



ST. THOMAS ANNOUNCEMENTS

March 16, 2025

1. **Abstinence (no meat) on Fridays during Lent.**
2. **Women's Club Spaghetti Dinner – March 22, 2025 - \$10.00. Children 5 years old and younger eat Free.**
3. **PLEASE CONTINUE TO PRAY FOR PEACE IN THE UKRAINE AND ISRAEL.**
4. **Greece in Footsteps of St. Paul with Greek Isle Cruise & Medjugorje.** Fr. Eugene has accepted an offer of Spiritual Director, 206 Tour 161-A, September 26 – October 10, 2025. You can find the details on the trip by clicking on the link <https://www.206tours.com/cms/tour161a/>. To see the prices, click on Dates & Prices, select September 26 – October 10. Father is leaving from Tampa. You can also click on the button "Fr. Eugene's Pilgrimages on the website homepage to see the details of the trip. If you are only interested in **Greece in Footsteps of St. Paul with Greek Isle Cruise** without Medjugorje, you would choose Tour 161, September 26 – October 6. He will be Spiritual Director on both tours.
5. **The obligation to participate in the Eucharist in person on Sundays and other holy days of obligation was restored three 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. 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 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.

7. 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.
8. 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>
9. 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.
10. In honor 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.
11. The annual Women's Club Rummage Sale is planned for Friday and Saturday, October 17 & 18. If you have items for the sale, you can bring them to the Social Hall at any time. Just call the office, and someone will open the door for you.

Catholic Trivia

What are “Ember Days”?

The U.S. bishops have encouraged us to observe this ancient practice. The Ember Days are an age-old custom of the Church, originating about the 4th century. They were observed four times per year, at the beginning of each season, and consisted of three days of prayer, fasting, and abstinence as a way of thanking God for the gifts of Creation, to ask His help in using them well, and to assist those in need. These days were closely connected to the seasonal farming cycles and were a profound way of sanctifying our earthly doings.



The Ember Days are always Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday, and the dates are as follows:

1. The Third Week of Advent
2. The First Week of Lent (The week after Ash Wednesday—this past week!)
3. The week after Pentecost
4. The third week in September

Traditionally, priestly ordinations have taken place on Ember Saturdays, a custom that dates all the way back to Pope Gelasius in the 5th century. Although this is not observed as a rule anymore, the Ember Days are still a good opportunity to offer prayer and sacrifice for our clergy.

In fact, various bishops and clergy in the U.S. have encouraged the renewed observance of the Ember Days as a way to pray for vocations, priests, and the needs of the Church. In their *Pastoral Statement on Penance and Abstinence* of 1966, the U.S. bishops also encouraged the voluntary observance of vigils and Ember Days as a way of participating in the Church’s traditional custom of a “fast before a feast.”

The idea of penance has been forgotten in our world. The secular mayhem surrounding Christmas has obscured the penitence once observed during Advent. Yet penance is an essential part of the Christian life. Why not bring it back through the observance of the Ember Days, in whatever way—small or large—that you are able?

You don’t have to perform great feats in order to embrace a spirit of self-denial. St. Thérèse of Lisieux—whose “Little Way” has become the path to holiness for countless souls—knew that little sacrifices are the key to sanctity.