

Father Eugene Grytner, SDS  
Office hrs Mon-Fri 9 am to 12 pm  
1305 E. Mann Road Bartow, FL 33830

**MASSES**

**Daily at 8:30 am - No Mass on  
Wednesday and Saturday morning.**

**Saturday: Vigil Bartow: 5:00 pm**

**Sunday: Ft. Meade 8:00 am**

**Sunday: Bartow 10:30 am**

**Sacraments**

**Confessions:** Half hour prior to masses.

**Marriage preparation:** Arrangements must be  
made four months in advance.

**Baptism:** Last Sunday of the month.  
Call Evelyn Rivera 863-370-4000  
evecoulter@aol.com

**Sick calls** – Anytime  
**Communion for Sick and Home Bound**  
Call the Church Office

**Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament** - Every  
Sunday 1:30 pm to 2:30 pm  
Monday 8:30 am to 10:30 am

Religious Education Administrator  
Jessica Whitmer 863-602-3837

Religious Formation – Every Sunday  
Sept thru May

Preschool thru 8th - Sun 9 am to 10:15 am

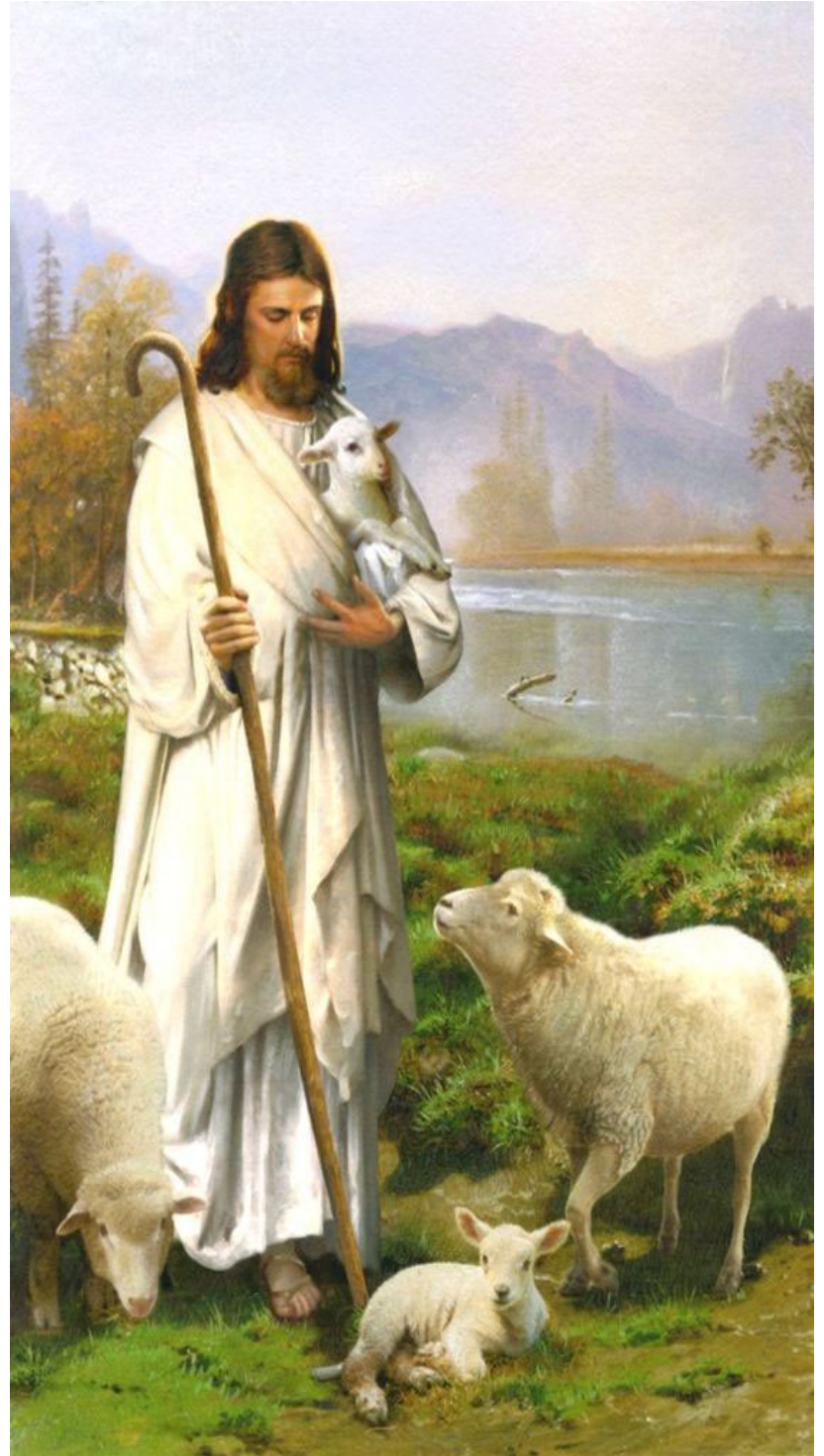
High School Sunday 9:00 to 10:15 am  
(1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the month.)

Email: gloria121@verizon.net  
Phone 863-533-8578  
Fax 863- 533-5090  
[www.stthomasbartow.org](http://www.stthomasbartow.org)

**NEW PARISHIONERS WELCOME!**  
**Registration forms in church or office**

Remember St. Thomas Church in your will

***Saint Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church***  
***2180 S. Kissingen Ave. Bartow FL, 33830***  
***Diocese of Orlando***



# Fourth Sunday of Easter

## April 21, 2024



### Mass Intentions

Sat Apr 20	5:00 pm	For All Parishioners
Sun Apr 21	8:00 am	For All the Faithful Departed By Miriam Olazabal
Sun Apr 21	10:30 am	Special Intention
Mon Apr 22	8:30 am	+Ann Marie Duceman By Eva Poplacki
Tue Apr 23	8:30 am	Christina Kjerrumgaard By Yvonne & Bill Kjerrumgaard
Thu Apr 25	8:30 am	All Souls in Purgatory
Fri Apr 26	8:30 am	+Ann Marie Duceman By The Barabas Family
Sat Apr 27	5:00 pm	+Ann Marie Duceman By Kathleen Morris
Sun Apr 28	8:00 am	For All Parishioners
Sun Apr 28	10:30 am	+Dave Dillman By Linda Dillman

### Please Pray For.....

Stuart Andrews, Terry Ayres, Kristin Bing, Pete Byrne, Melvin Casey, Maggie Chiarini, Alan English, Rachel Gohlman, Dorothy Guptill, Delores Hart, Austin Heath, Zachary Heath, Ivette Hernandez, Jennifer Hoffer, Mark Jansen, Missy Jansen, Mark Jones, Gail Kautz, Bill Kjerrumgaard, Sara Long, Aaron Mills, Adam Mills, Zachary Mills, Scott Mize, Lacey Pate, , George Pizano, Karlee Severns, Richie Southwell, Chuck Spencer, Rise' St. Arno, Gloria Stenger, Murphy Stidham, Debi Tuck, Laura Webb

### ***Please pray for our deceased diocesan priests***

Apr 6, 2018	Rev. Edward Hamilton
Apr 17, 2017	Rev. Domingo Gonzalez
Apr 19, 2012	Rev. John Walsh
Apr 21, 2002	Most Rev. Thomas Grady
Apr 21, 2018	Rev. Eduardo Benitez
April 24, 2023	Rev. Sean Heslin
Apr 28, 1985	Rev. Luis Maris Padilla
Apr 29, 2014	Msgr. Terence Farrelly

LECTORS	SME
4/20-5:00 pm	
Evelyn Rivera Ann Spencer	Evelyn Rivera Ann Slocum
4/21-10:30 am	
Maureen Leckie Confirmandi	Maureen Leckie Bill Leckie
4/27-5:00 pm	
Barbara Van Orsdale Pat Lowery	Kathleen Morris Doug Van Orsdale
4/28-10:30 am	
Rick Davila Martha Laurent	Theresa Cherry Kay LaClair

### Saint Thomas Collection

4/7	Regular	\$2403.00
	Maintenance	337.00

### Saint Elizabeth Collection

4/7	Regular	663.00
	Maintenance	45.00

### SECOND COLLECTION

Next week's second collection is a Diocesan Collection for Black/Indian Missions and Catholic Home Missions.

### SEEING THE RISEN LORD IN OUR MIDST

Built over the house of Caiaphas, the High Priest in Jerusalem at the time of Jesus' crucifixion, is the Church of Saint Peter Gallicantu, commemorating the denial of Simon Peter in the courtyard the night of Jesus' arrest. Underneath the church is the "Pit," the stone cell into which Jesus was thrown and held that same evening, hours before his death. To stand in that dark, cold place, to see the hole through which our Lord fell to the hard floor, to think of him lying there totally alone, facing Good Friday, moves one to tears. When I visited there, I meditated on Psalm 88, a solitary and suffering cry to God from one who feels total abandonment.

We have all been in the pit, facing our own dark nights of the soul, feeling unloved or unwanted or misunderstood, alone without any consolation from God or others. The Good News that we celebrated and proclaimed on Good Friday is the astonishing truth that the Lord went into the pit before us, tasted a

profound abandonment impossible to understand, and embraced a horrifying death. He did all of this so that we would never lose hope, even in the darkest of nights.

Easter Sunday is Jesus' victory over the forces of sin and death, the vindication of his entire mission, the triumph of love over hate, grace over evil, communion over loneliness and eternal life over the power of darkness. The resurrection of Christ does not magically erase the wounds and limitations of our frail humanity. We will still often feel misunderstood, suffer terrible heartbreaks and ultimately face death alone, but the Lord has opened a path for us; light shines at the end of the tunnel. He wants us to call on his mighty power, enjoy the intimacy of his presence through the sacraments, hear his gentle voice in the Word and discover the beauty of his face in those around us.

We will still find ourselves in the pit, but when our eyes get used to the darkness, we will see that Jesus is there with us, offering consolation, mercy and hope. The Lord beckons us to live in the vast beautiful world of his resurrection, already in the here and now of our lives as we find them to be. We don't have to wait until we are dead to know the glory of God and taste the joy of Easter. Just as in the Gospels, the risen Lord shows up in the most unexpected places, wearing the most shocking of disguises, if we have the eyes to see.

During Lent, we have journeyed with Jesus in the wilderness for 40 days, seen his transfigured glory on Mount Tabor, pondered the deep need for conversion, traveled with the Prodigal Son back home, met the woman caught in adultery, known the Lord's forgiveness and mercy, and welcomed Christ into the Jerusalem of our hearts. In the steady practice of prayer, fasting and almsgiving we have cleared an emptier space in our minds and hearts so that the Living Water, the Light of the World, the Resurrection and the Life can enter in and take hold of us in a deeper way.

In all of the Resurrection appearances of Jesus in the Gospels, his followers never recognize him immediately. Mary Magdalene assumes he is the gardener at the cemetery. The Apostles think Jesus is a ghost. The disciples on the road

to Emmaus see him as an interesting fellow traveler. When Jesus calls Mary's name, shows his wounds to his friends, and breaks the bread in the characteristic Eucharistic gesture, their eyes are opened to see the risen Lord come to the fullness of life! Maybe grief at the crucifixion had clouded their vision, maybe Jesus' risen appearance was somehow different than he looked before, but one thing remains clear: When the Lord acts and speaks, they know who he is, and they rejoice.

How is the risen Lord acting and speaking in your life? When Jesus tenderly calls our name in prayer, when we see his wounds in the suffering of others, when we receive the fullness of the Eucharist, we recognize Christ, and our hearts rejoice at the wonder of his nearness and the beauty of his disguise. Through the power of the Holy Spirit and the efficacy of the Church and her Scriptures and sacraments, the presence of Christ is all around us. His resurrection is the shining totality of God's beauty, truth and goodness. Because Jesus rose from the dead, we have the forgiveness of sins, the promise of eternal life, the presence of God in every moment and union with the Lord.

How can we not rejoice, sing praise and give thanks as we celebrate the beautiful triumph of the risen Christ? Love has vanquished hatred, grace has conquered sin, mercy has cast out evil, and life has the final word on death. May your hearts pulsate with the power and life of the Lord, crucified and risen, walking with each of us on our own road to Emmaus.

*BP DONALD J. HYING*



**Good Shepherd Sunday** is observed on the **Fourth Sunday of Easter** in the Catholic liturgical calendar.

On Good Shepherd Sunday, we reflect on Jesus' role as the shepherd of souls and our call to follow His voice wherever He leads us. It's a day to celebrate His unwavering love and protection for His people.