Saint Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church

2180 S. Kissingen Ave. Bartow FL, 33830

Diocese of Orlando



Father Eugene Grytner, SDS
Office hours Mon-Fri 9 am to 12 pm
1305 E. Mann Road Bartow, FL 33830

MASSES

Daily at 8:30 am - No Mass on Wednesday and Saturday morning.

Saturday: Vigil Bartow: 5:00 pm

Sunday: Ft. Meade 8:00 am

Sunday: Bartow 10:30 am

Sacraments

Confessions: Half hour prior to masses.

Marriage preparation: Arrangements must be made four months in advance.

Baptism: Last Sunday of the month.
Call Evelyn Rivera 863-370-4000
evecoulter@aol.com

Sick calls – Anytime
Communion for Sick and Home Bound
Call the Church Office

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament - Every Sunday 1:30 pm to 2:30 pm

Religious Education

Jessica Witmer 863-602-3837

Religious Formation – Every Sunday
Sept thru May

Preschool thru 8th
Sun 9 am + **Mass**

Email: office@stthomasbartow.org
Phone 863-533-8578
Fax 863- 533-5090
www.stthomasbartow.org

NEW PARISHIONERS WELCOME!
Registration forms in church or office

Remember St. Thomas Church in your will

32nd Sunday in Ordinary Time
November 8, 2026

Mass Intentions

Sat Nov 7	5:00 pm	Sr. Zofia
Sun Nov 8	8:00 am	For All Parishioners
Sun Nov 8	10:30 am	+Jorge & +Matilde Espinosa By Martha & John Laurent
Mon Nov 9	8:30 am	+Ozelle & +Missouri Johnson By Gerald Johnson
Tue Nov 10	8:30 am	
Thu Nov 12	8:30 am	All Souls in Purgatory
Fri Nov 13	8:30 am	+Jim Sowle By Ann Sowle
Sat Nov 14	5:00 pm	+David G Wilson By Mary Ellen Wilson Smith
Sun Nov 15	8:00 am	For All Parishioners
Sun Nov 15	10:30 am	+Charles Wiggins By Family

Please Pray For…..

Stuart Andrews, Terry Ayres, Kristin Bing, Pete Byrne, Melvin Casey, Debbie Coffman, Alan English, Rachel Gohlman, Dorothy Guptill, Delores Hart, Austin Heath, Zachary Heath, Ivette Hernandez, Jennifer Hoffer, Reagan H., Mark Jansen, Missy Jansen, Stuart Jones, Fr. Gabriel Kamienski, Bill Kjerrumgaard, David LaCalair, Aaron Mills, Adam Mills, Zachary Mills, Scott Mize, Kathleen Morris, Lacey Pate, George Pizano, Karlee Severns, Sr. Zofia, Richie Southwell, Murphy Stidham, Rita Taylor, Laura Webb

Please pray for our deceased diocesan priests

Nov 3, 2013	Msgr. John Caulfield
Nov 9, 1994	Rev. Charles Anderson
Nov 15, 1995	Rev. James Fahey
Nov 17, 2004	Rev. Thomas Bergin
Nov 20, 2000	Rev. George Moreau
Nov 29, 2021	Rev. Hugo Londono
Nov 30, 1994	Rev. William Killion

LECTORS	EMHC
11/7-5:00 pm	
Mike DeNeve Ann Spencer	Susan DeNeve Ann Slocum
11/8-10:30 am	
Caroline Picart Confirmandi	Evelyn Rivera Pattie Scott
11/14-5:00 pm	
Ruth Palmer Barbara Van Orsdale	Doug Van Orsdale Ruth Palmer
11/15-10:30 am	
Carrie Brown Rick Davila	George Cherry Martha Laurent

Saint Thomas Collection

10/25	Regular	$1765.00
	Maintenance	390.00
	All Souls	420.00

Saint Elizabeth Collection

10/25	Regular	415.00
	Maintenance	22.00

SECOND COLLECTION

The Annual Collection for Catholic Charities of Central Florida will be held next weekend. This important Collection is our prayer to God in thanksgiving for all we are given as we "keep our gaze fixed on Jesus" and offer our return to Him who became poor that we might become rich.



Veterans Day is a national observance honoring all U.S. military veterans, both living and deceased, for their service in times of war and peace. It reflects gratitude for those who risked their lives to defend the nation, recognizing their courage, sacrifice, and role in safeguarding peace. The holiday began as Armistice Day in 1919, marking the 1918 ceasefire that ended World War I, and was renamed in 1954 to honor veterans of all American wars.

DEATH AND THE CHURCH'S FUNERAL LITURGY

[…] What it means "to live" has escaped us. We measure our quality of life in relation to dying as a final event. This leads to an existential angst, an all-penetrating restlessness in our day-to-day activities that tries to sap the most out of things because "tomorrow we die!" YOLO as the popular slang goes.

In a disquieting article, Evan Axelrod notes that distress over death and its resulting immersion into the tedium of materialism is a principal reason that zombies are so popular in contemporary media. "The story of the zombie is a metaphor for what is wrong with the human condition, particularly the monotony of our lives and our drive to consume . . . on some level it allows us to deal with the fear of death. In a sense, the idea of confronting, defeating, and surviving zombies represents surviving death itself." (Axelrod, E. M., Zombies, Divorce, & the Internet, 2014). The zombie is an analogy for death which stands as an omnipresent existential threat that needs to be eliminated at all costs. Of course, this is seen on a purely somatic level with no notion of eternal life or spirituality. Thus, the modern empirical attitude towards death has led to an all-encompassing cultural phenomenon in which the whole of our society is ungirded with the eerie –presupposition that "this will all be over soon." So, enjoy it while you can. This is what makes Axelrod conclude his article with a chilling observation: "Zombies are us."

In many ways, the drama of Dorian Gray is well-lived in modern man, who, in exchange for the illusion of eternal beauty and youth, abandons his soul. Every day becomes a sacrifice to Hedone. We drink deeply of countless pleasures, living only to "give rebellion its fascination and disobedience its charm." All the while, we run from the self-portrait of our own mortality sitting hauntingly behind the lock-and-key of our subconscious. Finally, after years of superficiality, grown weary of worldly comforts, we dare to look back at the canvas of our lives and with Dorian quote the tragic lines of Hamlet's Laertes, for we too have become "a face without a heart!" In the end, Dorian notes, "I am too much concentrated on myself. My own personality has become a burden to me." He takes a knife and plunges it through his chest heinously bringing about the very thing he had spent every waking hour trying to flee.

The secular perception of death as the absolute threat to life has become so engrained in modern culture that we even see its influence among Christians. One need only look at our vocabulary when referring to funerals. A so-called "Celebration of Life" has commonly come to replace the Catholic designation Mass for the Dead or Funeral Liturgy. Any kind of terminology that hints at death or serves as a reminder of mortality is hurriedly downplayed. In an attempt to be pastoral and uplifting, we condense the Paschal Mystery to a one-sided emphasis on the Resurrection. But the ideology of such a change does not authentically reflect the ethos of the Church's doctrine. The Resurrection cannot be reduced to a comforting sentiment employed to sideline death or placate the pain of facing our finitude. In so doing, we lose the thrust of the Gospel as we retract the most compelling component of its message. Labeling Catholic funeral ritual as a sheer "Celebration of Life" truncates this evangelical principle in two ways.

First, it inadvertently depreciates the profundity of Jesus' Resurrection, failing to acknowledge the whole truth of "Christ crucified" who enters into the depths of human suffering by "becoming sin," put "to death in the flesh" and descending into hell as emissary "to the spirits in prison who disobeyed long ago" (2 Cor. 5:21, 1 Cor. 1:23, 1 Pet. 3:19–20). Christ's crucifixion and descent to the realm of the dead is what secures the sense of our dying being no longer a definitive violence to our nature. On the contrary, by the grace of God, dying becomes yet another way of belonging to the Lord.

Death indeed loses its sting, but not by disappearing from history. In fact, something even more amazing happens: death itself becomes an instance of communion, a manifestation of God's glory. This is what allows St. Paul to boldly claim that if we "die with Christ" then "death is gain," not loss (Rom. 6:8, Phil. 1:21). St. Francis of Assisi says it well: "Praised be You, my Lord, through our Sister, Bodily Death, from whom no one living can escape." In Jesus, death ceases to be an enemy, and is now a sibling whom we should embrace in due course at the allotted time with open arms and a peaceful heart.

(To be continued next week)

