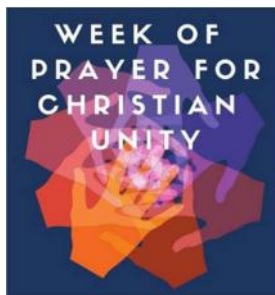


January 17-18, 2026
Second Sunday in Ordinary Time



St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic Church

404 W. Jourdan, Tel: 618-783-8741
 Newton, Illinois 62448 Fax: 618-783-8742

E-mail: parishoffice@stthomasnewton.net

Website: www.stthomasnewton.net

Pastor: Fr. Paul Luczak

(Email: revpl.stthomas@gmail.com)

Parochial Administrator: Fr. Tomy Philip

(Email: frtomysac@gmail.com)

Deacon emeritus: Rev. Mr. Larry Miller

Office Manager: Linda M. Hemrich

Annulment Advocate: Debbie Matson

Office Hours: 7:30 -11:30 am & 1:00- 4:00 p.m. M-F

Masses: 4:30 pm Saturday; 7 & 10:00 am Sunday

8:30 am Wednesday and Friday

Reconciliation: 8:00 am- 9:00am (Except for First Saturday at St. Mary) & 3:30-4 pm Saturdays and upon request at reasonable time.

St. Thomas School Office:

St. Thomas School Principal: Jill Bierman

School Secretary: Lori Smith

306 W. Jourdan, PO Box 26 Tel: 618-783-3517

Newton, Illinois 62448 Fax: 618-783-2224

E-Mail: jillbierman@stthomassaints.com

Website: www.stthomassaints.com

THANK YOU FOR YOUR OFFERING

January 10-11, 2026 Collection

Envelopes	\$	7,677.00
Loose	\$	329.00
Subtotal	\$	8,006.00
School Fund	\$	615.00
Centennial Campaign	\$	525.00
First Offering	\$	56.00
Solemnity of Mary	\$	225.00
Subtotal	\$	1,421.00
Grand Total	\$	9,427.00
Online December PushPay Giving	\$	5,181.80
ACH December Contributions	\$	2,296.00

St. Thomas Church October Tithe

October Tithe Income – \$81,900.00

10% Monthly Tithe Given to Diocese - \$8,190.00

This Week in Our Parish

Monday, January 19, Weekday

No School; Office Closed

Tuesday, January 20, St. Fabian; St. Sebastian

5:00 pm Rosary

5:30 pm Mass at St. Mary

Wednesday, January 21, St. Agnes

8:30 am Class Mass at St. Thomas

(Int. John W. Bergbower)

9:00 am Rosary

5:30 pm Youth Choir

6:00 pm Joint Finance and Pastoral Councils meeting

6:30 pm PSR at St. Mary/St. Thomas CYO

Thursday, January 22, Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children

8:00 a.m. - Rosary

8:30 am Mass at St. Mary

Friday, January 23, Weekday

7:30 am – 8:15 am Adoration

8:30 am All-School Mass at St. Thomas

(Int. Glen & Alberta Smithenry)

Saturday, January 24, St. Francis de Sales

8:00 – 9:00 am Reconciliation at St. Thomas

3:30 pm – 4:00 pm Reconciliation

4:30 pm Mass at St. Thomas (Int. For the Parish)

Sunday, January 25, Third Sunday in Ord. Time

7:00 am Mass at St. Thomas (Int: Melvin & Inis

(Probst) Kistner)

8:30 am Mass at St. Mary's

9:30 am Rosary

10:00 am Mass at St. Thomas (Int. Barbara Rubsam)

10:30 am Communion Service at Villas

11:15 am OCIA

This Week's Scripture Readings:

Mon.:	1 Sm 15:16-23	Mk 2:18-22
Tues.:	1 Sm 16:1-13	Mk 2:23-28
Weds.:	1 Sm 17:32-33,37,40-51	Mk 3:1-6
Th.:	1 Sm 18:6-9,19:1-7	Mk 3:7-12
Fri.:	1 Sm 24:3-21	Mk 3:13-19
Sat.:	2 Sm 1:1-4,11-12,19,23-27	Mk 3:20-21
Sun.:	Is 8:23-9:3 1 Cor 1:10-13,17	Mt 4:12-23

OPPORTUNITIES FOR RECONCILIATION

Regularly: 8:00-9:00 am Saturdays at St. Thomas (Except for First Saturday at St. Mary's); 3:30-4:00 pm Saturdays at St. Thomas **OR** by appointment

St. Thomas Pre-baptismal Class 2026 Schedule.

February 1, June 7, and October 4 at 8:45 am or by appointment if needed. Classes will be held in the choir area. Contact the parish office at 618-783-8741 to register or schedule an appointment.

St. Thomas Parish Ministry Schedule

Saturday, January 24 @ 4:30 pm

Lector: Beth Ochs

EM: Wade Ochs, Wanda Kocher, Alice Addis,
Ramon Kocher

Servers: Emmalin Finley, Emily Beals,
Carissa Barthelme

Gift Bearers: Todd Ochs Family

Musicians: Tammy Page & Elise Wright

Greeters/Ushers: Vic Klingler

Sunday, January 25 @ 7:00 am

Lector: Lucy Bierman

EM: Paul/Katie Bierman, Allison Weber, Brenda Phillips

Servers: Kyle/Blake Bierman, Micah Finley

Gift Bearers: Paul Bierman Family

Musicians: Jeff Finley & Lyndsey Spiker

Greeters/Ushers: Mark Vahling

Sunday, January 25 @ 10:00 am

Lector: Renee Gier

EM: Julie/Kylie Higgs, Dennis Weber, Dee Bower

Servers: Jennelle Hinterscher, Pete Weber,
Maura Weber

Gift Bearers: Jim & Ginger Robins

Musicians: Vicki Mullen & Debbie Matson

Greeters/Ushers: Justin Probst

We have an opportunity to attend the March for Life in Washington DC for a shorter time than usual but will still be a worthwhile experience to stand up for LIFE. Please let Diann know if you are interested. Mr. Fearday has invited us to join the St. Anthony students to help fill the bus. We would like to know as soon as possible, but Bales is holding a bus until we fill it. Help with funding is available so don't let the price say NO for you. Thanks for all you do for the pro-life movement.

Diann C Ruholl, Secretary
Effingham Area Right to Life
217-663-2056

The Effingham Area Right to Life is hosting its 50th ANNUAL PRO-LIFE BREAKFAST on Sunday, January 18th from 7am-Noon. The event will be held at the Teutopolis Banquet Hall (210 Pearl St, Teutopolis, IL). Free-will donations accepted, and you'll enjoy whole hog sausage, eggs, pancakes, homemade breads, and drinks. There will be numerous basket raffles, quilt raffle, and a 50/50 drawing. EARTL is accepting donations of cinnamon rolls, breads, and muffins. These can be dropped off on Saturday, Jan. 17, from Noon-4pm at the Teutopolis Banquet Hall. To volunteer for a shift, please text Susan Vogt at (217) 663-2084. For more information about the breakfast follow "Effingham Area Right to Life" on Facebook.

Welcome Back, St. Thomas CYO

Meeting Wednesday nights at 6:30 pm

January 21 – Prayer for Life Intentional Rosary – Meeting in Church

January 28 – Meet at Silk Purse, Master's Hands and Villas of Holly Brook

February 4 – St. Blaise & St. Ansgar

February 11 – World Day of the Sick – visit Villas and Newton Care Center with Ukelele Group

February 18 – Ash Wednesday – Attend Mass

February 25 – Planning Living Stations of the Cross

A Note of Thanks

Thank you, *Alice Addis, Linda Mertens*, and *Kristen Probst* for visiting the Villas of Holly Brook and Newton Care Center each week. This ministry is a wonderful way to care for those who have done so much for us, our parish and community. Thank you for distributing Holy Communion to them, offering Communion Services and praying the Rosary with the residents. The residents are very thankful for this ministry, and it brings joy to many, including all those who visit our sick and homebound. Thank you, Alice, Linda, and Kristen for responding to Jesus's call to care for those in need.

Thank you, *Alice and Marlene Harris*, for organizing the funeral dinners! You make it look easy! Thanks for all that you do to help our families during their time of need. Also, thank you to our funeral dinner trees. It takes many branches working together to offer the support that our parish families deserve during this time.

Save the Date

Family Life Center Breakfast
Sunday, March 8th, serving 8-12

St. Thomas Parish Center

Sausage, eggs and pancakes plus bake sale!

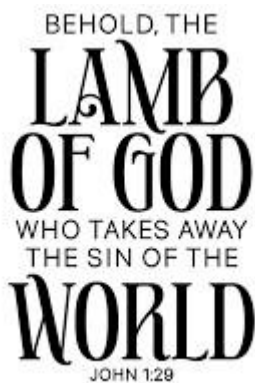
St. Thomas Contribution Statements. The 2025 contribution statements for St. Thomas parishioners are available upon request. Thanks to all of our parishioners for your generosity in 2025!

St. Thomas & St. Mary Parishes

WELCOME you and INVITE you



Please pray for the Sick: Doug Page, Eretria Vera Lou Cummins, Wesley Atkins, Janet Beavers, Steven Bierman, Chase Zumbahlen, Emma Rose Probst, Dale Harris, Jim Beauchamp, Naomi Shedlebower, Belinda Kubicki, Carson French, Matilda Hemrich, Carol Schafer, Jim/Norma Kocher, Randy Ochs, Ted/Susie Ochs; those in healthcare facilities/Book of Requests. **R.I.P.** John W. Bergbower



Soul Food

By Fr. Tomy

“Behold the Lamb of God”

Today’s Gospel gives us one of the most powerful titles ever spoken about Jesus. John the Baptist points to

Him and says, “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world.” These words are familiar to us, repeated at every Mass, yet the Church invites us to pause and rediscover their depth. John does not call Jesus a teacher or miracle worker; he calls Him the Lamb—a title rich with meaning, sacrifice, and love.

From the beginning of Scripture, the lamb is a sign of salvation. In Exodus 12, during the first Passover, the blood of a spotless lamb saved the Israelites from death. That event was not only history; it was prophecy. Jesus is the true Passover Lamb. His blood, shed on the cross, saves us not from physical death, but from the deeper death caused by sin and separation from God.

Saint Paul expresses this mystery in 2 Corinthians 5:21: Jesus, though sinless, took our place so that we might become righteous before God. He carried what did not belong to Him so that we could receive what we did not deserve. This is atonement. This is love.

The prophet Isaiah foresaw this centuries earlier, describing a servant “led like a lamb to the slaughter” who bore the sins of many. Jesus freely chose the cross. He did not resist or flee. Every wound and every breath on Calvary proclaimed His love for us.

The image of the scapegoat from Leviticus 16 deepens our understanding. On the Day of Atonement, the sins of the people were placed on a goat and carried far away into the wilderness. Jesus fulfills this ritual completely. He does not merely cover sin; He carries it away. He becomes both Lamb and Scapegoat so that sin would no longer define us.

To “behold” the Lamb is more than hearing words; it is allowing our hearts to be moved. When we pray or sing, “Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world,” it should awaken deep gratitude as we remember the price He paid and the love that held Him on the cross. To follow the Lamb today means allowing our lives to be transformed—replacing malice with innocence, power with love, pride with humility, and status with service.



Three simple and practical ways to live this mystery:

1. Come to the Lamb with your sins. Do not carry guilt alone. Jesus already carried it for you. Make regular use of the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Confession is not about shame; it is about freedom.

2. Receive the Eucharist with awareness and gratitude. When you come forward for Communion, remember: This is the Lamb who was slain, now given to you as food. Pause. Bow your heart. Whisper a quiet “Thank you, Lord.”

3. Stop scapegoating others. In daily life, we often blame others—spouses, children, coworkers, the Church, society. But Jesus has already taken the blame. As forgiven people, we are called to forgive, not accuse; to heal, not wound.

John the Baptist still points to Jesus today and says, “Behold the Lamb of God.” He is not distant or angry, but a loving Lamb—wounded, broken, and given for us. May our hearts be filled with love and gratitude, and may our lives become a humble response to His sacrifice.

The family of Ronnie Ochs would like to thank Fr. Tomy Philip and Fr. Dean Probst for the beautiful Mass that helped celebrate Ronnie’s life. Vicki and Kaitlyn, thank you for the beautiful music. Thank you to all the ladies from St. Thomas and St. Mary parishes who provided and helped with the funeral dinner. It was greatly appreciated. We are grateful to all of you for the prayers, cards, flowers, and gifts. Your kindness, generosity, and compassion have touched our hearts.

The Newton Family Life Center will be holding their annual online auction to be launched on March 8th at their annual breakfast – St. Thomas Parish Center. If your family or business would like to make a donation or has an item to donate, please call or text Renee Gier at 217-821-0872. Please submit items soon. Thank you in advance for your support!

Newman Breakfast – February 1st

The annual Newman Breakfast will be held **Sunday, February 1st from 7 am until noon at the Teutopolis Banquet Hall**. The menu will include all you can eat scrambled and fried eggs, whole hog sausage, biscuits and gravy, hash browns, French toast sticks, cinnamon rolls, coffee, juice, and milk. Baked goods will be available for purchase, and chances will be available for raffle items.

