



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

ST. THOMAS ANNOUNCEMENTS

November 21, 2021

1. Regular attendance at Mass is what fulfills God's commandment to "Keep holy the Sabbath Day". The real presence of God is not in the TV but in the Eucharist in the Mass in the Church. Receiving a Certificate for Baptism, First Communion and Confirmation never make you a Catholic. Be a true follower of Jesus, and keep Him in your heart and in your life every weekend in the Mass. Our church is not infected with Corona Virus so please do not be afraid.
2. Splendor of Our Faith with Fr. Blake Britton Session 5: Medieval Age (Humanities/Art) will be at Church of Resurrection, Lakeland December 14, 2021 6:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. Livestream for sessions at St. Joseph and St. Anthony is on their website, and the Church of the Resurrection is on Youtube. Fr. Blake has written a book, *Reclaiming Vatican II, What It (Really) Said, What It Means, and How It Calls Us to Renew the Church*. Information on purchasing the book can be found by clicking on the following link <https://books.wordonfire.org/reclaimingvaticanii>.
3. Pope Francis has declared this as the year of St. Joseph, entrusting all of us to his protection. Responding to his call we have a devotion to St. Joseph every Wednesday at 6:00 pm. It begins outside at the statue and ends in the church with benediction. See pages 4 & 5 for more details. For those seeking plenary indulgences for the Poor Souls in Purgatory during November, Fr. Eugene is having a communion service following the devotion.
4. 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.

5. 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://wordonfire.org/#newsletter> and just provide your email address.

6. Thank you to all who made donations to the Social Hall improvement project. Any money collected over the amount needed for the roof will be used for Phase II, the renovation of the interior of the hall beginning with the kitchen. The lights in the kitchen have been upgraded to LED lights, and the lights in the hall are now being upgraded to LED lights.

Catholic Trivia

Thanksgiving

The first American Thanksgiving was actually celebrated on September 8, feast of the birth of the Blessed Virgin, in 1565 in St. Augustine, Florida. The Native Americans and Spanish settlers held a feast and the Holy Mass was offered. This was 56 years before the Puritan pilgrims of Massachusetts. Don Pedro Menendez came ashore amid the sounding of trumpets, artillery salutes and the firing of cannons to claim the land for King Philip II and Spain. The ship chaplain Fr. Francisco Lopez de Mendoza Grajales chanted the Te Deum and presented a crucifix that Menendez ceremoniously kissed. Then the 500 soldiers, 200 sailors and 100 families and artisans, along with the Timucuan Indians celebrated the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass in gratitude to God.

The second American Thanksgiving happened on April 30, 1598, when Spanish explorer Don Juan de Oñate requested the friars to say a Mass of Thanksgiving, after which he formally proclaimed “La Toma”, claiming the land north of the Rio Grande for the King of Spain. The men feasted on duck, goose, and fish from the river. The actors among them dressed and presented a play. All this took place twenty-three years before the Pilgrims set sail from England on the Mayflower.

Do you remember Squanto, the Native American who assisted the Puritan Pilgrims at the “first Thanksgiving”? Squanto, our beloved hero of Thanksgiving, was Catholic! His true name was *Tisquantum*, yet he is affectionately known to us as “Squanto.” In 1614, Squanto was captured by lieutenant of John Smith. The lieutenant attempted to sell Squanto and other Native Americans into slavery via Spain. However, some Franciscan friars discovered the plot and acquired the captured Native Americans, Squanto included. During this time, Squanto received instruction in the Catholic Faith and received holy baptism. As a freeman, Squanto traveled to London where became a laborer in the shipyards. Here he became fluent in English. In 1619, five years after being kidnapped, Squanto was able to return to his Native Land, New England. He returned only to discover that his people were being decimated by the recently imported European diseases. Since he was fluent in English, Squanto became well-known and valuable to the new English Pilgrims settled at Plymouth. As an English speaker, Squanto taught the Pilgrims how to fertilize the ground, grow corn, and the best places to catch fish. He eventually contracted one of the European diseases and died within a few days. His death was a great loss.

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Declaration of Year of St. Joseph 2020-2021

On December 8, 2020, the Church commemorated the 150th 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 19th) 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 19th.

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 24th 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.