

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
evecoult@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



33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

November 17, 2024



Mass Intentions

Sat Nov 16	5:00 pm	All Souls in Purgatory
Sun Nov 17	8:00 am	For All Parishioners
Sun Nov 17	10:30 am	+Charles Wiggins By Family
Mon Nov 18	8:30 am	+Ozelle & +Missouri Johnson By Gerald Johnson
Tue Nov 19	8:30 am	Christina Kjerrumgaard By Yvonne & Bill Kjerrumgaard
Thu Nov 21	8:30 am	All Souls in Purgatory
Fri Nov 22	8:30 am	
Sat Nov 23	5:00 pm	
Sun Nov 24	8:00 am	For All Parishioners
Sun Nov 24	10:30 am	

Please Pray For.....

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

Please pray for our deceased diocesan priests

Nov 3, 2013	Msgr. John Caulfield
Nov 9, 1994	Rev. Charles Anderson
Nov 15, 1995	Rev. James Fahey
Nov 17, 2004	Rev. Thomas Bergin
Nov 20, 2000	Rev. George Moreau
Nov 29, 2021	Rev. Hugo Londono
Nov 30, 1994	Rev. William Killion

LECTORS	SME
11/16-5:00 pm	
Ann Spencer Jessica Witmer	Doug Van Orsdale Ann Slocum
11/17-10:30 am	
Martha Laurent Unique Gonzalez	Bill Leckie Maureen Leckie
11/23-5:00 pm	
Carolyn King Ruth Palmer	Pat Lowery Susan DeNeve
11/24-10:30 am	
Barbara Woodard Oziemar Woodard	Maria Davila Patti Scott

Saint Thomas Collection

11/3	Regular	\$2343.00
	All Saints	386.00
	All Souls	512.00
	Maintenance	460.00

Saint Elizabeth Collection

11/3	Regular	1286.00
	Maintenance	30.00

SECOND COLLECTION

The Annual Collection for Catholic Charities of Central Florida will be held this weekend. This important Collection is our prayer to God in thanksgiving for all we are given as we "keep our gaze fixed on Jesus" and offer our return to Him who became poor that we might become rich.

THANK YOU

Thank you for your donations of \$242.00 to the Food Pantry on All Souls Day. Your continued support of our Food Pantry allows us to help many needy families in our community.



Gift cards will be collected again this year to help needy children for Christmas. Please call the office to request assistance or if you know a family who might need assistance.

WHAT WE ARE AT DEATH IS WHAT WE ARE FORVER

(Continued from last week)

Our reflection on death, therefore, should compel us to reflect on the meaning of life. It was Fénelon, I think, who observed that the one thing God is not generous with is time: it is fixed and it is constantly diminishing. It requires us, then, to take time seriously. As St. Turibius of Mongrovejo observed, "We must start working early in the morning, because time is not ours. We must give a strict account of it." Or, as Marley warns us in Dickens' *Christmas Carol*:

Not to know that any Christian spirit working kindly in its little sphere, whatever it may be, will find its mortal life too short for its vast means of usefulness. Not to know that no space of regret can make amends for one life's opportunity misused!

In eternity, we reap the harvest we sowed in life. That is one reason why, for example, that the souls in Purgatory are passive vis-à-vis their own fate: they need our living human action to accomplish fully human and fully salvific moral action that is meritorious. That is one reason why the souls in Purgatory need us to do for them what they cannot, and why the Church affirms that the least suffering in this world may be more efficacious than the most arduous of Purgatory. Here, we are still a work in progress in which we have a hand.

So, let us take seriously two things: first, that our departure from this life defines who we are, and second, that our fixed lifetimes are the fleeting windows within which to engage in the definition of those lives.

Moderns seem somehow to doubt that God is just, that somehow God would "never" allow a soul to go to hell, that somehow all human lives have "happy endings." As human life itself teaches us, love can be unreciprocated. Love can be rejected. Why, then, do we expect love of the God we cannot see (1 John 4:20) will somehow replace the turning away from love towards our brothers and sisters we do?

There are certain illusions that seem to have popularity in our day. One is there is some kind of "final option," some kind of final choice made before we die.

There are two problems with this. One is that it presupposes a false kind of anthropology, that there are over here the individual, discrete choices we make in life (like caring for someone or stealing from them) and over here is some great "choice for or against God."

God is not an abstraction, and neither is morality. We don't "choose" God or not God independently of the ordinary moral choices we make. Even Jesus told us so: when he speaks of judgment, he tells us that "loving God" cannot be separated from feeding or giving drink to or clothing the least of one's brothers.

The other problem with "final option" approaches is that we have no evidence for it. Perhaps we may hope that, in the last moment of our lives, Jesus may ask us to come to our senses: "Really, John?" But we have no evidence that God does not simply take our lives on the terms we've built them.

Also, life doesn't normally work that way. We *become* certain people by acquiring certain habits, be they good (virtues) or evil (vices). Our habits make subsequent deeds like them easier, more natural, "connatural." So the kind of person we have become is, short of a miracle, not the work of a last minute quirk of fate or some overpowering miracle. Rather, as the Dominican Walter Farrell put it so well in his underappreciated masterpiece, *A Companion to the Summa*:

The mansions of hell, no less than the mansions of heaven, are not makeshift shacks thrown up after the darkness of death has come down upon life. Both are built slowly, carefully, stone by stone, through all the abundant moments than measure the length of a man's life. ... Heaven or hell ... never comes as a shock; it is the harvest that was planted so long ago, watched, cultivated, defended, and now reaped in all its fullness. It is the house at the end of the road that could lead nowhere else.

Moderns speak of a "life project." In some sense that's true — except we need to reckon with the fact that that project is settled by death.

So do we take life and death seriously?

John M. Grondelski