



ST. THOMAS AQUINAS
CATHOLIC CHURCH • BARTOW, FL
DIOCESE OF ORLANDO

ST. THOMAS ANNOUNCEMENTS

March 15, 2026

1. **PLEASE CONTINUE TO PRAY FOR PEACE IN THE UKRAINE AND ISRAEL.**

2. **The obligation to participate in the Eucharist in person on Sundays and other holy days of obligation was restored 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.

3. Our Parish bulletin can be viewed weekly online by clicking on the Bulletin button on our website at www.stthomasbartow.org. There is also a button to view the previous week's bulletin if you missed it. 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.

4. 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.

5. 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>

6. Bishop Robert Barron, author, speaker, theologian and founder of Word on Fire, a global media ministry, is producing a seven volume Bible series. Volume I focuses on the Gospels, Volume II on Acts, Letters, and Revelation, Volume III, on The Pentateuch, Volume IV on The Promised Land and Volume V on Exile and Return. All are all available now at <https://wordonfire.org/bible>. Volume VI The Wisdom Literature and will be released at a later date. If you would like to subscribe to Bishop Barron's newsletter, go to <https://wordonfire.org/#newsletter> and just provide your email address.

7. 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.

Catholic Trivia

Which priest has a statue in Times Square? Ever been to "Duffy Square" in NYC? Meet the heroic chaplain it's named after. He is honored by Catholics *and* the secular world. He is a legend in the U.S. Army. His statue is on display in one of New York City's most iconic locations. Who was Fr. Francis Duffy, and why is he so famous?



Statue Dedication 1937



Fr. Duffy on Right

Originally from Ontario, Canada, Fr. Duffy attended seminary in New York and was ordained in 1896. After a few years studying at the Catholic University of America and teaching in the seminary, he joined the Army as a chaplain. He first served during the Spanish-American War, where he was stationed at a hospital to greet injured soldiers returning from Cuba.

He is best known, however, for his service in World War I. Fr. Duffy served as chaplain for the 69th Infantry Regiment. They were known as the "Fighting 69th" and fought on the Western Front of France during the war. This regiment was also nicknamed the "Fighting Irish" because most of the soldiers were Irish-American. As chaplain, Fr. Duffy said Mass for the soldiers and gave each of them absolution as they marched off into battle. During the actual battles, Fr. Duffy would go out onto the battlefield to administer the sacraments and recover wounded soldiers. Because of this, he became known as the "Fighting Chaplain" who wasn't afraid of gunfire.

Providing spiritual sustenance, strength, and consolation to his men, Fr. Duffy boosted the morale of the soldiers and even took on a role of leadership and authority, which the soldiers say was crucial to the success of the regiment. Fr. Duffy received the Distinguished Service Cross when the Battle of Ourcq resulted in hundreds of casualties—and he had to bury every single one of them. These men had become spiritual sons to him, and he was deeply grieved, but did his priestly work out of love for them and their families.

Fr. Duffy also received the Army Distinguished Medal, Conspicuous Service Cross, and other honors during the war, and remains to this day the most highly-decorated cleric in U.S. Army history.

After the war, when the soldiers came home, Fr. Duffy's home parish in the Bronx held a celebratory parade for the return of the "Fighting Chaplain" who had done God's work and served his country. When he died in 1932, thousands turned out for his military funeral.