



Saint Thomas the Apostle Church
203 W. Washington Street
Corry, PA 16407

THE PARISH OF ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE AND ITS MISSION ST. TERESA OF AVILA



Saint Teresa of Avila Church
9 Third Avenue
Union City, PA 16438

December 15, 2024



Rev. Thomas J. Whitman
Pastor

Rev. Mr. Randy Kondrlik
Deacon
rkondrlik@eriercd.org

Rev. Mr. William Saborsky
Deacon—Retired

Melissa Silka
*Business Manager and
Director of Faith Formation*
business@stparish.org

Susan Johnston
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secretary@stparish.org

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Chris Slocum
Coordinator of St. Teresa Cemetery
814-462-6375

Saint Thomas the Apostle Parish
www.stthomastheapostle.church

Saint Teresa of Avila Church
www.st-teresa-unioncity.org

Parish Office
203 W. Washington Street
Corry, PA 16407
814-663-3041

Parish Office Hours
Monday: 12:30pm—3:30pm
Tuesday & Wednesday: 8:30am—3:30pm
Thursday: 8:30am—12:00pm (noon)
Friday: Closed

NEW PARISHIONER REGISTRATION FORM

NAME _____
STREET _____
CITY & ZIP _____
PHONE _____

St. Thomas the Apostle St. Teresa of Avila

Please drop this information into Offertory Basket or mail to Parish Office.

Notes from the Pastor

CHRISTMAS MASSES: We will have Masses on Christmas Eve at 4:30pm at St. Thomas, 7:00pm at St. Teresa, and there will be one Mass on Christmas Day at 10:00am at St. Thomas.

DECORATING FOR CHRISTMAS: We will be decorating the Churches for Christmas on the following dates, all are welcome to help with the decorating. We will decorate at St. Teresa on Sunday, December 22, at Noon. We will be decorating at St. Thomas on Monday, December 23 at 9:00am.

REMEMBER THE PARISH AT THE END OF THE YEAR AND IN YOUR WILL: To put it very simply: plan for your death by making a Will, plan for your family in the Will, remember the Church in your will. Our parish is still ministering because thoughtful people over the years have left us generous amounts of money in their Wills. A generous amount is whatever God moves someone to give, according to their means, to further the parish mission. Please include the parish in your estate plans. And remember: No gift is too small and no gift is too large!

- Fr. Tom

"Question of the Week" - 3rd Sunday of Advent

Question for Children: Why is it so important to keep promises which you have made?

Question for Youth: What do you remember from stories about your Baptism? What does your Baptism mean to you now?

Question for Adults: How can you live the promise of your Baptism each day?

WELCOME

If you are new to our parish, we extend a warm welcome and hope you will find here a place where your faith will be nourished.

PARISH MEMBERSHIP

New Parishioners are welcome to register by completing the form on the front of the bulletin and returning it to the Offertory Collection or the Parish Office.

BAPTISM

Please contact the Parish Office to schedule a Baptism. We require all first-time parents to attend a Baptism Class prior to having their child baptized. The best time to take this class is before the child is born and before godparents are chosen.

MARRIAGE

Please contact the Parish Office at least ten (10) months in advance to schedule a Wedding.

SACRAMENT OF THE SICK

Please let the Parish Office know of anyone in need of the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick, or anyone who is unable to get to Mass and would desire weekly Holy Communion to be brought to them.

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Confessions are offered at the following times/locations:
3:30pm—4:00pm on Saturdays at the church where the anticipatory Mass is celebrated that evening—at St. Thomas Church, Corry or at St. Teresa Church, Union City (depending on the month); and other times by request made to the Parish Office.

Please be sure to notify the Parish Office of any changes to your address, phone numbers, or email address. Thank you.



Sunday, December 15—Third Sunday of Advent

- 8:00a.m. †Wascak and Stolar Families by Carol & Darrell Huffman
(St. Thomas, Corry)
- 11:00a.m. †Diana Hanlin Strefeler by her daughter, Becky Boleratz
(St. Teresa, Union City)

Monday, December 16

- 8:00a.m. †Anna & Si Springer by Judy Flynn
(St. Teresa, Union City)

Tuesday, December 17

- 8:00a.m. †George Baker by Deacon Randy & Anne Kondrik
(St. Thomas, Corry)

Wednesday, December 18

- 8:00a.m. †Morris and O'Brien Families by the Estate of Anna O'Brien
(St. Thomas, Corry)

Thursday, December 19

No Mass or Services at either Sts. Thomas or Teresa today.

Friday, December 20

- 8:00a.m. †Thomas Zakovitch by Ilene Zakovitch
(St. Teresa, Union City)

Saturday, December 21

- 4:30p.m. For the Peoples of Sts. Thomas & Teresa
(St. Teresa, Union City)

Sunday, December 22—Fourth Sunday of Advent

- 8:00a.m. †Deceased Members of the Amy Family by Gary & Colleen Amy-Rambish
(St. Thomas, Corry)
- 11:00a.m. †Paul Mongera, Sr. by Lillie Mongera
(St. Teresa, Union City)



Christmas Mass Schedule

Tuesday, December 24

4:30pm—St. Thomas Church, Corry

7:00pm—St. Teresa Church, Union City

Wednesday, December 25

10:00am—St. Thomas Church, Corry



St. Thomas the Apostle and St. Teresa of Avila invite you and your family to join us at our Christmas Masses as we celebrate the birth of Jesus, our Savior.

St. Thomas News

2024 Catholic Services Appeal (CSA) Totals (as of 12/09):

St. Thomas Diocesan Goal is \$37,254.00
 Total Amount Pledged to date = \$60,881.00
 Total Paid to date = \$58,931.00
 # of Families who made a pledge = 131
 Prayerfully consider what God is leading you to give.
Please make a pledge today. Thank you.
Be sure to make your check payable to
'ST. THOMAS CHURCH' when making a CSA payment.

PERSEVERE IN PRAYER



PRAYER LINE... call: Gerrie (814-665-6944),
 Pam (814-664-7459), or Diane (814-882-6806).
*Since prayer is an important ministry of trust,
 know that all requests are kept confidential.*



The SANCTUARY CANDLE at St. Thomas Church for the week of December 15th burns in honor of our Lord and in memory of the Morris and O'Brien Families by the Estate of Anna O'Brien.

Decorating St. Thomas Church for Christmas

We will be decorating the church on Monday, December 23rd at 9:00am. *Many hands make for light work.* Thank you.

Catholic Daughters Meeting Date/Time Changed for December

Members of the Catholic Daughters of the Americas will move their regular monthly meeting in December from the fourth Thursday (which is during the Christmas holiday) to the third Thursday of the month. **Members will now meet this week on Thursday, December 19 at 5:00pm in the St. Elizabeth Parish Center.** We will be enjoying a special meal together at this meeting. Please bring a dish to share. We hope you will join us.



Seeking Volunteers at St. Thomas

We are looking for volunteers to help clean the inside of Saint Thomas Church before we decorate for Christmas. We will be holding a cleaning bee on Thursday, December 19 beginning at 10:00am. If you are able to help for any amount of time, please contact Sue Vinca (814-964-0290 call or text). *Many hands make for light work!!* Thank you!!

Ideas to Celebrate Advent

Do something to help you be mindful of the Lord's coming – use an Advent wreath / enthrone the Bible / read the readings from the Bible assigned to each day. Postpone the tree and decorations until closer to Christmas. Establish new family rituals, customs and prayers that help remind everyone that we are preparing to celebrate the birth of Jesus. Fasting, daily Mass, reaching out to those alienated from family or society, and visiting the homebound manifest the love of the Christ Child and the Holy Family. Resist the temptation to rush the season. In his own time and in his own way, God will come. Our task is simply to be watchful and ready.



St. Teresa News

2024 Catholic Services Appeal (CSA) Totals (as of 12/09):

St. Teresa Diocesan Goal is \$24,359.00
 Total Amount Pledged to date = \$39,564.00
 Total Paid to date = \$38,380.00
 # of Families who made a pledge = 102
 Prayerfully consider what God is leading you to give.
Please make a pledge today. Thank you.
Be sure to make your check payable to
'ST. THOMAS CHURCH' when making a CSA payment.



The SANCTUARY CANDLE at St. Teresa Church for the week of December 15th burns in honor of our Lord and in memory of Ed Weaver by Irene Weaver and family.

Decorating St. Teresa Church for Christmas

We will be putting up the Christmas decorations at St. Teresa Church after Mass on Sunday, December 22nd. Help is needed and appreciated.



Our prayers & sympathy to the family and friends of **Margaret 'Peg' Leute** who passed away and was buried from St. Teresa Church. May her soul and the souls of all the faithful departed rest in peace.

Family Perspective

Today's gospel tells us to SHARE! This Christmas resist the pressure to give token gifts. Instead, use those funds to give NECESSITIES to the poor. If our impoverished brothers and sisters are not on our gift list, we've missed the point of Christmas.

Giving Tree Gift Due TODAY

Just a reminder, if you took a tag from our Giving Tree at St. Teresa Church: ALL GIFTS need to be returned to the church TODAY— Sunday, December 15th. Gifts may be wrapped or unwrapped, but be sure to attach the tag to the gift. *Thank you for sharing your blessings with others this Christmas season.*



Local Red Kettle Campaign Seeking Bell Ringers

The Salvation Army needs bell ringers for this year's annual Red Kettle campaign! Bell ringers are needed Mondays through Saturdays up until Christmas Eve. Solo ringers, pairs of ringers, & even groups are welcome! This is a wonderful opportunity to earn service hours or just help spread Christmas cheer. The kettle is in the (heated) lobby of Tops, so no fear of standing out in the cold! Bell ringers can sign up for one hour or more time slots each day. Please call or (preferably) text Elizabeth Malec at 814-490-7394 to get scheduled! Thank you.

FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP: December 7 & 8, 2024

Amount in Envelopes: (130) \$6,080.00

Loose..... \$396.00
 (Above amounts combine total offertory from ALL 3 weekend Masses)

Online Giving (12)..... \$410.00

Faith Formation/Rel. Ed...... \$0.00

Continuing the Vision (4)..... \$180.00


Total Offertory Income \$7,066.00

Average Weekly Expenses..... \$11,390.00
 (Average Weekly Expenses are for normal operating expenses, this does not include extraordinary repairs.)

Weekly Average Shortfall.....\$(-4,324.00)

Thanks to everyone who regularly uses his/her envelopes.

Please write checks to St. Thomas Church.
If checks are to go to our parish cemeteries—please make them to either St. Thomas Cemetery, St. Elizabeth Cemetery, or St. Teresa Cemetery. Thank you.



Please know that you can now give all your donations online by visiting our parish website at www.StThomastheApostle.Church and click 'Donate Online'.

Have you paid in full your pledge to the 2024 CSA? If not, please try to do so by the end of the year.



Readings for the week of December 15, 2024

Sun.: Zephaniah 3:14-18a ♦ Isaiah 12:2-3, 4, 5-6 (6) ♦ Philippians 4:4-7 ♦ Luke 3:10-18

Mon.: Numbers 24:2-7, 15-17a ♦ Psalm 25:4-5ab, 6 and 7bc, 8-9 ♦ Matthew 21:23-27

Tues.: Genesis 49:2, 8-10 ♦ Psalm 72:1-2, 3-4ab, 7-8, 17 ♦ Matthew 1:1-17

Wed.: Jeremiah 23:5-8 ♦ Psalm 72:1-2, 12-13, 18-19 ♦ Matthew 1:18-25

Thur.: Judges 13:2-7, 24-25a ♦ Psalm 71:3-4a, 5-6ab, 16-17 ♦ Luke 1:5-25


Fri.: Isaiah 7:10-14 ♦ Psalm 24:1-2, 3-4ab, 5-6 ♦ Luke 1:26-38

Sat.: Song of Songs 2:8-14 or Zephaniah 3:14-18a ♦ Psalm 33:2-3, 11-12, 20-21 ♦ Luke 1:39-45

Next Sun.: Micah 5:1-4a ♦ Psalm 80:2-3, 15-16, 18-19 (4) ♦ Hebrews 10:5-10 ♦ Luke 1:39-45

Religious Education News

2024-2025 Religious Education Program
 Our Religious Education Program combined this year. Combining our resources makes our program stronger. For the 2024-2025 Religious Education Year, we will have classes at St. Teresa for the first half of the year (September—December) and at St. Thomas for the second half of the year (January—May). **Classes in the first half will meet at St. Teresa Parish Center at 9:30am.**



Calendar Reminders for Religious Education
 Sunday, Dec. 15—Classes for All students at St. Teresa
 Sunday, Dec. 22—No Classes / Christmas break
 Sunday, Dec. 29—No Classes / Christmas break
*** Beginning in January ALL Classes will be at St. Thomas in Corry and will start at 9:00AM.**

Have no anxiety at all, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, make your requests known to God. Then the peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:6-7

THANK YOU to all of our bulletin sponsors!

**OUR LADY OF MERCY
 DECEMBER 15, 2024**

d Merry Mercy CHRISTMAS

SPECIAL PERFORMANCES BY:
**ERIE PLAYHOUSE SHOWSTOPPERS
 MERCYHURST PREP SHOW CHOIR
 OLM CHOIR**

Free Entry with options to purchase food, beverages and merchandise

Doors Open At 2:00 PM
 Craft, Food and Beverage Vendors;
 Tree Decorating; Santa & his reindeer; Crafts for children & adults; hot cocoa; hay rides; bake sale & so much more!

837 Bartlett Rd. Harborcreek, PA 16421

Early Submission Deadlines for Bulletin Items
 Generally, items for publication in our bulletin must be sent to the parish office by Monday afternoon the week prior to when you wish your item to appear. **Please email written content to secretary@stparish.org. Please note that during holiday seasons, bulletin deadlines are moved up as much as 1-2 weeks earlier, so the earlier you provide the office with your bulletin items the better.**

Please be mindful of the following bulletin schedule deadlines:
 Items for Dec. 29 Bulletin—due to the office by Wed., Dec. 18
 Items for Jan. 5, 2025 Bulletin—due to the office by Mon., Dec. 23

GOD IS MADE FLESH IN THE PERSON OF JESUS TEACHER

One of the few stories we have of Jesus' childhood is the finding of the twelve-year old Jesus in the Temple. Mary and Joseph are heading back to Nazareth and Jesus becomes lost. They find him in the Temple teaching the elders. They are astonished at the wisdom he has at such an early age. That story will set the stage for the bulk of Jesus' ministry – teaching and healing.

But Jesus will do much more than teach us simple rules. Jesus will teach us the importance of the ten commandments, but he will also challenge us to something more. The commandments will help us to avoid sin, but Jesus wants us to do more than just avoid sin; he wants us to do good for others.

Jesus will be one who uses parables to instruct the people. These parables are stories that come from the very life of the people, but they challenge people to look at the world very differently. Unlike mystery or detective stories that give us a clear solution to the problem, Jesus tells a parable that often leaves us wondering how this can happen. Jesus invites us in his parables to look at the world in new and diverse ways, and often ways that upset our normal way of thinking. This way of thinking and teaching is intended to transform the lives of people.

Of all the messages that Jesus taught, I suspect they can be summarized in one very important lesson that we have all yet to learn. We often think of God as a Judge, or a Scorekeeper, or an angry parent. We tend to think that God is out to punish us. More than anything Jesus tried to teach us that God loves us, wants to heal us, wants to forgive us. God wants us to be his friend, to be in a loving relationship with him. If we learn nothing else from Jesus, we need to learn how deeply we are loved by God. And Jesus would teach us that not just in words, but by taking on our human life and learning what it is like to be human in order to understand us. But more importantly he would show us how much God loved us by entering our suffering and death and show us that with faith in him we could overcome suffering and death in resurrection. Jesus entered not just the good things but also the difficult things of being human, so that we might one day be able to share with him what it is to be divine.

A pastor was giving a homily to children and asking them various questions about where things were. He asked, "where is the cross?" And a little boy pointed to the cross on the front wall. He asked, "where is the baptismal font?" A little girl raised her hand and pointed to the font. Then he asked, "where is God?" The children looked all around. There were some shrugging their shoulders, others looked lost or blank because they did not know the answer. Finally, a three-year old boy said, "I know." And the pastor said, "you do?" And the little boy jumped up and said, "Yes, I know where God is." "Where?" the pastor asked. And the little boy jumped up and said, "I'll go get God." He jumped up ran out the back doors. In a few minutes he returned leading a woman by the hand into the church. The boy cried out, "Here is God. She's here." The pastor looked puzzled and said, "Miss Betty?" The boy pointed to her and said, "There she is, God." She was his Sunday School Teacher. There was not a dry eye in the congregation.

I wonder if people did not look at Jesus and see what the little boy saw. "Here is God." Jesus the teacher gave them, and us, glimpses of God. Through him we were able to see what God was like.

Advent is a time for us to look more closely through the eyes of the little boy with wonder and awe at the goodness of the people who surround us and say, "There is God." And in recognizing God's presence in our midst, we see the miracle of Christmas – God made flesh in people.

Jesus is our Teacher