



2012



The Saint Thomas Times
Church of Saint Thomas of Aquin
Ogdensburg, New Jersey

Dear Parish Family,

HAPPY SUPER BOWL SUNDAY! Well, I hope you will be rooting for my team today - The New York Giants in the Super Bowl. It should be an exciting game as our local team takes on the San Francisco 49ers. So, whatever team you are rooting for - have fun and enjoy the game! GO GIANTS!

I think of February as the "transition month." The holidays are behind us; the Christmas decorations and the festive lights have been dismantled and stored away for another year; we celebrated the New Year and now we can relax from the hustle and bustle of the holiday season. We are half way through the winter season. The red hearts and the Valentine decorations catch our eyes as we walk into stores leading up to February 14th and green shamrocks and Irish leprechauns remind us that Saint Patrick's Day is just around the corner. We have been blessed this year with a very mild winter, but we have two more months to go. I hope we have at least a couple snowstorms!!!

As I mentioned on the weekend of January 28th & 29th this year we are celebrating the Centennial of the Building and Dedication of our present Church building. It is our plan to celebrate this milestone in the history of our Parish with an Anniversary Liturgy on Sunday October 7th at 12 noon. Later that day, at 5:00 in the evening, we will gather for a Dinner Dance at Perona Farms. So, please mark your calendars and keep the date open for this Parish Celebration. More information on this celebration will be forth coming.

As a Community of Faith we look forward to the Season of Lent, which begins on Ash Wednesday, February 22nd. Lent is a 40 day period of fasting, penance, and reflection on the Passion and Death of Jesus Christ, leading to the celebration of His Resurrection on Easter Sunday, which is considered the most important of all Christian holidays. May our Lenten and Easter seasons this year be a time of special blessing for us and for all those we love.

IN FEBRUARY WE CELEBRATE:



February 2nd - Presentation of the Lord or Candlemas Day. On this day the Catholic Church celebrates the feast of the Presentation of the Lord in the Temple. This feast occurs 40 days after the birth of Jesus and is also known as Candlemas Day.



Groundhog's Day is a holiday celebrated in New York and Pennsylvania on February 2. In weather lore, if a groundhog emerges from its burrow on this day and fails to see its shadow because the weather is cloudy, winter will soon end. If the groundhog sees its shadow, it will return into its burrow, and the winter will continue for six more weeks.



February 3rd - Saint Blaise. St. Blaise has been extremely popular for centuries in both the Eastern and Western Churches. He was a physician and the Bishop of Sebaste, Armenia. He once saved a child who was choking on a fish bone, which led to the blessing of throats on Saint Blaises' feast day.



February 14th - Valentine's Day. The history of Valentine's Day is obscure, and further clouded by various fanciful legends. Some experts say that it originated from St. Valentine, a Roman who was martyred for refusing to give up Christianity. He died on February 14, 269 A.D. Legend also says that St. Valentine left a farewell note for the jailer's daughter, who had become his friend, and signed it "From Your Valentine." Hence, February 14 became the date for exchanging love messages and St. Valentine became the patron saint of lovers. The date is marked by sending poems, cards and simple gifts such as candy and flowers to those special people in our lives.



February 20th - President's Day. Until 1971, both February 12 and February 22 were observed as federal public holidays to honor the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln (February 12) and George Washington (February 22). In 1971 President Richard Nixon proclaimed one single federal public holiday, Presidents' Day, to be observed on the 3rd Monday of February, honoring all past presidents of the United States of America.



February 21st - Shrove Tuesday (Mardi Gras). Falls on the day before Ash Wednesday and marks the end of the carnival season, which once began on Epiphany but is now usually celebrated the last three days before Lent. In France, the day is known as Mardi Gras (Fat Tuesday), and celebrations are held in several American cities, particularly New Orleans. The day is sometimes called Pancake Tuesday by the English because fats, which were prohibited during Lent, had to be used up.



February 22nd - Ash Wednesday. This day is a Catholic holiday marking the start of the Season of Lent. Catholics place ashes symbolizing mortality and repentance on their foreheads. Ashes will be blessed and distributed on **ASH WEDNESDAY** during the 7:30 AM Mass, at a 3:45 PM Scripture Service and during the 7:30 PM Mass only. Ash Wednesday is a day of fasting.



STATIONS OF THE CROSS: On the Friday's of Lent we will pray the Stations of the Cross at 7:00 PM.



LENTEN FISH & CHIPS SUPPER - We will have again this year a Lenten Fish & Chips Supper on Friday, March 9th beginning at 6:00 PM.. Take-out orders will be available. More information on this will be forth-coming in the Sunday bulletin.



SOME IMPORTANT PARISH DATES FOR FEBRUARY:

- Sunday, February 5th - Rosary Society Meeting following the 8:00 AM Liturgy
- Social Action Committee's "Souper" Bowl Sunday Can of and a dollar Soup Collection
- Sunday, February 12th - Coffee And... after the 8:00 & 10:30 Liturgies
- Sunday, February 19th - Holy Name Society Meeting following the 8:00 AM Liturgy
- Monday, February 20th - President's Day - Morning Liturgy will be at 9:00 AM; Parish Office closed for the day



SAINT PATRICK'S DAY PARTY: Reserve a table with your fellow leprechauns and enjoy an Irish evening with corned beef and turkey sandwiches, cole slaw, chips, wine, beer, soda, Irish soda bread, Mike MacMullin's Famous Irish Coffee and Irish music. **Date:** Saturday, March 17th, 2012 after the 5 PM Liturgy in the Church Hall. A sign-up sheet will be available soon on the table at the entrance of the church. *Limited space, so please sign-up early, if you plan to attend.*



INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY: Whenever weather conditions on the weekday (Monday - Friday) are such that the Ogdensburg Public School is closed or has a delayed opening for the day, the 7:30 AM Liturgy is cancelled. On inclement weather days please listen to radio station WSUS (102.3 FM) for Saint Thomas Ogdensburg cancellations. If you have a computer you can log onto the radio station's website www.wsus1023.com and click on the Snow Closing and Delays Link or you can log on to our parish web site www.stthomasofaquin.org and click on the Cancellations Link.



THE GATHERING OF GOD'S CHILDREN - RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM:

- Tuesday Evenings from 6:30-7:30 pm for Grades 5 thru 8
- Wednesday Afternoons from 3:00-4:00 pm for Grades 1 thru 4 at the Ogdensburg School.

For more information, please call Sister Margaret Wilhelm (973.383.2620)

UPCOMING FAITH FORMATION EVENTS: Sacrament of First Eucharist - Saturday, May 5th, 2012 at 11:00 AM



BE SEALED WITH THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT - CONFIRMATION PROGRAM

The 9th Grade group meets on the 1st and 3rd Mondays of the month with Deacon Dom and Mrs. Zampella; the 10th grade group meets on the 2nd and 4th Mondays of the month with Deacon Ed. Sessions are held in the Church Hall. Bishop Serratelli will celebrate the Sacrament of Confirmation on **Saturday, April 14th, 2012 at Our Lady Queen of Peace in Branchville at 12 Noon.** For more information about our Confirmation program, please call Deacon Ed Reading at 973.729.6511.



PARISH MEETINGS: The next **Finance Council** meeting will be on Wednesday evening, April 11th at 7:00 PM. The next **Parish Advisory Board** meeting will be on Wednesday evening, April 18th at 7:00PM. All meetings are held at the Rectory. The **Rosary Society** meets on the first Sunday of each month after the 8:00 AM Liturgy in the Church Hall. The **Holy Name Society** meets on the third Sunday of each month after the 8:00 AM Liturgy in the Church Hall.



CHRISTMAS GRATITUDE: In these unsettling economic times, I am so proud of the generosity of Christmas spirit demonstrated by Saint Thomas of Aquin parish family. The impact of your kindness from the Giving Tree is admirable and overwhelming. Even when times are tough, you prove to me that you are Godly, gracious and generous. Just for your information, the final total of our Christmas collection this year is: **\$14,985.** Again I sincerely *thank you* for your generosity to our parish during the Christmas Season.

Have a great month of February!

In His Love,

F.R. John