

MASS SCHEDULE

MONDAY, February 20, 2012
9:00am Paul Dabourze
TUESDAY, February 21, 2012
6:30am Jacques Lesly Vilfort
NOON Christopher Concannon
WEDNESDAY, February 22, 2012
6:30am Thomas Corbin Jr.
NOON Vincent Gatens
THURSDAY, February 23, 2012
6:30am Blair R. Brooks
NOON Bernandel Denis
FRIDAY, February 24, 2012
NOON Anthony Mistretta
SATURDAY, February 25, 2012
8:30am Jose & Angela Alicante
5:30pm Margie Cully
SUNDAY, February 26, 2012
8:00am Purgatorial Society, Josette
Troulet, In Thanksgiving of
Alexander Jean Baptiste
11:30am People of the Parish
5:30pm Annie & Jimmy Cazeau



REMEMBER IN YOUR THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS



The Sick: Thomas Toal, Christine Walker,
Stacy Lapenna, Ellen M. Lehane, Norma
Allongo, Nicholas Zambrano, Helen Harvey,
Matthew Sealey, Stella Sealey, Marie
Collins, Nicholas Esposito Lucille Murphy,

Joanna Delfino, Sara Iovino

A Time to Die- Claude Blanc

Those in the Armed Services-in these difficult
times, let us lift up in prayer our brave men and
women who fight for our freedom all over the world.

MEMORIAL GIFTS

Altar Bread & Wine-In memory of
Michael Randazzo
donated by Tom & Yolanda Hernandez

Altar Candles-In memory of
Father Thomas Lyons
donated by Mary Calucci

FROM THE DESK OF FATHER DOYLE

My brothers and sisters in Christ:

In a few days we will celebrate Ash Wednesday, the beginning of Lent, a season to reflect on our sins and weaknesses, and repent of the ways that we rebel against God. During Lent, the Church calls us to pray and sacrifice, fast and abstain from some comforts and luxuries, and reach out to the needy, in order to help each us atone for our offenses against God and to focus on the Passion of the Lord and sacrifice on the cross.

As for sin, we tend to focus only on sins of commission, the acts we willfully commit, knowing that they are sinful. We are also told that for every good deed we do, there are many more good deeds left undone. These are our sins of omission, the sins caused by our failure to do what we can and ought to do. Think about it: how many times have we ignored a person or a situation in need because we are too busy? Or not listened to someone who was hurting? Or not said a cheerful word to someone feeling down? Or failed to restrain gossip being said behind someone's back? One day we will have to account for every word and deed, both those that we have done and those we have left undone.

As we journey through Lent, let us commit ourselves to stronger efforts to pray, to sacrifice, and to reach out to the needy around us. Let us bring our sins and failures to Jesus in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. In the process, we will strengthen our souls, bring others to Jesus, and avoid the actions and attitudes that lead us to sin (either by commission or omission). In this way, we'll make Lent a time of true renewal, a true springtime for the Church.

For all that you do for the parish of Saint Thomas Aquinas, thank you!

Happy Lent!
Rev. Fr. Thomas V. Doyle

PARISH OFFICE TO BE CLOSED

In observance of the civil holiday of President's Day, the Parish Office will be closed on Monday, February 20th. Please note that there will be only one mass at 9:00am.

The Parish Office will reopen on Tuesday, February 21st at 9:00am.

LAY MINISTRY SUNDAY

Lay Ministry Sunday will be celebrated throughout the Diocese of Brooklyn today. This is an opportunity to affirm and celebrate the many dedicated lay men and women who give tirelessly of their time and talent in service to others and to the Church as liturgical ministers, ministers of consolation, members of the finance and pastoral councils, adult faith formation coordinators, liturgical planners and so many other ways. A blessing will be done at each of the masses this weekend.

ARE YOU CALLED TO SERVE IN PARISH MINISTRY?

If you feel called to become part of the parish ministries here at Saint Thomas Aquinas, please speak with any member of the Pastoral Staff to obtain further information.

A STEWARDSHIP MOMENT

In this last Sunday before the beginning of the Lenten season, the gospel depicts Jesus continuing his healing ministry. A paralytic is placed on a pallet and lowered through a roof in order to get near Jesus. Jesus rewards the man's trust in him by forgiving his sins first and then healing his physical disability. Jesus makes a connection between spiritual healing and physical healing, and in doing so, proclaims the kingdom of God in a unique way. In what unique ways, given the divine gifts bestowed on us, have we proclaimed the kingdom of God?

50TH INTERNATIONAL EUCHARISTIC CONGRESS

Join other pilgrims from the Diocese of Brooklyn to Ireland and to the 50th International Eucharistic Congress, June 8th through 18th, 2012. Bishop Frank Caggiano will be the Spiritual Director and Father Brian Dowd and Father James Cunningham will be the Chaplains. For a brochure call: 1-800-225-7662.

MARY QUEEN OF HEAVEN PARISH RETREAT FOR BUSY PEOPLE

Mary Queen of Heaven Parish will hold a Lenten Retreat beginning Monday, February 27th through Thursday, March 1st, entitled a "Busy Person's Retreat." The four day retreat will be facilitated by Fr. Jude Siciliano, OP and Sr. Patricia Bruno, OP. The retreat for the parish begins on Monday morning with 8:00am Mass and ends on Thursday evening. Morning Sessions at 8:00am each day, and the evening sessions begin at 7:00pm. Call the Rector for further details (1-718-763-2330).

LENT 2012 WHAT ARE YOU DOING DURING LENT?

Lent-a time to reflect, to expand, to deepen, to respond-in our own personal way, in our own personal time! Lent-ever the same, yet somehow different from what we remember.

For by your gracious gift each year your faithful await the sacred paschal feasts with the joys of minds made pure, so that, more eagerly intent on prayer and on the works of charity, and participating in the mysteries by which they have been reborn, they may be led to the fullness of grace, that you bestow on your sons and daughters (Preface 1 for Lent). Throughout the 40 days of Lent the Parish of Saint Thomas Aquinas will be offering various ways in which we can actively participate and enter fully the spirit of this penitential season. You are encouraged to invite a family member or friend to join us.

Ash Wednesday-February 22nd

We gather today on the threshold of Lent, ready to be marked with ashes and the cross as a sign of our repentance and our faith. Where do you want to be 4 days from now? How do you want to enrich and deepen your relationship with the Lord?

Ashes will be blessed and distributed at the following times:

6:30am Mass

Noon Mass

3:00pm Prayer Service

7:30pm Prayer Service

Sunday Eucharist

Saturday at 5:30pm

Sunday at 8:00am; 11:30am & 5:30pm

Weekday Eucharist

Monday and Friday at Noon only

Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday at

6:30am and Noon

Saturday at 8:30am

Stations of the Cross

One of our Lenten devotions is to pray the Stations of the Cross and uniting with Christ's passion and death. We will have communal celebrations of The Stations of the Cross on:

Tuesdays following the Noon Mass

Fridays at 7:30pm

Also, during the week, booklets will be made available in the church near the first station for those who wish to pray the Stations of the Cross on their own. We hope that when you pray the Stations of the Cross you will remember those who are suffering throughout the world.

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and Benediction are celebrated each Friday following the Noon mass. Benediction is celebrated at 1:30pm.

Sacrament of Reconciliation

Wednesdays following Noon Mass

Saturdays from 4:00pm to 5:00pm

Reconciliation Monday, April 2nd

Lenten Faith Sharing

As we approach the most sacred time in our Church year, pray, listen and share your thoughts on the gospel stories leading to Resurrection, the greatest mystery of our faith. At this time of year, it is good for us to join together and share the faith we have all come to believe is our salvation in Jesus Christ!

Wednesdays following Noon Mass

(Feb. 29th, March 7th, 14th, 21st & 28th)

Wednesday evenings at 7:30pm

(March 7th, 14th, 21st & 28th)

For further information please call Sister Terry at 1-718-253-4404, ext. 30). All sessions will be held at the Aquinas Center (2000 Flatbush Avenue).

Bringing Home the Word

In the rear of the church are located copies of "Bringing Home the Word", a handout written for the average Catholic and includes features to make the Scriptures come alive. Please take advantage of this wonderful resource.

Sunday afternoon at the Movies

Join us on March 4th, 11th and 18th at 12:30pm as we gather in the Chapel to view three movies with a Lenten theme. Refreshments will be available.

Lenten Calendar 2012

Throughout the Church please find copies of Lent 2012; please take one home and try to complete the daily task.

Little Black Book for Lent

Do you have 6 minutes a day? If so, then you have time to pray! This little book has a short reflection for each day of Lent for us to meditate and pray over. Copies are available this weekend for \$2.00 each. It can change your day; it can change your life!

Sacrifices and Acts of Charity

Consider living simply, enjoying the good things of our lives in moderation and forgo some good things in a spirit of penance. Fast from wasting food wasting time and wasting resources. Use your free time to enrich your spiritual life. DO something positive to help someone in need, perhaps a friend, a neighbor or a loved one. Maybe you can abstain from one thing you spend money on and support a charitable work.

LENTEN REGULATIONS

On February 22nd we begin the Season of Lent with our observance of Ash Wednesday. The Lenten season affords us the opportunity to unite with the Church throughout the world in a deeper experience of prayer, works of charity and penitential disciplines. Every Catholic worthy of the name draws upon the manifold grace of this season that each of us may come to the Solemnity of Easter with minds and hearts renewed in our love for God and in profound awareness of his love for us in the person of his son Jesus.

Abstinence: Catholics over 14 years of age are bound to the obligation of abstinence. Abstinence is to be observed on Ash Wednesday, Good Friday and the other Fridays of Lent. On days of abstinence, meat may not be used at all.

Fasting: Catholics over the age of 18 and up to the beginning of their 60th year are bound to the obligation of fasting. Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are the days of fasting. On these days, only one full meal (meatless) is allowed. Two other meals (meatless), sufficient to maintain strength, may be taken according to each one's needs, but together they should not equal another full meal. Eating between meals is not permitted, but liquids, including milk and fruit juices are allowed.

MASS BOOK 2012

Masses are available for the weekend of April, May and June as of Tuesday, March 6th at 10:00am. Please stop by the Parish Office to make arrangements for these masses. We cannot make arrangements over the phone.

Please note that the 8:00am Mass on Sunday is a Multiple Intention Mass; permitting more than one intention. All Mass Stipends are \$15.00 each.

SPRING FLING CARD PARTY MIDWOOD CATHOLIC ACADEMY

Midwood Catholic Academy will sponsor their 6th Annual Card Party on Friday, March 23rd in Monsignor King Hall at 7pm.

Tickets are on sale now-\$20.00 per person and includes refreshments, coffee, cake, soda, water, ice cream and snacks, along with a Goody Bag. Come join in a fun-filled evening. For more information please call 1-718-377-1800 (school office).

Representatives from Midwood Catholic Academy will be selling raffle tickets on the following dates after Masses-March 4th at 11:30am only, 11th at the 11:30am only and 18th at all the masses.

OPEN HOUSE-ST. FRANCIS COLLEGE THE SMALL COLLEGE OF BIG DREAMS

St. Francis College will hold its Spring 2012 Open House on Sunday, March 11th from 10:00am to 2:00pm. For more information please call 1-718-489-5200 or visit their website at sfc.edu.

ROSARY SOCIETY ATLANTIC CITY TRIP

The Rosary Society is sponsoring a trip to Bally's Hotel in Atlantic City on March 1, 2012. The bus leaves from in front of the Church at 8:30am. For more information please call Noreen at 718-253-7824. Please leave a message. All are welcome.

HOLY NAME SOCIETY ATLANTIC CITY TRIP

The Holy Name Society is sponsoring a bus trip to Atlantic City on February 21, 2012 to Showboat. The bus leaves from in front of the Church at 8:30am. For more information please call Bill or Dorothy at 1-718-377-4061. All are welcome.

AN EXPLANATION OF THE HHS ACCOMMODATION MANDATE

1. The rule that created the uproar has not change at all, but was finalized as is. Friday evening, after a day of touting meaningful changes in the mandate, HHS issued a regulation finalizing the rule first issued in August 2011, "without change." So religious employers dedicated to serving people of other faiths are *still* not exempt as "religious employers." Indeed, the rule describes them as "non-exempt."
2. The rule leaves open the possibility that even exempt "religious employers" will be forced to cover sterilization. In its August 2011 comments, the USCCB warned that the narrow "religious em-

ployer" exemption appeared to provide no relief from the sterilization mandate-only the contraception mandate-and specifically sought clarification. HHS provided no clarification, so the risk remains under the unchanged final rule.

3. The new "accommodation" is not a current rule, but a promise that comes due beyond the point of public accountability. Also on Friday evening, HHS issued regulations describing the intention to develop more regulations that would apply the same mandate differently to "non-exempt, non-profit religious organizations" - the charities, schools, and hospitals that are still left out of the "religious employer" exemption. These policies will be developed over a one-year delay in enforcement, so if they turn out badly, their impact will not be felt until August 2013, well after the election.
4. Even if the promises of "accommodation" are -fulfilled entirely, religious charities, schools, and hospitals will still be forced to violate their beliefs. If an employer of these second-class citizen religious institutions wants coverage of contraception or sterilization, the objecting employer is still forced to pay for it as part of the employer's insurance plan. There can be no additional costs to that employee, and the coverage is not a separate policy. By process of elimination, the funds to pay for that coverage must come from the premiums of the employer and fellow employees, even those who object in conscience.
5. The "accommodation" does not even purport to help objecting insurers, for-profit religious employers, secular employers, or individuals. In its August 2011 comments, and many times the USCCB identified all the stakeholders in the process whose religious freedom is threatened-ali employers, insurers, and individuals, not just religious employers. Friday's actions emphasize that all insurers, including self-insurers must provide the coverage to any employee who wants it. In turn, all individuals who pay premiums have no escape from subsidizing that coverage. And only employers that are not non-profit and religious may qualify for the "accommodation."
6. Beware of claims, especially by partisans, that the bishops are partisan. The bishops and their staff read regulations before evaluating them. The bishops did not pick this fight in an election year-others did. Bishops form their positions based on principles-here, religious liberty for all, and the life and dignity of every human person. Bishops are duly bound to proclaim these principles.