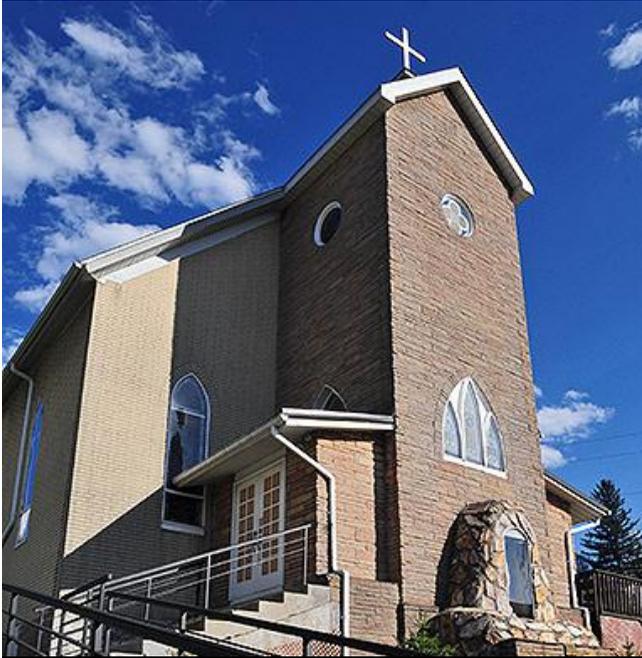


SAINT THOMAS AQUINAS PARISH

Mission: OUR LADY OF MERCY

St. Thomas Aquinas
Thomas, West Virginia

Our Lady of Mercy
Parsons, West Virginia



Pastor: Rev. Timothy J. Grassi,
P.O. Box 300, Thomas, WV 26292 —Tel: 304-463-4488

Parish Website:
www.stsite.com

Sacrament of Baptism:

Please contact the priest to make arrangements. Instructions for both parents are required. Sponsors from outside the Parish need a letter of eligibility from their Pastors.

Sacrament of Matrimony:

Arrangements should be made with the Pastor at least six months in advance of the intended date of marriage. Preparation classes with the Pastor are required.

Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick:

If you know of anyone who is seriously ill, hospitalized, shut-in, or about to undergo surgery, Please contact the Pastor or the Parish office to let us know

Sacrament of Penance:

Saturday 4:00 – 4:30 p.m., and 30 minutes before all weekday Masses and anytime upon request.

Fourth Sunday of Advent, December 23, 2012

THE TRADITIONAL LATIN MASS

During the month of **December**, the Tridentine Mass will be offered at the following times and churches:

St. Thomas - 7:30 AM, Sunday 12/16/12;

Our Lady of Mercy - 12:30 PM, Sunday 12/09/12.



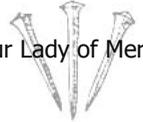
PRO-LIFE CORNER

Mary knew the trials and tribulations of an unplanned pregnancy, but she also knew that the baby growing inside her was a gift from God. All pregnancies are a gift from God that should never be returned unopened.



THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE

Confessions will be available 30 minutes before all Masses and at 5:00 PM on Christmas Eve at Our Lady of Mercy and before Midnight Mass at St. Thomas (or by appointment.)
Prepare your soul to welcome the Prince of Peace!



ATTENTION CONFIRMATION CLASS

As part of your Confirmation service hours all confirmation students are asked to meet with Father immediately after Mass in Parsons today, December 23rd to decorate the Our Lady of Mercy Church for Christmas. We will then travel up the mountain to help decorate St. Thomas Aquinas Church. Food and drinks will be provided.

CAR MAGNETS & DECALS FOR SALE

The Knights of Columbus are selling: "Keep Christ in Christmas" car magnets and decals. This is a great way to remind others of what Christmas is all about!

CHRISTMAS FLOWERS

Please help offset the cost of flowers by making a donation towards Christmas flowers in memory of loved ones. Envelopes are available at the back of the church.

EVENTS ON THE HORIZON!!!

December 24 - Christmas Program in Parsons beginning at 6:00 PM followed by Christmas vigil Mass at 6:30.

December 24 - St. Thomas Christmas choral program at **11:30 PM** followed by **Mass at Midnight**.

December 25 - Christmas Mass at 9:00 AM at St. Thomas

January 1 - Solemnity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God.

January 6 - Epiphany pot luck dinner at Our Lady of Mercy church immediately following Mass.

January 9 - Knights of Columbus monthly meeting at 6:00 PM at the St. Thomas Center.

January 13 - Our Lady of Mercy Women's Guild meeting after the 11 AM Mass in Parsons.

January 25 - 40th Annual March for Life in Washington, D.C.

Contributions for December 16, 2012

St. Thomas: \$1,302.00

Retirement Fund for Religious: \$992.00

Our Lady of Mercy: \$676.00

Retirement fund for Religious: \$146.00

Food Pantry

The Food Pantry is in need of "valued" food items.

This month we are seeking **bean/bacon soup**. In subsequent months we will let you know what items are needed and ask your assistance in this need for our community.



CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

All are invited to the Our Lady of Mercy children's Christmas program beginning at 6:00 PM Monday evening, December 24th, (before the Christmas vigil Mass at 6:30). All parents are asked to please bring their children to the church by 5:30 PM so there is plenty of time to dress in costumes and run through the play one last time.

CATHOLIC CHARITIES OF WEST VIRGINIA

Many of our poor and vulnerable West Virginia neighbors face the same challenges we face, but without the same resources to cope with those challenges. Many times they live in a world of despair and isolation. Your annual gift to Catholic Charities WV can change a world. *Your world has nutritious meals for you and your family.*

Help us provide nutritious food for our neighbors in need. *Your World has a warm, safe place to live for you and your family.* **Help us provide rent and utility assistance for our neighbors in need.** *Your world has friends and family who can provide a helping hand.* **Help us open our doors wide and welcome our neighbors in need.**

Please consider making an annual gift to Catholic Charities WV during the second collection at Mass on the most joyous of days - Christmas.

QUESTION: WHEN SHOULD YOU PUT UP YOUR CHRISTMAS TREE?

Every year, it seems that Christmas decorations start appearing a little bit earlier, and stores are now starting to play Christmas music even before Thanksgiving. Many people even decorate their Christmas tree the weekend after Thanksgiving. But is there a proper time to put up your Christmas tree?

Answer: Traditionally, Catholics did not put up their Christmas trees until after noon on Christmas Eve. The same was true of all Christmas decorations. The purpose of the tree and the decorations is to celebrate the feast of Christmas; by putting them up early, we anticipate the feast, and Christmas loses some of its sense of joyfulness when it finally does arrive.

Most Christians today spend the entire season of Advent celebrating Christmas rather than preparing for it. It's natural, at this time of year, to want to enjoy the pleasures of hearth and home, and the greenery of the tree and the colors of the decorations add to that enjoyment. But we can get some of that, while still preserving the Advent season, by taking part in Advent activities and devotions, such as the Advent wreath and Advent calendars.

Of course, if you wait until Christmas Eve to purchase your Christmas tree, you might end up with a sad, spindly looking stick like the one that Charlie Brown brings to the Christmas pageant in A Charlie Brown Christmas. (On the other hand, you might also get your tree at a very low price, or even free!) But holding off on purchasing a tree until Gaudete Sunday, and then decorating it as late as possible, is a reasonable compromise.

Even if circumstances make it necessary to put up the Christmas tree earlier in Advent, we can still maintain some sense of the Advent season by not lighting the lights until Christmas Eve, or by putting out our most precious decorations (and perhaps the star for the top of the tree) only on Christmas Eve. Such practices increase the sense of expectation, especially among young children, and make Christmas Day all the more joyful. The traditional "Christmas tree" is a very ancient custom which exalts the value of life, as in winter the evergreen becomes a sign of undying life. In general, the tree is decorated and Christmas gifts are placed under it. The symbol is also eloquent from a typically Christian point of view: It reminds us of the "tree of life" (see Genesis 2:9), representation of Christ, God's supreme gift to humanity.

*As we pray the Rosary before our Masses in this month of December, we will pray in reparation for sins,
for all those serving in our armed forces, for peace in the Middle East and
For the Consecration of Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.*

MASSES FOR THE WEEK
Fourth Sunday of Advent

Dec. 24 Monday (Christmas Eve)	People of the parish	6:30 PM Parsons
Dec. 24 Monday (Christmas Eve)	Mary Christine DiBacco	12:00 MIDNIGHT
Dec. 25 Tuesday (Christmas Day)	People of the parish	9:00 AM Thomas
Dec. 26 Wednesday	Virgil Botizan	9:00 AM Parsons
Dec. 27 Thursday	*Patrick & Kathryn Kotten	5:00 PM Thomas
Dec. 28 Friday	Patrick Flanagan	5:00 PM Thomas
Dec. 29 Saturday	*Paul DeFuria	9:00 AM Parsons
Dec. 29 SATURDAY VIGIL	*Ed & Madeline Rowan & Family	5:00 PM Thomas
Dec. 30 SUNDAY	*Mary & Earl Moore	9:00 AM Thomas
Dec. 30 SUNDAY	People of the Parish	11:00 AM Parsons

THOMAS 12/29 12/30	EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS Kathy Supak Brittany Snyder & Titi Ferguson	READERS Nancy Zizunas Summer Snyder	ALTAR BOYS Nathaniel Rader
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PARSONS 12/30 Cleaning:	EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS Joanne Sikarskie & Dee Oldaker 12/23 - 12/29: Pat Usnik & Christine Rosenau	READER Jessica Gutshall	ALTAR BOYS Any and all Available!
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PRAYER LINE
If you would like to place someone on our prayer line call Mary Frances Evans - Thomas (463-4413) or Martha Nichols - Davis (259-5370) Paula Siler - Parsons (478-4104) or Cindy Long - Parsons (478-4833)

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS
Monthly meeting on the second Wednesday of the month at 7:00 p.m., alternating in the Knights of Columbus room Thomas, and Social Hall, Parsons.

OUR LADY OF MERCY WOMEN'S GUILD
Meetings are held the second Sunday of the Month immediately after Mass in the Parish Hall.

SOCIETY OF ST. THOMAS WOMEN
Every woman of the parish is a member of the Society. Monthly meetings are the first Tuesday of the month (except Jan., Feb., March)

HOLY COMMUNION: *We welcome to the Holy Mass all who share our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. While all are welcome here, we cannot extend to all an invitation to receive Holy Communion. This is not for lack of Christian hospitality. Rather, it is the recognition by the Catholic Church that real divisions of faith and practice do sadly exist among Christians. Practicing Catholics who go to Confession whenever needed are invited to receive Holy Communion. Non-Catholic Christians and those Catholics who should not receive Holy Communion (including those married outside the church and those in need of the sacrament of Penance) are asked to pray for a spiritual communion with the Lord Jesus and for the unity of His Church. Those who are not receiving Holy Communion but who would like to receive a blessing are invited to indicate this desire by crossing their arms across their chests as they approach the priest in the Communion procession.*

Let us remember in prayer all of our sick and shut-ins:

Dorothy Breth, Theresa Cook, Helen Wilson, Champ Sedmock, Frances Shaga, Vivian Bozic, Solena Massi, Lois Lamont, "Sob" Gennantonio, Martha Kochenderfer, Genny Yeager, Eleanor James, Mary Watkins, Earl & Mary Moore, Betty Swantek, J. Pat and Martha Nichols, Muriel Nestor, Eula Jean & Henry Udovich, Tony Lambruno, Elizabeth Lane, Vincent DiBacco, Judy Gutshall, Dan and Mary Ingram, Mary Johnson and Sherry Burns.

We offer a hearty welcome to all of our visitors! If you would like to make a contribution to our parish, please use the visitor's envelope in the pew.