

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.

Welcome -We Are a Tithing Parish

Here is an ancient announcement of the Birth of the Lord among us. It is recorded in the Roman Martyrology, and in sweeping terms shows the birth of Jesus as the center and summit of all history.

The Twenty-Fifth of December

When ages beyond number had run their course
From the creation of the world,
When God in the beginning created heaven and earth,
And formed man in his own likeness;
When century upon century had passed
Since the Almighty had set his bow in the clouds
After the great flood,
As a sign of covenant and peace;
In the twenty-first century since Abraham, our father in faith,
Came out of Ur of the Chaldees;
In the thirteenth century since the People of Israel were led
By Moses in the Exodus from Egypt;
Around the thousandth year since David was appointed King;
In the sixty-fifth week of the prophesy of Daniel;
In the one hundred and ninety-fourth Olympiad;
In the year seven hundred and fifty-two
Since the foundation of the City of Rome;
In the forty-second year of the reign
Of Caesar Octavian Augustus,
The whole world being at peace,

JESUS CHRIST, eternal God and Son of the eternal Father,
Desiring to consecrate the world by his most loving presence,
Was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
And when nine months had passed since his conception,
Was born of the Virgin Mary in Bethlehem of Judah,
And was made man:

The Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ according to the flesh.

THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD
December 25, 2016

St. James the Greater

The Sanctuary Lamp this week burns in
Memory of Roger Ervey at the
Request of the Cerra Family

SATURDAY, December 31

8:00AM – Eileen Nolan

SUNDAY, FEAST OF MARY, MOTHER OF GOD

January 1

8:00AM – John & Eric Cerra
req. by Joan & Harvey McKean

11:30AM – Michael Fuller

ST. JAMES THE GREATER

\$1,282.00 – Regular Collection – December 18, 2016

\$2,477.00 – Weekly Budget Need

\$1,055.00 – Regular Collection – December 20, 2015

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, Marguerite Phillips, 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 in
Memory of Rosemarie Bastian at the
Request of her Family

MONDAY, December 26

9:00AM – Intentions of Rosemarie Briegel

TUESDAY, December 27

9:00AM – Intentions of Eleanor Roll
Birthday Celebration
req. by her daughter, Ann Dilger

WEDNESDAY, December 28

9:00AM – Holy Souls in Purgatory

THURSDAY, December 29

No Mass

FRIDAY, December 30

9:00AM – Intentions of Father Alfred Vito
- Father John Murray
- Families of the Parishes
req. by Mary Flexer

SATURDAY, NEW YEAR'S EVE, December 31

4:30PM – Michael Wenning
req. by Omar & Marie
- Intentions of Rita Wenning
Birthday Celebration
req. by Omar & Marie

SUNDAY, FEAST OF MARY, MOTHER OF GOD

January 1

9:30AM – Bernie Reich
req. by his wife, Grace
- Intentions of the Legion of Mary
req. by the Legion of Mary

ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE

\$1,605.00 – Regular Collection – December 18, 2016

\$4,410.00 – Weekly Budget Need

\$2,158.00 – Regular Collection – December 20, 2015

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.



The Feast of the Holy Family

On December 30th, we celebrate the Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph. This feast reminds us that Jesus grew up in a family long after his birth in the manger. The Holy Family is a model for all Catholic Christian families as we walk through life's joys and trials together. Blessed and Joyous Christmas.



Children's Christmas Pageant and Church Decorating

Thank you to all parishioners who came out for our Children's Christmas Pageant. Special thanks to our Confirmation Candidates who put so much time in with the children. Also, to our Knights of Columbus for assisting with the lighting of our parish Christmas Tree. Extra special thanks, of course, to all our children who joyfully participated and to their parents who encouraged them to do so. May each of you be blessed for your precious "birthday gift" to Our Lord.



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 "next year" on **Sunday, January 8th from 6:00- 8:00pm**. There will be plenty of fun, games, music, events and prayer.

2016: St. Thomas 75th Anniversary Year

St. Thomas History – Following Father Lewis' retirement, Rev. A. Richard Carton was assigned as pastor. During his tenure, the Father Lewis Center was dedicated in February, 2004, the Columbiettes formed April, 2006 and on January 1, 2007, the Msgr. James Gacquin Youth and Religious Education Center, which was acquired thanks to the bequest of Mrs. Joan Spoolstra, was dedicated.

Our very own Knights of Columbus Council #12974 held a "Pasta Knight" at St. Thomas Church in the Father Lewis Center on November 26th. The event was a great success due to all the time and effort of all those who donated, prepared, cooked, set up, served and cleaned up. Events like this are not possible without the cooperation of the parish. Thank you for your support. I also wish to thank President, Pat Lane and our sister Columbiettes for providing such a bountiful of desserts. We, the Msgr. James F. Gacquin Council #12974, just wanted to acknowledge all who made our "Pasta Knight" a success. Hope to see you at the next one.

Soup on a Saturday

St. James the Greater will again be sponsoring a take-out soup fundraiser on Saturday, January 28, 2017. Order a quart (or more) of Venison Chili by Art & Maria Henn, regular Chili by Bill & Joan Henn, Italian Wedding soup by Bill Ricciardi or Pasta e Fagioli by Mike and Linda Spinapolice. Price is \$7.00 per quart. You must order in advance by January 22nd. Pick up is on the 28th from 12:00pm to 2:00pm at St. James the Greater. Fill out an order form found in the back of the church and place in the collection basket OR give to Bill Ricciardi, Art Henn or Mike Spinapolice. You may also e-mail your order to Bill Ricciardi at wjr218@optonline.net.

Rachel's Vineyard Retreat

Rachel's Vineyard is a safe place to renew, rebuild and redeem hearts broken by abortion. Weekend retreats offer a supportive, confidential and non-judgmental environment where women and men can express, release and reconcile painful post-abortive emotions and begin the process of restoration, renewal and healing. A Rachel's Vineyard Retreat will be held from Friday evening, January 27 through Sunday afternoon, January 29, 2017 in the Stirling area. To register or for more information, contact Marie at 973-377-1004, ext. 425. All calls will be held in the strictest confidence.

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, December 25, 2016

Feast of Christmas !

Monday, Dec. 26

Tuesday, Dec. 27

10:00a.m. STC Reflection on Readings

Wednesday, Dec. 28

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

Thursday, Dec. 29

Friday, Dec. 30

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

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

Saturday, Dec. 31

New Year's Eve

For Masses: see schedule

Sunday, January 1, 2017

Feast of Mary, Mother of God

Happy New Year !

Next Sunday's Readings: *Christmas*

Christmas is celebrated with at least four sets of Readings. Here are the Readings for Christmas Eve:

1st Reading: *Numbers 6: 22--27*

Resp. Psalm: *Psalm 67*

2nd Reading: *Galatians 4: 4--7*

Gospel: *Luke 2: 16--21*

"He was created of a mother whom He created. He was carried by hands that He formed. He cried in the manger in wordless infancy. He, the Word, without whom all human eloquence is mute."

~Saint Augustine

"How many observe Christ's birthday! How few, His precepts!"

~Benjamin Franklin

Merry Christmas !

Along with the entire staff of our parishes-- Saint James and Saint Thomas—may I wish you all the blessings of our Savior's Birth. I offer my best wishes along with Deacon Wayne, Mary Flexer our D.R.E., Pat Hope our Pastoral Associate and Rosemarie Briegel our Parish Secretary. We hope that you will be able to enjoy a blessed and happy Christmas with your families and loved ones.

Pope Francis' 'Urbi et Orbi' Christmas Message, 2015 ('to the City and to the World'):

Christ is born for us, let us rejoice in the day of our salvation! Let us open our hearts to receive the grace of this day, which is Christ himself. Jesus is the radiant "day" which has dawned on the horizon of humanity. A day of mercy, in which God our Father has revealed his great tenderness to the entire world. A day of light, which dispels the darkness of fear and anxiety. A day of peace, which makes for encounter, dialogue and reconciliation. A day of joy: a "great joy" for the poor, the lowly and for all the people (cf. Lk 2:10).

New Year's Day, the first day of the new calendar, is recognized and celebrated by people the world over. It is also a special day for us as Catholics. We celebrate also the **Feast of Mary, Mother of God**. She is the first and best of the human race. She brought forth the Savior of the world. She herself lived a life of holiness in constant communion with the Lord. Her Feast day is an important moment in our Church. **Our Masses for New Year's and the Feast of Mary, Mother of God will follow our usual week-end schedule:**

Saturday 4:30 p.m. at St. Thomas

Sunday: 8:00 a.m. at St. James;

9:30 a.m. at St. Thomas; 11:30 a.m. at St. James

"It is impossible to conceive how different things would have turned out if that birth had not happened when, where, and how it did. For millions of people who have lived since, the birth of Jesus made possible not just a new way of understanding life but a new way of living it. It is a truth that, for twenty centuries, there have been untold numbers of men and women who, in untold numbers of ways, have been so grasped by the child who was born, so caught up in the message he taught and the life he lived, that they have found themselves profoundly changed by their relationship with him."

~Frederick Buechner, Pastor