



The Saint Thomas Times
Church of Saint Thomas of Aquin
Ogdensburg, New Jersey

It is hard to believe that a New Year is on the horizon, and that the Year of Grace 2018 will begin this Monday with the usual celebrations and the making of New Year's resolutions.

At the end of every year I often reflect on the events that have taken place in my life, some good, some not so good. I reflect on and pray for those whom I love, whom God chose to call home to himself this past year, especially our good friend Miss Patricia Dolan, and a tear comes to my eye. I reflect on all the good that we have done together here at Saint Thomas of Aquin as a parish family, and it has been a very good year. So, as I reflect on the Year of Grace 2017 I wish to again express my thanks to all of you for your continued support to me and to our parish. I have said it since I came here in 2005 and I will never tire of saying it on my watch here in Ogdensburg: "We are the best parish in the Diocese of Paterson!"

I always refer to each New Year as a *Year of Grace*. Indeed each day, each hour, each minute, each second is one of grace where God seeks to be known to, by and through us. You may ask, what is Grace? The book *Catholicism for Dummies* explains Grace in this way: "**Grace** is a totally free, unmerited gift from God ... Grace is a sharing in the divine; it's God's help – the inspiration that's needed to do His will ... Grace inspires a person to selflessly conform to God's will, and like the battery in the mechanical bunny rabbit, grace keeps the soul, going, going, going and going ... Grace is a gift, and as a gift, a person can accept or reject it. If accepted, it must be cooperated with ... Grace is given so that the will of God may be done ... Grace must be put into action through those who receive it" (*Catholicism For Dummies – Page 11*).

Our celebrations during the Season of Advent, on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day were, as always, wonderful and for this I am most grateful. Our Children's Choir who sang at the 4:00 PM liturgy and our Adult Choir who sang carols at 7:30 PM and during the 8:00 PM Liturgy on Christmas Eve were both just magnificent! I wish to thank Joan and Trish for leading us with these choirs in sacred song. I wish to thank all those who donated gifts to our *Annual Christmas Giving Tree*. Because of your donations, a good number of families in our area were able to have a Merry Christmas. I wish to express my "thanks" to the members of our parish family who have been so generous over the past year. Our weekly offering has remained stable and our Christmas offering this year to date, amounts to \$8,728.68 and for this I too am most grateful.

Our Third Annual Beefsteak Dinner will be held on Friday, January 26th at the Ogdensburg Firehouse beginning at 7:00 PM. For the past two years this event has been successful, fun-filled and enjoyed by so many. Tickets are \$45.00 per person and will be available for purchase after our celebrations next weekend, January 6th & 7th. You can also reserve your tickets by calling the Parish office or Dion Derkach at 973.827.5458. A information flyer for this event is inserted in this weekend's bulletin.

The New Year of Grace 2018 that we will begin Monday comes with new opportunities of experiencing the grace of God in our lives. There are signs all around us of God's saving grace. As each New Year begins we are presented with new opportunities for deeper growth in our relationship with God and with one another. So, as we bring to an end the Year of Grace 2017 and begin A New Year of Grace 2018, I wish to you and your loved ones a *Happy New Year* that is filled with love, joy, peace, good health and GRACE.

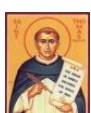


All of us need time to reflect prayerfully upon our lives and make a commitment to the Lord. On the first Friday of each month, unless otherwise noted, we celebrate the Eucharist at 7:30 AM which is followed by Eucharistic Adoration until 8:30 AM. Come and spend time in the peaceful presence of the Lord and receive the many blessings and graces our Lord wishes to give you. Our next Eucharistic Adoration will be Friday, January 5, 2018.

IN JANUARY WE CELEBRATE:



The Feast of the Epiphany on January 6th (Little Christmas) On this day we celebrate the arrival of the Three Wise men from the east to the manger of Jesus, where they offered the first Christmas gifts ever given to anyone ~ the gifts of Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh. It is also the official ending of the Christmas season.



Saint Thomas Aquinas Feast Day (priest and doctor of the Church; patron of all universities and of students) on January 28th. On this day we honor our Parish Patron. Saint Thomas was one of the greatest and most influential theologians of all time. He was canonized in 1323 and declared Doctor of the Church by Pope Pius V.



Catholic Schools Week: January 28th – February 3th. This week we show our appreciation for Catholic Schools in the United States and in the Diocese of Paterson in particular, Reverend George A. Brown School, Pope John XXIII Middle School and Pope John XXIII Regional High School under the leadership of the Catholic Academy of Sussex County.

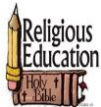


SOME IMPORTANT PARISH DATES FOR JANUARY:

- January 4th - Group from St. Thomas prepares and serves lunch at Manna House in Newton
- January 5th - First Friday Eucharist - 7:30 AM followed by Eucharistic Holy Hour till 8:30 AM
- January 8th - Religious Education Classes resume for Grades 5-6 and Confirmation Classes for Grade 9 and 10
- January 10th - Religious Education Classes resume for Grades 1-4; Finance Council Meeting - 7:00 PM
- January 15th - Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday – Morning Mass – 9:00 AM; Parish Office Closed; No Religious Education or Confirmation Classes
- January 26th - Annual Beefsteak Dinner 7:00 PM - Ogdensburg Firehouse
- January 27th & 28th - Contribution Statements for 2017 will be available in the Church Hall following all of our Liturgies.
- January 31st - Parish Advisory Board Meeting – 7:00 PM



INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY: Whenever weather conditions on the weekday (Monday-Friday) are such that the Ogdensburg Public School and/or Walkkill Valley Regional High School are closed or have a delayed opening for the day, the 7:30 AM Liturgy is cancelled. On inclement weather days please listen to radio station WSUS (102.3 FM) for cancellations for Saint Thomas Parish Ogdensburg. You can also log on at www.wsus1023.com and click on the Snow Closing and Delays Link. You can log on to our parish web site at www.stthomasofaquin.org and click on the Cancellations Link.



GOD'S GATHERING OF CHILDREN - RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM

UPCOMING FAITH FORMATION EVENTS: **First Reconciliation Parents Meeting** – Sunday, January 14th 2018 - following the 12 Noon Liturgy - Church Hall. **First Reconciliation** - Tuesday, January 30th, 2018 at 7:00 PM; (Snow date: Tuesday Feb. 6th) **First Eucharist Parent Meeting** – Sunday April 15th, 2018 following the 12 Noon Liturgy in the Church Hall; **First Eucharist Retreat** Saturday, April 21st, 2018 from 1:00 - 3:30 PM at Camp Auxilium in Newton; **Sacrament of First Eucharist** – Saturday, May 5th, 2018 at 11:00 AM



"BE SEALED WITH THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT" – CONFIRMATION PROGRAM

Confirmation Classes for Grades 9 and 10 meet on Monday evenings at the Ogdensburg School from 6:45-8:00 PM. Bishop Serratelli will celebrate the Sacrament of Confirmation for our 10th Grade Confirmation Candidates here at Saint Thomas on **Saturday morning, April 21st, 2018 at 11:00 AM.** Any questions about our Confirmation program please call the Parish Office. Thank You.



Parish Meetings: The next **Finance Council** meeting will be on Wednesday evening, January 10th, 2018 at 7:00 PM. The next **Parish Advisory Board** meeting will be on Wednesday evening, January 31st, 2018, at 7:00 PM. All meetings are held at the Rectory. All these Parish Committees meet four times a year. **The Rosary Society** meets on first Sunday of the months of October, November, February, March, April & May after the 8:00 AM Liturgy in the Church Hall. The **Holy Name Society** meets when necessary in the Church Hall.

HAPPY NEW YEAR and Have a great month of January!

In His Love,

