



ST. THOMAS ANNOUNCEMENTS

December 3, 2023

1. **PLEASE CONTINUE TO PRAY FOR PEACE IN THE UKRAINE AND ISRAEL.**
2. **The obligation to participate in the Eucharist in person on Sundays and other holy days of obligation was restored on Palm Sunday 2022.** 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 source of our strength. Jesus Christ invites us to return to the source and summit of our faith: his Real Presence in the Eucharist.
3. Bishop Robert Barron has written a new book, *This is My Body: A Call to Eucharistic Revival*, to accompany the Eucharistic Revival currently underway in our country. It is being published for a very reasonable \$2.00 per copy, and his goal is to get this book into the hands of one million Catholics. Copies can be found in the narthex. Please take one, and consider a small donation toward this program.
4. Our Parish bulletin can be viewed weekly online by clicking on the Bulletin button on our website at www.stthomasbartow.org. A new button has been added that you can also see the previous week's bulletin. If you do not have access to the internet, please let the office know, and copies can be printed. If you look at the bulletin on your phone, you can add an icon to your homepage by doing the following steps. 1. **Do a search for stthomasbartow.org.** 2. **When the page opens, Click** (touch) the small square with an arrow pointing up on the bottom of the screen. 3. **Scroll** down and click (touch) "Add to Home Screen". 4. **Click** (touch) "Add" in the upper right-hand corner. The next time you want to view the website, you only have to touch the new icon on your home page screen. If you need help finding the website or creating the icon on your phone, call the office or stop in the narthex after Mass for help.
5. **The Catechism in a Year Podcast is hosted by Fr. Mike Schmitz.** In these short podcasts, Fr. Mike will guide you through the entire Catechism of the Catholic Church in 365 episodes, providing

explanation, insight, and encouragement along the way. Download your copy of the reading plan of *The Catechism in a Year* (with Fr. Mike Schmitz) at ascensionpress.com.

6. To subscribe to Bishop John Noonan's E-Scroll, news from the Diocese of Orlando go to www.orlandodiocese.org/e-scroll/. Just provide your name and email address.
7. Fr. Blake Britton, a priest in our Diocese, who is now at the Pontifical Institute of St. John Paul II in Washington DC for further studies, has written a book, *Reclaiming Vatican II, What It (Really) Said, What It Means, and How It Calls Us to Renew the Church*. 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 at the Catholic Media Association National Book Awards. If you would like to purchase a copy of the book, click on the following link: <https://books.wordonfire.org/reclaimingvaticanii>
8. Bishop Robert Barron, author, speaker, theologian and founder of Word on Fire, a global media ministry, is producing a Bible series. Volume I focuses on the Gospels, Volume II on Acts, Letters, and Revelation, and Volume III, The Pentateuch. All can be ordered at <https://wordonfire.org/bible>. 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.
9. In honor of the 100th anniversary of the birth of Mother Angelica, foundress of EWTN Catholic television network, please consider a gift of \$10, \$20 or \$25 per month or any amount you choose. No amount is too small.
10. **OCA deficit update.** The total of \$2,575.00 was collected from the two bake sales and donations from several individuals, reducing the deficit to **\$2,696.00**.
11. **National Eucharistic Congress 2024.** It's been 83 years since a National Eucharistic Congress was held in the United States. It was 1941 when the Church in America last gathered for a National Eucharistic Congress. Thousand of Catholics overwhelmed the Twin Cities with joyful processions, fervent worship, and public adoration of Our Lord. A lot has changed since then!

A National Eucharistic Congress is a gathering of the whole Church from across the nation. Eucharistic adoration is a powerful part of every Eucharistic Congress. At the 10th National Eucharistic Congress, our Catholic family will gather to experience profound, personal renewal through the power of Christ's love. Like a new Pentecost, this transformation will flow out from Indianapolis to bring *revival* in our communities as the Church returns to her first love – the source and summit of our faith.

Every day at the Congress is designed to facilitate this life-changing encounter with Jesus, regardless of where you are on your faith journey.

The world may look different today, but this gathering is a part of the same heritage as the Eucharistic Congresses from our history. We are on the cusp of a new chapter for the Church in the United States – a chapter that begins with the rebirth of this incredible legacy. Don't miss your chance to be a part of this generational moment! Reserve your passes today for the long-awaited 10th National Eucharistic Congress, July 17 – 21, 2024 in Indianapolis, where the Church will find blessing and renewal through a profound encounter with Jesus Christ in the Eucharist.

Catholic Trivia

What is an Advent wreath? Why do we need one? While the exact origin of the Advent wreath is uncertain, one thing is undeniable: the use of this symbol is a longstanding tradition in our Catholic Faith, dating back to at least the 17th century.

As we progressively light the candles throughout the Advent season, we acknowledge God's coming through reflection, prayer, and hope. We make our own private vigil while awaiting the Light of the World. Not only do we recall His first coming, we also await His second coming, when He will judge the living and the dead.

Significance of the Advent Wreath's Shape and Color

Since circles have no beginning and no end, the circular shape of the Advent wreath symbolizes eternal life in Christ. The wreath holds four candles, which are lit one-by-one over the four weeks of the Advent season. Generally, three are purple and one is rose-colored, each representing 1,000 years. Added together, the four candles symbolize the 4,000 years that humanity waited for the Savior.

Purple is a liturgical color symbolizing penance, sacrifice, and prayer. During the first, second, and fourth weeks of Advent, we light purple candles as a reminder of the preparation of heart and mind undertaken during this season, which was traditionally known as a "little Lent."

The Third Sunday of Advent is called Gaudete (Rejoice) Sunday. On this day, we celebrate that our wait is almost over. Since rose is the liturgical color used to signify joy, we light the rose candle on the Third Sunday of Advent as we rejoice in anticipation of the coming of the Messiah.



**Materials used in the
Advent wreath**

Advent wreaths were traditionally made of evergreen branches, which have long been a symbol of the constancy and faithfulness we aspire to as Christians. Evergreens flourish during every season, remaining unchanged through the harshness of winter. We are called to live our Faith this same way—with holy confidence and fortitude. If holly is used, its prickly leaves represent the Crown of Thorns. If pinecones are used, they represent the Resurrection because they contain the seeds of a new tree and therefore new life.