



ST. THOMAS AQUINAS CATHOLIC PARISH

602 Everglade Drive, Madison WI 53717 • (608) 833-2600 • stamadison.org • parish@stamadison.org

Regular Mass Schedule

Saturday	4:30 PM
Sunday: Masses in English	8:00 & 10:00 AM
Misa en español/Mass in Spanish	6:30 PM
Monday, Wednesday, Friday	8:30 AM
Tuesday	5:30 PM
Thursday	7:30 AM

Confession

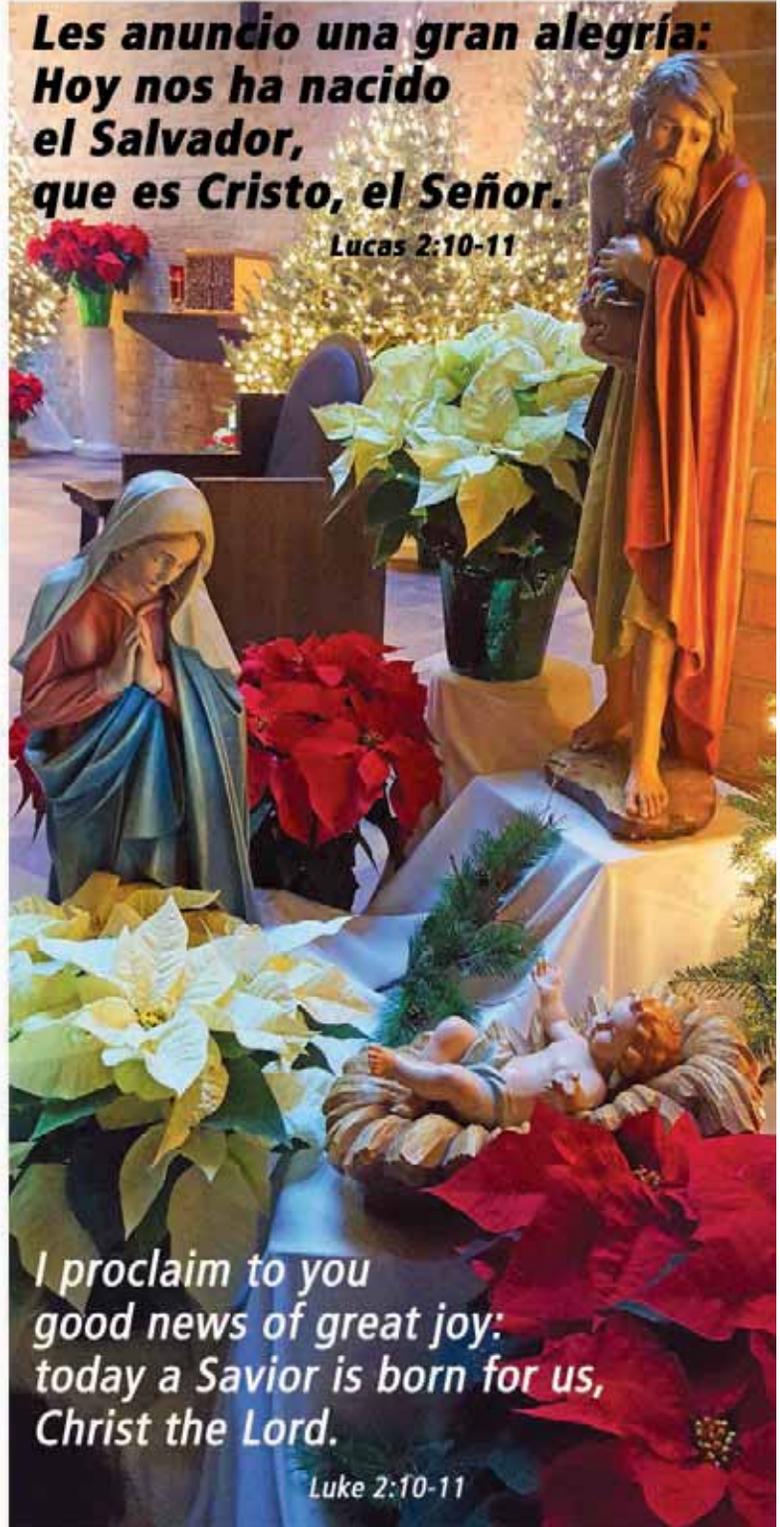
Saturdays, 3:15–4:10 PM
Sundays, 9:00–9:50 AM

Prayer, Devotion, and Adoration

Our Lady of Perpetual Help: Monday after Mass
Chaplet of Divine Mercy: Wednesday after Mass
Morning Prayer: Thursday after Mass
Rosario en español: Thursday, 6:00–7:00 PM
Rosary in English: Friday, 8:05 AM
Adoration: Monday, 2:00–4:00 PM
Tuesday, 4:30–5:25 PM
Friday, 9:00–10:00 AM

Parish Staff

Pastor: Fr. Bart Timmerman, 833-2600
Pastoral Associate: Erik Gyr, erik@stamadison.org
Music Ministries: Gregory Buchberger, greg@stamadison.org
Director of Evangelization and Parish Outreach:
Jennifer Ludtke, jennifer@stamadison.org
Middle/High School: Dominick Meyer, dominick@stamadison.org
Children & Families/Hispanic Ministry:
Lorianne Aubut, lorianne@stamadison.org
Director of Discipleship: Holly Irving, holly@stamadison.org
Business Manager: Patrick O'Loughlin, patrick@stamadison.org
Facilities/Community Minister:
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Administrative:
Main office: Mary Bailey, mary@stamadison.org, 833-2600
Main office/bulletin: Clarice Hinrichs, clarice@stamadison.org
RE/Stewardship: Terri Kopplin, terri@stamadison.org, 833-2606



**Les anuncio una gran alegría:
Hoy nos ha nacido
el Salvador,
que es Cristo, el Señor.**

Lucas 2:10-11

*I proclaim to you
good news of great joy:
today a Savior is born for us,
Christ the Lord.*

Luke 2:10-11

**Fourth Sunday of Advent
Solemnity of the Nativity of the Lord
December 24, 2017**

**Cuarto Domingo de Adviento
Solemnidad de La Natividad Del Señor
24 de Diciembre de 2017**

From the Desk of Fr. Bart

Forth Sunday of Advent

Our Advent Season comes to a sudden conclusion today and tonight we will begin the great feast of Christmas! Our Gospel focus this final Sunday of Advent is on Mary and how her human cooperation with God brought about God's plan to save us. Our salvation is not earned, but human cooperation is required. We have many opportunities throughout the day to say our "yes" or "let it be done." There are countless occasions of God's grace breaking into our daily life. When we cooperate with that grace, extraordinary things happen. It's true that we are not receiving visits from angels with messages, but we do have opportunities to recognize the work of God in our world. How is Mary a model of discipleship for us?

The Solemnity of the Nativity of the Lord

It is my joy to extend Christmas blessings and best wishes to each of you and your families at the great feast of the Lord's Nativity. This year is my fifth Christmas with you. It is with great sentiments of love and respect that I will ascend the Altar of God and offer the Christmas Mass with and for each of you on this solemn feast. I thank God for your presence at our Christmas Mass and will be so filled with joy to see so many of our number partaking in our Holy Communion this Christmas. At our Christmas Mass we look so numerous, so unified, so strong, and so faithful.

The incarnation of God becoming man in the womb of the Virgin Mary and then being born a baby in the manger in Bethlehem reminds us of the truth that, "God is Love." It is the love of God alone that brings hope to you and me in this world where violence and terrorism speak to anything but love. God's love is powerful. It can dismantle the structures of hatred and sin. It can build communities of compassion, humility, forgiveness, non-violence and justice. This happens through our sharing what God has given to us, His love through the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace. May He be born in you and me again this holy Christmas Day!

The Parish Staff and I sincerely thank you for your love of those in need, your prayerful support, and your dedication to the Sacramental life of the Church and we wish you a merry Christmas! Thank you to all who have worked so diligently to prepare for our Christmas Masses especially our musicians, choirs, decorators, liturgical ministers, children's pageant participants, and all who participated in our Advent journey by attending our Masses and Reconciliation. May all who attend our Christmas Masses be touched by the love of God and the miracle of the Incarnation. Thank you again for being here at Mass, your involvement in our parish family proclaims the birth of Jesus and keeps Christmas in our hearts all through the year by spreading God's love in our families, in our parish, in our community, and yes- even to the whole world!

Celebrating the Christmas Season

Do you wish that that the joy and goodwill of Christmas Day would last longer? It can- and according to Catholic tradition, it does! Our Season of Christmas lasts until Sunday, January 7, 2018 when we celebrate the Epiphany of the Lord. Let's make each day special and keep the joy of Christmas alive. Here are the highlights of the liturgical celebrations of the Christmas Season:

- The Feast of the Holy Family: Sunday, December 31, 2017
- The Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God: Monday, Jan. 1, 2018. This is not a holy day of obligation since it falls on a Monday



Prayer for Life

4th Sunday of Advent

For couples longing for a child:
May God strengthen and comfort them
as they strive to follow his plan;
We pray to the Lord:



Por las parejas que anhelan tener un hijo:
que Dios les de fuerza y consuelo
en la búsqueda de seguir su voluntad;
roguemos al Señor:

The Nativity of the Lord

For new parents:
May family and friends provide ongoing support
as they welcome their child;
We pray to the Lord:

Por nuevos padres:
que la familia y los amigos
les brinden apoyo continuo
al recibir a su hijo;
roguemos al Señor:

Parish Care Team Available for Support

The Parish Care Team attempts to provide the support that families and individuals need. If you are a full-time caregiver and need a break to tend to other needs, a team member can stay with your loved one. If you are alone and need the company of another person to visit with or help with a project, we can do that, too.

Our Care Team members receive training from Catholic Charities and the Diocese plus monthly support from team meetings. All volunteers have passed a background check. If you feel called to be a team member to provide support to fellow parishioners, we always welcome new members.

Whether you need support or are interested in providing it, please contact Erik at erik@stamadison.org or 833-2600.

Christmas Baskets 2017

The generosity of those parishioners who donated food, as well as the time and labor devoted to sorting, packing and delivering Christmas baskets was phenomenal. The "reverse collection" brought in the right amount and type of many needed items.

Parishioners of all ages participated in the sorting and packing of these baskets. On the day of delivery, families toted basket after basket to their cars. A heartfelt "Thank You" to all who made the 2017 Christmas basket project such a success.

God bless you for all you do for our parish.



Reflection from Our Parish Seminarian, Lawrence Oparaji



The Gospel proclaimed at the Christmas Mass during the Day from the Gospel of St. John gives us a deep insight into what we celebrate today, the Divine incarnation of God: *“The Word was made flesh, He lived among us, and we saw His glory.”* The Word which was with the Father and Spirit has today come to be with us in flesh. He has left his heavenly throne and glory to come take upon our flesh so as to redeem us and restore us to the status of Children of God! It takes great love and sacrifice to do this. Therefore, what we celebrate today is love at its highest and purest form and sacrifice because: *“...God so loved the world that he sent his only begotten son... (Jn 3, 16).*

Today we are called to be ready to share this love. God sent Christ out of love, Christ accepted to come out of love, the messengers and prophets announced his coming out of love, and of course, out of love, Mary cooperated with God to bring Him forth. So, we must continue this line of succession of love, we must extend it to others, we must be ready to offer ourselves to others. One thing we should do this season is that, just as Christ has reached out to us, we should reach out to others. Today we also celebrate *Sacrifice*. We should be ready to sacrifice for the good of our brothers and sisters as Christ did by leaving his heavenly throne in order to be with us. Just as Christ came down from heaven to be with us, and to show us the way, we must always be willing and ready to serve others especially the lowly, suffering and neglected of our society.

So today, as we celebrate the coming of Christ into our world to bring us joy, peace, love and hope let us remember our brothers and sisters who are going through various forms of difficulties at this time, let us pray for them and also thank God for his blessing in our lives, our families and our country. I wish you all a merry Christmas, God’s blessings in the New Year, as well as my best wishes and prayers to everyone.

Creche Blessing

God of every nation and people,
from the very beginning of creation
you have made manifest your love:
when our need for a Savior was great
you sent your Son to be born of the Virgin Mary.
To our lives he brings joy and peace,
justice, mercy, and love.

Lord, bless all who look upon this manger;
may it remind us of the humble birth of Jesus,
and raise our thoughts to him,
who is God-with-us and Savior of all,
and who lives and reigns forever and ever.
Amen. (Catholic Household Blessings & Prayers)

Fr. Bart’s article is continued from the previous page

this year. We will honor our Blessed Mother at a special 9:00 AM Mass; all are welcome to attend.

- The Feast of the Epiphany: Sunday, January 7, 2018. Traditionally observed on January 6, this feast in the U.S. falls on the Sunday between January 2-8 and commemorates the arrival of the Three Wise Men. It is a Catholic tradition to bless one’s home on the Epiphany. We will be including a House Blessing in the bulletin for this Sunday.

At 1:00 PM on the Feast of the Epiphany we will also have our Lessons and Carols Event with a social following.

Alpha Is about to Begin!

Alpha is about to begin!

We’re offering three sessions starting in **February not January:**
Sunday after 10 am Mass (starting **February 11**),
Wednesday evening 5:45-7:30 pm (starting **February 7**),
Tuesdays from 11:30-1 pm (starting **February 13**).

Please RSVP or send questions to Jenny at 833-2606. or Jennifer@stamadison.org

What is Alpha?

Alpha is a series of about 10 sessions. It provides a comfortable, hospitable environment to refresh your understanding of the basics of the Christian faith and the big questions of life.

Who Should Come to Alpha?

Anyone who wants to get to know Jesus and their faith better, or who has questions about their faith. Has it been awhile since you had to explain the basics of what we believe about Jesus and our faith? Do you have a family member or friend who has stepped away?

Alpha can help you explain things to them, or give them a place to ask their own questions. Even if you have been Catholic your whole life, it will deepen your appreciation for the way God loves us. Come, and bring a friend!

What Does Alpha Look Like?



GOOD FOOD

Each Alpha gathering begins with a meal. This is a time of fun and relaxation in a casual atmosphere ... perfect for making friends.



ALPHA TALK

Following the meal there is a video of a short talk exploring various aspects of the Christian faith.



DISCUSSION

Guests break into small groups where everyone is welcome to share thoughts and ask questions in a nonjudgmental and relaxed setting.

“Only in souls the Christ is brought to birth, and there He lives and dies.”

Music & Liturgy By Greg Buchberger, Director of Music Ministries



CELEBRATION OF CHRISTMAS

We have just journeyed through four short weeks of preparation for the Celebration of the Nativity of the Lord. How does one slow down, make time for prayer, and reflect on the coming of the Lord when our society begins promoting the secular Christmas before Halloween? How do we celebrate the Season of Christmas? A few suggestions...

Join us for Mass! Our Christmas Celebrations are a highlight of our Church Year. Our choir and musicians prepare for these celebrations for months ahead of time. We invite you to join us in lifting our voices together in prayer and in song! If you have never been to "Midnight Mass," or haven't been in years, consider joining us this year! This celebration is truly a beautiful liturgy, giving praise for the Newborn King! Our choral prelude on Christmas Eve begins at 8:15 PM and "Midnight" Mass is celebrated at 9:00 PM as we begin Christmas together in prayer!

Take time with your family to pray: pray before meals, bless the crèche in your home, pray for the homeless and the hungry, pray for those who are alone, pray for your family and friends, pray for your loved ones who have gone before us in faith, and pray for our Parish Community. A number of years ago, when my nieces and nephews were all small, my family began the tradition of recounting the story of Christ's birth, and then each of us sharing how the Lord has blessed us in the past year, all **before** we exchange our cards and gifts. And don't forget to join in singing those Christmas carols, especially the ones that our children love to sing!

Unplug. Our lives are bombarded with technology. Spend this Christmas Season truly in the presence of your family and friends. Unplug from those things which steal our time, and focus on reconnecting with one another and with the Lord. It is good to remember that we are part of a world in need and lonely for human contact and connection. Live by example the love that Christ shares with each one of us and cherish the precious moments we have by being present to all those whom we are blest to have in our lives.

By ancient tradition, the celebration of Christmas begins at Midnight on Christmas Eve night, and continues for 12 days. And so we conclude our Christmas celebrations on the 12th Day of Christmas, the Epiphany of the Lord. Join us on Epiphany Sunday for a special celebration of Lessons & Carols, celebrated here at St. Thomas Aquinas at 1:00 PM All are welcome!

Discipleship with Holly Irving



Discipleship Moment

In the Gospel reading for the Fourth Sunday of Advent, we hear the story of the Annunciation, when the angel of the Lord announced to Mary that she would give birth to Christ through the intercession of the Holy Spirit. Mary allowed God's messenger to speak to her. She was attentive, not afraid to enter into a dialogue, then unconditionally obedient. Mary's acceptance of this mystery is a stewardship model for us. Good stewards remain open to the incursions of divine life into the their daily lives. How open are we to the promptings of the Holy Spirit in our own lives? What might we do this last week of Advent to be more attentive to the Lord? (Based on ICSC)

Discipleship Is Having Faith in God

Today in the Gospel for the Fourth Sunday of Advent, we hear the angel of the Lord telling Mary that she will conceive and bear a Son who will be called the Son of the Most High. Mary who is betrothed to Joseph, but has not had relations with a man, has faith in God's purpose for her and replies. "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word." (Luke 1:38) Can you say those same words to God?

Ministry of the Week

This week St. Thomas Aquinas acknowledges the people who pray for others on the prayer chain! Thank you for the many prayers you say for people's needs. They are so grateful!

Prayer Chain

Prayer is powerful. There are many parishioners who pray daily for the needs of others. If you, a loved one, or a friend need prayers **please contact Holly at 833-2600**. If you would like to pray for the people in need, **please contact Holly at 833-2600 or holly@stamadison.org**. The prayer chain is very long by the end of December, so in January, I take everyone off the prayer chain. If you know someone who needs to remain on the prayer chain, **please contact Holly at 833-2600 or holly@stamadison.org**.

Leaving a Lasting Legacy

Bequests to the parish, gifts of life insurance, stocks, bonds, and certificates of deposit can help perpetuate your faith commitment into the future. Please remember the ongoing and long-range needs here at St. Thomas Aquinas Parish. For specific areas which could benefit from your gift, **please contact Holly Irving at 833-2600 or holly@stamadison.org**.

Love God.
Love Others.
Make Disciples!

Weekly Stewardship of Treasure

Giving amounts will return next week.

Counters Schedule

Tuesday, December 26

Aeki Baik, Barbara Rudin, and Carol Sawyer

Tuesday, January 2

Mary Neuhauser and Bill Schwoegler



We Pray for Our Loved Ones

SERVING WITH THE ARMED FORCES

- CW4 Steve Artz, brother of Sue Ziegler and Judy Rossa
- SSG Michael Bosold, nephew of Sharon Michel
- Owen Carle, grandson of Glynn and Shirley Rossa
- SFC Enrique Andres Cervantes, cousin of Maria McHugh
- A1C Margarita Clayton, Sister of Tina Hutchison
- Anthony Church, grandson of Clara Church
- Major Tim Doll, nephew of Jerry and Mary Ann Doll
- A1C Colin Donovan, cousin of Pat Korger
- A1C Charles (Gus) Dorais, grandson of Mary Kay Dorais
- Lt. Colonel Michael Everton, brother of Jennifer Doering
- Captain Alex Harms, son of Bruce and Judy Harms
- Airman First Class Brianna Herreid, granddaughter of Ken and Joyce Niesen
- SPC Shalice Hood, friend of Alyssa Rivera
- A1C Nicholas Jones, grandson of Mary and Gordon Samuelsen
- SSGT Mark Jurakovich, brother of Gina Levesque
- LT Bradley Kirschbaum, grandson of Tom and Sally Ellis
- SSGT Mike Levesque, brother of Chad Levesque
- CPL Alyssa Rivera, cousin of Fr. Bart Timmerman
- Major Stuart Mark Slattery, grandson of Thomas & Loretta Slattery
- Steven Thomas, brother of Linda Galang
- SGT Jack Vilim, nephew of Mary Crave
- A1C Blake E. Westbrook, grandson of Diane Genske



Follow Fr. Bart on Twitter at @Frbart01



Follow St. Thomas Aquinas on Facebook

This Week at St. Thomas Aquinas

Sunday, December 24

- 4th Sunday of Advent Mass 8 and 10 AM
- Christmas Eve Children's Mass..... 4:00 PM
- Christmas Eve Mass, Bilingual 6:30 PM
- Christmas Eve Prelude and Carol Sing..... 8:15 PM
- Christmas Eve "Midnight" Mass 9:00 PM

Monday, December 25

- Christmas Day Mass 8 and 10 AM
- Parish closed after Mass, No Office Hours, No Adoration

Tuesday, December 26

- Women's Evening of Recollection, Chapel 6:00 PM

Wednesday, December 27

No Toddler Time

Saturday, December 30

- Sierra Weast and Michael Fose Wedding 2:00 PM

Monday, January 1

Parish Closed after Mass, No Office Hours, no Adoration

Care Facility Liturgies This Week

- Oakwood:** Friday, December 29, Rosary
- Brookdale:** Friday, December 29, Rosary and Communion
- Sebring:** Sunday, December 24, Word and Communion

Mark Your Calendar!

St. Thomas Aquinas will host our area Confirmation Mass **Saturday, May 5, 2018 at 7 PM.** There will be lots more details to come but, please mark your calendars!

Please continue praying for our candidates and the others in the area.

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- www.womenscarecenter.org/Madison.html: Women's Care Center (counseling, ultrasounds)
- www.catholiccharitiesofmadison.org/: Catholic Charities (adoption, aging services, developmental disabilities, counseling, substance abuse treatment, etc.)
- www.cmcmadison.org/: Catholic Multicultural Center (food, health services, education, job development, immigration legal help)
- abuseintervention.org/: Domestic Abuse Intervention Service (crisis response, emergency shelter, support groups)
- www.silentnomoreawareness.org: Abortion recovery help
- hopeafterabortion.com: Project Rachel (Abortion recovery help)
- Madison Al-Anon Hotline:** support for families and friends troubled by someone else's drinking or drug use—608-255-5181
- www.elizabethhousedane.org: Care Net Pregnancy Center of Dane County (free residential maternity and parenting program)

Symbolon:

The Catholic Faith Explained

Thursday evenings,

starting January 18, from 6:30-8 PM

We may be familiar with different aspects of the Catholic Faith ... but how does it all fit together? And what difference does it make for our lives? This video series systematically presents the BIG picture of the Catholic Faith. Acclaimed author, speaker, and theologian Dr. Edward Sri leads over 25 of the nation's top experts to clearly explain the Catholic Faith in a way that helps us know it, live it, and articulate it to others.

This is another great follow-up to Alpha! Contact Jenny Ludtke, Director of Evangelization, at Jennifer@stamadison.org or 833-2606 or for more information or to register.



Young Adult Connections

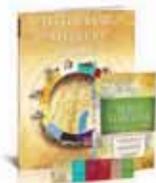
Open to marrieds and singles in their 20s and 30s, the Young Adult group at St. Thomas Aquinas gathers for conversation and fellowship twice a month during (with a few extra fun events).



Young Adults meet on the first and third Monday nights. Our next gathering is Monday, January 15, 7-9 PM. To be added to the email/ mailing list, please contact Jennifer Ludtke at 833-2606 or jennifer@stamadison.org. You can also stay informed on <https://www.facebook.com/STAMadisonYA>

Unlocking the Mystery of the Bible: An Engaging Journey Through the Bible

This eight-part study (30-minute sessions) provides the easiest way to understand the Bible. Unlocking the Mystery of the Bible makes the complex simple. It helps you uncover the story woven throughout Scripture so that you can get the "big picture" of the Bible and understand what it is all about. The Bible is a story about the Father's unending love for you - a love that you are now called to share with others.



You will:

- Make sense of the Bible and see how it relates to your everyday life
- Discover the remarkable connections between the Old and New Testaments
- See how the sacraments, the Church and our entire Catholic Faith is rooted in Scripture ... and much more!

This is a great follow-up to Alpha!

Cost of the study is \$20, and runs on Friday mornings, starting January 12, from 9:15-10:30 AM. Contact Jenny Ludtke, Director of Evangelization, at 608 833-2606 or Jennifer@stamadison.org for more information or to register.

"Love the giver more than the gift."

Mass Intentions for This Week

Saturday, December 23

4:30 PM Joseph and Lucille Devine ☩

Sunday, December 24: 4th Sunday of Advent

8:00 AM St. Thomas Aquinas Parishioners

10:00 AM Barbara Prue ☩

Sunday, December 24: Christmas Eve

4:00 PM Norman and Huguette Ayoub ☩

6:30 PM Lourdes Medina de Larracilla ☩

9:00 PM Janet Sveum ☩

Monday, December 25: Christmas Day

8:00 AM St. Thomas Aquinas Parishioners

10:00 AM James Shampo ☩

Tuesday, December 26: St. Stephen, the First Martyr

5:30 PM Michael and Stella Keyes ☩

Wednesday, December 27: St. John, Apostle & Evangelist

8:30 AM Shirley Laska ☩

Thursday, December 28: The Holy Innocents, Martyrs

7:30 AM Sr. Colleen Schmitt

Friday, December 29: St. Thomas Becket, Bishop & Martyr

8:30 AM Marian Engerman ☩

Saturday, December 30

4:30 PM David Peterson ☩

Sunday, December 31: The Holy Family; New Year's Eve

8:00 AM St. Thomas Aquinas Parishioners

10:00 AM Edward and Shirley King ☩

6:30 PM Deceased members of the Sergio Ocotl family

Readings for the Week of December 24

Sunday: 2 Sm 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16/Ps 89:2-3, 4-5, 27, 29 [2a]/
Rom 16:25-27/Lk 1:26-38

Monday: Vigil: Is 62:1-5/Ps 89:4-5, 16-17, 27, 29 [2a]/

Acts 13:16-17, 22-25/Mt 1:1-25 or 1:18-25

Midnight: Is 9:1-6/Ps 96:1-2, 2-3, 11-12, 13 [Lk 2:11]/

Ti 2:11-14/Lk 2:1-14

Dawn: Is 62:11-12/Ps 97:1, 6, 11-12/Ti 3:4-7/Lk 2:15-20

Day: Is 52:7-10/Ps 98:1, 2-3, 3-4, 5-6 [3c]/Heb 1:1-6/

Jn 1:1-18 or 1:1-5, 9-14

Tuesday: Acts 6:8-10; 7:54-59/Ps 31:3cd-4, 6 and 8ab, 16bc and 17 [6]/
Mt 10:17-22

Wednesday: 1 Jn 1:1-4/Ps 97:1-2, 5-6, 11-12 [12]/Jn 20:1a, 2-8

Thursday: 1 Jn 1:5--2:2/Ps 124:2-3, 4-5, 7b-8 [7]/Mt 2:13-18

Friday: 1 Jn 2:3-11/Ps 96:1-2a, 2b-3, 5b-6 [11a]/Lk 2:22-35

Saturday: 1 Jn 2:12-17/Ps 96:7-8a, 8b-9, 10 [11a]/Lk 2:36-40

Next Sunday: Gn 15:1-6; 21:1-3 or Sir 3:2-6, 12-14/Ps 105:1-2, 3-4, 5-6,
8-9, [7a, 8a] or Ps 128:1-2, 3, 4-5 [cf. 1]/Heb 11:8, 11-12, 17-19 or
Col 3:12-21 or 3:12-17/Lk 2:22-40 or 2:22, 39-40

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