

**ST. THOMAS OF VILLANOVA PARISH, WILMINGTON, MASSACHUSETTS**

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**Mass Intentions February 9-17, 2008**

**Saturday**

**5:00 PM Virginia Crane**

**Sunday**

**8:00 AM Gertrude Wagstaff**

**9:30 AM Joseph Saporito & Family & The Fusco Family**

**11:15 AM Grade 10 Confirmation Students**

**Monday**

**9:00 AM Delia T. Montalbano**

**Tuesday**

**9:00 AM Robert F. Doucette**

**Wednesday**

**9:00 AM Mario & Santa Patti**

**Thursday**

**9:00 AM Delia T. Montalbano**

**Saturday**

**5:00 PM Richard P. Robinson**

**Sunday**

**8:00 AM George Pratt**

**9:30 AM Edward White**

**11:15 AM Lawrence Reinhart**

**MANDATORY WEDDING MUSIC MEETING**

On Sun, Feb 24, at 1pm there will be a mandatory Music meeting for Brides and Grooms getting married this year

**BAPTISM**

Sun, Feb 3, *Allison Elizabeth Boutoures & Quinn Richard Stockman* were welcomed into St. Thomas Parish Family

**THERE WILL BE NO BAPTISMS DURING LENT**

**THE BAPTISMS DURING THE EASTER SEASON  
EASTER SUNDAY March 23 @ 11:15 AM**

**DURING MASS April 6 & MAY 4 @ 11:15 AM**

**REGULAR BAPTISM NO MASS April 20 @ 1:00 PM**

**VIDEO VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**

St. Thomas' Mass is broadcast weekly on WCTV. Volunteers are needed to videotape one Mass every 6 weeks or so. Training available. Call Jim Buckley 978-658-4151.

**TAX LETTERS**

The 4<sup>th</sup> quarter 2007 Pastors report from the envelope company has arrived. If you use the envelope system and are interested in receiving a letter please call the rectory.

**A NOTE FROM THE PASTOR**

We celebrated World Marriage Day on Sat, Feb 9, at the 5:00 PM Mass. After the Mass, there was a reception in church hall. As we celebrate World Marriage Day, please keep all married couples in your prayers especially those who are facing difficulties in their relationship.

Please mark your calendars. On Sat March 8, 2008 we will hold our annual STAMP dance in Villanova Hall. For more information, look elsewhere in our bulletin. If you are interested in going on our next trip an information meeting will be held downstairs Feb 24 after the 11:15 Mass.

Religious Education registration is underway. A registration letter and form was sent to all families who currently have a child in the program. Please return the registration form as soon as possible. As I have said since the day I arrived at St. Thomas, no child will be deprived of a religious education because of a family's inability to pay the registration fee. If you cannot pay the fee, speak to Marilyn Mandosa or Dottie Barker or myself. If you cannot pay the religious education fee during the registration period but could pay it later, then get the registration form in and just note you will pay the fee later. What is helpful to us is getting the forms in on time. Please spread the word to those who are not with us today. Thank you in advance for your cooperation and your help in spreading the word about registration.

I have decided to join the Billerica parishes in a communal celebration of penance. The service will be held on Sunday, March 16, 2008 at 7:00 PM in St Theresa's Church. (St. Theresa's Church is the one that is in the center of town on Rt. 3A between O'Connor's Hardware and the K-Mart Mall.) This will give people an opportunity to go to confession to a priest other than Father Paul or myself.

Well I guess that is it for now. Until next time, take care.  
Fr. Earley

*On this first Sunday in Lent, most of us have good intentions to spend time before Easter in penance and prayer. But perhaps before the end of Lent, we might need a reminder of that commitment. Today take time to step away as Jesus did and reflect on your life and what you could do during Lent to start to change it for the better. Give up something-some temptation or habit that is not healthy for your physical or spiritual life? Or add something, to resolve to do something new and constructive? You could come to daily Mass, participate in our 'Gospel Giving' program, say the rosary each day, volunteer to help at a nursing home, soup kitchen, visit a sick friend or neighbor, or just say one small prayer every day for some special intention. A basket of "Nail of Redemption" will be at the doors. We ask you to take one and carry it with you every day of Lent, as a daily reminder that we share in the burden of Christ's cross, but also in his promise of new life.*

## FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

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### LENT

The traditional foundation for Lenten practice rests on three supports: PRAYER-FASTING-ALMSGIVING. To assist families in need, and to help fulfill the third of these, St. Thomas Parish Outreach Ministry is participating in Lenten Gospel Giving. Each week, anyone who would like to participate is asked to bring ONE item with them to Mass. The gifts will be donated to various needy causes, some in which we are already involved. There will be a reminder in the bulletin each week.

**2cd Sunday of Lent-February 16 & 17 “And he was transfigured before them; his face shone like the sun and his clothes became white as light.” Matthew 17:3. Please bring toiletries such as deodorant, shaving cream, razors toothpaste/brushes, or soap for the victims of the fire in Lawrence, Ma.**

### LENTEN REGULARIONS 2008

**Abstinence:** Catholics over 14 years of age are bound to the obligations of abstinence. Abstinence is to be observed on Ash Wednesday and the Fridays of Lent. On days of abstinence, meat may not be used at all.

**Fast:** Catholics over 18 and up to the beginning of their sixtieth year are bound to the obligation of fasting. Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are the days of fasting. On these days, only one full meal is allowed. Two other meatless meals, sufficient to maintain strength, may be taken according to each one's needs, but together they should not equal another full meal. Eating between meals is not permitted, but liquids, milk and fruit juices are allowed.

Lent is a period of special penitential observance. Following the instructions of the Holy See, the Bishops of the United States have declared that the obligation to fast and to abstain from meat still binds on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. In this matter the faithful enjoy freedom in conscience to excuse themselves but, as the Bishops state, “no catholic Christian will lightly hold himself excused from this penitential practice”. Regarding all the other weekdays of Lent, we strongly recommend participation in daily Mass and the voluntary observance of fasting. Commendable, particularly during Lent, is generosity to local, national, and world programs of sharing our abundance, the traditional Lenten Devotions, and all the self-denial summed up in Christian concept of ‘mortification’.

“Let us witness to our love and imitation of Christ by special solicitude for the sick, the poor, the underprivileged, the imprisoned, the bed-ridden, the discouraged, the stranger, the lonely and persons of color, nationalities, or background that our own. A catalogue of not merely suggested but required good works under these headings is provided by our Blessed Lord Himself in His description of the Last Judgment.” (cf. Matt 25,25-40) “This salutary word of the Lord is necessary for all the year, but should be heeded with double care during Lent.” (Bishops’ Statement)

### RELIGIOUS EDUCATION REGISTRATION

Registration is going on now, letters have gone out.

Anyone who has a child entering first grade in Sept., and the child was NOT BAPTIZED at St. Thomas we ask you to bring his/her baptismal certificate to the office for verification and we will register him/her at that time.

The Religious Ed. Office is located in the basement of the Church. If you have questions, call the religious education office at 978-658-6040.

**Registration will be available Sunday, Feb 24 after the 9:30 Mass**

**Registration tuition payment**

**1 Child \$75.00**

**2 Children \$100**

**3 or more children \$125.00**

If you have a parochial school child entering into grade 10 and plan on having him /her confirmed, you must register him/her in the religious education program.

**GRADE 2 PARENT MEETING WILL BE HELD SUNDAY, March 9 AT 1PM IN THE CHURCH**

### STAMP DANCE

9<sup>th</sup> Annual STAMP Dance on Saturday, March 8 in Villanova Hall, Please join us for a fun filled night of great raffle prizes, food and dance.

**STAMP Committee is now making plans for our trip to Mississippi this fall.** If you are interested in coming on the STAMP trip to Mississippi, please plan to attend our informational and planning meeting on Sunday February 24 following the 11:15 Mass. We are looking for motivated individuals who have some experience in the building trades or plenty of unlimited energy to help us to continue the rebuilding process along the Gulf Coast. Please come to the meeting downstairs in the Church on February 24 at about 12:15 if you are interested in getting involved. If you are unable to make the meeting but are interested in participating contact Chris or Carol at 657-5150 or Domenic or Agnes at 657-6062.

### ST. THOMAS CHARITIES FOOD COLLECTION

On February 23 & 24 a Food Collection for the Wilmington Food Pantry. All donations can be dropped off in Villanova Hall after all Masses that weekend.

### BLANKET COLLECTION

The blankets don't have to be new but must be clean

**FEBRUARY 10, 2008**

| SUNDAY  | MONDAY  | TUESDAY  | WEDNESDAY  | THURSDAY                                 | FRIDAY   | SATURDAY  |
|---|---|--|--|--|--|---|
| Feb 10<br>11:15am<br>Grade 10 Mass<br><br>7pm<br>Prayer Group       | Feb 11<br>CCD grades<br>1 4-5pm<br>4 5:30-6:30pm<br>10 6:45-8pm                       | Feb 12<br>CCD grades<br>2 4-5pm<br>5 5:30-6:30<br>8 6:45-8pm   | Feb 13<br>CCD grades<br>3 4-5pm<br>6 5:30-6:30   | Feb 14<br>Happy<br>Valentine's<br>Day    | Feb 15<br>6:30pm Stations  | Feb 16  |
| Feb 17<br>7pm<br>Prayer Group                                       | Feb 18<br>NO CCD  | Feb 19<br>SCHOOL   | Feb 20<br>VACATION                               | Feb 21                                   | Feb 22<br>6:30pm Stations  | Feb 23<br>FOOD<br>COLLECTION                                    |
| Feb 24<br>1pm<br>WEDDING<br>MUSIC<br>MEETING<br>7pm<br>Prayer Group | Feb 25<br>CCD grades<br>1 4-5pm<br>4 5:30-6:30pm<br>10 6:45-8pm                       | Feb 26<br>CCD grades<br>2 4-5pm<br>5 5:30-6:30<br>8 6:45-8pm   | Feb 27<br>CCD grades<br>3 4-5pm<br>6 5:30-6:30   | Feb 28                                   | Feb 29<br>6:30pm Stations  | March 1   |
| March 2<br>7pm<br>Prayer Group                                      | March 3<br>CCD grades<br>1 4-5pm<br>4 5:30-6:30pm<br>9 6:45-8pm                       | March 4<br>CCD grades<br>2 4-5pm<br>5 5:30-6:30<br>7 6:45-8pm  | March 5<br>CCD grades<br>3 4-5pm<br>6 5:30-6:30  | March 6                                  | March 7<br>6:30pm Stations   | March 8<br>STAMP<br>DANCE                                       |
| March 9<br>Gr. 2 Parent<br>meeting<br><br>7pm<br>Prayer Group       | March 10<br>CCD grades<br>1 4-5pm<br>4 5:30-6:30pm<br>10 6:45-8pm<br><br>Women's Club | March 11<br>CCD grades<br>2 4-5pm<br>5 5:30-6:30<br>8 6:45-8pm | March 12<br>CCD grades<br>3 4-5pm<br>6 5:30-6:30 | March 13                                 | March 14<br>6:30pm Stations  | March 15  |
| March 16<br>PALM<br>SUNDAY<br><br>7pm<br>Prayer Group               | March 17<br>CCD grades<br>1 4-5pm<br>4 5:30-6:30pm<br>9 6:45-8pm                      | March 18<br>CCD grades<br>2 4-5pm<br>5 5:30-6:30<br>7 6:45-8pm | March 19<br>CCD grades<br>3 4-5pm<br>6 5:30-6:30 | March 20<br>HOLY<br>THURSDAY<br>7pm Mass | March 21<br>GOOD FRIDAY<br>3pm Adult<br>Stations<br>4:15 Children<br>Stations<br>7pm Service | March 22<br>7:30pm<br>EASTER<br>VIGIL<br>MASS<br>No 5pm<br>Mass |

**OUR LADY'S MONTHLY MESSAGE JANUARY 25, 2008**

*“Dear children! With the time of Lent, you are approaching a time of grace. Your heart is like ploughed soil and it is ready to receive the fruit which will grow into what is good. You, little children, are free to choose good or evil. Therefore, I call you to pray and fast. Plant joy and the fruit of joy will grow in your hearts for your good, and others will see it and receive it through your life. Renounce sin and choose eternal life. I am with you and intercede for you before my Son. Thank you having responded to my call.”*

**Meditation of the Heart**

by Carolyn Kenney

Lent. Last Wednesday, we began our Lenten journey. For many people this is a time of fasting or at least a time when we “give up” something we like. I love chocolate and for many years I have given up this delicacy for forty days, which is no easy task.

In today's gospel, we read of Jesus' fasting in the desert for forty days and forty nights and also His temptation by the devil. We are tempted in so many ways. The world entices and convinces us to think only of ourselves. However this Lent instead of focusing only on ourselves, let us give up our self-centeredness. In its place, let us substitute thoughtfulness and understanding not only for those close to us, but for everyone.