

Father Eugene Grytner, SDS  
Office hours 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 8<sup>th</sup>

Sun 9 am + **Mass**

Email: [office@stthomasbartow.org](mailto:office@stthomasbartow.org)

Phone 863-533-8578

Fax 863- 533-5090

[www.stthomasbartow.org](http://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*



# 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Easter April 19, 2026



## Mass Intentions

Sat Apr 18	5:00 pm	
Sun Apr 19	8:00 am	For All Parishioners
Sun Apr 19	10:30 am	+Charles Wiggins By Family
Mon Apr 20	8:30 am	+Ozelle & +Missouri Johnson By Gerald Johnson
Tue Apr 21	8:30 am	Special Intention
Thu Apr 23	8:30 am	All Souls in Purgatory
Fri Apr 24	8:30 am	
Sat Apr 25	5:00 pm	
Sun Apr 26	8:00 am	For All Parishioners
Sun Apr 26	10:30 am	

### 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, David LaCalair, Aaron Mills, Adam Mills, Zachary Mills, Scott Mize, Kathleen Morris, Lacey Pate, George Pizano, Karlee Seaverns, Richie Southwell, Chuck Spencer, Murphy Stidham, Rita Taylor, Laura Webb

### ***Please pray for our deceased diocesan priests***

Apr 6, 2018	Rev. Edward Hamilton
Apr 14, 2024	Rev. Clyde Bonar
Apr 17, 2017	Rev. Domingo Gonzalez
Apr 21, 2002	Most Rev. Thomas Grady
Apr 21, 2018	Rev. Eduardo Benitez
April 24, 2023	Rev. Sean Heslin
Apr 28, 1985	Rev. Luis Maris Padilla
Apr 29, 2014	Msgr. Terence Farrelly

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

LECTORS	EMHC
4/18-5:00 pm	
Ann Spencer Ann Slocum	Angelika Almanzan Luke Almanzan
4/19-10:30 am	
Carolyn King Caroline Picart	Martha Laurent Maureen Leckie
4/25-5:00 pm	
Victor Aguirre Mike DeNeve	Ann Slocum Susan DeNeve
4/26-10:30 am	
Ryan Curtis Carrie Brown	Pattie Scott George Cherry

### Saint Thomas Collection

4/5	Regular	\$4449.00
	Maintenance	439.00
	Easter Flowers	10.00
	Diocesan	492.00

### Saint Elizabeth Collection

4/5	Regular	1132.00
	Maintenance	49.00

### SECOND COLLECTION

Next week's second collection is a Diocesan Collection for Black/Indian Missions and Catholic Home Missions.

### MOTHER'S DAY ENVELOPES

Special Mother's Day Masses will be celebrated on **May 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, and 11<sup>th</sup>**. Envelopes can be found in the pews.

### What is just one of the misconceptions people today have about the Eucharist

That the Eucharist is just a symbol because Christ didn't mean it literally, or we would be cannibals. First of all, that's not true because the Body and Blood that we get in Communion is not the earthly Body and Blood of Christ. It's the glorified Body and Blood of Christ after his resurrection. Secondly, it's not just a symbol. The Greek word *trogon*, the word used, means to "gnaw," to "chew" with your teeth. So Jesus is not talking figuratively. The verb *trogon* means to literally "chew with your teeth." And so that's what we have to be aware of. John 6 makes it very clear that unless we eat the Body and drink the Blood of Christ, we have no life in us.

## A LESSON IN FAITH

“So God, for each soul that is saved, rings the eternal Easter bells. And he says: I told you so.”

*Charles Péguy*

The words say perfectly what God does at Easter. They seem to say it just right: What God does with us.

And hope is the effect. A dead body comes to life, dawn comes as darkness fades, sins are forgiven, sluggish souls are revived; against all obvious odds, God wins the game. God will save us. He will ring the eternal Easter bells.

What is found in the Gospels is enough to make your head spin, but I think that's kind of the point. Repeatedly, the disciples are left wondering in weird joy having seen the risen Lord. There is indeed a holy deliriousness to Easter. This story from John's Gospel is no exception.

Mary Magdalene is up before dawn to visit Jesus's tomb. To anoint the body? To mourn? John doesn't say. Is she even alone; when she runs to Peter and the beloved disciple, she says “we.” But those details don't really matter. What matters is her fright seeing the tomb open. She doesn't seem to investigate; she apparently just runs away. She assumes, not implausibly, that the body of Jesus was stolen.

You can almost hear her heart beating through the verses of the story. Filled with love for Jesus, filled also with fear, the world still dark, and she runs to Peter. “They have taken the Lord from the tomb, and we don't know where they put him” (Jn 20:2). She calls him “Lord,” but still she's not thinking of resurrection; her faith is still filled with fear.

But, of course, Peter and the beloved disciple (presumably John) do not possess cooler heads. They run to the tomb; Peter — maybe he's older; maybe there's some symbolism to it — runs slower. But when Peter enters the tomb first, seeing what he sees, the story doesn't say what he made of it. Only Luke tells us that Peter went home “amazed” (Lk 24:12).

The beloved disciple “saw and believed,” it says, but that's complicated in the very next verse where it says, “they did not yet understand the Scripture” (Jn 20:9). So, what exactly did the beloved disciple believe? What's going on?

Mary Magdalene's racing heart, Peter's wondering, the beloved disciple's rushed belief: these are Easter's first experiences.

But these experiences teach us. For they are like our experiences especially in the earliest moments of conversion, the first feelings of salvation. God died for me? He rose from the dead for me? God's forgiving me? What's going on? The plausible thing is death and the grave and nothing more or, if you're not an atheist, hell for the wickedness of our sinful ways — not resurrection, not forgiveness, not Pentecost.

But the Gospel says what it says, and the poet writes what he writes. As you read closely this story from John, you'll notice that the sun is slowly rising, that as Mary and Peter and the beloved disciple are scurrying about, things are slowly getting brighter. Because ours is a God who saves souls. He rings eternal Easter bells and says to us, “I told you so.” Because God loves us anyway. Because God wins the game.

## YOUR GIFT BECOMES A BLESSING

The celebration of First Holy Communion is a beautiful and sacred milestone in a child's faith journey. Many families in our sister diocese in San Juan de la Maguana long to celebrate this blessed day with dignity, but do not have the resources to purchase special clothing.

By sharing your child's First Communion outfit, you are passing on a symbol of faith, love, and hope to another child of God. Together, we can help them feel the joy and reverence of this holy sacrament.

The Mission Office  
50 E Robinson Street  
Orlando, FL



*Approach prayer with honesty; God values sincere hearts more than eloquent words.* — **Pope Leo XIII**