

March 7-March 8, 2026
Third Sunday of Lent



RENEW
RECONCILE
REJOICE

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

February 28-March 1, 2026 Collection

Envelopes	\$	9,929.00
Loose	\$	317.00
Subtotal	\$	10,246.00
School Fund	\$	768.00
Centennial Campaign	\$	760.00
Catholic Charities	\$	1,330.00
Other	\$	185.00
Subtotal	\$	3,043.00
Grand Total	\$	13,289.00

St. Thomas Church January Tithe

January Tithe Income – \$58,640.00

10% Monthly Tithe Given to Diocese - \$5,864.00

This Week in Our Parish

Monday, March 9, St. Frances of Rome

Tuesday, March 10, Lenten Weekday

8:00 am Rosary

8:30 am Mass at St. Mary

Wednesday, March 11, Lenten Weekday

8:30 am Class Mass-St. Thomas

(Int.: Gerald & Rosella Hemrich)

9:00 am Rosary

5:30 pm Youth Choir

6:15 pm PSR @ St. Mary

6:30 pm CYO @ St. Thomas

Thursday, March 12, Lenten Weekday

8:00 a.m. - Rosary

8:30 am Mass at St. Mary

1:00 pm Student Reconciliation

Friday, March 13, Lenten Weekday

7:30 am – 8:00 am Adoration

8:10 am Stations of the Cross

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

(Int. MaryAnn Kocher)

4:30 pm KC Hall Fish Fry

Saturday, March 14, Lenten Weekday

8:00 am – 9:00 am Reconciliation

8:30 am Pre-Cana at St. Mary, Ste. Marie

3:30 pm – 4:00 pm Reconciliation

4:30 pm Mass at St. Thomas

(Int.: Walter & Leatha Urfer)

Sunday, March 15, Fourth Sunday of Lent

7:00 am Mass at St. Thomas (Int: For the Parish)

8:30 am Mass at St. Mary's

9:30 am Rosary

10:00 am Mass at St. Thomas

(Int. Leonard & Coletta Ochs)

10:30 am Communion Service at Villas

11:15 am OCIA

This Week's Scripture Readings:

Mon.:	2 Kgs 5:1-15ab	Lk 4:24-30
Tues.:	Dn 3:25, 34-43	Mt 18:21-35
Weds.:	Dt 4:1,5-9	Mt 5:17-19
Th.:	Jer 7:23-28	Lk 11:14-23
Fri.:	Hos 14:2-10	Mk 12:28-34
Sat.:	Hos 6:1-6	Lk 18:9-14
Sun.:	1Sm 16:1b,6-7,10-13a	Eph 5:8-14
	Jn 9:1-41	

Returning Home to the Father

A Night of Reconciliation

St Thomas the Apostle Church – Newton

March 25, 2026

5:30pm – 8pm

**St. Thomas Parish Ministry Schedule
Saturday, March 14 @ 4:30 pm**

Lector: Kim Zuber
EM: Brad/Kimberly/Kaitlyn Ochs, Lori Rauch
Servers: Jack Schumacher, Eli Ochs, Gauge Weber
Gift Bearers: Ken & Karen Buerster
Musicians: Tammy Page & Mallory Einhorn
Greeters/Ushers: Chris Rauch

Sunday, March 15 @ 7:00 am

Lector: Tyler Spiker
EM: Pam Francis, Jamie Shamhart, Brooke Woods, Nikki Earnest
Servers: Micah Finley, Audrey Earnest, Brady Francis
Gift Bearers: Brian Shamhart Family
Musicians: Jeff Finley & Lyndsey Spiker
Greeters/Ushers: Doug Long

Sunday, March 15 @ 10:00 am

Lector: Kylie Higgs
EM: Annie/Mallory Ochs, Leo Weber, Matt Bower
Servers: Dominic Ochs, Luke Bower, Lane Zumbahlen
Gift Bearers: Brad Ochs Family
Musicians: Vicki Mullen & Debbie Matson
Greeters/Ushers: Jacob Jahraus

A Note of Thanks

The generosity of our parishioners is always inspiring! Our parish families are so busy, but always find ways to donate their time, talent and treasure. Below are listed two perfect examples of how your generosity is at work:

Centennial Campaign(began May 2025)

Goal \$88,473.00
Collected \$20,411.66

Sound System

Collected \$1,390.00

Thank you for being wonderful examples of stewardship during this period of renewing, reconciling, and rejoicing!

Catholic Heart Work Camp Texas Roadhouse Fundraiser is now underway! Please contact a camper to order your rolls, butter and/or gift cards. Any donations to help cover the cost of the trip will be accepted and are welcome!

Holy Week Schedule: April 2- April 5

Holy Thursday: Mass of the Lord's Last Supper

6:30 pm at St. Mary Adoration following
6:30 pm at St. Thomas Adoration following

Good Friday: The Passion of our Lord

3:00 pm at St. Mary & 6:30 pm at St. Thomas

Holy Saturday: Vigil of Easter

7:00 pm at St. Thomas

Easter Sunday:

7:00 am Mass at St. Thomas
8:30 am Mass at St. Mary's
10:00 am Mass at St. Thomas

The 2026 OCIA Class



Pictured with their God Parents/Sponsors

<i>Hank</i> Thomas Matherly	<i>Elizabeth</i> Renee Houser
<i>Grace</i> Louise Boostrom	<i>Wendy</i> Lynn Meinhart
<i>Karli</i> Brooke Burley	<i>Chad</i> Michael Miller
<i>Mary</i> Suzanne Thornton	<i>Julie</i> Laine Pitcher
<i>Jess</i> Alan Burley	

Catechists: Annie Ochs, Kevin Parker, Debbie Matson and Father Tomy

St. Thomas & St. Mary Parishes

WELCOME you and INVITE you



Please pray for the Sick: Lorraine Yager, 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, Carol Schafer, Jim/Norma Kocher, Randy Ochs, Ted/Susie Ochs; those in healthcare facilities/Book of Requests.

Applications are now being accepted for the Springfield Diocesan Council of Catholic Women (SDCCW) 2026 High School Girl Graduate Scholarship Program! Are you a practicing Catholic girl who is graduating from the 12th grade? If you attend a private or public school or are home schooled, you are eligible to apply! The SDCCW is pleased to award a \$2,000 scholarship to 4 Catholic high school girls who are graduating. Three required documents (application, essay, and letter of recommendation) must be received by April 15th and sent to Rita Devore, 1006 Shenandoah Avenue, Effingham, IL 62401. In addition, the application must be signed by your pastor. Copies may be found in your parish office, OR online at dio.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/02/2026-SDCCW-H-S-Girl-Scholarship-Letter-to-Graduate.pdf For further questions, please call Rita Devore at 217-821-7517. Thank you!

An Opportunity to visit the Sisters of St. Francis of the Martyr St. George. Kristen Probst, a St. Thomas parishioner, has made plans to visit the convent in Alton, IL. This visit is scheduled for **Monday, March 23rd**, from 10am-12pm. Contact Kristen at slifer.kristen@gmail.com to learn more. We will be sure that Kristen sends our best regards to Sister Mary Grace (Taylor Smith).

Springfield March for Life

Thursday March 19; \$20 each

Leave Effingham Event Center 7:30am on charter bus, 3 pm depart for Effingham; 5pm arrive at Event Center

To learn more call [Diann Ruholl 217-663-2056](tel:217-663-2056)

or email at dcruholl@hotmail.com

LENTEN REGULATIONS:

1. ABSTINENCE – Everyone 14 years of age and over is bound to abstain from meat on Ash Wednesday and all the Fridays of Lent.

2. FAST – Everyone 18 years of age and under 59 is required to fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday.

On these two days of fast and abstinence, only one full meatless meal is permitted. Two other meatless meals, sufficient to maintain strength may be taken according to each person's needs, but together these two should not equal another full meal. Eating between meals is not permitted, but liquids (including milk and fruit juices) are allowed.

3. To disregard completely the law of fast and abstinence is seriously sinful.

Soul Food by Fr. Tomy Feast of Forgiveness!

On this Third Sunday of Lent, the Word of God speaks to us about thirst—an inner thirst for reconciliation, the second point of our Lenten journey.

The Israelites thirsted in the desert and questioned God's presence: "Is the Lord in our midst or not?" The Samaritan woman thirsted at the well of Sychar—not only for water, but for love, dignity, forgiveness, and peace. And we too thirst. We long for healing from our past, freedom from guilt, reconciliation in our families, and peace in our hearts.

In today's Gospel, Jesus, tired from His journey, says to her: "Give me a drink." With those simple words, He breaks barriers—between Jews and Samaritans, between men and women, between the "righteous" and the "sinner." Jesus is not afraid. He approaches because He loves. Mercy is greater than prejudice.

The woman carried shame. She came at noon to avoid others. Yet Jesus does not condemn her. He gently reveals her truth, not to humiliate her, but to restore her dignity. He makes her feel seen and valued. Jesus' thirst was deeper than water. He thirsted for her heart. By

asking for a drink, He awakens her own deeper thirst. She begins to ask real questions—the kind we often bury inside ourselves. Lent is the time to bring those questions to the Lord.

When Pope Francis was asked, "Who are you?" he answered, "I am a forgiven sinner." What a beautiful identity—not perfect, but forgiven. Returning home to the Father begins by admitting our thirst and saying, "Lord, I need You."

After encountering Jesus, "the woman left her water jar." That jar symbolized her burdens, her past, her sins. She leaves it at His feet. Reconciled and free, she runs back to the village that once judged her and becomes a joyful witness: "Come and see a man who told me everything I have done." She is no longer hiding. Every encounter with Jesus changes our life. It brings lasting joy. If God alone makes us happy, we can be truly happy always.

My dear friends, what is your water jar? Guilt? Resentment? A secret sin? Fear? Lent invites us to lay it down at Jesus' feet.

On March 25th, our parish will celebrate a great "Feast of Forgiveness." Fifteen priests will be here from 6:00 to 8:00 PM. At 5:30 PM, there will be a presentation on the Sacrament of Reconciliation and Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament. It will be outdoors in our parking lot—a powerful sign that mercy is open and accessible to all. Perhaps for the first time in our Diocese, we are organizing something like this. St. Thomas and St. Mary Parishes are called to lead the Diocese of Springfield in celebrating forgiveness—to reconcile with God and with one another, to reclaim our dignity as children of God. That is going to be a great spiritual awakening in our parish.

Confession is not a place of shame. It is where the Father runs towards us. Jesus will never condemn us there. He restores dignity, gives living water, and sets us free.

Last week I gave you the stickers as a reminder. Jesus says there will be greater joy in heaven over one repentant sinner. Let us make heaven rejoice.

Three practical suggestions:

1. Admit your thirst. Spend five minutes daily in silence and ask, "Where am I spiritually thirsty?" Speak honestly to the Lord. Let our Bible reading awaken that thirst and lead you to Christ.

2. Examine your water jar. Make a simple examination of conscience. Write down what burdens you. Naming it reduces its power.

3. Come to the Feast of Forgiveness on the 25th. Mark your calendar. Bring your family. Encourage a friend. Do not delay. Mercy is waiting.

May we leave our jars at Jesus' feet and one day say with joy: "I am a forgiven sinner." Amen.

March 7-March 8, 2026

Third Sunday of Lent



RENEW
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St. Mary of the Assumption

112 W. Embarras Street, P.O. Box 68
Ste. Marie, Illinois 62459
Tel: 618-455-3155

E-mail: stmaryschurch@stmariechurch.org

Website: www.stmariechurch.org

Pastor: Fr. Paul Luczak

(email/text: revpl.stthomas@gmail.com)

Parochial Administrator: Fr. Tomy Philip

(Email: frtomysac@gmail.com)

Deacon emeritus: Rev. Mr. Larry Miller

Office Manager: Denisse Ochs

PSR Coordinator: Marie Wagner

Tribunal Annulment Advocate: Debbie Matson

Office Hours: 8:00 a.m. – 3 p.m. Tues-Wed.-Thurs.

Masses: 8:30 am Sunday

First Saturday of the Month

**7:30 am – 8:15 am Eucharistic Adoration
& Reconciliation**

8:30 am – Holy Mass

Reconciliation: As Scheduled by request

This Week in our Parish

Monday, March 9th, Sainte Frances of Rome

Tuesday, March 10th, Lenten Weekday

8:00 a.m. – Rosary

8:30a.m. – Mass (Int: Darrell Ochs+)

Wednesday, March 11th, Lenten Weekday

6:15 pm – PSR – Stations of the Cross

Thursday, March 12th, Lenten Weekday

8:00 a.m. - Rosary

8:30 a.m. Mass (Int: Orville Schmidt+)

Friday, March 13th, Lenten Weekday

Saturday, March 14th, Lenten Weekday

8:30 am – Pre Cana Session

Sunday, March 15th, Fourth Sunday of Lent

8:30 a.m. – Mass (Int: Ephrem & Lelia Rennier+)

Returning Home to the Father

A Night of Reconciliation

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March 25, 2026

5:30pm – 8pm

St Mary's Disciples' Stewardship of Treasures

Collection for the week of March 1, 2026

Envelopes/Online giving	\$	1,885.00
Loose		282.00
Sub Total	\$	2,167.00
Catholic Charities		130.00
Improvement Fund		15.00
Total	\$	2,312.00

PreCana – 2026 – St Mary's Church will be hosting the 2026 PreCana session on March 14, 2026. Registration forms can be found on the church website – stmariechurch.org.

Ministers for Holy Week – April 2nd – 5th

Needed volunteers for ministries, please let Denisse in the parish office know as soon as possible. We will need ushers, servers, lectors, gift bearers & eucharistic minister for all services.

Holy Thursday – 6:30 pm

Good Friday – 3:00 pm

Easter Sunday – 8:30 am

Ministers for 8:30 a.m. – March 15, 2026

Ushers: Bob Barthelme, Jacob Kaufmann
Jake Semple

Servers: Wade Schackmann, Elanor Roberts,
Kinsey Barber

Lectors: Ethan Zwilling/Nancy Ochs

Gift Bearers: Jeff & Lisa Ochs

E Ms Lisa Ochs, Maynard Kaufmann, Ben Ochs

St Mary's Brunch THANK YOU!

Many thanks to those who donated to help offset the cost of the Brunch, including:

Lance & Maria Zumbahlen - hog for sausage

George & Lora Semple/Ron & Nancy Zwilling -
Biscuit Mix

Hartrich Meats – processing hog

Ed Kocher – Ham

Kaufmann Families & Prairie Farms – Milk & Juice

Paul & Amber Frohning – Ice

George & Lora Semple/Paul & Kate Kaufmann
Electric Skillet

To those who donated cash, thank you! Bakers, workers, and anyone who helped to make the brunch a success, we thank you! To the committee who spent many hours making sure everything was ready to go – Amber Frohning, Maria Zumbahlen, Jessica Schackmann & Gina Bahl – great job ladies!! To all those who came and enjoyed the delicious meal, many thanks! Served – 345 Adult Meals & 41 Child Meals.