



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

ST. THOMAS ANNOUNCEMENTS

July 7, 2024

1. **PLEASE CONTINUE TO PRAY FOR PEACE IN THE UKRAINE AND ISRAEL.**
2. **Pilgrimage to Italy August 12 – 25.** For information on the trip, go to St. Thomas website homepage and click on the button “Fr. Eugene’s Pilgrimages”. It will take you right to the information. For prices, click on the dates August 12-25, and the city you want to depart from. Father is leaving from Tampa.
3. **Pilgrimage to Greece September 17 – 30** with Fr. George Dunne, SSS, sponsored by San Pedro Spiritual Development Center. Includes 4-night cruise and roundtrip airfare from Orlando. For information <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5bfc3028b98a787cb513d4ab/t/65b7bddc63af444745dd97ab/1706540511009/Greece+Brochure+FINAL.pdf>. You may need to copy & paste the address if clicking on the link doesn’t take you there.
4. **Construction Volunteer Opportunities** to bring water to rural mountain communities to our Sister Diocese in San Juan de la Maguana in the Dominican Republic. July 20 – 27. For information, 407-246-4893 or [zwamy.parra@orlandodiocese.org](mailto:zwamy.parra@orlandodiocese.org).
5. **The obligation to participate in the Eucharist in person on Sundays and other holy days of obligation was restored two years ago 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.
6. 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. Copies can be found in the narthex. Please take one and read it.
7. Our Parish bulletin can be viewed weekly online by clicking on the Bulletin button on our website at [www.stthomasbartow.org](http://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

for an iPhone. 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 ( 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. If you have an Android phone, please call the office for directions.

8. **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](http://ascensionpress.com).
9. To subscribe to Bishop John Noonan’s E-Scroll, news from the Diocese of Orlando go to [www.orlandodiocese.org/e-scroll/](http://www.orlandodiocese.org/e-scroll/). Just provide your name and email address.
10. 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*. If you would like to purchase the book, click on the following link: <https://books.wordonfire.org/reclaimingvaticanii>
11. 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.
12. In honor of the 100<sup>th</sup> 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.
13. **National Eucharistic Congress 2024.** It was 1941 in St. Paul/Minneapolis when the Church in America last gathered for a National Eucharistic Congress. 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 10<sup>th</sup> National Eucharistic Congress, our Catholic family will gather to experience profound, personal renewal through the power of Christ’s love. Reserve your passes today for the long-awaited 10<sup>th</sup> National Eucharistic Congress July 17 – 21 in Indianapolis, where the Church will find and renewal through a profound encounter with Jesus Christ in the Eucharist.
14. **Ave Maria University upcoming Conferences.** Called, Youth Conference July 12 – 14. For more information go to [avemariaconferences.com](http://avemariaconferences.com).

## Catholic Trivia

**St. Maria Goretti** is unique in that she is the youngest canonized saint in the Church. She died tragically on July 6, 1902, at the age of eleven.

Born into poverty, her father moved the family when Maria was just six years old from the east side of Italy (near Ancona) to the west side (near Nettuno, about 40 miles south of Rome) in hopes of escaping the grinding poverty that was gripping the area. Just three years later, when Maria was nine, her father died tragically. It fell to her at that time to raise her five siblings while her mother worked the fields to produce the crops with which they would both pay the rent and feed themselves.

This was a terrible time of trial and suffering for the whole family. For Maria it was especially difficult. Aside from having the responsibility of caring for her family, she had to also cook and clean for her two next door neighbors—Giovanni Serenelli and his son, Alessandro—who assisted her mother with the farm tasks.

It was also during this time that Alessandro began to develop an impure liking for Maria. The big 20-year-old would say rude and crude things to her, things that were inappropriate and embarrassing, and that would cause her to run away. However, at a certain point he began to make direct sexual advances towards her, demanding her virginity and threatening her with violence for non-compliance.

Finally, after many months of this, Alessandro forced himself upon Maria in an attempt to rape her. Though she prevented him from violating her, Alessandro brutally stabbed her numerous times. Maria died the next day in the midst of horrendous infection brought on by her lacerations. Her last words were, “I forgive Alessandro Serenelli ... and I want him with me in heaven forever.”

During his prison sentence Maria appeared to Alessandro and forgave him. That act of mercy and forgiveness—that act of love—filled Alessandro with contrition for his crime. It was also a turning point for him where grace entered his heart. From that point on, he lived a beautiful and converted life of holiness, eventually becoming a Franciscan lay brother.