



ST. THOMAS ANNOUNCEMENTS

September 6, 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

On September 1 the feast of Our Lady of the Southern Cross was celebrated. Have you heard of it? The title isn't suggesting some new apparition of Mary. Our Lady of the Southern Cross is a title of the Blessed Virgin Mary, connected to the Southern Cross.

If you live in the Northern Hemisphere and lose your bearings at night, you can look for the North Star. But south of the equator, there is another sign in the heavens that has helped generations of travelers find their way: the Southern Cross. In Australia, Catholics have given that celestial landmark a Marian meaning. As one of the most recognizable features of the night sky, the constellation Crux (the Southern Cross) has been associated with Australia and appears on the Australian flag. For centuries, the Southern Cross has helped travelers in the Southern Hemisphere find their direction. Unlike those in the Northern Hemisphere, they cannot use Polaris, the North Star, to locate north. The Southern Cross can help you determine south.

Australian Catholics eventually began invoking Mary under the title **Our Lady of the Southern Cross**, bringing together something distinctly cultural with the ancient Catholic tradition of honoring Mary under titles associated with particular peoples and places.

A recent story explains the actual feast. In the Diocese of Toowoomba in Queensland, Church officials discovered in the 1990s that they could find no official record of a diocesan patron. After searching diocesan archives, the Apostolic Nunciature, and records in Rome, the diocesan liturgical commission proposed Mary under the title of the Southern Cross. The diocese says the proposal received overwhelming support.

On November 14, 1998, Pope St. John Paul II formally recognized the Blessed Virgin Mary under the title Our Lady of the Southern Cross as patron of the Diocese of Toowoomba. The first diocesan celebration took place on September 1, 1999.

Why September 1st? The Diocese of Toowoomba gives several reasons for choosing September 1. It was the anniversary of its first bishop taking possession of the cathedral. It fell eight days before the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary on September 8, creating an octave-like relationship between the celebrations. September 1 is also traditionally the first day of spring in Australia, since the seasons are reversed in the Southern Hemisphere. And at the time, there was no other Australian feast occupying the date.

So while we're beginning to think about fall here in the United States, Australian Catholics celebrating Our Lady of the Southern Cross are welcoming spring.