



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

## ST. THOMAS ANNOUNCEMENTS

June 21, 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](http://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/](http://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

During America's founding, there was a lot of hostility towards Catholics. However, there was one openly practicing Catholic who played an essential role in the establishment of this nation. As America prepares to celebrate its 250th anniversary, it is worth remembering the only Catholic who signed the Declaration of Independence.

Charles Carroll of Carrollton was one of the wealthiest men in the colonies, a passionate advocate for independence. When Americans think about the Founding Fathers, they do not often think about Catholics. That is not entirely surprising. Catholics made up only a small portion of the colonial population, and their place in public life was not always secure.

Maryland had been founded in part as a refuge for Catholics, yet religious tensions and restrictions still found their way into the colony over time. Even so, Catholics helped shape the life of Maryland and, eventually, the new nation itself. Charles Carroll stands as one of the clearest examples.

Educated in Europe and deeply committed to both his faith and his country, Carroll became one of the strongest supporters of American independence. Although Catholics faced various legal restrictions in colonial America, his intelligence, influence, and leadership made him an important voice in Maryland's political life.

When the Continental Congress adopted the Declaration of Independence in 1776, Carroll signed his name alongside fifty-five other delegates. He remains the only Catholic signer of the Declaration. One of the most memorable stories associated with Carroll concerns his signature itself.

According to tradition, after he signed the Declaration, someone remarked that there were many Charles Carrolls in Maryland. If the Revolution failed, it might not be clear which Charles Carroll had committed treason against the British Crown. Carroll reportedly solved the problem by adding two words: "of Carrollton."

Carroll was willing to risk everything for the cause of independence, and he wanted there to be no doubt about where he stood. His story also reminds us that Catholicism was part of the American story from the beginning.

Long before the Revolution, Catholic missionaries had traveled to the colonies to preach the Gospel. Priests celebrated Mass in secret when necessary. Families passed the faith on to their children despite obstacles and uncertainty. The Catholic presence in America did not begin after the founding. It helped shape the founding itself. Living until 1832, he witnessed the growth of the nation from a bold experiment into a flourishing republic.