

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

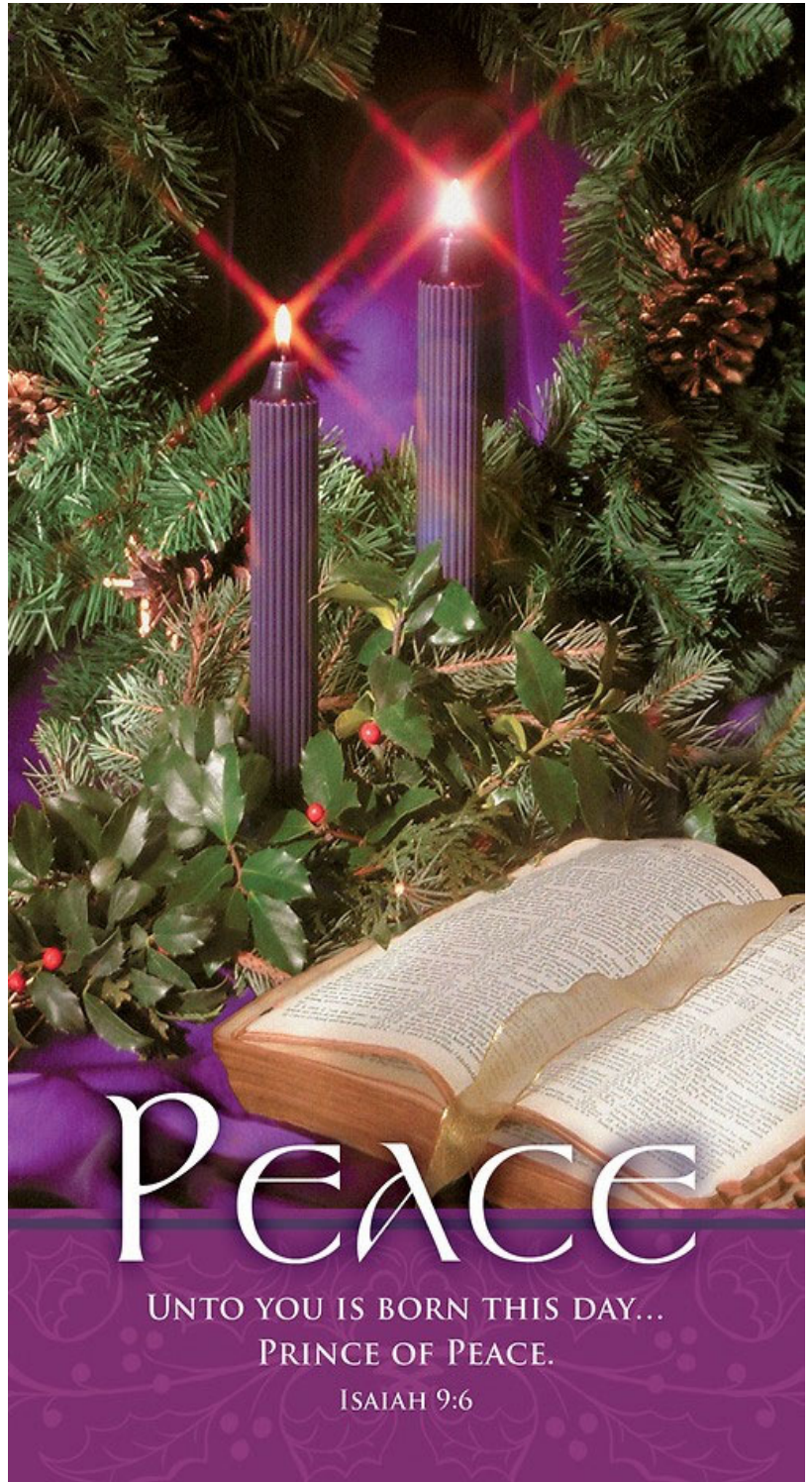
Preschool thru 8th
Sun 9 am + **Mass**

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



2nd Sunday of Advent December 7, 2025



Mass Intentions

Sat Dec 6	5:00 pm	+Carol Case By Marge & Rick Ward
Sun Dec 7	8:00 am	For All Parishioners
Sun Dec 7	10:30 am	+Leon LaClair By Bob & Helen Hillis
Mon Dec 8	8:30 am	
Mon Dec 8	7:00 pm	
Tue Dec 9	8:30 am	+Leon LaClair By Family
Thu Dec 11	8:30 am	All Souls in Purgatory
Fri Dec 12	8:30 am	+Sara Long By Den Mark & Carolyn King
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

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

***December 12th-Feast Day
Our Lady of Guadalupe
Patron of the Americas***

LECTORS	EMHC
12/6-5:00 pm	
Ann Spencer Barbara Van Orsdale	Susan DeNeve Doug Van Orsdale
12/7-10:30 am	
Rick Davila Caroline Picart	Martha Laurent Maria Davila
12/8-8:30 am	
Evelyn Rivera Martha Laurent	
12/8-7:00 pm	
Maureen Leckie Pat Lowery	
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

Saint Thomas Collection

11/23	Regular	\$1724.00
	Maintenance	308.00
	Diocesan	25.00
	All Souls	20.00
	Christmas Flowers	15.00

Saint Elizabeth Collection

11/23	Regular	556.00
	Maintenance	40.00
	Diocesan	65.00

Next 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.

HOLY DAY OF OBLIGATION

The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Patronal Feast Day of the United States of America is **December 8th**. This is a Holy Day of Obligation. Masses will take place at 8:30 am and 7:00 pm.



There will be a Penance Service on Friday, **December 12th** at 7:00 pm.

A RESTLESS ADVENT

The season of Advent is upon us. I said Advent, not Christmas. Christmas is coming, of course—that's the reason for this season of anticipation—but the Christmas season is not yet here.

Every year at about this time, I am struck once again by the contrast between the quiet anticipation proper to Advent and the frantic noisy bustle of the hyper-commercialized "holiday season." I say that I am "struck," but it would be more honest to say that I am frustrated. The "holiday season" encroaches on my Advent.

Is there something wrong with me for wanting to let Advent be Advent? For wanting to celebrate Christmas during the Christmas season? Would I be playing the curmudgeon, when I suggest that the best time to celebrate the Fourth of July is on July 4?

Yes, I know: Everyone feels the urge to get together and share the joy of the season. But *what* season? "To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven." [Eccl 3:1] My quarrel is not with the partying, but with the *timing* of the parties.

Advent is a season of preparation, and it's just plain wrong to prepare and celebrate at the same time. We'll all be making material preparations for Christmas Day: buying presents, wrapping them, hiding them from sight. If you open all the presents now, you won't have the same thrill of excitement on Christmas morning. The same is true of spiritual preparations. We all need to spend some time in quiet reflection, realizing how desperately we need a Savior. That quiet reflection—which is incompatible with partying—steadily builds a sense of longing that then explodes into the joy of the Nativity celebration. Without that time of reflection you cannot build the same longing; without the longing you cannot experience the same explosion of joy.

There's great wisdom behind the Church's liturgical calendar. We need the time of preparation, for emotional as well as spiritual reasons.

Then when Christmas does arrive, remember that the feast only begins on the 25th and last until the Baptism of the Lord: that's a reality. Plenty of time for parties.

Timing is critical. If the parties are all held before Christmas—earlier and earlier, as hosts try to avoid the rush—then both the decorations and the party-goers are wilting by the time Christmas Day arrives. So the premature celebrations that nearly erase Advent also sap the joyous energy from the Christmas season. Advent never happened, and the Christmas season is shrunk to a single day; the trees are out on the sidewalk, ready to be carted away, on December 26.

Recently I read an ad from a firm offering, if I plunked down a considerable sum of money, to send me every day a gift. Actually, the ad promised 24 gifts., this firm would send me one Christmas gift for each day. These gifts would begin arriving on December 1, and there would be another for every day until December 24.

And then the gifts would stop. On Christmas Day.

Do you see what's happening here? The firm was identifying the "Christmas season" as the period leading up to Christmas. Once Christmas arrived, the "Christmas season" was over!

Faithful Christians enjoy Advent as a season of anxious anticipation. The eagerness with which we look forward to celebrating the Incarnation is dampened if we hit the party circuit too early. But again, that's only the beginning of the problem with this perverse advertisement.

(To be continued next week)

The second candle of Advent is often referred to as the "Bethlehem Candle," it represents the peace brought by the Prince of Peace, Jesus Christ.

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.

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