

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

“They shall beat their swords into plowshares.”

Isaiah 2: 4

Sparks fly with each strike of the hammer. Heat billows from the furnace. The sound of metal against metal clangs in the air. A blacksmith, applying the tools of his trade, takes a sword and slowly, painstakingly, reshapes it into a plow blade.

Is this what Advent looks like to you? It's the image that Isaiah used when he prophesied about the coming Messiah. He described a kingdom where swords were no longer necessary. Instead, these obsolete tools of war and instruments of death would be turned into instruments of life and peace.

This is how God asks us to prepare for the coming of Jesus at Christmas; it's what Advent is all about. We all have swords in our lives, “tools” that we use to hurt one another. Maybe we have a short temper. We might be moody and hold grudges. Or maybe we're quick to insult or condemn. The Lord wants to take those biting words and teach us how to speak with compassion and understanding. He wants to take our anger and re-form it into mercy. He wants to help us take steps toward making peace in our relationships.

The image of swords turning into plowshares is one way to explain why Jesus became man—to turn us from the destruction of sin so that each of us can become a tool for peace. This is what the Messianic Age looks like—an age when people are more concerned about building each other up than tearing them down.

Experience tells us that this beating of swords into plowshares doesn't happen automatically. We need to cooperate with the divine Blacksmith. We need to surrender our swords to Him so that He can help us re-shape them. That's why the Sacrament of Reconciliation is so vital.

So take the time to examine your conscience before Christmas. Don't be afraid to look for those swords, the ways that you have injured yourself or the people around you. Then go to Confession. God is ready to forgive, heal and strengthen you. He is ready to make you an expert in the art of peace, not war. He can take every act of repentance, every bit of time spent in prayer, every sacrifice or act of generosity, and fill it with His grace.

**Father, thank you for this season of Advent.
Lord, I surrender my swords to You**

--from: *“The Word Among Us*
December 2017

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT
December 10, 2017

St. James the Greater

The Sanctuary Lamp this week burns in
Memory of Dale R. Briegel at the
Request of his son, Dale

SATURDAY, December 16

8:00AM – Michael Soletro
req. by Mike & Linda Worden

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT
December 17

8:00AM – John Klimkiewicz
req. by Jane & Doug Sandberg
-Michael Soletro
req. by Linda & Mike Spinapolic

11:30AM – Richard Gray
req. by his wife, Peggy

ST. JAMES THE GREATER

\$1,700.00 – Regular Collection – December 3, 2017 +
\$ 225.00 - Online Giving
\$2,477.00 – Weekly Budget Need
\$1,937.00 – Regular Collection – December 4, 2016
Consider a gift to St. James Parish in your will.

For On-Line Giving: log onto our website:
saintjamesthomas.org Then go to On-Line Giving link.



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.

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.

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 Spinapolic at 973-293-7031.



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*

St. Thomas the Apostle

The Sanctuary Lamp this week burns in
Memory of Kazimiera Szwajkiewicz at the
Request of John & Maria Babon

MONDAY, December 11

9:00AM – Special Intentions

TUESDAY, December 12

9:00AM – Intentions of Nora Jane Normill and Shaun Carroll
-the Gorman Family

WEDNESDAY, December 13

9:00AM – Intentions of Martin Croughin
req. by the Gorman Family

THURSDAY, December 14

No Mass

FRIDAY, December 15

9:00AM – Intentions of the extended Gorman Family
req. by the Gorman Family

SATURDAY, Vigil, December 16

4:30PM – Michael Reich
req. by Mary & Ed Tomasula
-Barbara K. Kientzler
req. by her son, Charles

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT
December 17

9:30AM – Special Intentions
-Cathy Pullis
req. by her niece, Lisa Dispoto

ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE

\$1,993.00 – Regular Collection – December 3, 2017 +
\$ 328.00 – Online Giving
\$4,410.00 – Weekly Budget Need
\$2,365.00 – Regular Collection – December 4, 2016
Consider a gift to St. Thomas Parish in your will.

For On-Line Giving: log onto our website:
saintjamesthomas.org Then go to On-Line Giving link.

TO CHRIST THE DIVINE HEALER WE PRAY FOR:

Margaret Accordino, Mary Cunico, Frances Demalderis, Rozanne DeNardo, Derya Dimertas, Judy Dressie, Rachel Gibbs, Mary Guimes, Barbara Haggerty, Carmen Howell, Jennifer, David Koehler, Betty Lacovara, Angela Lanzalotta, Jeff Librizzi, Joseph Ligammari, Miriam Ligammari, Thomas Lynch, Betty Mastrelli, Sonny Mastrelli Sandy Matthews, John Meehan, Brian McKenna, Bill Myers, Jim Pantelmo, Danielle Parker, Tracey Perles, Flo Puccio, Sarah Scheckner, Alex Sepiol, Infant John Antonio Seti, Pam Spencer, Joan Strehl, Baby Teddy, Michael Toth, Jen Vaughn, Tarra Wagner, Thomas Walsh, Joan White and Robert Woodcock



Symbols of the Season ~ Advent

Advent is rich with sacred symbols. The Scriptures are filled with images of darkness and light, disharmony and silence, waiting and fulfillment. The deep midnight blue or purple that graces our churches indicates that we are in darkness without Christ and also symbolizes the penitential nature of the season. Arrive a bit early at Mass each Saturday or Sunday and look around for the signs and symbols of the season!

The Advent Calendar ~ While many Advent calendars today show images of the more secular images of the season, such as Santa Claus, the original Advent calendar was created to help mark the days of this holy season as we count down to the birth of Christ.

Family Faith Idea ~ Each time you open up a little door or window of your Advent calendar, share one way that you will try to share the Good News that day. Ideas include being kind to strangers, helping a neighbor, calling a friend, making room for someone on the bus, listening to a person in need, practicing patience or giving some time to an elderly person struggling with loneliness. Blessed Advent!

Confirmation Retreat

Please keep the teens (first-year candidates) of our parishes in your prayers today who are on their Confirmation I Retreat at the Sacred Heart Center in Newton.



Children's Christmas Pageant and Tree Lighting

Our annual Children's Christmas Pageant will take place on Sunday, December 17th at St. Thomas Church at 3:00PM. **Please have all children in the Father Lewis Center by 2:30.** Also, please plan to have your family participate in the "first-ever" Cookie Challenge by baking and bringing your favorite cookies to the gathering afterwards.



Catholic Teens

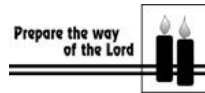
Our next gathering will take place at Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish **today, Sunday, December 17th, from 6:00-8:00PM. All High School Teens and 7th & 8th Graders are invited to this event!!!** Join us for an Evening of Music by Singer/Songwriter Dan Ferrari, an Inspirational Talk by Youth Minister Stephanie Twedt, Dinner and Desserts and Campfire and Games.



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 the internet, you can call the Religious Education Office at 973-948-7004 and listen to any cancellation message there.

PLEASE NOTE: The St. Thomas Pancake Breakfast has been postponed. Also, there will be no pot luck dinner in December.

"SOUP ON A SATURDAY"....St. James the Greater will again be sponsoring a take-out soup fundraiser on **Saturday, January 27, 2018**. 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 & Linda Spinapolice. Price is \$7.00 per quart. Please get your orders in early as there will be limits on the Venison Chili and the Pasta e Fagioli. You must order in advance by January 21st. Pick up is on January 27th 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@ooptonline.net.



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

Second Sunday of Advent December 10, 2017

"The Lord does not delay in keeping His promises, though some consider it 'delay.' Rather He shows you generous patience since He wants no one to perish but all to come to repentance... I send my messenger before you to prepare your way, a herald voice in the desert crying, 'Make ready the way of the Lord clear him a straight path.'"

The letter of Peter and Isaiah's message in the gospel of Mark, provide a wonderful opportunity to begin this second week of advent. Somehow it is easy, or convenient, to forget or presume why Jesus came two thousand years ago. A lost people needed a savior, to bring them back to union with their creator. He came, revealed the Father's love for us and still invites us to respond to that love. Do I see my need today, and the needs of my family and our world?

Let's face it, our messed up world needs a savior, not a political leader or powerful military strength, but someone to free us from sin and all that divides us, the barriers which keep us from growing in holiness, in grace, or love of God and neighbor. Advent invites us to focus on our need from the Lord today. Advent, the great time of hope and expectation calls us to make ready, the way of the Lord, to have Him into our hearts and the hearts of others.

'Come Lord Jesus.'

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 10, 2017

2nd Sunday of Advent

10:00a.m. Confirmation I Retreat

--Sacred Ht. Center, Newton

Monday, Dec. 11

7:00 p.m. SJC Sacrament of Reconciliation

Tuesday, Dec. 12

Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe

10:00a.m. STC Reflections on Readings

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

Wednesday, Dec. 13

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, Dec. 14

Friday, Dec. 15

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

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

10:00a.m. STC Moms & Tots Play Group

Saturday, Dec. 16

4:30 p.m. STC Mass & Confirmation Prep.

Sunday, December 17, 2017

3rd Sunday of Advent

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

11:00a.m. STC Columbiettes' Mtg.

3:00 p.m. Christmas Pageant & Tree Lighting &
Cookie Bake-off Contest

Next Sunday's Readings: 3rd Advent

1st Reading: *Isaiah 61: 1--2a, 10--11*

Resp. Psalm: *Luke 1: 46--54*

2nd Reading: *1 Thessalonians 5: 16--24*

Gospel: *John 1: 6--8, 19--28*

*"We do not preach only one coming of Christ, but a second as well, much more glorious than the first. The first coming was marked by **patience**; the second will bring the **crown** of a divine kingdom."*

--St Cyril of Jerusalem, (313--386 a.d.)

Confessions during Advent. In the Gospels, St. John the Baptist warns us to repent, for the Kingdom of God is at hand. It's a warning for all time, for the Lord can come at any moment. This Advent Season is a call to penance, and to watchfulness. Make use of this Season in the best way possible: by making a good Confession.

Confessions will be available on Mondays at 7 p.m.—8 p.m. according to this schedule:

Mon. Dec. 11—St. James

Mon. Dec. 18—St. Thomas

Masses at Christmas. To help your planning for this special day, here is the schedule of Masses at our churches for this year:

4:00 p.m. *Christmas Eve Mass at St. James*

6:00 p.m. *Christmas Eve Mass at St. Thomas*

11:30 p.m. *Lessons & Carols Service at St. Thomas*

12 Mid. *Midnight Mass at St. Thomas*

9:30 a.m. *Christmas Day Mass at St. Thomas*

11:30 a.m. *Christmas Day Mass at St. James*

A Living Nativity is being performed at Sugar Sweet Farms, 186 Route 94 in Lafayette. Performances are at these times: Fridays: 7 p.m. Saturdays: 12 Noon, 2 p.m., 4 p.m., 6 p.m. Sundays: 12 Noon, 2 p.m., 4 p.m. Christmas Eve: 12 Noon. Admission: \$8 for all.

Choose Your Tree. St. Paul's Abbey, on Route 206 one mile south of Newton, has thousands of Christmas trees ready to choose'n cut. Open 7 days a week from Nov. 24th till Dec. 23; 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

They also have the Abbey Gift Shop with many items that make ideal Christmas gifts, including books, jewelry and more.

Get FORMED for Advent:

www.FORMED.org Unlock spiritual treasures with our Parish Code: HCVWQC

Recommended at FORMED:

Audio: "Prepare the Way of the King," Scott Hahn

Video: "The Story of the Nativity"

Children: "Kristof and the First Christmas Tree"

St. Patrick's Church, Milford is offering a course: *"A Biblical Walk with the Blessed Mother."* Dates: Tues. Dec. 5, 12, and 19. Choice of times: either 12:30 p.m. or 6:30 p.m. each day. Meets at Office Building, 111 East High St. No registration fee. For more info call: Mr. Ray Proulx at 570-296-7645.