

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
evecoulter@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

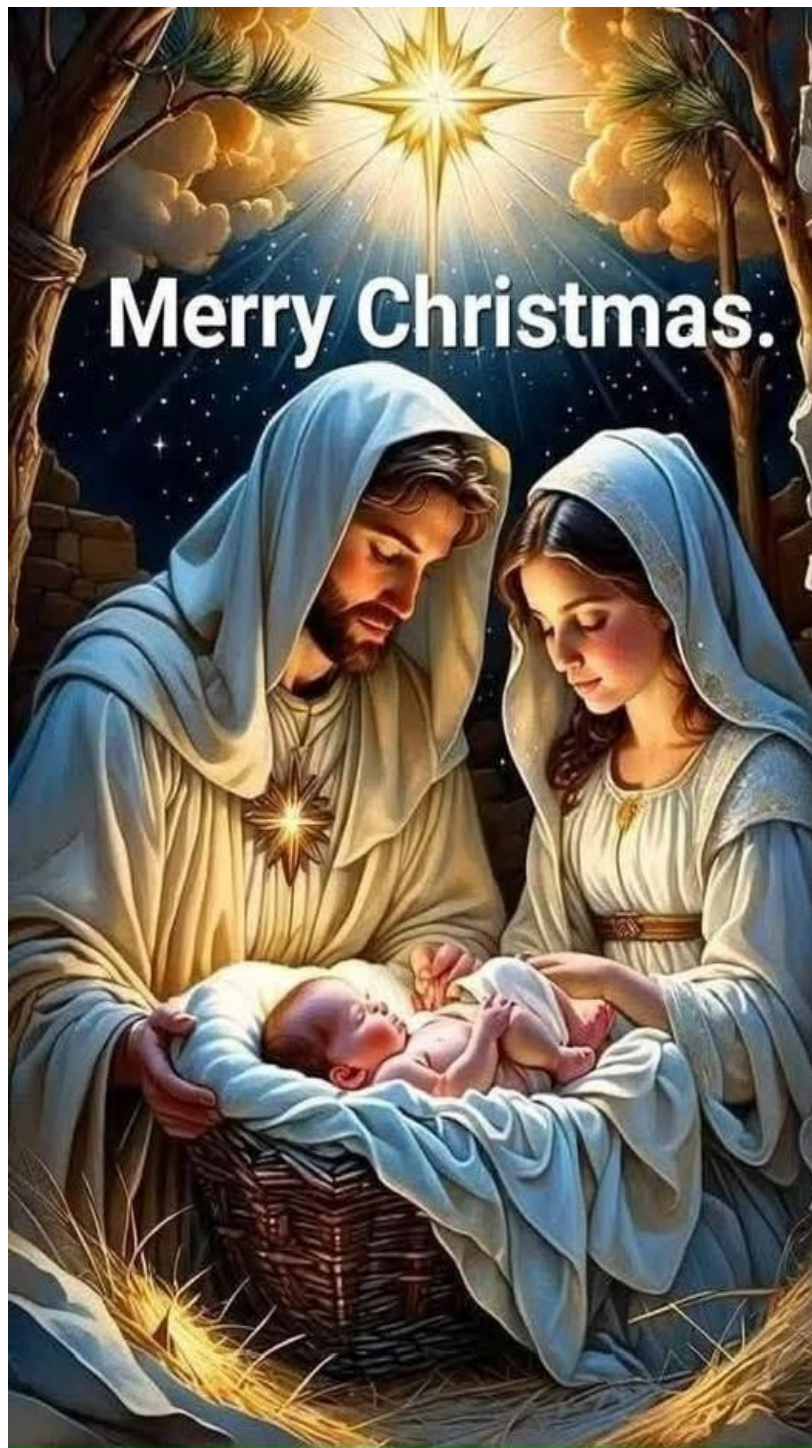
NEW PARISHIONERS WELCOME!
Registration forms in church or office

Remember St. Thomas Church in your will

Saint Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church

2180 S. Kissingen Ave. Bartow FL, 33830

Diocese of Orlando



4th Sunday of Advent December 21, 2025



Mass Intentions

Sat Dec 20	5:00 pm	+Juan Vasquez, +Kainen Genovisi, & +Elisa Roman By Yolanda Vasquez
Sun Dec 21	8:00 am	For All Parishioners
Sun Dec 21	10:30 am	+Charles Wiggins By Family
Mon Dec 22	8:30 am	All Souls in Purgatory
Tue Dec 23	8:30 am	
Wed Dec 24	5:00 pm	
Wed Dec 24	10:00 pm	
Thu Dec 25	10:30 am	
Fri Dec 26	8:30 am	
Sat Dec 27	5:00 pm	
Sun Dec 28	8:00 am	For All Parishioners
Sun Dec 28	10:30 am	+Leon LaClair 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

LECTORS	EMHC
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
12/24-5:00 pm	
Luke Almanzan Angelika Almanzan	Angelika Almanzan Luke Almanzan
12/24-10:00 pm	
Barbara Woodard Oziemar Woodard	Pat Lowery Maureen Leckie
12/25-10:30 am	
Pat Lowery Rick Davila	Maria Davila George Cherry
12/27-5:00 pm	
Mike DeNeve Carolyn King	Susan DeNeve Doug Van Orsdale
12/28-10:30 am	
Martha Laurent Carrie Brown	Pattie Scott Martha Laurent

Saint Thomas Collection

12/7	Regular	\$2272.00
	Maintenance	404.25
	Immaculate Conception	728.00
	Christmas Flowers	226.00

Saint Elizabeth Collection

12/7	Regular	960.00
	Maintenance	30.00
	Immaculate Conception	30.00
	Christmas Flowers	20.00

The fourth candle of Advent represents peace and is called the "Angel's Candle." The angels announced that Jesus came to bring peace--He came to bring people close to God and to each other again.



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.



Christmas Mass Schedule

Saint Thomas		
Dec 24	5:00 pm	Christmas Vigil
Dec 24	10:00 pm	Shepherd's Mass
Dec 25	10:30 am	Christmas Day Mass
Saint Elizabeth		
Dec 25	8:00 am	Christmas Day Mass

DON'T LET CHRISTMAS TAKE YOU BY SURPRISE

The Church provides this time of Advent to allow you to be caught by the joy of the Incarnation, you can be easily caught by surprise that it is Christmas. To help remedy this surprise, the Church provides songs, signs, and symbols to enter into the season of Advent more fruitfully.

Many of the customary hymns for Advent highlight the movement of the soul toward what Pope Francis termed in a 2014 homily on Advent as a "horizon of hope." No hymn epitomizes this better than "O Come, O Come Emmanuel," with its overtones of expectation and its mournful remorse over the state of man, captive to sin. The cultivation of hope and expectation is also seen in Advent hymns such as "O Come Divine Messiah" and "People Look East."

The commingled darkness and hope that God will fulfill his promises, a theme characteristic of Advent, deepens with songs and move the faithful into an experience of waiting with a pregnant Blessed Virgin Mary while the rhythm and percussion evoke donkey hooves clattering across the plains of Israel to Bethlehem.

Advent is a season of penance marked by joy and, in many ways, a little Lent. This is why the colors of purple and pink — with their ties to penance and the Lord's Passion, and the joy of Laetare Sunday when Lent is almost over — are the colors of Advent. But did you know that the deep purple of Advent has a blue hue to it to teach the faithful in symbol about the Marian heart of the season?

The lack of church decor also teaches about the penitential nature of the season. In the weeks leading up to Christmas, the lack of flowers on the altar, the restrained use of instruments, and the absence of the resounding and angelic Gloria all lead to a deliberate emptiness.

Following the solemnity of Christ the King, Advent begins with echoes of the power of Christ coming in glory before it stretches forward to the humble beginnings of the mystery of the Incarnation.

This means there is a certain focus the Church helps people enter into even in the way the liturgical calendar is marked by very few memorials of saints: just five in the course of the four weeks, most of whom are deeply embedded in the celebration of and preparation for Christmas in various countries.

St. Nicholas is the best known of the five: the generous bishop whose gifts inspired generations of lore and giving. St. Lucy, whose desire to give charity to prisoners in the catacombs meant she wore candles in her hair to free her hands, is another well-known saint with connections to Christmas whom we celebrate in Advent.

The Church also shows forth the importance of Mary during this season, which places her Immaculate Conception on Dec. 8, a solemnity and holy day of obligation, at the very beginning of the liturgical year. Combined with the feast day of Our Lady of Guadalupe on Dec. 12, the Church shows forth what God has wrought in a soul full of grace — a foreshadowing of the entire mystery of salvation in one soul.

Though there are many more signs and symbols that communicate the meaning of Advent, building anticipation for the celebration of Christmas so it doesn't catch you by surprise.



May the light of Christ's birth fill your heart with peace, your home with joy, and your life with hope. Merry Christmas, and may God's grace be with you always.