

Dear Parish Family,

For us who live in this part of the country, we experience the four seasons (winter, spring, summer and fall) with all of its various changes in nature, temperature and precipitation. The summer season can be a welcome relief as the warmth of God's creation surrounds us.

While vacations are enjoyed by so many members of our parish family, and rightfully so, parish life here at Saint Thomas of Aquin moves forward, at a slower pace, and God is glorified through it all.

If your family will be vacationing this year, be sure to remember your parish family in prayer at various times during your break. I can't begin to tell you of the tremendous value your prayers are. So often people wonder what God's will is for their lives, especially if they love the Lord and simply want to be obedient in their life journey as they move toward to their eternal reward.

Let me share a passage from sacred scripture with you that is simple, yet powerfully shares God's will for all of us. In his First Letter to the Thessalonians (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18) Saint Paul wrote: "*Rejoice always, never cease praying, render constant thanks; such is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.*"

Rejoice always. Never cease praying. Render constant thanks. As I reflect on those 3 points, I can't help but think that they are a continual cycle that can be in any order, yet they build off each other for tremendous fulfillment and purpose in life.

So, as we continue to enjoy these summer days, I encourage all of us to reflect on the 3 points of Saint Paul and in our joy, prayer and thanksgiving we can find His presence in so many ways as we continue to enjoy His blessings in our lives.

As the summer days move on, I wish to remind those families in our Religious Education and Confirmation Program that Registration for our 2021/2022 Religious Education and Confirmation Programs is now taking place via e-mail. All returning students, as well as new students, must register for next year's classes, no student is automatically re-registered. The Registration Form can be found on the Home Page of our Parish Website (www.stthomasofaquin.org). For more information about our Religious Education Program (Grades 1-8) please feel free to contact Ms. Deb Henegan at 908.914.6656 or via e-mail at: stthomasfaithfrm@gmail.com. Thank you for your cooperation. Registrations are coming in slowly so your cooperation in this process is most important, as we need to know the number of students so we can order the necessary materials.

Save the Date: Sunday, September 12th from 1PM - 4PM for our Welcome Back Parish Family Picnic and Parish Raffle Drawing which will take place on the field adjacent to the Rectory. We will observe the necessary COVID-19 protocols to make this an enjoyable event for all. More information concerning signing-up for the picnic will be forthcoming.

Raffle tickets for our Annual Parish 50/50 Raffle have been distributed. Please sell and return your raffle tickets to the Parish Office or by dropping them in the basket at the entrance of the church on the weekend. The proceeds from the Raffle will be used for the upkeep and maintenance of our Parish Campus (church, rectory & cemetery). If you have not received your tickets or would like more, please call Connie at the Parish Office. Thank you for your support!

Stay well. Stay safe. See the good in everyday and enjoy these summer days!

In His Love,
Father John