

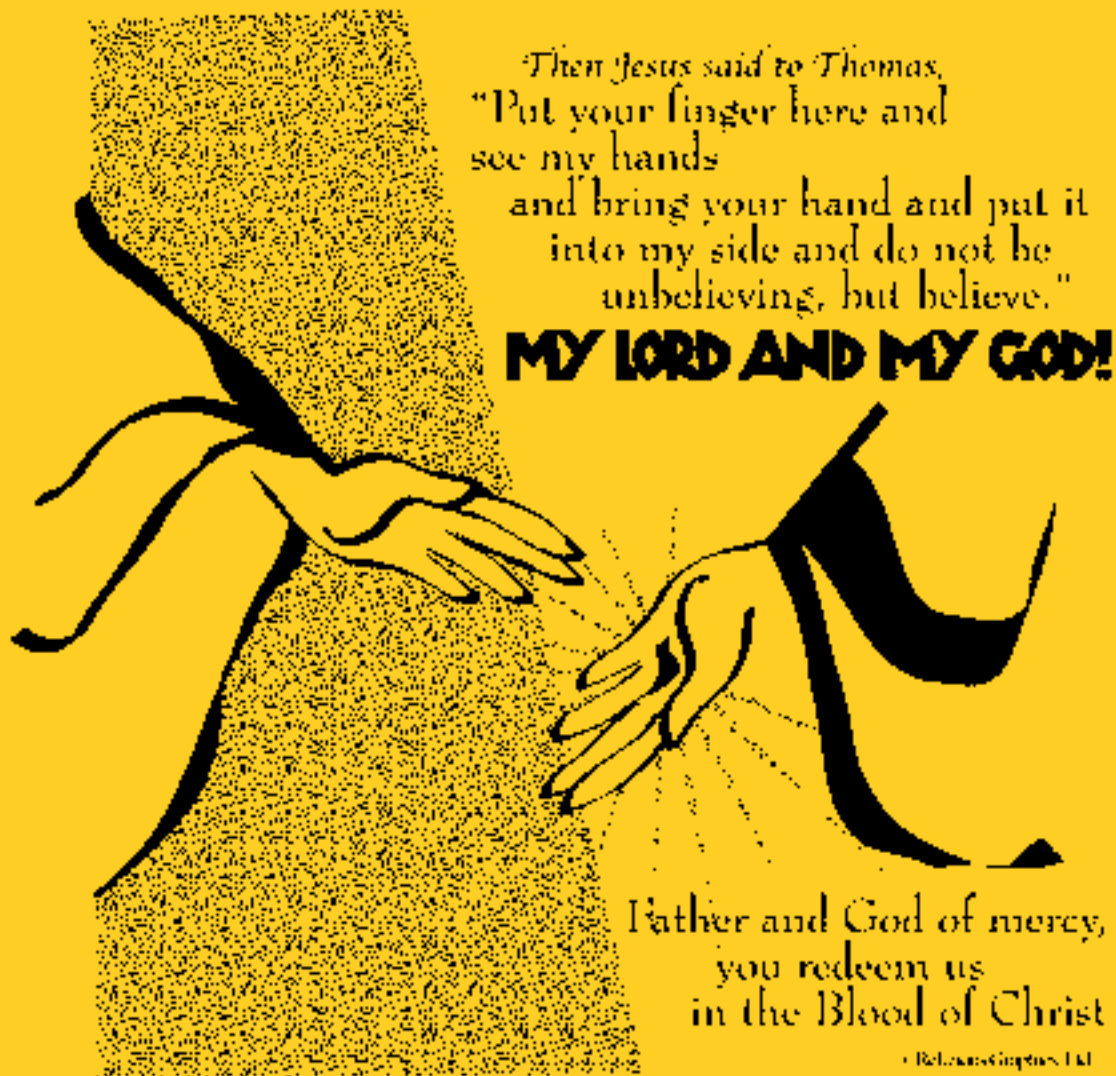
ST. THOMAS MORE CATHOLIC PARISH



CONVENT STATION, NEW JERSEY › 973-267-5330 › WWW.STMNJ.ORG

APRIL 30, 2017

THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER



Then Jesus said to Thomas,
"Put your finger here and
see my hands
and bring your hand and put it
into my side and do not be
unbelieving, but believe."

MY LORD AND MY GOD!

Father and God of mercy,
you redeem us
in the Blood of Christ

• *Religious Graphics, Ltd.*

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Weekly Eucharists

Saturday 5 pm
Sunday, 9 am, 11 am, 7 pm
Monday – Saturday: 8:15 am
Reconciliation
Saturday 3:30 pm or by appt.
Holy Days
8:15 am, 12:10 pm, 7 pm

Parish Office Hours
Mon. - Wed, 9:30–2 pm

*Other times & days,
call to see if office
is open.*

www.stmnj.org

What's Happening?

Sunday
Religious Ed

Every Sunday
Pound A Week

*Please sign up for
electronic giving at
stthommore.weshareonline.org*



Stewardship of Treasure

Easter Collection: \$ 6120



Rest in Peace

This week the funerals for Irma Conte and Dawn Klotz took place. We offer our prayers and our support for their families.

Bake Sale

The Women's Guild will hold its Bake Sale on May 6 & 7 Each member please bring 4 items . All proceeds goes back to the church.

AOSE Open House

The Academy of Saint Elizabeth will host an Open House for girls and their families, Grades 6 to 8. Sun.May 7, 1pm Registration is not necessary.

Spend the day at the academy. Thurs. May 11. Info:l 973-290-5225, 973-290-5200 or visit: aosenj.org

Bishop Ahr H.S.

Bishop Ahr/St. Thomas H.S. wants to reconnect with all alumni. See news article at www.bgahs.org and update contact info or write to dchippendale@bgahs.org.

Kids Word

These weekly bulletins for kids are on the brochure rack every week. For little kids and older ones. Take one before mass and help yourself and your child.



WELCOME

To all our visitors this weekend

As a faith community, we keep in mind who have asked us to pray for them, that they may experience the healing power of our gracious God.

Special requests for prayers at liturgy and donations made in honor of loved ones. These intentions and names of our sick are noted on the Gifts Table in the Remembrance Book and on the Weekly Sheet.



Ministry to the Homebound

If you know a homebound person who would like communion and/or on a regular basis, if you are ministering in that way OR if you can visit and/or bring communion to a homebound person, please fill out the form on the info rack in the vestibule.

Rice Bowl

Please bring Rice Bowls to Church by next week. Please put your donation in the envelope that came with a kit, either paper money or check. Please do not bring the box with coins.



**PREPARING FOR
NEXT WEEK'S LITURGY
Fourth Sunday of Easter**

First Reading: Acts 2:14-41

In last Sunday's reading from the Acts of the Apostles, we heard a portion of Peter's sermon at the first Pentecost. Today's passage gives the last part of that sermon, and the reaction of those who heard it.

Second Reading: 1 Peter 2:20-25

Today's passage from the first letter of Peter was addressed to Christian slaves who were being treated harshly by their pagan masters. The author reminds them that they are members of a flock whose shepherd walked ahead of them in the face of insults and unjust treatment.

God's Grace is Young Enough

Acts 2:42-147; 1 Peter 1:3-9; John 20:19-31

In the Breaking of the Bread

- On our own we cannot grasp the mystery of the resurrection. The two disciples travelling to Emmaus were "conversing and debating"; they recounted the facts but could not believe the mystery. Yet they desired to move from disappointment and unbelief to hearts burning with life and belief—they invited Jesus to stay with them. Our own participation in Word and sacrament must give rise to the same desire in us: to seek Life by journeying deeper into the mystery.

This Week's Question

For Adults:

In what way have you come to know Jesus better through the breaking of the bread at Eucharist?

For Children:

When you join Jesus at the table of the Eucharist next Sunday, what would you like to thank him for?



THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER



Blessed, Broken, Shared

Generous God,
you who have given your people so
many blessings:
who saved them from a life of slavery
in Egypt,
and who blessed them with a land flowing
with milk and honey;
You walked with your disciples on the
paths they chose,
and blessed them with bread and fish;
Bless us this day as we yearn to find you
along the way,
and strive to know you in strangers
and Scripture,
in shared meals and broken bread.
May our hearts burn with your love
and may our generous spirits be unleashed
for others
who also seek to know you.
We ask this through your Son and our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity
of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

April 30, 2017 Recognizing Christ

Today's Readings: Acts 2:14, 22-33; Psalm 16:1-2, 5, 7-8, 9-10, 11; 1 Peter 1:17-21; Luke 24:13-35. After encountering a stranger, two disciples have a conversion of heart. As impossible as that may seem to be on the surface, the Gospel today is full of the newly possible. Not recognizing the Risen Christ is the first impossibility. Most of us are quick to judge by appearances. Who is this stranger? Why is this person whom I do not know approaching me? If Christ were to come to me today, what would he look like? That is the question we must ask if we are to believe that Christ is alive and present in the world.

The second impossibility is the topic of conversation. Purposefully fleeing Jerusalem, two disciples are committed to hiking to Emmaus, just beyond the reach of Jerusalem's influence. Yet the topic begins with them laying out their

concerns to this stranger: the disbelief that Jesus, one of their own, has been killed and, then even more unbelievable, perhaps risen from the dead. It is all too confusing. Yet this stranger, chiding them for their foolishness, walks the distance with them, teaching them and revealing hidden truths to them. Later they confess that their hearts were burning within them on the road.

However, the final action—the sacramental moment for the two—is Jesus taking bread, blessing it, breaking it, and sharing it with them. This is the moment of revelation for them: knowing Jesus through the breaking of the bread and all that that implies. We, too, find our way to moments of knowing Jesus: in the least of the strangers we encounter, in others opening up the meaning of Scripture and faith for us, and in the blessing and breaking of bread.

Take an antidote for a deadly sin

Some sins are considered especially deadly because they lead to other sins. Fortunately, the "Capital" or "Deadly" sins such as envy, pride and lust have antidotes. For example,

Envy is wanting what someone else has. Heavy doses of gratitude will help. Our peace is restored when we remember that all good gifts come from God and are glad for others' good fortune and grateful for our own.

Pride is seeking attention and honor that belong to God. Pride makes us focused on ourselves,



concerned about how we appear to others. Humility is a counter. Purposely draw attention to others, rather than yourself. Praise and thank God daily for your gifts.

Lust is focusing on sexual self-gratification rather than glorifying God. Sexuality is a gift from God and not inherently impure. Lust, however, is misuse of that gift, straying from God's intentions for us. Love, willing the good of the other, is at the heart of what it means to be human. Love for God and each other is the antidote.

from Scripture

Luke 24:13-35, Jesus hides in plain sight

Jesus was so close to Cleopas and his companion on the road to Emmaus, he could have tripped them. Yet neither man recognized him. Jesus even gave clues to his identity that he quoted from Scripture. The men were too caught up in the pain and disappointment of the crucifixion. Only when he broke bread with them did they see Jesus for who he was. Then he was gone from their sight.

Both Cleopas and his friend had formed such clear ideas of what they wanted Jesus to be that they failed to see him for who he was. They expected a

warrior king and almost missed the universal savior. Aren't we like that, too? Don't we have such expectations of what we want God to be that we miss who he really is?

Christ's presence in our lives isn't revealed so much by the song of angels as the whisper of a

prayer. Taking the time to be alone with God, to read Scripture, and seek him in the people around us will help us uncover Christ's presence everywhere.



Feasts & Celebrations

April 1 - St. Hugh of Grenoble (1132). St. Hugh was the bishop of Grenoble, France, and as bishop, he worked hard to reform his diocese of corruption. St. Hugh was also the friend and patron of St. Bruno, giving him the land where the Grand Chartreuse was built. With his help, St. Bruno founded the Carthusian order.

April 9 - Palm Sunday. The Sunday before Easter is called Palm Sunday and recalls Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem, when he was greeted by crowds waving palms and cheering,

"Hosanna to the Son of David; blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord; hosanna in the highest" (Matthew 21:9). It marks the beginning of Holy Week.

April 24 - St. Fidelis of Sigmaringen (1622). In his native Prussia, St. Fidelis became a lawyer and championed the poor and oppressed. He joined the Franciscans. During the Protestant Reformation, St. Fidelis worked hard to bring people back to the Catholic faith. He was martyred by an angry mob.



Q & A Why are there religious orders?

Historically, religious orders were founded in response to a need within the Church. Each order receives a special grace from the Holy Spirit,



called a charism, which helps to build up the Church. For example, the charism of the Sisters of Life is to

protect human life in all its stages. There are two "kinds" of religious orders: contemplative and active. Members of contemplative orders live apart from the world in closed-off communities. They devote themselves entirely to prayer. Members of the active orders do their work in the world, though there is often a contemplative element to their life as well.

Religious life is "a permanent state of life recognized by the Church, entered freely in response to the call of Christ to perfection...characterized by the profession of...[vows]" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*). All religious orders have the mission to spread the Gospel by how they live. They vow to live in poverty, chastity, and obedience so they can dedicate their lives, hearts, and minds completely to God's service.

Our Mission

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 (Unless noted Bible quotes and references are from the Revised Standard Version and the New American Bible)

A SHORT CONVERSATION ABOUT PASTORAL COUNCILS

A Parish Pastoral Council as a consultative instrument of the pastor to help him understand pastoral matters so he can make wise decisions on the parish's behalf. As a pastoral instrument this group is not expected to discuss theology, moral principles or church law. Rather, its members are called to use their experience, prudence and faithfulness as they discuss issues in search of practical resolutions.

What does Pastoral Mean?

Councils are pastoral insofar as they aid the mission of pastor in his role to lead the parish. The pastoral work of a council, then, is moving from self-knowledge to vision, and from vision to an improved practice.

What does Parish Pastoral Council is NOT

As a body, role of the Parish Pastoral Council is not to coordinate tasks or ministries. Nor is a council a collection of the parish's chief ministers or a roster of the "elders" of the parish. It does not attempt to coordinate all facets of parish life and does not have responsibility for financial matters. This is the role of the Parish Finance Council.

What the Church Expects of Pastoral Councils

The Parish Pastoral Council is involved in planning in the parish but should not get involved in planning every aspect of parish life directed by church policy or diocesan mandate. This would create an agenda too ambitious in scope for a council which only meets periodically.

A good Parish Pastoral Council tends to the parish's mission and its plans with realistic and clear expectations. Church law states that councils "are to investigate, ponder, and draw conclusions." There are no inflated expectations about coordinating a system of committees or accomplishing diocesan agenda in a parish.

In this model, the pastor knows his parish and consults the council about the parish's needs. The council, then, assists him by its study, reflection, and considered recommendations.

The pastor invites the council to examine issues of real importance in the parish and community and he relies on the council's wisdom. In this image of Pastoral Councils, Church law presumes pastors who want to know the reality of the parish so he can love and serve it better. It also envisions council members who also want the best for the parish and are willing to put aside personal agendas for the good of the whole.

To sum up, pastoral councils are composed of wise parishioners with a gift for three things: investigating pastoral matters, pondering them, and drawing practical conclusions. This is a healthy consultative model that can greatly benefit parish life.

A Council should be representative, not necessarily in a demographic sense, but as it makes present the wisdom of the whole community. Members should be chosen for their ability to undertake the work of the council, the work of study and reflection and see themselves as part of one community of faith.

Consider Being a Member of the Parish Pastoral Council

SAINT THOMAS MORE PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL

The Pastoral Council of Saint Thomas More parish serves as an advisory group to the pastor. A major focus of the Pastoral Council is to develop an ecclesial community rooted in gospel service and compassionate relationships.

With this focus in mind, the pastor and the members engage in short and long range planning to both increase and retain parish membership, strengthen current ministries as well as develop new ministries, enhance liturgical and spiritual life of the parish, and build a solid financial base for a vibrant parish.

The members of the Pastoral Council serve the parish and the pastor by providing:

- **an overall view of the parish needs as a result of their involvement in parish life**
- **leadership in evaluating pastoral and liturgical aspects of parish life, including communications between and among pastor, staff, committees and parishioners**
- **recommendations regarding responses to these needs, keeping in mind parish finances, facilities, and personnel**
- **recommendations regarding increasing present and future community service**
- **suggestions as to appropriate parishioners to lead pastoral initiatives.**

For the pastor, the Pastoral Council is a primary source of support, challenge, and consultation as well as an avenue of communication within the parish.

The Pastoral Council consists of the pastor and 6 - 8 members of the parish. Two of these members may be appointed by the pastor and the rest are to be elected at large by the parish following a broad process to determine appropriate candidates and to provide information to the parish regarding the nominees' backgrounds, participation in parish life, and potential contributions to this advisory body.

Presently, members serve three year terms with a one third membership changing each year. The Pastoral Council normally meets five times a year.

From the Pastoral Council:

Please consider running for the St. Thomas More Pastoral Council. As laity, we are called to serve the Church. A member of the council makes an important contribution to the Parish by providing the Pastor with advise, support and helps him cultivate ministers and activity committee personnel. The council meets five times per year. There are two three-year terms open for July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2020 terms. Look for a "Candidate Nomination Form" in the vestibule of the church soon; complete one and email to ossela@optonline.net or drop off at the Parish office by May 22. The forms will be condensed into candidate blurbs, which will be published for two Sundays in June with an election at the end of June.