



Dear Parishioners and Friends,

Advent is coming to a rapid close and we will be celebrating the birth of our Lord this week. In today's gospel our Lady has gone to visit her cousin Elizabeth. Hospitality and sacrifice are two themes that come to mind when you meditate on this mystery. Their miraculous conceptions demonstrate their openness to God's will. Mary, who is pregnant, then travels to minister to Elizabeth who is also pregnant. They both have experienced the love of God and this leads them to get out of themselves and serve others. There is a joyous family reunion and an incredible demonstration of the love of God through sacrificial service to others.

Over the course of the holidays we will all be given many opportunities to follow the example of Mary and Elizabeth. We will be called to offer hospitality to family and friends and to serve them. May the joy which animated Mary and Elizabeth during their Visitation be the hallmark of your own celebration of Christmas. And may the peace of the Christ Child reign in your hearts.

God Bless,
Fr Luke, OP

Christmas Mass Schedule

December 24

4:00PM (Children's Mass) and 6:30PM (Lifeteen)

December 25

Midnight (12:00AM) and 11:00AM

The Parish Office will be closed from December 24 through January 3.



Christmas Poinsettias

There is a sign up sheet and collection box at a table in the link for monetary donations for our Christmas poinsettias. Memorial, honorary, and general gifts are welcome.

Readings for the Week of December 20, 2009

- Sunday: Mi 5:1-4a/Heb 10:5-10/Lk 1:39-45
- Monday: Sg 2:8-14 or Zep 3:14-18a/Lk 1:39-45
- Tuesday: 1 Sm 1:24-28/Lk 1:46-56
- Wednesday: Mal 3:1-4, 23-24/Lk 1:57-66
- Thursday: Morning: 2 Sm 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16/Lk 1:67-79
- Friday: *The Nativity of the Lord*
Vigil: Is 62:1-5/Acts 13:16-17, 22-25/Mt 1:1-25 or 1:18-25
Midnight: Is 9:1-6/Ti 2:11-14/Lk 2:1-14
Dawn: Is 62:11-12/Ti 3:4-7/Lk 2:15-20
Day: Is 52:7-10/Heb 1:1-6/Jn 1:1-18 or 1:1-5, 9-14
- Saturday: *St Stephen*
Acts 6:8-10; 7:54-59/Mt 10:17-22
- Next Sunday: Sir 3:2-7, 12-14 or 1 Sm 1:20-22, 24-28/ Col 3:12-21 or 3:12-17 or 1 Jn 3:1-2, 21-24/Lk 2:41-52

MASS INTENTIONS

- Saturday, December 19**
8:30 AM Helen Medica †
5:15 PM Elizabeth Hastoglis †
- Sunday, December 20**
7:30 AM Guido & Elena Cirenza †
9:00 AM Richard Bukoskey †
11:30 AM Deacon Frank Veraart †
5:15 PM For the People
- Monday, December 21**
8:00 AM Eugene Maddalena †
5:15 PM Irene Gilmore
- Tuesday, December 22**
8:00 AM Michael Moynihan †
5:15 PM Colleen Maguire †
- Wednesday, December 23**
8:00 AM Agnes & John Kickham †
5:15 PM Adelaida Predilla Lavadia †
- Thursday, December 24**
8:00 AM James Family
4:00 PM Danny Vacin †
6:30 PM For the People
- Friday, December 25 — Christmas Day**
12:00 AM Rosario Scordo †
11:00 AM Benefactors of the Dominican Friars
- Saturday, December 26**
8:30 AM Randall Miller †
5:15 PM For the People

Please Keep the Following in Your Prayers

Lori Jimenez, Gilbert Maestas, Fr Thomas Seagrave, Joanne Hayden, James Burke, Ashley Sheets, Lisa Miller, Rosemary Firer, Duncan Campbell, Dave Watters, Ted Oakey, Brad Gentry, Michael Mitchell, Consuelo Benson, Lauren Mara Miller, Victoria Amparo Villar, Matthew Grimes, Linda Weinhardt, Patrick Howell, Vincent Burins, and Anna Mills' granddaughter Wanda Clements — If you or someone you know is ill and would like the prayers of our parish family please call the office. To keep the list current, names will be periodically removed.

Congratulations

To David Jones and Beth Kariel, who were received into the full communion of the Catholic Church, Confirmed, and received their First Eucharist; and to Lizzy DiMattia who was Confirmed, on Sunday, December 13th. We joyfully welcome you and hope for God's abundant graces!

PARISH FINANCES

December 13, 2009

Budgeted Weekly Expenses.....	\$18,879.78
Offertory.....	29,745.50
Immaculate Conception.....	3,394.94
Parish Charities.....	2,325.95
Other Income.....	632.75
Building Fund.....	2,635.00

PARISH CENTER DEBT ELIMINATION

As of November 20, 2009

Previous Mortgage Balance.....	\$249,614.00
Mortgage Reduction.....	9,990.00
Outstanding Debt to be Eliminated.....	239,624.00

WORSHIP AND MUSIC

Marta Brannon • 293-8081 x18 • marta@stauva.org

Eucharistic Adoration

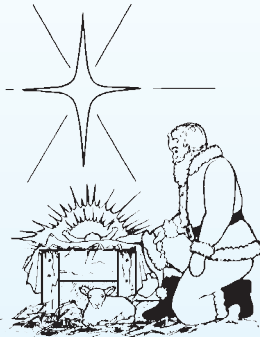
Is held every week, Wed 8:30AM—Thurs 5:00PM. Have you thought about spending just one hour with the Lord? Please consider it. Call 244-5619 or e-mail srmlobo@hotmail.com for more information. **We will not have Adoration on December 23/24 or December 30/31.**

New Eucharistic Adoration Times!

Additional hours for Eucharistic Adoration will include Fridays from 9AM to 5 PM! We encourage you to take advantage of this opportunity and commit to an hour of prayer before the Blessed Sacrament. The new times will begin when at least 2 people sign up for each Friday hour. Please sign up in the Link.

Children's Choir

Children in grades 1-8 who would like to participate in the Children's Choir are invited to join us in the music room from 10:10 to 11:10 on Sunday, December 13, and Sunday, December 20 (the normal RE time). The choir will be singing at the 4:00PM Children's Mass on Christmas Eve.



Sunday 11:30AM Folk Choir

Please consider coming to our rehearsals at 10:45AM Sundays in the Church and see if you would like to be part of our music ministry. Stop by after Mass for more information.

Sunday 9AM Choir

Everyone is welcome. In addition to Sunday Mass and Holy Days, we participate in the Holy Week combined choir. Attend rehearsals in the music room (directly across from the parish office) on Thursday 6-8PM or Sundays, 1-3PM.

Gregorian Chant Mass: Sunday, 7:30 AM

The Schola, directed by John Harvey, is open to anyone interested in singing Gregorian Chant. Rehearsals are on Mondays from 7:00 to 8:30PM in the church. Contact John at utre@comcast.net.

Elizabeth, filled with the Holy Spirit, cried out in a loud voice and said, "Blessed are you who believed that what was spoken to you by the Lord would be fulfilled."

— Lk 1:41, 42, 45

Excerpts from the Lectionary for Mass ©2001, 1998, 1970 CCD

ADULT EDUCATION

Chris Gilbert • 293-8081 x15 • dre@stauva.org

Interested in Becoming Catholic?

Would you like to learn more about *what* Catholics believe and *why*? The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) takes place on Wednesdays at 7:30PM in St Thomas Hall. Info: dre@stauva.org or 293-8081.

Catholicism 101 Special "The Star of Bethlehem"

This is a video presentation on the actual astronomy in the skies over Israel at the time of Christ's birth. An incredible and moving matching of scripture using the latest astronomy software. A must see. This presentation will be on Jan 9 at 10AM in the Community Room. The normal 101 study group will resume on Jan 23. For info contact sackandpam@comcast.net.

PARISH ACTIVITIES

Holiday Cookies for Haiti Bake Sale

Parish teens are raising funds in order to sponsor children at St Michel's in Saltadère, Haiti. Look for them after all the Sunday Masses on December 20th.



Knights of Columbus (K of C)

The K of C is the largest Catholic fraternal service organization dedicated to the principles of unity, charity, fraternity and patriotism. Knights are Catholic men who engage in camaraderie, community service, support of our Church, enhancing our faith, and advancing the culture of life. We invite Students and Men of our Parish to join our college council. For further information please contact Bob Savino, Grand Knight (rmsavino@comcast.net), pick up a brochure in the Link, or see the Knights website (www.kofc.org). Our next meeting will be held in classroom 12, Chapel side, on Wed, Jan 6, with the Rosary at 6:45PM and General Meeting at 7:00.





RELIGIOUS ED / YOUTH MINISTRY

PreK-5 • Chris Gilbert 293-8081 x15 • dre@stauva.org
Gr 6-12 • Michael Balazs 293 8081x16 • michael@stauva.org

Antioch 2010 is Coming!!!

Who: High Schoolers Only - All High School Youth are welcome, you don't even have to be from St Thomas. Bring your friends!!!

What: Antioch is a weekend retreat planned, organized and run by your fellow high schoolers who have experienced this life changing retreat in the past. It is a wonderful opportunity to share your faith and meet other Catholic youth while strengthening and deepening your own relationship with God. Besides all that, it is also crazy amounts of fun!

When: Jan 15-17, 2010

Why: Seriously? Just ask anyone who has been! Here are some quotes...

"When I first came to St Thomas I had a fairly poor relationship with God and just figured no one my age cared one bit. Antioch was a slap in the face. My eyes were opened to the reality of a young and vibrant church."

"The first time I went to Antioch I absolutely did not want to attend, but my parents forced me to go. Upon returning, I'd never been so grateful towards them. The experience changed me; both in my personal relationship with Christ, and my involvement in the Church."

How: Just return the registration form found at stauvaym.blogspot.com by Dec 18, 2009.

Kujenga Retreat

What is it? It is a retreat for African-American high school youths, grades 9-12 to provide Christ centered family oriented leadership training through a celebration of culture, customs and traditions

When: February 5-7, 2010

Where: Virginia United Methodist Assembly Center, Blackstone, VA

Contact Info: Pam Harris, Office for Black Catholics, at 804-240-0403 or visit <http://www.richmonddiocese.org/obc/index.htm> and click on calendar of events for more information and to download a registration form.

SCRIP

Our new SCRIP program has been a huge success. We have sold over \$30,000 towards our goal of selling \$100k+ through next September.

What is SCRIP? SCRIP is a quick and easy way to support our programs and those of the Charlottesville Catholic School with NO out of pocket cost to you. You simply purchase gift and grocery cards from us at 100% of their value and we receive a portion of the proceeds.

CAMPUS MINISTRY

Michael Horsey • mlh6r@virginia.edu
John Hopke • johnhopke@stauva.org

Are You in Need of a Babysitter?

Catholic Student Ministry will provide a responsible student. For more information contact Kristina Wolf at kmw8z@virginia.edu.

YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY

For parishioners aged 21-35
Stephanie Zilora • smz5c@virginia.edu

Attention Grad Students and Young Adults

YAM is a ministry at St Thomas Aquinas geared toward all people ages 21-35. Our goal is to offer young adult Catholics a community of faith and friendship devoted to spirituality, society, service, and study. If you are interested in being more involved with YAM or if you would like to be added to the e-mail list, contact Stephanie Zilora at smz5c@virginia.edu.

Ongoing Events

Please meet in the Link to join us for brunch on the third Sunday of every month after the 11:30AM Mass. (First Friday dinner has been postponed until next semester.)
Rosary Group meets in the link every Wed at 7:30PM.

SENIOR MINISTRY

For parishioners aged 60 and older
Barbara Brodie • bb9w@virginia.edu

Senior Coffee

Please note: There will be no Senior Coffee Break in December. We'll begin the Coffee Breaks again in 2010 – first meeting on Wednesday, January 13, at 10AM.

PEACE AND JUSTICE

The Haitian Station

*St Thomas Parish – Twinned with
St Michel Parish, Saltadère*

Thank you to all who participated in our Committee's Raffle: The lucky winners are Pat Sylvestro (the hand worked wallhanging); Madeline Powers (the P.B. Moss Nativity print); Eric Pooley (the Haitian Metal art piece); Michelle Weber (the Longaberger Holiday basket); Bob Schwagerl (the specialty cake); and, Mike Moyles (the framed student artwork). "Se Pou Bondye Beni-w Anpil" -- "Thank You and May God Bless You". **Christmas Cards/Sketches of Saltadère:** The "Sketches of Saltadère" note cards, especially formatted for Christmas, are available for purchase at the Haiti Table on the lower level. These unique and beautiful cards were created by students from the upper grades at St Michel School. They are available in packs of 5 (\$10) or packs of 10 (\$18). Also, Donation Cards (\$20) can be purchased to support the food program at the school. With these cards you can, with the same purchase, provide a gift to a loved one and to St Michel School. **Sponsorship Drive:** Many thanks to all who have sponsored a child or have renewed the sponsorship. You can still sponsor a child and help with the funding of the new school year at St Michel School. Sponsorship is \$10/month or \$120/year. To learn more, stop by the Haiti table downstairs or contact sponsorshipprogram@gmail.com. **Thank You from Père Blot:** Plans are well underway for a Christmas feast with small gifts for the children. This celebration is made possible by the gift of funds from the Senior Group of our parish. **Parish Haiti Committee:** The committee next meets at 1:00PM on Jan 24 at St Thomas Aquinas. **Contact:** To learn more about the Bi-parish committee, email Paul Harnois at lphmch@embarqmail.com.

**Advent Food Collection**

Thank you for your giving! 90 bags of food and supplies were recently delivered to the Emergency Food Bank, an all volunteer organization that provides a 3-day supply of food to those in need. We will continue to collect until the New Year. Needed items: **pasta & sauce, cereal, baby food, diapers, peanut butter, toiletries (soap, shampoo, deodorant, toilet paper), canned vegetables, soups, beans, fruits and fish.** Please place your donations in the baskets upstairs or downstairs.

Unto Us a Child is Born

As Christmas approaches, it is especially important to remember the plight of the unborn children. God himself sanctified the womb by becoming an unborn child. Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, became man to bring LIFE by vanquishing death. This Christmas you can work to defend these weakest and most undervalued members of our society by standing up for truth and fighting for justice and peace. Remember the stable at Bethlehem--remember too Herod's slaughter of the innocent children (commemorated on 12/28). Please join us in praying for the unborn this Christmas Eve (12/24) from 9 to 11 AM at Planned Parenthood on Hydraulic Road. (A group will leave from St Thomas after the 8AM Mass).

COMMUNITY EVENTS

The Manhattan Declaration

The Manhattan Declaration is a Call of Christian Conscience created and published to reaffirm fundamental truths of our faith and to serve as a call to defend these: (1) the sanctity of human life, (2) the dignity of marriage as the conjugal union of husband and wife, and (3) the rights of conscience and religious liberty. It is especially important in these challenging times, when these are under attack, that we speak and act forcefully in their defense. Please see www.manhattandeclaration.org to read the entire document, sign the document, and view a list of signatories, which includes many religious leaders and of them numerous priests, bishops and archbishops.

Charlottesville Catholic School (CCS)

We are currently accepting applications for the 2010-2011 school year. Please visit our website for comprehensive information about CCS and our application process. If you would like to have a tour of our school, please call Ann Michel, Admissions Coordinator, at (434)964-0400. Limited seats are also available for the current school year.

Morning of Reflection

"Loving Our Neighbor In a Shrinking World" ~ Advance reservation required. Sat, Jan 16, 9:30AM-1:30PM. All who volunteer their time to meet the needs of others or who work for justice and peace are invited for a morning of reflection with guest speaker Marie Dennis, Director of the Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns. The co-president of Pax Christi International, Ms. Dennis has traveled extensively in Asia, Latin America and Africa to stand in solidarity with the poor and to work for peace and justice. Participants will be inspired by Ms. Dennis' words of wisdom, and will be encouraged to draw connections between local and global work to end suffering and build a just world. Prayer, small group discussion and a simple lunch will be included. Suggested donation \$10/person. Seats are limited - please contact the Incarnation parish office (973-4381) by Jan 11 to make a reservation.

Employment Opportunities in the Diocese

Go to <http://www.richmonddiocese.org/human/> to get information about the following jobs: 1) Youth Minister, St Bridget Catholic Church, Richmond, VA, 2) Principal / Head of School – Roanoke Catholic School, Roanoke VA

New Year's Eve Overnight Retreat for Women & Men

Thurs 5:30PM—Fri 10:30AM at Dominican Retreat in McLean. "Becoming a New Creation in the New Year" presented by Fr Joe Breighner. Info: call 703-356-4343 or check www.dominicanretreat.org

TRAVEL OPPORTUNITIES

Pilgrimage to Medjugorje

Apr 21—May 1, 2010, with Fr Luke Clark, OP. Join us as we journey to a place where "Heaven Touches the Earth"! Medjugorje is a gift to our time and is filled with so many Graces! We will also spend one day and night in beautiful Dubrovnik, the "Pearl of the Adriatic." Cost is \$1,784/person + airport taxes of about \$400. For info contact Julie Zackrisson at 296-4615 or julieanne333@gmail.com. To register send an application & \$400 deposit made out to "206 Tours" to Julie at 2616 Cardinal Ridge Road, Ch'ville, VA 22901. Info/registration forms are in the Link.

**St Thomas Aquinas University Parish
401 Alderman Road
Charlottesville, VA 22903**

GIFTS FROM YOUR IRA

Persons age 70 or older can support St. Thomas Aquinas Parish by making a tax-free gift donation directly from their IRA. If you have wished to make a charitable contribution from your IRA, changes in the tax law now permit you to do so within certain guidelines.

If you are 70 or older, you may make a contribution directly from your IRA to St. Thomas Aquinas during the calendar year 2009. The maximum gift is limited to \$100,000 but the gift may be made in cash or appreciated property. Even though Minimum Required Distributions have been suspended for 2009, a charitable gift directly from your IRA to St. Thomas Aquinas will not be considered taxable income to you and therefore will not increase your tax bracket. You will not be able to deduct the gift as a charitable contribution on your 2009 income tax return. However, because these gifts do not fall under normal deduction rules, you can make gifts in excess of 50% of Adjusted Gross Income limitation for cash gifts.

Confer with your tax advisor and consult your IRA custodian concerning the details of making an IRA gift to the Parish.