

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
evecoultter@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
Thursday 7:00 pm

Religious Education

Evelyn Rivera 863-370-4000

Religious Formation – Every Sunday
Sept thru May

Preschool thru 8th
Sun 9 am + **Mass**

Email: office@stthomasbartow.org
Phone 863-533-8578
Fax 863- 533-5090
www.stthomasbartow.org

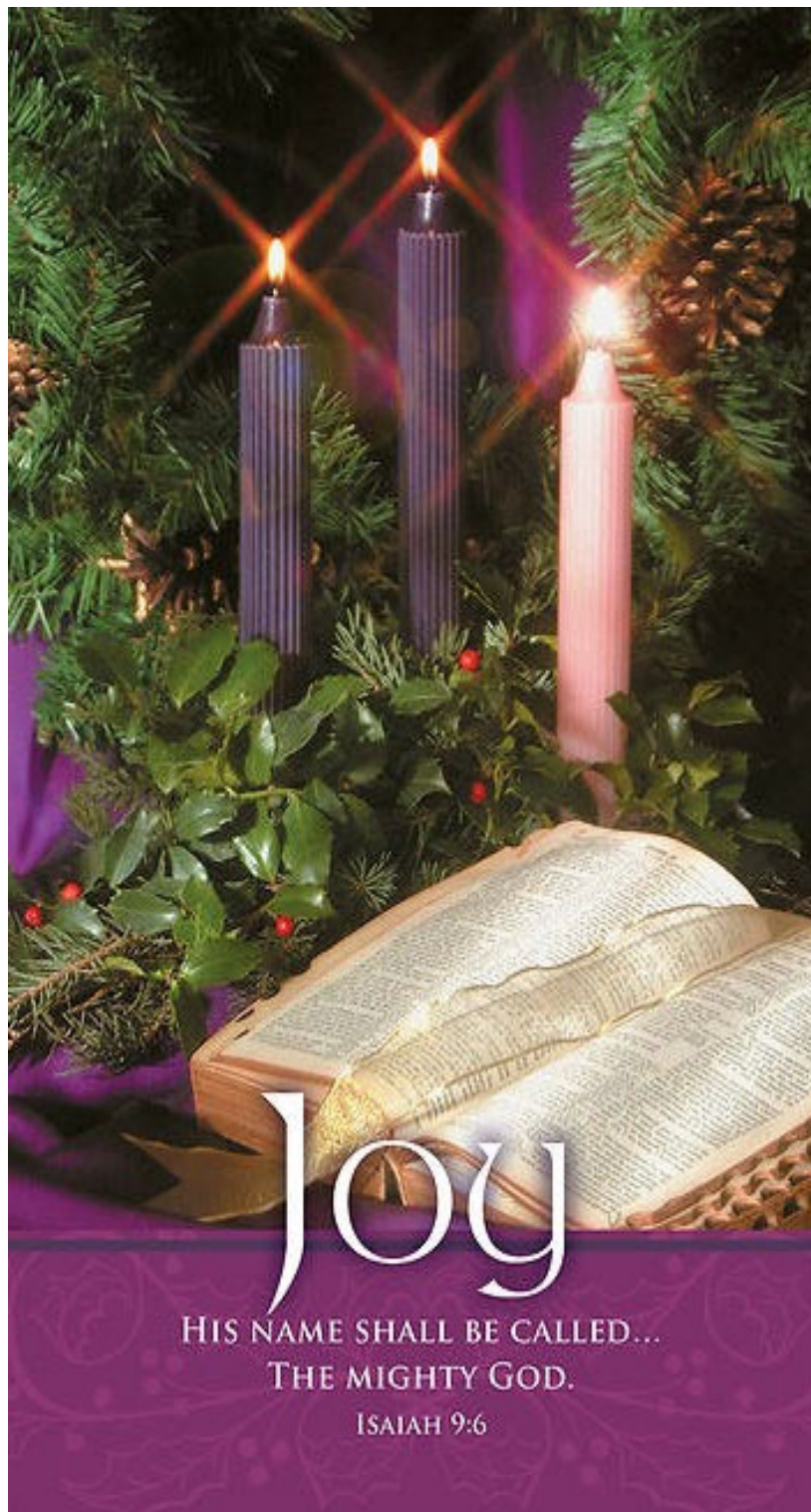
NEW PARISHIONERS WELCOME!
Registration forms in church or office

Remember St. Thomas Church in your will

Saint Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church

2180 S. Kissingen Ave. Bartow FL, 33830

Diocese of Orlando



3rd Sunday of Advent December 14, 2025



Mass Intentions

Sat Dec 13	5:00 pm	
Sun Dec 14	8:00 am	For All Parishioners
Sun Dec 14	10:30 am	+Leon LaClair By Family
Mon Dec 15	8:30 am	+Ozelle & +Missouri Johnson By Gerald Johnson
Tue Dec 16	8:30 am	
Thu Dec 18	8:30 am	All Souls in Purgatory
Fri Dec 119	8:30 am	
Sat Dec 20	5:00 pm	
Sun Dec 21	8:00 am	For All Parishioners
Sun Dec 21	10:30 am	+Charles Wiggins By Family

Please Pray For.....

Stuart Andrews, Terry Ayres, Kristin Bing, Pete Byrne, Melvin Casey, Debbie Coffman, Alan English, Rachel Gohlman, Dorothy Guptill, Delores Hart, Austin Heath, Zachary Heath, Ivette Hernandez, Jennifer Hoffer, Mark Jansen, Missy Jansen, Stuart Jones, Fr. Gabriel Kamienski, Bill Kjerrumgaard, Aaron Mills, Adam Mills, Zachary Mills, Scott Mize, Kathleen Morris, Lacey Pate, George Pizano, Karlee Severns, Richie Southwell, Chuck Spencer, Murphy Stidham, Rita Taylor, Laura Webb

Please pray for our deceased priests

Dec 2, 2015 Msgr. Vidal Arboleda
Dec 5, 2008 Rev. Stephen Phillips
Dec 13, 1971 Msgr. William Mullally
Dec 21, 1997 Rev. William O'Farrell
Dec 22, 1981 Rev. Vincent Smith
Dec 22, 2010 Rev. Gerard Granahan

The third candle of Advent also known as the "Shepherd Candle" reflects the joy that comes through Jesus' arrival, and through the salvation he has gifted us.

LECTORS	EMHC
12/13-5:00 pm	
Ruth Palmer Mike DeNeve	Angelika Almanzan Ruth Palmer
12/14-10:30 am	
Alina Gutierrez Confirmandi	Maria Davila Theresa Cherry
12/20-5:00 pm	
Ryan Curtis Ann Slocum	Ann Slocum Susan DeNeve
12/21-10:30 am	
Unique Gonzalez Evelyn Rivera	Pattie Scott Evelyn Rivera

Saint Thomas Collection

11/30	Regular	\$2471.00
	Maintenance	278.00
	Diocesan	5.00
	Christmas Flowers	264.00

Saint Elizabeth Collection

11/30	Regular	239.00
	Maintenance	35.00

This week's second collection is for the Retirement Fund for the Religious.

CHRISTMAS FLOWERS

If you would like to make a donation towards Christmas Flowers for the Church, please include your donations in the second collection.

ANGEL TREE

\$25 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.



Please join us at Las Posadas nightly from **December 15-23** at 6:00 pm. Las Posadas is a nine day novena. The Posada re-enacts Mary and Joseph's searching for a place to stay in Bethlehem.

A RESTLESS ADVENT

(continued from last week)

What I found most striking about this firm's pitch was the unabashed suggestion that I should celebrate the Christmas season right up until Christmas Eve, and then stop. Just as the religious observance began, this crassly commercial operation would close down.

Here, in one dumb online advertisement, was an example of the American secular celebration of "the Christmas season" at its worst. To say that the holy day had been drained of religious significance would be an understatement. Any thought about Christ's birth had been dropped out of the thinking of this firm's publicists long ago. Now they had gone much further. Having taken Christ out of Christmas, they were now prepared to remove Christmas day from the Christmas season.

And why not? If the Christmas season is made merry by shopping and by office parties and by music in the malls, we might as well acknowledge that those things stop on Christmas Day: a holiday, when stores and offices are closed and families stay at home. If the season is made merry by the realization of year-end profits at big-box stores, those profits have already been reaped, and the advertising managers can relax at last. It's all over.

But for us Christians, it's only just beginning. We're human, and we can be caught up in the pre-Christmas excitement: the rush to shop and to prepare, the jingling and the ho-ho-hos. That's only natural. But we know that the parties and the presents are only the superficial manifestation of a deeper joy. We don't look for satisfaction in the gifts—and certainly not in whatever gifts we give to ourselves!—because we know that these things always fail to satisfy. There's a let-down waiting for anyone who looks forward to Christmas solely because of the gifts under the tree. There's an infinitely more valuable gift, offered to anyone who awaits it. And the more eagerly we await it, the more it will satisfy.

"Thou hast formed us for Thyself, and our hearts are restless till they find rest in Thee." Restless: that's the best word to describe the feeling of Advent anticipation. Come, Lord Jesus!

Phil L.

THE HIDDEN MESSAGE IN ANCIENT 'O ANTIPHONS' OF ADVENT

Composed in the sixth or seventh century, the seven O Antiphons are drawn from the Book of the prophet Isaiah and the first letters of each antiphon form the Latin word SARCORE, which read backwards is ERO CRAS, which means 'Tomorrow I come.'

The first letters spell the message in an acrostic:

Dec. 17 — "O Sapientia"/"O Wisdom" (Isaiah 11:2-3; 28:29)

Dec. 18 — "O Adonai"/"O Lord" (Isaiah 11:4-5; 33:22)

Dec. 19 — "O Radix Jesse"/"O Root of Jesse" (Isaiah 11:1; 11:10)

Dec. 20 — "O Clavis David"/"O Key of David" (Isaiah 9:6; 22:22)

Dec. 21 — "O Oriens"/"O Dawn of the East" (Isaiah 9:2)

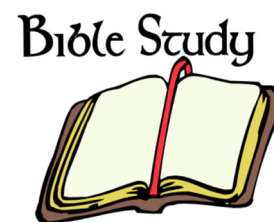
Dec. 22 — "O Rex Gentiu"/"O King of the Gentiles" (Isaiah 2:4; 9:7)

Dec. 23 — "O Emmanuel"/"God with Us" (Isaiah 7:14)

Together, these antiphons spell out "a hopeful message about the coming of the long-awaited Messiah, of Jesus as we prepare for his birthday each year on Dec. 25,"

The message in the antiphons holds true today. Each Christmas Jesus fulfills the promise 'I will come tomorrow' by being born again as a tiny baby, the Godman, Jesus Christ.

We can make the following O Antiphons part of our Advent preparation for the birth of Christ by using them in our prayers or Advent scriptural readings. The seven prayers accompany the Magnificat canticle, or the canticle of Mary. Then in gratitude and joy celebrate the birth of our long-awaited savior, Jesus Christ — Christmas.



Bible Study Sunday Nights at 6:00 pm in the parish hall.