

MASS SCHEDULE

MONDAY, July 25, 2011

NOON Carlo Martino

TUESDAY, July 26, 2011

NOON Jean Conte

WEDNESDAY, July 27, 2011

NOON Kettly Augustin

THURSDAY, July 28, 2011

NOON Joan Nelson

FRIDAY, July 29, 2011

NOON Lucia Competiello

SATURDAY, July 30, 2011

5:30pm John Carroll Jr. (L)

SUNDAY, July 31, 2011

8:00am Purgatorial Society,
Yves Jean Charles

11:30am Joseph Fox

5:30pm People of the Parish



REMEMBER IN YOUR THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS



The Sick: Guy Fury, Theresa Stokes, Rita Tamaro, Noreen Charles, Thomas Toal, Christine Walker, Stacy Lapenna, Carlos Salcedo, Faye O'Malley, Hyacinth Khaleel, John Collins, Gladys Santiago, Ellen M. Lehane, Melva Cordouar, Luis Loperna-Padilla, Annette Petti, Sarah DeProssino, Lisa Allard-Howe, William Slater

A Time to Die— Rev. Father Gary Philip Rogers

Help us keep our sick list current; all names will remain on our list for three weeks unless notified otherwise. Please notify the Parish Office (1-718-253-4404) when changes occur. We enjoy hearing the good news of recovery.

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.

A STEWARDSHIP MOMENT

A profound stewardship prayer is offered by the young king Solomon in today's first reading. He asks the Lord to give him an understanding heart, compassion toward God's people and the insight to distinguish right from wrong. An understanding heart, or wisdom, is a gift from God. It is a gift that enables us to make good decisions and prudent choices. Cultivating and sharing this gift is essential, especially when poor decisions and lack of compassion have consequences that affect the lives of others. Do we exercise good stewardship over the gift of wisdom? Do we share our compassionate hearts with others?

IS GOD CALLING YOU?

"Ask and you shall receive. Seek and you shall find. Knock and it will be opened to you." Ask in prayer to know your vocation! Seek and find ways to serve! Knock on the doors of those who can help guide you! If you think God may be offering you the grace of a vocation to the priesthood or consecrated life, call the Vocation Office of the Diocese of Brooklyn at 1-718-827-2454, or write: vocations@diobrook.org.

PADRE SERRA SAYS

The seeds of vocations are sown in the family. Through loving support of parents who nurture the love of God in their children, young people see that serving God is an important and satisfying lifestyle. So that you parents can encourage your children to listen to God's call in their lives, the following might be one of your prayers at home:

Lord, we thank you for our children. You are Father and Mother to us; help us to be good parents. Make our home a place of life and love: where strangers are welcome and sins are forgiven. Make us a family, Lord. Whatever you may call our children to be, give us the grace to say "yes" and let go of their lives. May our family's love extend beyond our table and be a blessing for the whole world. Help us to have a part in making your kingdom come. Amen.

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM: WHAT DOES BEING ABLE TO RECEIVE THE EUCHARIST MEAN TO YOU?

Being able to receive the Eucharist has been a lifetime blessing for me. At Mass, I always feel the solemnity of the Last Supper as the bread and wine are being transformed to Christ's body and blood. I often find myself transfixed at that moment, sometimes holding my breath, as the priest says those familiar words: 'This is my body. This is my blood.' Amidst the beauty of the Mass, the songs, the ceremony, so soon after hearing the Word of God and the homily, time suspends for a moment as I pray and meditate on Christ among us and eagerly await receiving Him.

I am an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion. Each time I am able to give the Host or a sip of the Most Precious Blood to a fellow congregant it is a blessing and privilege. When I was first trained as a minister, I could not have been prepared for what it is like to give someone communion. Every person, of every age, from every background stands before the minister in joyful anticipation of receiving Our Lord. With each person, I am reminded of the incredible gift that God has given us when He instructed; "Do this in memory of Me."

I also bring communion to the homebound of my parish, Saint Thomas Aquinas in Flatlands, Brooklyn. Through this ministry, I have learned even more about what being able to receive the Eucharist really means. I visit people who have through no fault of their own, been separated from their church community and have lost their freedom to receive the Eucharist at will. These faithful men and women had often attended Mass daily; they were active in the Rosary or Holy Name Society. They put their children through Catholic school and were volunteers in those schools, or coached the teams. Their daily prayer life and devotion to Christ inspires me as I get to know them. Yet, they are unable to receive Christ's body unless a minister is willing and able to come to their house.

So, I know that the Eucharist has great meaning in my life and in the life of all Catholics, but this past Sunday, while celebrating the Feast of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ, also remembered as Corpus Christi, I added a new level of meaning to the importance of having the ability to receive the miracle of the Eucharist.

This weekend I returned from a four-week study abroad program in China. It had been an educational and fascinating trip, a once in a lifetime opportunity. It had also been the first time in my life that I was separated from the Eucharist. For four weeks I was unable to attend Mass. I knew ahead of time that this would be the case; the churches in China are government run and there is no open Roman Catholic presence in the country. I brought a book of daily gospel readings and a Rosary. I planned on spending time each day in personal prayer and reflection on God's Word and looked forward to receiving the Eucharist when I returned.

It was surprising to me how difficult it was for me to nurture my spirit without the support of my faith community and especially without the physical presence of Christ in the Eucharist. I found that days went by and I did not read, did not say the Rosary, and only muttered a quick Lord's Prayer or a few words of thanksgiving or request for blessing for my family. The Chinese landscape is not dotted with steeples like ours. I became aware that not only was I unable to practice my faith, but that the 1.3 billion people in the nation I was visiting had no opportunity to receive the body of Christ or to freely practice any religion.

I felt incredibly blessed to return to Mass on the beautiful Feast of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ. The readings and the music celebrated God's gift to the faithful. I felt the presence of Christ in the Mass and especially during the consecration. I received the Holy Eucharist with extra reverence and joy that morning. As the celebration of the Mass was drawing to a close, our celebrant placed the Host in a beautiful monstrance. Our congregation left the Church and proceeded with songs of praise to the garden of the convent next door. An altar has been lovingly constructed by the resident contemplative order of sisters, whose prayers and holy presence are a gift and blessing to our parish. As we returned to church and the blessed host was returned to the tabernacle, I was in

tears when I realized how fortunate I was to live in a country where, not only could I freely practice my religion, but I could actually walk publicly with my congregation in the street worshipping my Lord in the form of the Holy Eucharist.

I have learned a lot from my travel to China. My research there was designed to help me complete my degree and I left the United States thinking of how study aboard would help me grow academically. I learned a lot more than I expected. My knowledge and understanding and appreciation of the meaning of religious freedom was greatly enhanced. My love for the Eucharist and my gratitude for the ability to receive Christ's Body and Blood have grown immensely. I believe that as we reflect last week's feast day and get ready to celebrate Independence Day, we should all add the people of China to our prayers. 1.3 billion people do not have the freedom or opportunity to live publicly with Christ. Perhaps one day they will be able to share in this incredible gift. Let us never take it for granted.

By Frances Yemen Rosenson

CATECHISTS WANTED FOR SEPTEMBER 2011

Are you someone who would like to share your faith with the young people of Saint Thomas Aquinas?

Do you have the following qualities:

- An open heart to share your faith,
- Patience to listen to our young people,
- And ability to laugh and a willingness to give it a try?

If you answers yes to any of the above questions, we have a place for you in our program. The pay isn't great, but the rewards are plentiful.

Please contact Mr. McCutchan at 718-253-4404, extension 31.

2011-2012 REGISTRATION FOR THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM



In order to properly plan for the Religious Education Program needs for the 2011-2012 school year, we are now accepting registrations for

new and returning students. For new registrations, please call Mr. Kevin McCutchan (1-718-253-4404, ext. 31) to set up an appointment.

For returning students, registration forms have been mailed. Please either mail the re-registration forms back or drop them off in the Parish Office. Re-registrations need to be completed by July 30th, 2011. A late fee per family will be charged after that date.

ROSARY SOCIETY ATLANTIC CITY TRIP



The Rosary Society is sponsoring a trip to Bally's Hotel in Atlantic City on **August 4, 2011**. 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 **August 16, 2011** to Showboat. The bus leaves from in front of the

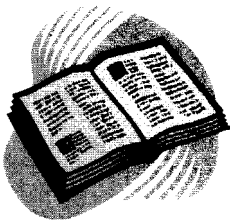
Church at **8:30am**. For more information please call Bill or Dorothy at 1-718-377-4061. All are welcome.

WORLD YOUTH DAY PRAYER REQUESTS

The youth and young adults of Saint Thomas Aquinas Parish who are attending the World Youth Day celebrations in Madrid, Spain this August are continuing their preparations and invite the parish to offer any prayers you would like our group to bring with them as they pray with the Holy Father, Pope Benedict XVI. Prayer request slips will be available throughout the Church for you to fill out. Please place in the basket under the statue of Saint John the Baptist in the front of the Church.

All petitions will be complied and carried by our pilgrims from August 12th through August 22nd. Please keep our pilgrims in our prayers as they will be praying for us.

MASS BOOK 2011



The Mass Book for the months of Sept. Oct. Nov. & Dec. will be opened on Tuesday, August 2, 2011. Arrangements for masses for these months are to be made at the Aquinas Center (2000

Flatbush Avenue) from 10:00am to 11:30am and 1:30pm to 4:30pm or in the evening (5:15pm to 7:45pm), you can come to the Rectory (1550 Hendrickson Street). Please note that we cannot make arrangements over the phone.

When you come to make arrangements for these masses, only 3 weekday and 1 Sunday Mass (Saturday at 5:30pm or 8:00am, 11:30 am or 5:30 pm Sunday.) w All mass stipends are \$15.00 per mass. The 8:00am Mass on Sunday is a "Collective Mass" Intention celebration where more than one intention is permitted.

SIDEWALK REPAIR

Permits have been obtained and this past week work began on the sidewalk repair to Flatlands Avenue between Hendrickson Street and Flatbush Avenue; this has been completed. Work has begun on the sidewalk on Flatbush Avenue; please be aware that access to the Parish Office on Flatbush Avenue will be extremely limited as they make their way around to Flatbush Avenue. Before coming to the Parish Office please call to insure that the Office is accessible.

REPAIR WORK TO THE CHURCH AND CONVENT ENTRANCES

Along with the necessary work on the sidewalks, there is a need to repair the stair entrances of the Church—a contract has been signed and work should begin within the next few weeks. Please be advised that certain entrances may not be available while this work is being done.

Work also needs to be done on the convent entrances, this will be done in conjunction with the work on the Church entrances.

Thank you for your cooperation and understanding as we do this necessary repair work.

The cost of this project will be approximately \$32,000.00.

