335.



Saint Matthew, Apostle and Evangelist (September 21st). Matthew the Apostle is one of the greatest evangelists, whose account, in the first book of the New Testament, of Christ's teaching and life, is the most detailed and complete - the most accurate catechism, if you will, for the Christian faithful. As his gospel reveals, Matthew was a tax collector and he abandoned being a publican when called by Our Lord to follow Him while sitting in the tax-collector's seat in Capharnaum.



Saints Michael, Gabriel, and Raphael, Archangels (September 29th). These biblical messengers signify God's transcendence and loving care: Michael, meaning who is like God, is the patron of security forces and of the sick. Gabriel meaning God's Strength, is the patron of telecommunications and the postal service. Raphael meaning God's Remedy, is patron of travelers and the blind.

IN SEPTEMBER WE CELEBRATE:



Labor Day (September 7th). This holiday, which always is observed on the first Monday of September, has been a federal holiday since 1894. Its purpose is to honor the nation's working people. Most Americans consider Labor Day the end of the summer, and the beaches and other popular resort areas are packed with people enjoying one last three-day weekend. For many students it marks the opening of the school year. The Eucharist will be celebrated Labor Day morning at 9:00 AM. Please join me to thank God for the blessings of our daily labor.



Patriots Day (September 11th). We remember on the 14th Anniversary this tragic day the 2,793 fellow Americans who lost their lives in New York, Washington DC and Pennsylvania in 2001. We also remember their families, those injured, the rescue workers, clean-up crews, our government officials, our military and all others affected by this tragedy. We must never forget what was taken from us and we pray that those who lost their lives on this day 14 years ago may rest in peace.



Autumn Equinox - First Day of Fall/Autumn (September 23rd). The air is crisp, the foliage is spectacular, and there is a nip in the air. Summer is over, and winter is quickly approaching. Autumn is the second time of balance in the year, when day and night are of equal length. It is a time to celebrate the harvest and to store our abundance for the coming cold but cozy months of winter; there is great energy in the air. From this point on, we celebrate the oncoming season of shorter days and longer nights.



GOD'S GATHERING OF CHILDREN - RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CLASSES for 2015/2016 will begin on Monday evening, September 14th from 6:45-8:00 PM for Grades 5-8 and on Wednesday afternoon, September 16th from 3:00-4:00 PM for Grades 1-4. All of our Religious Ed classes will meet at the Ogdensburg School at the times indicated. If you have not registered your child/children for Religious Education classes, please do so as soon as possible by returning the form to the Parish Office with the required fee. There will be a **Parent Meeting on Tuesday evening, September 8th at 7:00 PM** in the Church for **ALL** the parents of our children in Grades 1 - 8, who are registered in our Religious Education Program. For more information about our Religious Education Program (Grades K-8) please feel free to call Ms. Brigette Hanley, our Director of Religious Education at 973.864.4441.



"BE SEALED WITH THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT" - CONFIRMATION PROGRAM

Confirmation Classes for 2015/2016 will begin for Grades 9 and 10 on Monday evening, September 14th at the Ogdensburg School from 6:45-8:00 PM. **PLEASE NOTE THE CLASS TIME AND LOCATION CHANGE.** Class schedules for Grades 9 and 10 have been e-mailed only to those who are registered in the Program. There will be a **Parent Meeting on Thursday evening, September 3rd from 7:00-8:00 PM** in the Church for all parents of the students who are registered in our Confirmation Program. Finally, Bishop Serratelli will celebrate the Sacrament of Confirmation for our 10th Grade Confirmation Candidates here at Saint Thomas on **Sunday, April 17th, 2016 at the 12 Noon Liturgy.** Any questions about our Confirmation program please call the Parish Office. Thank You!



PARISH MEETINGS: The Finance Council will meet on Wednesday evening, October 7th at 7:00 PM; the Parish Advisory Board will meet on Wednesday evening, October 14th at 7:00 PM. All meetings are held at the Rectory. The Rosary Society meets on the first Sunday of each month after the 8:00 AM Liturgy in the Church Hall. Our Holy Name Society meets four times a year. Dates of the meetings will be announced.

Have a wonderful month of September!
In His Love,

Fr. John