



## ST. THOMAS ANNOUNCEMENTS

August 30, 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](http://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/](http://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

**How did a pear heist change Church history?** It was late at night when a group of teenage boys decided to steal pears from a neighbor's tree. They weren't hungry, and the pears weren't even particularly good. One of the boys later admitted that he had better pears at home. They stole them anyway. Most of the fruit ended up being thrown to pigs.

It sounds like fairly ordinary teenage mischief, except that one of those boys grew up to become St. Augustine, one of the greatest theologians in the history of the Church. And years later, he devoted several pages of his book *Confessions* to



figuring out why on earth he had stolen those pears. Augustine was about sixteen at the time. Looking back on the incident as an adult, he realized something that troubled him: he hadn't really wanted the pears.

As he wrote: **"I did not desire to enjoy what I stole, but only the theft and the sin itself."** —St. Augustine, *Confessions*, Book II An insignificant teenage prank became important to Augustine. Why do we sometimes choose something we know is wrong even when we don't particularly want the thing we're choosing? The other thing that Augustine admitted was that he probably wouldn't have done it alone. Part of the attraction was doing it with his friends. More than thirty years after that, now a bishop, Augustine was still thinking about those pears.

He came to see that little episode as a window into the human heart. We don't always sin because we need something. Sometimes we want our own way simply because it is our way. We can be drawn by the approval of others. And sometimes we choose what is lesser while something much better is already ours. Those stolen pears became part of Augustine's much larger exploration in the *Confessions* of sin, freedom, desire, and ultimately our restless search for God.

And perhaps there's a lesson for us in Augustine's willingness to look so closely at what might have seemed like a very small sin. He didn't dismiss it because it happened when he was young or because "everyone else was doing it." He asked what it revealed about his heart. That is a good question for us, too. Not simply, "What did I do?" But "Why did I want to do it?" Sometimes the smaller sins can tell us quite a lot. And that anxious heart that Augustine so profoundly described hasn't changed in the years since he was alive.