



ST. THOMAS ANNOUNCEMENTS

August 23, 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

Why does the same suffering make one person bitter and another holy?

Venerable Fulton Sheen concludes with a powerful observation: "every sickbed, every hardship, and every cross we carry is, in a sense, on one side of Calvary or the other".

The two thieves crucified beside Jesus had something in common. Both were guilty. Both were suffering. And both looked upon the face of Christ. Yet only one turned their suffering into a path towards Christ. As the Church prepares to celebrate the beatification of Venerable Fulton Sheen this September, it's worth revisiting one of his most profound insights. He saw in the two thieves not merely two historical figures, but two possible responses to every cross we carry.

Archbishop Fulton Sheen reflected that the difference between the two men was not the amount of pain they endured. It was what they allowed their suffering to do to their hearts. The thief on the left became bitter. He demanded that Jesus rescue him from the cross, but never recognized who hung beside him. His suffering became an occasion for anger. The thief on the right saw something different.



As Fulton Sheen writes in his book, *The Cries of Jesus from the Cross*, *"If pain had no reason, Jesus would not have embraced it. If the Cross had no purpose, Jesus would not have climbed it."* The Good Thief understood that suffering united to Christ could become redemptive. Instead of asking to be taken down from the cross, he entrusted himself to the One hanging beside him. Jesus' response is one of the most consoling promises in all of Scripture: **"Today you will be with me in Paradise."**(Luke 23:43)

Sheen concludes with a powerful observation: "every sickbed, every hardship, and every cross we carry is, in a sense, on one side of Calvary or the other". We can allow suffering to make us bitter, or we can unite it to Christ and allow Him to transform it. None of us seeks suffering. But when it inevitably comes, the Good Thief reminds us that we are never carrying our cross alone.