

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
evcoultter@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
(1st and 3rd Sunday of the month.)

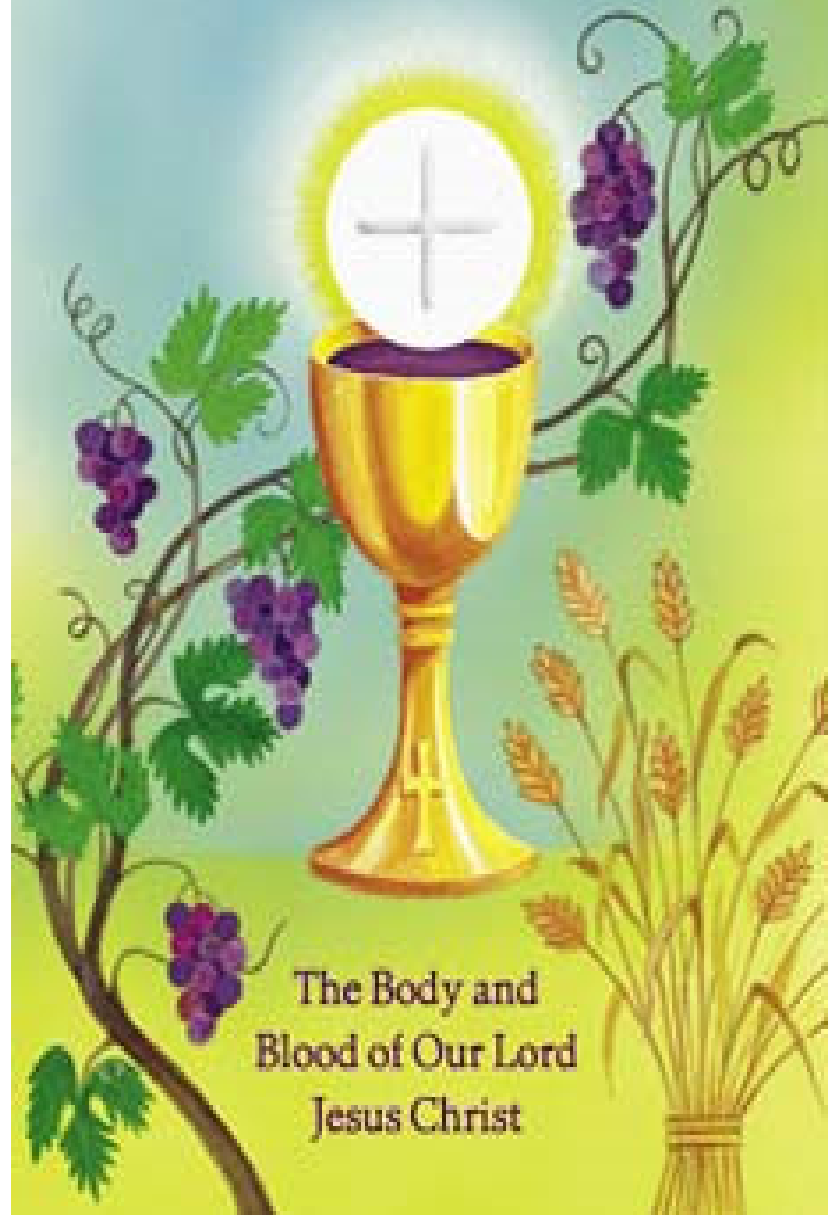
Email: gloria121@verizon.net
Phone 863-533-8578
Fax 863- 533-5090
www.stthomasbartow.org

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

FIRST HOLY Communion



The Body and
Blood of Our Lord
Jesus Christ

6th Sunday of Easter

May 5, 2024



Mass Intentions

Sat May 4	5:00 pm	For All Parishioners
Sun May 5	8:00 am	+Juan & +Maria Bravo By Miriam Olazabal
Sun May 5	10:30 am	+Guadalupe Blanco By Rick & Maria Davila
Mon May 6	8:30 am	+Jim Morris By Kathleen Morris
Tue May 7	8:30 am	Christina Kjerrumgaard By Yvonne & Bill Kjerrumgaard
Thu May 9	8:30 am	All Souls in Purgatory
Fri May 10	8:30 am	+Ann Marie Duceman By Kathleen Morris
Sat May 11	5:00 pm	For All Mothers
Sun May 12	8:00 am	For All Parishioners
Sun May 12	10:30 am	For All Mothers

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, Stuart 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

May 1, 2005 Rev. John Garvy
 May 6, 2013 Rev. Patrick O'Carroll
 May 20, 2010 Rev. James John MacLoughlin
 May 30, 2020 Msgr. Fachtna Joseph Harte

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations and Best Wishes to Michael Dulin, Unique Gonzalez, Alina Guitierrez and Isaias Herrera who were confirmed on April 23rd.

LECTORS	SME
5/4-5:00 pm	
Carolyn King Barbara Van Orsdale	Doug Van Orsdale Kathleen Morris
5/5-10:30 am	
Carrie Brown Confirmandi	Maria Davila Kay LaClair
5/11-5:00 pm	
Ann Slocum Mike DeNeve	Susan DeNeve Pat Lowery
5/12-10:30 am	
Jessica Witmer Caroline Picart	Martha Laurent Patti Scott

Saint Thomas Collection

4/21	Regular	\$2050.00
	Maintenance	485.00
	Diocesan	55.00

Saint Elizabeth Collection

4/21	Regular	369.00
	Maintenance	33.00

SECOND COLLECTION

Next week's second collection is a Diocesan Collection for Catholic Communications.

MOTHER'S DAY ENVELOPES

Special Mother's Day Masses will be celebrated on **May 11th, 12th, and 13th**. Please return your envelopes before **May 11th**. Envelopes can be found in the pews.

GRADUATING SENIORS

If you know any parishioners who are graduating from high school, please call the office with their names so we can honor them.

HAVE YOUR LOVED ONES TURNED THEIR BACKS ON GOD?

The incredible story of Félix and Élisabeth Leseur is a great testament to the power of sacrificial love and Divine Providence

Having a loved one who doesn't believe in God is soul-crushing. Not to be able to share the joy of the Mass with that person or to share anything about the Faith, for that matter, can be incredibly lonely and can bring a person to the brink of despair.

Take heart, though, and *never* give up praying for your loved one because "for God, all things are possible" (Matthew 19:26).

The incredible story of Félix and Élisabeth Leseur is a great testament to the power of sacrificial love and Divine Providence.

The young French couple were madly in love when they married on July 31, 1889. Both Félix and Élisabeth came from Catholic homes, but Félix had renounced his faith while in medical school—a confession he made to his bride just before taking their vows. Élisabeth loved Félix so much that she resolved to bring him back to Christ. Félix adored Élisabeth and promised himself to free her from her "religious superstitions."

The Leseurs were intelligent, successful and well-connected. They shared a passion for travel, art and literature. They faced hardships, including infertility and Élisabeth's chronic illness. Unbeknownst to Félix, though, more painful than her illness was Élisabeth's *spiritual isolation*.

She lived a private interior life of prayer and mortification, constantly offering up her sufferings for the conversion of "souls," especially for her husband's:

She had to build her married life with what she had and not with what she dreamed of having...She therefore decided to live her marriage fully as the wife of Félix as he was with his qualities, his faults, his atheism, his refusals and his rejections, his mockeries, but also with all the love that he showed her every day. (*Salt and Light: The Spiritual Journey of Élisabeth and Félix Leseur*, by Bernadette Chovelon)

You see, Élisabeth chose not to try to convert Félix with words. She thought it pointless and realized it would only lead to arguments. Instead, she decided she'd make God known to her husband and other non-believers she loved, by her actions:

Through the serenity and the strength that I want to acquire, I will prove that the Christian life is beautiful and great and that it brings joy with it.

Only after Élisabeth's death on May 3, 1914, did Félix discover how much his beloved wife sacrificed for him when he read her deepest desires in her secret diary:

We pray, suffer and labor in ignorance of the consequence of our acts and prayers. God makes them serve his supreme plan; gradually they take their effect, winning one soul, then another. They hasten the coming of the Kingdom of God and by

the other beings, acts and desires they give birth to, and they will exert an influence that will endure until the end of time. (The Secret Diary of Élisabeth Leseur)

Félix was not only devastated by his wife's death, but now was ridden with tremendous guilt, having discovered he had caused his wife so much heartache for mocking her faith while she was alive. Félix read and reread Élisabeth's writings and slowly, he allowed God back into his heart:

It was no longer as before. I was closer to her [Élisabeth] all the same, and without being won over by the faith, I was often troubled by the thought of the inner life. I stiffened then; I wanted to believe myself as much a materialist as before, but my ideas had received a powerful shock and although remaining attached to my irreligious or skeptical friendships, the work of transformation was being done without my knowing it, slowly, often despite myself, even though no one around me could encourage it—quite the contrary.

A few years later, the once boisterous and anti-clerical atheist surrendered his whole life for God's glory and became a Dominican priest at the age of 62. He spent the rest of his life spreading his wife's message of sacrificial love across the globe.

Before his death in 1950, Félix, who became Father Marie-Albert Leseur, worked diligently to champion the cause of his wife's beatification. Unfortunately, World War II and his declining health interrupted his efforts.

In 1990, the Catholic Church reopened the cause for Élisabeth's canonization.

Élisabeth lived in a very materialistic society, surrounded by atheists and people who lived for themselves and openly mocked her faith. But she didn't treat them with contempt. Instead, she chose to love them as they were. She saw each person as God's creation. She respected their beliefs even if they were different than hers. Élisabeth brought to life Jesus' words, "that you love one another, even as I have loved you." (J. 13:34)

KATYA FITZPATRICK



May, The Month of Mary