

# 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](mailto:stjamesthomas@aol.com)  
Website address: [saintjamesthomas.org](http://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](http://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](http://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**

# REASONS to Rejoice

*“Rejoice in the Lord always ! I say it again: Rejoice !!  
Everyone should see how unselfish you are. The Lord is near.”*

--Philippians 4: 4–5

Today we celebrate the joyfulness that colors (or should color) our lives, just because we are Christians. This day, the Third Sunday of Advent, is traditionally known as *Gaudete Sunday*—the Sunday of Rejoicing. We rejoice because the Lord is near. Like children who just can't wait for Christmas morning to get here, we too are already anticipating the happiness that Christmas promises. The Lord will be with us. We have nothing to fear. Even the Advent Wreath has a brighter rose or pink-shaded candle for us to light today. We begin to anticipate the great joy of the shepherds and the angels as they recognize God-among-us.

With the Lord comes security. We know that we are safe in His care. With security comes confidence, that the Lord will help us and guide us in every situation. With confidence comes a readiness to re-direct our lives and to open ourselves more fully to what the Lord asks of us. And with this openness to the Lord comes a willingness to offer His very love to others, by our own actions of love.

Jesus has shown us how to bring joy to others: by our acceptance of others; by showing ourselves to be people who can be trusted and depended upon. As He carried out His mission on earth, Jesus strengthened the weak, He enabled the blind to see, He helped the deaf to hear and the mute to speak up. He gave to each—a new hope and a reason for rejoicing.

Today many others, many even from our parishes, donate to the needy, bring food for the hungry, visit the sick, educate the young and even make Christmas Day brighter by providing gifts. And daily, people offer themselves in countless acts of selflessness for the good of others. And with each of these actions, God's Kingdom draws just a little closer. There are so many reasons to rejoice.

Happy “Gaudete Sunday.” Do something special to celebrate !

God bless you,  
Father Wayne

**THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT**  
**December 17, 2017**

**St. James the Greater**

The Sanctuary Lamp this week burns in  
Memory of Robert & Ann Lamb at the  
Request of their daughter, Peggy

**SATURDAY, December 23**

8:00AM – Intentions of Lillian Michiloff

**FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

**December 24**

8:00AM – Charlie Lombaerde

req. by his wife, Carol

-William Pagano

req. by his Children

11:30AM – William Quinn

req. by his Family

**CHRISTMAS EVE**

**SUNDAY, December 24**

4:00PM – Ann Jaros

req. by Art & Maria Henn

**CHRISTMAS DAY**

**MONDAY, December 25**

11:30am – People of the Parish, Living & Deceased

**ST. JAMES THE GREATER**

**\$ 780.00 – Regular Collection – December 10, 2017 +**

**\$ 160.00 - Online Giving**

**\$ 189.00 – Retirement Fund for Religious**

**\$2,477.00 – Weekly Budget Need**

**\$1,461.00 – Regular Collection – December 11, 2016**

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

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**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 Spinapolicc 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 Kate Olivo at the  
Request of her Family

**MONDAY, December 18**

9:00AM – John Sweeney

req. by his granddaughter, Mary Flexer

**TUESDAY, December 19**

9:00AM – Theresa & Walter Hoffman

req. by the Wainwright Family

**WEDNESDAY, December 20**

9:00AM – Father Eugene McQuaid

req. by Mary Flexer

**THURSDAY, December 21**

No Mass

**FRIDAY, December 22**

9:00AM – John Nacinovich

req. by Luisa & Dan

**SATURDAY, Vigil, December 23**

4:30PM – Deloris Spinks

req. by her husband, Russ

-Russell B. Spinks

req. by his Dad

-Jimmy Reed

req. by his Mom & Dad

**FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

**December 24**

9:30AM – Arthur & Elsie Bastian

req. by their son, Andy

-Intentions of Elizabeth Grodowsky

**CHRISTMAS EVE**

**Sunday, December 24**

6:00PM – People of the Parish, Living & Deceased

Midnight – Bill Wagner

req. by his daughter, Tarra

-Donald & Mary Powers

req. by their Daughters & Grandchildren

**CHRISTMAS DAY**

**MONDAY, December 25**

9:30AM – People of the Parish, Living & Deceased

**ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE**

**\$1,765.00 – Regular Collection – December 10, 2017 +**

**\$ 328.00 – Online Giving**

**\$ 444.00 – Retirement Fund for Religious**

**\$4,410.00 – Weekly Budget Need**

**\$2,937.00 – Regular Collection – December 11, 2016**

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

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**For On-Line Giving: log onto our website:**

**saintjamesthomas.org Then go to On-Line Giving link.**



## **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!

**Sacrifices for Baby Jesus** ~ The purpose of the four weeks of Advent is to spiritually prepare us for the coming of Christ. Each time that we deny ourselves, or do something kind for another person, it has an effect of allowing Christ to shine through us. This can be visually represented by the activity of *"Making Small Sacrifices for Jesus."* Each time a kindness is done by any family member, a small piece of straw is placed in Baby Jesus' manger. Day by day, and kind deed by kind deed, the pieces of straw accumulate. Then on Christmas Eve, the Baby Jesus is placed in the manger now filled with straw which offers him a comfortable place to lay his head. This is a tangible symbol for how we make room for Christ in our heart and soul. Blessed Advent!



## **Children's Christmas Pageant and Tree Lighting**

Our annual Children's Christmas Pageant will take place **today, Sunday, December 17<sup>th</sup>** at St. Thomas Church at 3:00PM. **Please have all children in the Father Lewis Center by 2:30.** Also, hope everyone has made batches of their "soon-to-be award winning cookies" and plans to participate in the "first-ever" Cookie Challenge afterwards!



## **Catholic Teens**

Our next gathering will take place at Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish **today, Sunday, December 17<sup>th</sup>, from 6:00-8:00PM.** **All High School Teens and 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> 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.



## **Happy Birthday Pope Francis**

Our Holy Father turns 81 on December 17<sup>th</sup>. Remember to say a prayer for him today!



**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](http://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.

## **St. James Annual Christmas Bazaar**

Thank you to all those who worked so tirelessly this past year to make our annual Christmas Bazaar such a great fundraiser. We were able to raise over \$2,600.00. Special thanks to Linda & Mike Spinapolice, Art & Maria Henn, Joan & Bill Henn, Virginia Madden, Diane Johnson, Bill Ricciardi, Louise Backus, Norma Lange, Janice Cerra, Jane & Doug Sandberg, Wendy Wesighan, Janet Scarpone, Michelle Henn and Jennifer Olenick. And especially to our young parishioners Corrine & Aiden Wesighan and Jillian, Alyssia and Brianne Olenick. You are our future.

**"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 21<sup>st</sup>. Pick up is on January 27<sup>th</sup> 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](mailto:wjr218@optonline.net).



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

## **Third Sunday of Advent December 17, 2017**

**"The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me. He has sent me to bring glad tidings to the lowly, to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to captives, and release to prisoners. To announce a year of favor from the Lord and a day of vindication by our God."**

Remember when Jesus read this passage in His synagogue in Nazareth? St. Luke tells us He said 'Today this Scripture passage is fulfilled in your hearings.' We often associate this passage at the time of ordination or confirmation. Today it is directed to me and tells me what to expect when the longed for Savior comes. He was 'anointed', the name Christ means the anointed one. He had a mission, He was sent. He had a message 'good news.' He looked for the lowly, the hurting, those bound by addictions and desperation. He came to free and form missionary disciples.

The mission of Jesus is our mission, the mission of the entire church. We are comfortable, but consider fellow Christians throughout the world suffering from poverty, political oppression. Consider missionaries serving the most pitiable people, like Doctors with Borders, the Catholic Near East Welfare Society Workers, Medical Mission Sisters bringing Isaiah's prompting to fulfillment.

Yes, the spirit of the Lord is upon all of us as we begin week three of Advent. Jesus has gifted us with His mission.

'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 17, 2017

#### 3<sup>rd</sup> 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

### Monday, Dec. 18

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

7:00 p.m. STC Sacrament of Reconciliation

### Tuesday, Dec. 19

10:00a.m. STC Reflections on Readings

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

7:00 p.m. REC Men's Prayer Group

### Wednesday, Dec. 20

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

### Thursday, Dec. 21

### Friday, Dec. 22

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. 23

### Sunday, December 24, 2017

#### 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent

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#### Next Sunday's Readings: 3<sup>rd</sup> Advent

1st Reading: *Samuel 7: 1–5, 8–12, 14–16*

Resp. Psalm: *Psalm 89*

2nd Reading: *Romans 16: 25--27*

Gospel: *Luke 1: 26--38*

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#### Confessions during Advent. Final

Confessions before Christmas:

Mon. Dec. 18—St. Thomas, 7 p.m.—8 p.m.

*“Christmas is joy, religious joy, God’s joy, an inner  
joy of light and peace.”* -- Pope Francis

**Masses at Christmas.** 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*

**Mary, the Mother of God.** New Year's Day  
is also a holy day for us as Catholics. It honors  
our Blessed Mother, who is the Mother of God's  
Son and the one through whom salvation was made  
possible for the world. As such, she deserves first  
place in our hearts—and on our calendar. Masses  
for this **holy day of obligation** are:

*Sun. eve., Dec. 31* 4:30 p.m. *at St. Thomas*

*Monday, Jan. 1* 8 00 a.m. *at St. James;*

9:30 a.m. *at St. Thomas*

11:30 a.m. *at St. James*

**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. 24<sup>th</sup> 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.

#### Blessing of Your Christmas Tree at Home

Lord our God,

we praise you for the light of creation:

the sun, the moon, and the stars of night.

We praise you for the light of Israel:

the Law, the prophets, and the wisdom of the  
Scriptures.

We praise you for Jesus Christ, your Son:

he is Emmanuel, God-with-us, the Prince of Peace,  
who fills us with the wonder of your love.

Lord God,

let your blessing come upon us

as we light our Christmas tree.

May the light and cheer it gives

be a sign of the joy that fills our hearts.

May all who delight in this tree

come to the knowledge and joy of salvation.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

--from the U. S. Conference of Catholic Bishops