ST. THOMAS AQUINAS
CATHOLIC CHURCH • BARTOW, FL
DIOCESE OF ORLANDO

ST. THOMAS ANNOUNCEMENTS
July 26, 2026

1. **PLEASE CONTINUE TO PRAY FOR PEACE IN THE UKRAINE AND ISRAEL.**

2. **The obligation to participate in the Eucharist in person on Sundays and other holy days of obligation was restored four years ago on Palm Sunday 2022.** Regular attendance at Mass is what fulfills God's commandment to "Keep holy the Sabbath Day". Our world is hurting. We all need healing yet many of us are separated from the source of our strength. Jesus Christ invites us to return to the source and summit of our faith: his Real Presence in the Eucharist.

3. Our Parish bulletin can be viewed weekly online by clicking on the Bulletin button on our website at www.stthomasbartow.org. There is also a button to view the previous week's bulletin if you missed it. If you do not have access to the internet, please let the office know, and copies can be printed. If you look at the bulletin on your phone, you can add an icon to your homepage by doing the following steps for an iphone. 1. **Do a search for stthomasbartow.org. 2. When the page opens, Click** (touch) the small square with an arrow pointing up on the bottom of the screen. **3**. **Scroll** down and (touch "Add to Home Screen". **4. Click** (touch) "Add" in the upper right-hand corner. The next time you want to view the website, you only have to touch the new icon on your home page screen. If you need help finding the website or creating the icon on your phone, call the office or stop in the narthex after Mass for help. If you have an Android phone, please call the office for directions.

4. To subscribe to Bishop John Noonan's E-Scroll, news from the Diocese of Orlando go to www.orlandodiocese.org/e-scroll/. Just provide your name and email address.

5. Fr. Blake Britton, a priest in our Diocese, who is now at the Pontifical Institute of St. John Paul II in Washington DC for further studies, has written a book, *Reclaiming Vatican II, What It (Really) Said, What It Means, and How It Calls Us to Renew the Church*. If you would like to purchase the book, click on the following link: https://books.wordonfire.org/reclaimingvaticanii

6. Bishop Robert Barron, author, speaker, theologian and founder of Word on Fire, a global media ministry, is producing a seven volume Bible series. Volume I focuses on the Gospels, Volume II on Acts, Letters, and Revelation, Volume III, on The Pentateuch, Volume IV on The Promised Land and Volume V on Exile and Return. All are all available now at https://wordonfire.org/bible. Volume VI The Wisdom Literature and will be released at a later date. If you would like to subscribe to Bishop Barron's newsletter, go to https://wordonfire.org/#newsletter and just provide your email address.

7. In honor of Mother Angelica, foundress of EWTN catholic television network, please consider a gift of $10, $20, or $25 per month or any amount you choose.

Catholic Trivia

Did Michelangelo actually want to paint the Sistine Chapel? If you've ever stood beneath the Sistine Chapel ceiling, it's hard to imagine that the man who painted it didn't really want the job. Michelangelo considered himself a sculptor. In fact, when Pope Julius II commissioned him to paint the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel in 1508, Michelangelo was convinced he had been set up to fail. He suspected that artistic rivals had encouraged the pope to choose him precisely because painting was not his specialty. He accepted the commission anyway. The work consumed the next four years of his life.

Contrary to popular belief, Michelangelo did not spend those years lying on his back. He worked for hours each day standing on scaffolding with his head tilted upward, reaching overhead to paint thousands of square feet of wet plaster before it dried. The physical toll was enormous.

In one humorous poem written during the project, he complained that his beard pointed toward heaven, paint dripped constantly onto his face, and his body had become so twisted that he resembled "a Syrian bow." (Michelangelo, *Sonnet on the Sistine Ceiling*, c. 1509.)

And yet... From that sacrifice came one of the greatest masterpieces in human history. When we are beneath the Sistine Chapel looking up or when we see a piece of art from the Sistine Chapel, we are looking at profound beauty that required perseverance, suffering, and extraordinary fidelity to a difficult task.

The spiritual life often works the same way. We naturally admire the beauty of holiness in the saints. What we don't always see are the countless hidden sacrifices that made such holiness possible: the daily prayers no one noticed, the acts of forgiveness, the patient endurance of suffering, and the quiet "yes" repeated over and over again.

It is good to remember that one reluctant artist's perseverance became a gift to the entire world. The work God gives us isn't always easy. But faithfulness has a way of bearing fruit, even when we can't yet see what He's doing.