

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
evcoultter@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



5th Sunday of Easter May 3, 2026



Mass Intentions

Sat May 2	5:00 pm	Confirmandi
Sun May 3	8:00 am	For All Parishioners
Sun May 3	10:30 am	+Guadalupe Blanco By Maria & Rick Davila
Mon May 4	8:30 am	
Tue May 5	8:30 am	
Thu May 7	8:30 am	All Souls in Purgatory
Fri May 8	8:30 am	
Sat May 9	5:00 pm	For All Mothers
Sun May 10	8:00 am	For All Parishioners
Sun May 10	10:30 am	For All Mothers

Please Pray For.....

Stuart Andrews, Terry Ayres, Kristin Bing, Pete Byrne, Melvin Casey, Debbie Coffman, Alan English, Rachel Gohman, 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 Severns, Richie Southwell, Chuck Spencer, Murphy Stidham, Rita Taylor, Laura Webb

Please pray for our deceased diocesan priests

May 1, 2005 Rev. John Garvy
 May 6, 2013 Rev. Patrick O'Carroll
 May 20, 2010 Rev. James John MacLoughlin
 May 30, 2020 Msgr. Fachtna Joseph Harte



In the Catholic Church the month of May is Mary's month. It's the month we honor Blessed Mary as the Mother of Jesus and our Heavenly Mother.

LECTORS	EMHC
5/2-5:00 pm	
Unique Gonzalez Alina Gutierrez	Ann Slocum Pat Lowery
5/3-10:30 am	
Martha Laurent Rick Davila	Martha Laurent Maria Davila
5/9-5:00 pm	
Barbara Van Orsdale Ruth Palmer	Doug Van Orsdale Ruth Palmer
5/10-10:30 am	
Evelyn Rivera Confirmandi	George Cherry Evelyn Rivera

Saint Thomas Collection

4/19	Regular	\$1739.00
	Maintenance	498.85
	Mother's Day	2.00

Saint Elizabeth Collection

4/19	Regular	380.00
	Maintenance	35.00

MOTHER'S DAY ENVELOPES

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

COME TO PRAY

May 7 First Thursday of the Month is dedicated to pray for new vocations to the priesthood and the religious life, and the sanctity of life for those already called.

FAMILY BALLROOM DANCE

On **May 17** following the 10:30 am Mass, there will be a Family Ballroom Dance session with Caroline Picart in the Social Hall. She will be teaching ballroom dances to the children and everyone who wants to learn. Come and learn or just come to watch. Plan to stay 1 ½ hours. A light lunch will be provided.

If you know any students who are graduating this year, please let the office know so that we can honor them.

HIDDEN LESSON OF LOURDES

It was powerful to be in Lourdes the place where Our Lady appeared and to learn first-hand about her visits and messages to the holy seer. On this particular pilgrimage, I was especially struck by Our Lady's honesty, when she told St. Bernadette, "I do not promise to make you happy in this world but in the other."

Most people don't know much about St. Bernadette after the apparitions, which took place between Feb. 11 and July 16, 1858. Many people aren't interested to know where the young woman went or what happened after the apparitions were over.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church reminds us that private apparitions are a help to us in living out the Christian way of life: "Throughout the ages, there have been so-called 'private' revelations, some of which have been recognized by the authority of the Church. They do not belong, however, to the deposit of faith. It is not their role to improve or complete Christ's definitive Revelation, but to help live more fully by it in a certain period of history. Guided by the Magisterium of the Church, the *sensus fidelium* knows how to discern and welcome in these revelations whatever constitutes an authentic call of Christ or his saints to the Church" (67).

And so, I guess it shouldn't have been a surprise to learn that, after the apparitions, their investigations, and the completion of the initial shrine at Lourdes, Bernadette — like all Christian young people — pursued her vocation and sought holiness out of the spotlight and in the ordinary course of life.

St. Bernadette felt a call to religious life, and she pursued it. It led her to a hidden life in a small town. Bernadette went to Nevers with no fanfare, no hype and no crowds of people surrounding her.

When others raised questions about her entrance into apparent anonymity, the young Bernadette responded, "The Virgin used me as a broom to remove the dust. When the work is done, the broom is put behind the door again."

The poor French girl wanted the apparitions to do in her life what they're supposed to do in

each of our lives, namely, to encourage and help us to live the Christian call to holiness.

In Nevers convent still is the reception room that Bernadette would have been received into the cloister and began her life as a Sister of Charity.

It is a simple hall, with no markings, burning candles or hanging rosaries. There was nothing in that room that resembled the sanctuary in Lourdes in any way, except it was there in that room where the graces of Lourdes came to fruition in the tender soul of its visionary.

The young woman who met the Blessed Virgin Mary, the person who was invited to pray the Rosary with Our Lady, and the good soul that was given the powerful declaration, "I am the Immaculate Conception" by the Blessed Mother herself was integrating the graces of these experiences and letting them enrich her interior life and lead her to greater holiness through the daily living out of her vocation.

Holiness is not found in signs and wonders. It is not found in apparitions and preternatural phenomena. Holiness can be inspired by such things and can be encouraged by such experiences, but the real work of holiness requires a lot more from us.

Holiness is rolling up our sleeves and seeking to encounter God in the mundane, regular duties of our life. Holiness is found in the virtuous completion of the tasks and responsibilities of our vocation. Holiness is found in the trenches. It is living by faith and seeking to do all that God is asking of us in our daily lives.

St. Paul reminds us all: "And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him" (Col 3:17).

There is no enigma to holiness. It has no riddles. Holiness is practical and tangible. It is oftentimes found in easy-to-find places, such as a small quiet room in a backwoods town where a sickly young woman says "Yes" to her vocation, enters the convent, and seeks to do the unknown, insignificant things of her daily schedule with great attentiveness and love. There's holiness.

(To be continued next week)