



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

ST. THOMAS ANNOUNCEMENTS

October 9, 2022

1. PLEASE CONTINUE TO PRAY FOR PEACE IN THE UKRAINE.

2. The weekend of October 23, there will be a special Diocesan collection for *Disaster Relief 2022*. Please see letter from Bishop Noonan on pages 3 and 4 of these announcements.

3. **Beginning Palm Sunday, April 10, 2022, the obligation to participate in the Eucharist in person on Sundays and other holy days of obligation was restored.** Regular attendance at Mass is what fulfills God's commandment to "Keep holy the Sabbath Day". Our world is hurting. We all need healing, yet many of us are separated from the very source of our strength. Jesus Christ invites us to return to the source and summit of our faith: his Real Presence in the Eucharist.

4. Fr. Blake Britton in our Diocese has written a book, *Reclaiming Vatican II, What It (Really) Said, What It Means, and How It Calls Us to Renew the Church*. If you would like to purchase the book, click on the following link: <https://books.wordonfire.org/reclaimingvaticanii>. This book recently won 1st place as the best work by a first-time author and 2nd place overall as one of the popular presentations of the Catholic Faith for 2022 at the Catholic Media Association national book awards.

5. **Synod 2021 – 2023.** Pope Francis has asked us to be a people of "synodality" for the next two years beginning with Advent. Synodality is described as a journeying together, a time to listen to one another and to the Holy Spirit. The Holy Father said there are three words that characterize the synod: **encounter**, to draw near and be fully present to one another; **listen**, to hear one another; **discern**, let the Holy Spirit guide us. He wants everyone to listen to the Holy Spirit and each other to build a better relationship with the Lord. His goal is that we encounter one another, we listen to the heart, and we understand how the Spirit is asking us to move forward.

6. **Polk County Catholic Singles – Social Group:** If you are single, a widow, a widower or divorced person over 55, you are invited. The group attends Mass twice a month at various churches in Polk County and has dinner afterward at a predetermined restaurant. For further information, call Joanne 863-967-0785 or Tony 570-814-7653.
7. The bulletin can be found on our website by clicking on the button “Bulletins” or by signing up for the bulletin to be delivered to you weekly by email at www.jspaluch.com/subscribe. You only need to provide your email address and first name. We explored options with J.S. Paluch and other companies, and none of them were able to provide a bulletin at no cost to us. If you know anyone who has internet but does not know how to find the website, please have them call the office, and we will teach them. If you know someone who does not have internet, call the office, and we will print copies for them.
8. The *Bible in a Year* Podcast, hosted by Fr. Mike Schmitz and featuring Jeff Cavins, guides Catholics through the Bible in 365 daily episodes. Each 20-25 minute episode includes two or three scripture readings and a reflection from Fr. Mike Schmitz. To sign up for this series, go to <https://ascensionpress.com/pages/biy-registration>. A Spanish version is also available on the website ascensionpress.com.
9. 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.
10. 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 was 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.



“You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your being, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself” (Luke 10:27).

October 4, 2022

To: All Pastors

cc: Business Administrators

Re: Disaster Relief 2022

My Brothers in Christ:

Grace and Peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. We have just experienced the devastating impact of Hurricane Ian, and know our brothers and sisters across local and international borders suffer from catastrophic flooding, wildfires, typhoons, etc. Even with emergency response to provide rescue and shelter, and restore electricity and water supplies, we realize their impacts will be long-lasting throughout the nation and the world. We offer our prayers to all the families affected by these disasters and pray for the repose of the souls whose lives were taken.

In St. Luke’s Gospel, we are called to love God with all our heart, with all our being, with all our strength, and with all our mind, and our neighbor as ourselves. In solidarity with our brothers and sisters, I ask you to participate in Disaster Relief 2022, a voluntary special collection for the humanitarian, long-term recovery, and Church needs arising from these calamities. We join other dioceses through the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops for this voluntary special collection. The funds collected in this special appeal will be used to support the efforts of the official relief agencies of the U.S. Catholic Church, Catholic Charities USA and/or Catholic Relief Services, as they and their local agencies respond to immediate emergency needs for such necessities as water, food, shelter, and medical care, and aid in long-term rebuilding and recovery efforts; and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops for pastoral and reconstruction needs of the Church.

Communicate this opportunity to serve to your parishioners and ask them to notate their donations for Disaster Relief 2022. Realizing there are other important collections and celebrations during October, please choose October 9 or October 23 for this special collection.

Once this collection has been subject to your parish’s standard offertory count and accounting procedures, please send the entire collection (monetary donations) made payable to the Diocese of Orlando, *Disaster Relief 2022*, at P.O. Box 1800, Orlando, FL 32802-1800. Please remind your parish bookkeepers/business managers to record all amounts **received** in connection with this special diocesan collection on line 405 of your parish

financial statements (i.e. Diocesan Collections). **Disbursements** of the collected funds should be recorded on line 705 of your parish financial statements (i.e. Diocesan Collections).

We pray our love of God and neighbor are worthy of His mandate.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

A circular seal with a cross and other symbols is partially visible on the left. Overlaid on it is a handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Noonan".

Most Reverend John Noonan
Bishop of Orlando

Catholic Trivia

The title, **Our Lady of Sorrows**, given to our Blessed Mother focuses on her intense suffering and grief during the passion and death of our Lord. Traditionally, this suffering was not limited to the passion and death event; rather, it comprised the seven dolors or seven sorrows of Mary, the first of which was foretold by the Priest Simeon who proclaimed to Mary, "This child [Jesus] is destined to be the downfall and the rise of many in Israel, a sign that will be opposed and you yourself shall be pierced with a sword so that the thoughts of many hearts may be laid bare." (Luke 2:34-35). The other six sorrows of our Blessed Mother included the flights of the Holy Family into Egypt; the loss and finding of the child Jesus in the Temple; Mary's meeting of Jesus on His way to Calvary; Mary's standing at the foot of the cross when our Lord was crucified; her holding of Jesus when He was taken down from the cross; and then our Lord's burial. In all, the prophesy of Simeon that a sword would pierce our Blessed Mother's heart was fulfilled in these events. For this reason, Mary is sometimes depicted with her heart exposed and with seven swords piercing it. More importantly, each new suffering was received with the courage, love, and trust that echoed her fiat, let it be done unto me according to Thy word, first uttered at the Annunciation.

The Feast of Our Lady of Sorrows grew in popularity in the 12th century, although under various titles. By the 14th and 15th centuries, the feast and devotion were widespread throughout the Church.

Interestingly, in 1482, the feast was officially placed in the Roman Missal under the title of Our Lady of Compassion, highlighting the great love our Blessed Mother displayed in suffering with her Son. The word *compassion* derives from the Latin roots *cum* and *patior* which means to suffer with. Our Blessed Mother's sorrow exceeded anyone else's since she was the mother of Jesus, who was not only her Son but also her Lord and Savior; she truly suffered with her Son. In 1727, Pope Benedict XIII placed the Feast of Our Lady of Compassion in the Roman Calendar on Friday before Palm Sunday. This feast was suppressed with the revision of the calendar published in the *Roman Missal* of 1969.

In 1668 the feast in honor of the Seven Dolours was set for the Sunday after September 14, the Feast of the Holy Cross. The feast was inserted into the Roman calendar in 1814, and Pope Pius X fixed the permanent date of September 15 for the Feast of the Seven Sorrows of the Blessed Virgin Mary, now simply called the Feast of Our Lady of Sorrows. The key image here is our Blessed Mother standing faithfully at the foot of the cross with her dying Son: the Gospel of John recorded. Seeing His mother there with the disciple whom He loved, Jesus

said to His mother, “Woman, there is your son.’ In turn He said to the disciple, ‘There is your mother.’ (John 19:26-27). The Second Vatican Council in its *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church* wrote, “She stood in keeping with the divine plan, suffering grievously with her only-begotten Son. There she united herself, with a maternal heart, to His sacrifice, and lovingly consented to the immolation of this Victim which she herself had brought forth” (#58).

St. Bernard (d. 1153) wrote, Truly, O Blessed Mother, a sword has pierced your heart...He did in body through a love greater than anyone had known. She died in spirit through a love unlike any other.

Focusing on the compassion of our Blessed Mother, our Holy Father, Pope John Paul II, reminded the faithful, Mary Most Holy goes on being the loving consoler of those touched by the many physical and moral sorrows which afflict and torment humanity. She knows our sorrows and our pains, because she too suffered, from Bethlehem to Calvary. ‘And thy soul too a sword shall pierce.’ Mary is our Spiritual Mother, and the mother always understands her children and consoles them in their troubles. Then, she has that specific mission to love us, received from Jesus on the Cross, to love us only and always, so as to save us! Mary consoles us above all by pointing out the Crucified One and Paradise to us! (1980).

Therefore, when we honor our Blessed Mother, our Lady of Sorrows, we honor her as the faithful disciple and exemplar of faith. Let us pray: *Father, as your Son was raised on the cross, His Mother Mary stood by Him, sharing His sufferings. May your Church be united with Christ in His suffering and death and so come to share in His rising to new life.* Looking to the example of Mary, as we pray the Rosary especially in this month of October, may we too unite our sufferings to our Lord, facing them with courage, love and trust.

