



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

ST. THOMAS ANNOUNCEMENTS

May 3, 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 four years ago 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

What are we really celebrating on Cinco de Mayo? Cinco de Mayo commemorates the Battle of Puebla on May 5, 1862, when Mexican forces achieved an unlikely victory over the powerful French army. Cinco de Mayo is often marked with food, music and festivity, but its meaning runs far deeper than that.

Many people mistakenly assume it is Mexico's Independence Day, which was September 16, 1810. To understand Cinco de Mayo fully, we have to see it within a broader and more complex moment in Mexican history. In the decades after independence, Mexico wrestled with competing visions of its future. Some leaders promoted modern republican ideals and reform, while others emphasized tradition, the role of the Church, and continuity with long-standing cultural and religious life.

These tensions were not simply political, they threatened to reshape the spiritual identity of Mexico. Though separated by centuries, the story of Cinco de Mayo unfolds within a nation already shaped by Our Lady of Guadalupe. Mexicans were a people who, in moments of uncertainty and struggle, entrusted themselves to her maternal care.

In contrast to the United States, where religious freedom allowed the Church to grow alongside democratic institutions, Mexico's path often forced a perceived choice between embracing political reform and remaining fully rooted in the Faith.

The Battle of Puebla in Context Against this backdrop, the victory at Puebla took on greater meaning. It was not just a military success, but a moment of unity and resilience during a time of profound division. It reminded a struggling nation of its strength, dignity, and identity in the face of foreign intervention. There is every reason to celebrate Cinco de Mayo as a meaningful part of Mexican history and heritage. In general, Cinco de Mayo is a low key event in Mexico except in Puebla and nearby states. There, the day is treated with genuine historical significance. Military parades, civic ceremonies, school events, and cultural festivals with food, music and dancing make it a patriotic and historical festival. It's more than just another reason to party.

Cinco de Mayo offers an opportunity to reflect on the complexity of Mexican history: the sacrifices made, the faith that endured, and the people who navigated profound cultural and spiritual challenges.



Celebrating the day with joy and respect, while remembering its deeper story, allows us to honor both the culture and the enduring faith that have shaped it. Cinco de Mayo reminds us of an important lesson still valuable today: Governments will rise and fall, ideologies will come and go, but the faith of a people - lived quietly, tested deeply, and sustained by grace - can endure through it all.