St. Thomas the Apostle Parish

Mass Schedule
Sunday
8am & 10am
Monday, Wednesday,
Thursday, Friday: 8am
Tuesday: 8:30am
Saturday: 4pm
Holy Days: 8am

Confession
Saturdays, 2:30-3:30pm or by appointment

Baptism
Please contact the Parish Office.

Marriage
Please make arrangements eight months in advance.

Membership
Please register at the Parish Office or online at
www.stapostleparish.org under “Contact Us”.

Come visit us at www.stapostleparish.org
Welcome!

We’re so glad you’re here and invite you to journey in faith with us. We believe the church is the sacrament of God’s saving presence in the world. Our goal is to provide a spiritual home where all are welcome, where the healing, reconciling, liberating love of God flows through us to all people. If you have any questions about our parish, please call or email our parish office. **Masks are currently required for all persons regardless of vaccination status in all Archdiocesan facilities, including parish offices, schools, and churches.**

**Today’s Readings: Eighth Sunday of Ordinary Time**

**Family of Ngwueke** (Mass of Thanksgiving)

*We encourage you to prepare yourself for next weekend’s liturgy by reading and praying the scriptures (visit www.usccb.org).*

**Next Sunday’s Readings: First Sunday of Lent**

**Weekday Mass Intentions**
Weekday Masses are at 8am on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. On Tuesdays, when we join with our school students, Mass is at 8:30am. *Please remember those listed below in your prayers this week.*

**MONDAY, February 28**
Readings: 1 Pt 1:3-9 ♦ Ps 111:1-2, 5-6, 9 & 10c ♦ Mk 10:17-27

Jesus answered, “Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone.” Mk 10:18

**Diane Grudis, Ngwueke Family** (Mass of Thanksgiving)

**TUESDAY, March 1**
Readings: 1 Pt 1:10-16 ♦ Ps 98:1, 2-3ab, 3cd-4 ♦ Mk 10:28-31

*Set your hopes completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.* 1 Pt 1:13

**Dr. Herman Neal**

**ASH WEDNESDAY, March 2**
See Mass and Ash Distribution schedule on page 3.
Readings: Jl 2:12-18 ♦ Ps 51:3-4, 5-6ab, 12-13, 14 & 17 ♦ 2 Cor 5:20—6:2 ♦ Mt 6:1-6, 16-18

*Return to me with your whole heart.* Jl 2:18

**John Coruthers, Jr.**

**THURSDAY, March 3**
Readings: Dt 30:15-20 ♦ Ps 1:1-2, 3, 4 & 6 ♦ Lk 9:22-25

*I have set before you life and death…choose life.* Dt 30:19

**Antonia Laudadio, Mark Lewis**

**FRIDAY, March 4**
Readings: Is 58:1-9a ♦ Ps 51:3-4, 5-6ab, 18-19 ♦ Mk 9:14-15

*This is the fasting that I wish:...setting free the oppressed...sharing your bread with the hungry, sheltering the oppressed and the homeless, clothing the naked when you see them…* Is 58:6-7

**Iris Carter**

**Faith Formation Monthly Theme**
**PRAYER, FASTING, ALMSGIVING**

The second Lenten Discipline is that of fasting. The Church reminds us that Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are days of fast, where those between the ages of 18-59 are to eat only one full meal in the day, with two additional smaller meals that when taken together do not equal a full meal. No eating between meals is permitted, but one may have liquids. When we fast, we are not merely denying ourselves something; rather, we are stepping away from things that may separate us from God, so that we are able to pay closer attention to him. As we prepare for Ash Wednesday this week, consider if there are things you need to step away from this Lent, so that you may open your heart more fully to God.

**Questions of the Week**

**Adults:** When have you most felt like a hypocrite? How did you overcome this feeling?

**Children:** Is it a good thing or a bad thing to act differently from what you are really feeling? Why?
Dear Parishioners and Friends of St. Thomas the Apostle,

As you’ll see in this weekend’s bulletin, Jennifer Davis, our director of liturgy, has shared with me that she will be completing her time at St. Thomas the Apostle on May 1st. Jennifer has been a real blessing to the parish. Beginning her work with Fr. Elias, and continuing under Fr. Chris and Fr. Dan, she has shared her love of the liturgy with all of us at St. Thomas by coordinating and training the liturgical ministers, leading the decoration of the church for the various liturgical seasons, and being a welcoming face to many in the back of the church before and after Mass.

Jennifer is currently enrolled in the Doctor of Ministry program at CTU and I know that she will continue to bring her gifts to St. Thomas in a new way as she transitions out of this role. It has been my real joy to work with Jennifer, I will miss collaborating with her, and wish her well in her next endeavor.

As I’m coming up on eight months here at St. Thomas, I am still learning more about the parish and the things that make us so special as well as our rich history. As I learn more and can see a little more clearly each day where we are headed, I have learned that I can’t do this work alone. Firstly, I am grateful for the many volunteers who give so faithfully of their time and talent. I’m also grateful for my colleagues on the staff who do well the work of ministry. On the parish side, we are a small but mighty group who do so much. They bring their expertise, love of ministry, care for the people, and zeal for the Catholic faith in helping me at the parish. I truly mean it when I say I couldn’t do this without them.

You’ll see on the front page of the bulletin and as you see in your experience, we have a good group of people who work here at St. Thomas. One of the things that I appreciate about them is that they are not afraid to roll up their sleeves and take an “all hands on deck” approach to ministry at the parish. As I see more clearly each day the wonderful things we can do at the parish and school, we are getting to a critical point where we need more help in the office to do the good work of ministry. I am looking to hire a pastoral associate to assist me in the ministry of the parish. This is what I wrote in the job description:

“The Pastoral Associate will assist the pastor with the overall care of the parish. The ministry of the Pastoral Associate is comprehensive, relating to various aspects of parish life as designated by the pastor and works to help further the mission of the Church in the parish and in the local community. “

This position, open to a lay person or a religious, will help me in ministry planning and vision setting, and collaborate with the entire staff in continuing our good work at the parish. If you know someone in your network who might be interested in this position, please have them go to our website for more information.

As I say my prayers daily, I always include a prayer of gratitude for the people I get to collaborate with at the parish. Please, say a prayer of gratitude as well for all those who give of their time, talent, treasure, and expertise to our parish and school.

Sincerely,
Fr. Trail

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**ASH WEDNESDAY AND LENT SCHEDULE AT ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE**

**Ash Wednesday**

- 7:00 AM – Mass with the Distribution of Ashes
- 8:30 AM – Mass with the Distribution of Ashes with St. Thomas the Apostle School Students
- 12:15 PM – Liturgy of the Word with the Distribution of Ashes
- 6:30 PM - Mass with the Distribution of Ashes

The Church will also be open for private prayer all day and a minister will be available to impose Ashes.

**Stations of the Cross**

Every Friday of Lent at 6 PM in Church

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**FIRST FRIDAY OF THE MONTH**

**ADORATION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT**

8:30 AM - 10:00 AM
Middle School: Exploring the Wonders of Our Solar System

Middle School Science, lead by Mr. Losey, explored the universe this past month within their Planetary Unit. During the Planetary Science unit, our 7th and 8th graders explored the wonders of our solar system. The class explored the crater simulations, and created research posters of their very own planet. They even explored the Museum of Science and Industry's solar system “metaverse”.

During this unit they were exposed to all corners of what our solar system has to offer. To end the unit, they integrated our knowledge of baking (from Kitchen Chemistry) to bake and decorate “Planet Cookies”. The students were asked to work as a class to follow the recipe for both the cookies and frosting. In celebration of finishing their unit, students were allowed to then decorate and eat their Planet Cookie.
Dear family and friends of St. Thomas the Apostle Parish, as I write this letter, I give thanks and glory to God for blessing me to have served this parish for twenty-four years in an array of ministries, in leadership, and as your liturgist. Through prayer it has come with a heavy heart, that I will be leaving my position as Director of Liturgy on May 1, 2022, but not my family and friends of the parish. I will continue to work closely with our pastor as I transition from my duties so this ministry may continue to function smoothly after my departure.

I call you family and friends for you have formed me into the minister and leader that I am today. And I am most grateful. We have journeyed together on many roads, and I thank you for the support you have given, the prayers, the challenges, and most of all the continuous love that you all give. There are many people to thank in the parish of God’s People in Extraordinary Variety who have come and gone, who have mentored me and saw something within me that I did not see within myself. In my first ministry at St. Thomas in the RCIA, a fellow catechist said to me, “Pray to the Holy Spirit and ask him to help you find your voice in this ministry” my voice was found, and I have been praying to the Holy Spirit ever since for the Spirit of God has brought me a long way in my service to God’s people. What an incredible journey!

I want to thank Father Michael for his support, it has been an honor working with him and I look forward to ministering with him again sometime down the road. To our liturgical coordinators Dr. Jacqueline Callery, Dr. James Rydel, Thomas Dousa, and to all our liturgical ministers, Terry Sherwood, Mildred Soriano, our parish catechists Dr. Charemi Jones (Sacramental Prep), and Christiana Njoloma (Confirmation II) who have ministered tirelessly, and for all those volunteers who have helped to keep the doors open of our parish for worship during Covid, I thank you all in profound gratitude for your dedication, and to the parish staff, it’s been an honor working side by side with you through it all.

I am proud to have called St. Thomas the Apostle my home for many years, and you my family and friends. You will always have a special place in my heart for this is where it all began.

Peace and Every Good Blessing,

Jennifer Elizabeth Davis
Black History Month, celebrated this month, is an annual celebration of achievements by African Americans and a time for recognizing their central role in U.S. history. The Church in the U.S. is greatly blessed by the contributions of Black Catholics and the legacy of holiness of so many men and women of color. As part of our celebration this year, we want to raise up and celebrate the six men and women of African descent who are “on the road to Sainthood.” Each Sunday, during February, we will feature these models of holiness.

Servant of God
Sister Thea Bowman: A prophetic voice for the modern Church in the U.S. (1937-1990)

“Does it mean to be Black and Catholic? It means that I came to my church fully functioning... I bring myself, my black self, all that I am, all that I have, all that I hope to become, I bring my whole history, my traditions, my experience, my culture, my African American song and dance and gesture and movement and teaching and preaching and healing and responsibility as a gift to the Church.”

Born in Yazoo City, Mississippi, in 1937, Bertha Bowman was the granddaughter of a slave and the only child of a doctor and a teacher. Bowman experienced prejudice and racism growing up, but was taught “we must return love, no matter what.”

Her life of discipleship began in the Methodist church, where she was raised in the Black spiritual tradition. Her experiences gave her a foundation of faith to endure the sufferings of a segregated South.

The course of Bowman’s life changed when a school open to Black children was opened up in her Mississippi hometown by the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration from La Crosse, WI.

The gospel joyfulness of the missioners attracted young Bowman to the Catholic faith, and she converted at age 9. The attraction to their way of life was so strong that at 15, she asked to be an aspirant in their order. After taking religious vows, she went by the name Sister Thea.

Sister Thea left Mississippi for Washington, D.C., in 1965 after several teaching assignments. There, she obtained a master’s and doctoral degrees in English at The Catholic University of America. In 1972, Sister Thea returned to La Crosse to take up a professorship at Viterbo College.

Sister Thea also served as director for intercultural affairs in the Diocese of Jackson. She was a founding faculty member and later director of the Institute for Black Catholic Studies at Xavier University in New Orleans.

She came of age in the midst of America’s struggle for civil rights and recognized the need not only to speak up on behalf of her African American brothers and sisters, but to help heal a society, culture, and Church deeply wounded by racism and its consequences.

As a writer, teacher, musician, and evangelist, Sister Thea preached the gospel to clergy and laity alike, promoting ecclesial and cultural harmony and reconciliation. With her prophetic voice, she was a tireless spokeswoman for the Black Catholic experience.

In 1984, after burying both of her parents, Sister Thea was also diagnosed with breast cancer. Though weakened by treatment, her mind and heart remained strong. Pledging to “live until I die,” Sister Thea remained committed to her ministry, which included travels around the world.

About a year before she died, Sister Thea gave a rousing speech before the bishops of the U.S., articulating for them the Black Catholic experience in this country and the need for their fuller participation in the life of the Church. [See her address here: https://ignatiansolidarity.net/blog/2020/11/19/sr-thea-bowman/]

She died March 30, 1990, and her cause for canonization was opened in 2018. [Adapted from USCCB.org and https://angelusnews.com/faith/the-holy-perseverance-of-six-black-catholics-on-the-road-to-sainthood/]

Sister Thea Bowman in an undated photo. (Catholic News Service/Beatrice Njemanze, Mississippi Catholic)
The word Lector comes from the Latin translation meaning “reader of lessons” at a worship service. What a nice way of being thought of...a reader of lessons!

The Lector proclaims the Word of God at Mass as part of the Liturgy of the Word. The ministry of lector requires an interest in good liturgy, a love of scripture and an understanding that Scripture is the living Word of God, an appreciation of language and a desire to proclaim the Word of God with understanding and confidence. The lector needs to be willing to prepare for the reading. Usually this means getting the reading in advance, reflecting on the passage, and studying enough to understand the meaning of the text. A lector must do their part to make sure that the proclamation of the Word of God is done reverently, knowledgeably, and expressively.

If you are interested in learning more about this ministry, please contact Jennifer Davis at jennifer@stapostleparish.org or call the parish office at 773-324-2626. Training is provided.

“The Lord has given me a well-trained tongue, that I may know how to speak to the weary, a word that will rouse them.”

~Isaiah 50:4

Eucharist Home Visits

If you or a loved one are ill or homebound and unable to attend Mass, there are Ministers of Care available to bring Holy Communion to the home. The Ministers of Care will be fully vaccinated and will wear a mask and practice other safety measures. We would appreciate members of the household wearing masks as well. Please call Lisa at 773-324-2626 and she will make the arrangements.

Hyde Park Kenwood Food Pantry

The Hyde Park Kenwood Food Pantry is open to give out groceries from 10am until 1pm on Saturdays at the Hyde Park Union Church at 56th & Woodlawn. For more information, contact Margaret Mitchell at mmm17@uchicago.edu.
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