



**ST. THOMAS AQUINAS**  
CATHOLIC CHURCH • BARTOW, FL  
DIOCESE OF ORLANDO

## ST. THOMAS ANNOUNCEMENTS

August 1, 2021

1. As Catholics we should come to Mass every weekend (The Lord's Day). Without the Eucharist we are not true followers of Christ. Jesus should be in our hearts and our homes. Without Him we are too weak to follow Him rightly. Baptism, first communion and confirmation never make you a Catholic, a true follower of Jesus. But regular attendance of Mass is what fulfills God's command to "Make Sabbath day holy".
2. The Women's Club will resume meetings on August 8 immediately after the 10:30 am Mass to elect new officers and plan the year's events.
3. A graveside memorial service at Wildwood Cemetery is scheduled for Joan Ascione on August 12, at 11:00 am.
4. Because Pope Francis has declared this as the year of St. Joseph, entrusting all of us to his protection, there is a devotion to St. Joseph every Wednesday at 6:00 pm. It begins outside at the statue and ends in the church. See page 3 for more details.
5. To subscribe to Bishop John Noonan's E-Scroll with news from the Diocese of Orlando <https://www.orlandodiocese.org/e-scroll/>. You only have to provide your name and email address.
6. Bishop Robert Barron, an author, speaker, theologian and founder of Word on Fire, a global media ministry is producing a new Bible series. Volume I focuses on the Gospels and can be ordered at <https://wordonfire.org/bible>. Volume II, Acts, Letters, and Revelation is to be released in 2022. There will be a total of seven volumes. If you would like to subscribe to Bishop Barron's newsletter, go to <https://www.wordonfire.org/#newsletter> and just provide your email address.

## Catholic Trivia

Six black Catholics from the United States are on the road to sainthood. **Mother Henriette Díaz DeLille, SSF** was born in New Orleans, LA on March 11, 1813. Her mother, a “free woman of color” was in a type of common-law marriage known as placage, typical at the time in New Orleans. It was a union of white wealthy men with women of color. She had a brother and other siblings. Trained by her mother in French literature, music and dancing, she was being groomed to find a white, wealthy male partner. Raised as a Catholic, Henriette was instead drawn to religious life. She became an outspoken opponent of placage and believed it a violation of the Catholic sacrament of marriage.

Henriette was influenced by Sister Marthe Fontier, who ran a school in New Orleans for girls of color. In 1827, at the age of 14, the well-educated Henriette began teaching at the local Catholic school. Over the next several years, her devotion to caring for and educating the poor grew. In 1835 when her mother suffered a nervous breakdown, the court granted Henriette control of her mother’s assets. After providing for her mother’s care, she sold the remaining property. In 1836, she used the money to found a small order of nuns, which she named the Sisters of the Presentation; in 1842, they changed the name to Sisters of the Holy Family. They cared for the sick, helped the poor and instructed free and slave children and adults. They took into their home older women and became America’s first Catholic home for the elderly. Her brother strongly opposed her work as like other family members, he could pass for white and felt that his sister’s activities would expose his African ancestry. She also faced opposition from the public and the Church as racism ruled the times, and black women were not seen as worthy of religious life. When she formed her own order, the bishop did not allow them to wear a habit, and they were made to take their vows in private rather than in public.

She died on November 16, 1862 at the age of 49, during the American Civil War, when the city was occupied by Union troops. At the time of her death, the order had 12 members who were noted for their care of the sick and dying during the yellow fever epidemics, and by 1950 membership peaked at 400. The city of New Orleans named a street after her in 2011. In 1988 she became "the first United States native-born African American whose cause for canonization has been officially opened by the Catholic Church." In 2007, Christine McGee, a 19-year-old college student was hospitalized with an aneurism and not expected to live. With her mother’s devotion and prayers to Sister DeLille, she was released a month later. In 2010 Pope Benedict XVI declared DeLille to be Venerable.



## **Declaration of Year of St. Joseph 2020-2021**

On December 8, 2020, the Church commemorated the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the decree by Pope Pius IX in 1870 declaring St. Joseph, Patron of the Universal Church. To observe this anniversary and to highlight the importance of devotion to the intercession of St. Joseph, I would like to begin with the Solemnity of St. Joseph, Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary (March 19<sup>th</sup>) to dedicate a special day and time for devotion to St. Joseph in our parish. The blessing of the new statue of St. Joseph will be after Mass on Friday the 19<sup>th</sup>.

In the Liturgy of the Church, Wednesday was always a day dedicated to St. Joseph. Votive Masses were composed in honor of him. His name is mentioned in all Eucharistic Prayers. But somehow, he still is a forgotten Saint. In our church beginning March 24<sup>th</sup> we will have every Wednesday at 6PM devotion to St. Joseph at the statue.

With the encouragement of many, I wish to invite all our parishioners to open their minds and hearts to increased devotion to St. Joseph and to implore his intercession during this challenging and uncertain time. I offer you this invitation for the following reasons.

1. We need the example and witness of St. Joseph now more than ever, for St. Joseph, the just man, was chosen by God to be the foster father of Jesus, the Incarnate Son of God. The Church everywhere is in need of the protection of our heavenly patron.
2. Joseph espoused himself to the Blessed Virgin Mary. Joseph the faithful and chaste husband is a marvelous example for all husbands and fathers and as such can help the men of our parish embrace this vocation with renewed fervor and dedication.
3. Joseph stands out as an exemplary example and model for priests. As in all times, priests of the Church today need a powerful intercessor,

like St. Joseph, to remain steadfast in their pastoral duties as shepherds and teachers.

4. Joseph was a true family man, who worked hard to safeguard the Holy Family from danger and to provide for Jesus and Mary's needs, in spite of the poverty they experienced. Family life is under such attack. We can unite ourselves more closely under the mantle of Mary and her most chaste spouse, St. Joseph to strengthen family life through the sacrament of marriage.
5. The sabbath was important to the Holy Family. Joseph would have been instrumental in imparting the traditions of the Jewish faith to the child, Jesus. We can look to St. Joseph and the example he gave in this regard to help us reclaim the Christian sabbath, Sunday, as the Day of the Lord.
6. Joseph was a just man. He can be a great example to inspire all of us to live lives of reclaimed purity and innocence.
7. In this time of uncertainty, we all need more father figures, especially in the spiritual realm. Joseph did not shrink away from his responsibilities as foster father and husband but accepted them with trust and courage. We all need such father like men in our lives, both naturally and spiritually to lead us through these dark and anxious times.

These are among the most important of my reasons for inviting us to reflect, pray for the intercession of and call upon St. Joseph in this Parish during this special Year dedicated to him.

St. Joseph, pray for us

## Year of St. Joseph

Pope Francis announced a Year of St. Joseph in honor of the 150th anniversary of the saint's proclamation as patron of the Universal Church by Pope Pius IX on Dec. 8, 1870. The year of St Joseph begins Dec. 8, 2020, and concludes on Dec.8, 2021.

Pope Francis had established a Year of St. Joseph so that "every member of the faithful, following his example, may strengthen their life of faith daily in the complete fulfillment of God's will."

The pope explained in the letter, entitled *Patris corde* ("With a father's heart") that he wanted to share some "personal reflections" on the spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

"My desire to do so increased during these months of pandemic, noting that many people had made hidden sacrifices during the crisis in order to protect others. Each of us can discover in Joseph - the man who goes unnoticed, a daily, discreet and hidden presence - an intercessor, a support and a guide in times of trouble. St. Joseph reminds us that those who appear hidden or in the shadows can play an incomparable role in the history of salvation. In his relationship to Jesus, Joseph was the earthly shadow of the heavenly Father: he watched over him and protected him, never leaving him to go his own way. Our world today needs fathers. Contemporary world required examples of true fatherhood."

The Apostolic Penitentiary said that, "to reaffirm the universality of St. Joseph's patronage in the Church," it would grant a plenary indulgence to Catholics in honor of St. Joseph, especially on

- March 19, the saint's solemnity,
- May 1, the Feast of St. Joseph the Worker
- Feast of the Holy Family on Dec. 29
- 19th of each month and
- every Wednesday, a day dedicated to the Saint in the Latin tradition.

The decree said: "In the current context of health emergency, the gift of the plenary indulgence is particularly extended to the elderly, the sick, the dying and all those who for legitimate reasons are unable to leave the house, who, with a soul detached from any sin and with the intention of fulfilling, as soon as possible, the three usual conditions, in their own home or where the impediment keeps them, recite an act of piety in honor of St. Joseph, comfort of the sick and patron of a happy death, offering with trust in God the pains and discomforts of their life."

The three conditions for receiving a plenary indulgence are sacramental confession, the reception of Holy Communion and prayer for the pope's intentions.