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

ST. THOMAS ANNOUNCEMENTS
November 29, 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 Catholic year begin with Advent? The liturgical calendar isn't meant for the Church alone—it's meant for every believer. It sanctifies time and teaches us how to live for God in every moment. Christianity isn't just lived—it's celebrated. Our faith is not only about what we believe, but also about how we worship. The Church, guided by the Holy Spirit, orders our worship through a sacred rhythm called the **liturgical calendar** a yearly cycle of seasons, feasts, and solemnities that unfolds the story of our salvation.

The word "liturgy" originally meant "public work" or "service on behalf of the people." In Christian tradition, it refers to the participation of the People of God in the "work of God." Through the Mass, the Liturgy of the Hours, and the celebration of the mysteries of Christ's life, the Church praises and glorifies God throughout the year. To help the faithful participate in this sacred rhythm, the Church follows her own calendar. And this calendar doesn't begin on January 1—it begins on the **First Sunday of Advent,** this year on November 29.

This marks the start of a new liturgical year, a new opportunity to enter more deeply into the life of Christ. It reminds us that everything our beginnings and endings centers on Him. **"I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end",** the Rhythm of Heaven and Earth. Just as the earth revolves around the sun, the Church revolves around the **Son of God**. The liturgical calendar unites the Church across every nation and time zone in a shared rhythm of prayer and worship. Through-out the year, the Church celebrates the mysteries of Christ through six liturgical seasons:

Advent– a time of preparation and hopeful waiting for the coming of Christ.
Christmas– rejoicing in the mystery of the Incarnation.
Lent– a season of repentance and conversion before Easter.
Sacred Paschal Triduum– the Church's holiest three days, recalling Christ's Passion, death, and Resurrection.
Easter– celebrating the Resurrection of the Lord.
Ordinary Time– growing in faith as we reflect on the teachings and works of Jesus.

The liturgical year concludes with the celebration of **Christ the King**, before Advent begins again fittingly reminding us that all things begin and end in Christ.

The liturgical calendar isn't meant for the Church alone it's meant to shape the lives of every believer. It sanctifies time and teaches us how to live for God in every season. When we align our hearts with the rhythm of the Church, our days, prayers, and celebrations continually point toward our final goal: eternal life with God.