

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

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.

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT
December 24, 2017

St. James the Greater

The Sanctuary Lamp this week burns in
Memory of Barbara Gioielli at the
Request of her Family

CHRISTMAS DAY

MONDAY, December 25

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

SATURDAY, December 30

8:00AM – Intentions of Joyce & Jim Guinn

FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY

December 31

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

11:30AM – Eileen Nolan
req. by her Family
-Intentions of the Religious Education Families

NEW YEAR'S DAY

MONDAY, January 1, 2018

8:00AM – Arthur & Elsie Bastian
req. by their son, Andy

11:30am – Kate Olivo
req. by her Family

ST. JAMES THE GREATER

\$ 969.00 – Regular Collection – December 17, 2017 +

\$ 255.00 - Online Giving

\$2,477.00 – Weekly Budget Need

\$1,282.00 – Regular Collection – December 18, 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 Spinapolicce 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 Jimmy Reed at the
Request of his Mom & Dad

CHRISTMAS DAY

MONDAY, December 25

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

TUESDAY, December 26

9:00AM – Karin Takacs
req. by the Cunico Family
-Protection of Babies in the Womb and their Families

WEDNESDAY, December 27

9:00AM – Anna Pigan
req. by Dave Ovejero
-Roman Szlosowski
req. by his daughter, Alicia

THURSDAY, December 28

No Mass

FRIDAY, December 29

9:00AM – Intentions of Miriam Ligammari
For Healing
req. by Luisa & Dan

SATURDAY, Vigil, December 30

4:30PM – Jerry & Judy Wainwright
req. by the Wainwright Family
-Intentions of Jim & Sandy Matthews
60th Wedding Anniversary
req. by the Wedemeier Family

FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY

December 31

9:30AM – Frank & Jane Varga
req. by their Family
-Intentions of Religious Education Families
-Special Intentions

NEW YEAR'S EVE

Sunday, December 31

4:30PM – Gene & Rosalie Mauro
req. by their Family

NEW YEAR'S DAY

MONDAY, January 1, 2018

9:30AM – Rosemarie Bastian
req. by her Family

ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE

\$2,737.00 – Regular Collection – December 17, 2017 +

\$ 328.00 – Online Giving

\$4,410.00 – Weekly Budget Need

\$1,605.00 – Regular Collection – December 18, 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.**



Symbols of the Season ~ Christmas

The Christmas season in the liturgical year of the Church is more than one day. In fact, the season begins with the vigil Masses on Christmas Eve and concludes in January on the feast of the Baptism of the Lord.

The Christmas Tree ~ The Christmas tree is a beautiful symbol of the Nativity. Like the evergreen branches, God's love for us never withers. The lights remind us that Christ is the Light of the World. An angel atop the tree points to the angels that announced Jesus' birth and a star on the highest branch represents the Star of Bethlehem that guided the Magi to the Christ Child. Christmas trees help us to remember Jesus and why he was born.

Family Faith Idea ~ As a family, offer this blessing for your tree and all it represents:

Loving God, encircle this tree with your blessing. May its twinkling lights remind us of the peace you bring to all the world. May we find joy in the memories we will share around it and may the gifts beneath our tree help us to appreciate the greatest gift of all – Your Beloved Son, Jesus, Amen

Joyous Christmas!



Happy Birthday Father Wayne

Our Pastor, Father Wayne, will be celebrating his birthday on December 27th (by, hopefully, getting some rest after all his beautiful Christmas Masses!!!). Remember to say a prayer for him today and wish him a very happy birthday the next time you see him!



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: There will be no 8:00AM Coffee Hour at St. James on January 7th. We will resume in February.



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

Fourth Sunday of Advent December 24, 2017

“Do not fear, Mary. You have found favor with God. You shall conceive and bear a son, and give Him the name Jesus. Great will be His dignity and He will be called Son of the Most High.”

The great moment in the history of salvation, began with the visit of the angel Gabriel and the invitation to be the mother of Jesus. It is not surprising that Mary hesitated, questioned and then consented. Wouldn't you? Her response 'I am the maidservant of the Lord. Let it be done to me as you say' redirected the course of human history.

The celebration of the Bethlehem event tonight, allows us not just to recall what happened, but to imitate Mary and permit the Lord to touch our lives in a truly special way. Our traditions and customs are rich as we relive Jesus' entering our lives again. The Simbang Gabi celebration of Filipino Catholics or Las Posadas of Latin Catholics lead us to the stable cave to meet and adore the Lord of history, the Lord of today. We have been praying 'Come Lord Jesus' for the four weeks of advent. Today, we welcome Him with joy.

As we celebrate this special night, may we be ready to open our door not just to Joseph and Mary, but Christ who comes to us.

“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@optonline.net.

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 24, 2017

4th Sunday of Advent

Christmas Eve

(see Col. 2 for Mass schedule)

Monday, Dec. 25

Feast of Christmas

Tuesday, Dec. 26

Wednesday, Dec. 27

Thursday, Dec. 28

Friday, Dec. 29

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

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

Saturday, Dec. 30

Sunday, December 31, 2017

Feast of the Holy Family

New Year's Eve

(see Col. 2 for Mass schedule)

Monday, January 1, 2018

Feast of Mary, Mother of God

Happy New Year !

Next Sunday's Readings: Holy Family

1st Reading: *Genesis 15: 1–6; 21: 1--3*

Resp. Psalm: *Psalms 105*

2nd Reading: *Hebrews 11: 8, 11–12, 17--19*

Gospel: *Luke 2: 22--40*

Personal Thanks. In the Christmas Season, we are filled with gratitude to our Lord Jesus for coming among us as a little baby. And we also become aware of all those who help us throughout the year, and who make our lives possible. I take this space to thank all of you who, through kindness and generosity and dedication and hard work, make our parishes to be as strong as they are, and to accomplish as much as they do. I thank you also for your continuing thoughtfulness and kindness and generosity to me all throughout the year. I offer my prayers for all in our parishes, that the Lord may bless you greatly with His love, at Christmastime and always. Father Wayne

Merry Christmas ! This might be slightly premature, but in few hours Christmas will be upon us. Along with entire staff of our parishes, I wish you all the blessings of our Savior's birth. I offer my best wishes along with Deacon Wayne, Mary Flexer our Director of Religious Ed., 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.

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

Pope Francis, 'Urbi et Orbi' Message, Christmas, 2016: "The power of this Child,

Son of God and Son of Mary, is not the power of this world, based on might and wealth; it is the power of love. It is the power which created the heavens and the earth, which gives life to all creation: to minerals, plants and animals; it is the force which attracts man and woman, and makes them one flesh, one single existence; it is the power which gives new birth, pardons faults, reconciles enemies, and transforms evil into good. It is the power of God. This power of love led Jesus Christ to strip himself of his glory and become man; it led him to give his life on the cross and to rise from the dead. It is the power of service, which inaugurates in our world the Kingdom of God, a kingdom of justice and peace."