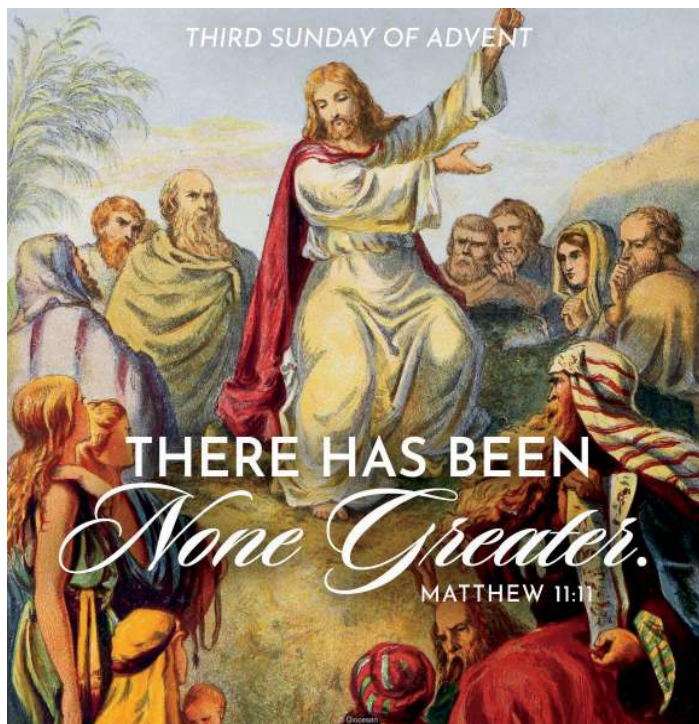


The third Sunday of Advent is traditionally called *Gaudete Sunday*. *Gaudete* is the Latin word meaning "rejoice." This Sunday is so named because "Rejoice" is the first word in the entrance antiphon for today's Mass taken from Philippians 4:4,5: "Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice! The Lord is near." Some people mark this Sunday on their Advent wreath with a pink candle instead of a purple candle. This Sunday is a joyful reminder that our salvation is near.



is the Messiah for whom he has been waiting. Jesus responds by pointing to the miracles that he has worked and invites John and the other hearers to make their own determination. In his next breath, however, Jesus praises John for his role in preparing the way for Jesus. Then Jesus says that all of those who work for the Kingdom of God will be as great as John and even greater.

This week's Gospel Reading continues our Advent reflection on the person and message of John the Baptist. Last week we heard John speak about his relationship to the coming Messiah, Jesus. This week, we hear Jesus' message to John the Baptist, now in prison, about the signs of the kingdom found in Jesus' ministry and Jesus' assessment of John's role in the Kingdom of God.

The Gospel of Matthew tells the story of John's arrest in Chapter 14:3-12. In today's Gospel, John sends word to Jesus from prison, asking if Jesus

performed recalls the salvation described by the prophet Isaiah. This passage is a reminder that the beginning of salvation is already mysteriously present to us, but also yet to be fulfilled. Salvation is already in our midst as manifest in the miraculous deeds of Jesus and in the Church. But salvation is also to be fulfilled in the coming reign of God. Even as we observe our world today, we can find glimpses of God's work among us. Even more, we help to prepare the way for God's kingdom by our words and our deeds. This message is indeed a cause for rejoicing.



Saint Thomas the Apostle Catholic Parish Robstown, Texas and Saint Patrick Mission, San Patricio, Texas

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Website: www.christon624.com • Email: stthomastheapostle@christon624.com

Parish Office Hours: Mon./Wed./Fri. 8:00-11:00 a.m.; Tues./Thurs. 8:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m.



Pastor: Rev. Philip J. Panackal
Secretary: Ann Clarke
Housekeeper: Yolanda Tobòn
Catholic Daughters of America Court #2290

Deacon: Bill Cleavelin (361-208-2146)
Bookkeeper/DRE: Michele Hoelscher (361-244-2138)
EDGE: Pauline Pechacek
LIFETEEN: Rachel Unterbrink
Knights of Columbus Council #9318

Sacristan: Jerry Knesek
Music Director: Vic Benys
Plant Manager: Gary Clarke

Saturday Vigil Mass @ St. Patrick: 4:00 PM
Saturday Vigil Mass @ St. Thomas: 5:30 PM
Holy Day Vigil @ St. Thomas: 6:30 PM
Weekday Masses @ St. Thomas: 12:00 Noon on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, & Friday
CONFESSIONS @ St. Thomas: 30 Minutes before Masses or by Appointment

Sunday Masses @ St. Thomas: 8:30 AM & 11 AM
Holy Day Mass @ St. Thomas: 12:00 PM Noon

Divine Mercy: Fri. 11:45 AM
Holy Rosary: Thurs. 11:40 AM

CONFESSIONS @ St. Patrick Mission: 3:30 PM

"The coming of the Lord is at hand."

James 5:8

Masses and Intentions for the Week

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2025

4:00 PM: **Mass @ St. Patrick Mission**
Myrtle McCoy (Special Intention) by the McCoy Family
 5:30 PM: **Mass @ St. Thomas the Apostle**
†Harlew Conally by Betty Conally

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2025 - Masses @ St. Thomas the Apostle **THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

8:30 AM: *Parishioners*
 11:00 AM: **Collective Mass**
†Allen Migura by Owen & Kim Gallagher
†Aida Deases by Louis Deases
†Herb Welch by Owen & Kim Gallagher
†Herlinda Arredondo (AOD) by Tony Arredondo



MONDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2025

12:00 PM: *No Mass*

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2025 - Mass @ St. Thomas the Apostle

12:00 PM: *†Nina Riebschleager by Betty Conally*

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2025 - Mass @ St. Thomas the Apostle

12:00 PM: *†Aida Deases by Rosario Gonzalez*

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2025 - @ St. Thomas the Apostle

12:00 PM: *†Patrick Knesek by Owen & Kim Gallagher*

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2025 - @ St. Thomas the Apostle

6:00 PM: *Cole Landreth (Birthday) by Pat Landreth*

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 20, 2025

4:00 PM: **Mass @ St. Patrick Mission**
†David Tajchman, Sr. by Leona Williams
 5:30 PM: **Mass @ St. Thomas the Apostle**
†Harley and †Nina Riebschleager by Betty Conally

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2025 - Masses @ St. Thomas the Apostle **FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

8:30 AM: *Parishioners*
 11:00 AM: **Collective Mass**
All those Remembered on the Memory Tree by CDA Court 2290
†Pedro "Pete" Bosquez by Rosario Gonzalez & Family
†Tomas B. Valdez (AOB) by Rosario Gonzalez & Family
For Rain by Karen Vaughan

Please Pray for ...

**All the homebound, sick and suffering of our parish,
 especially all those who have asked us to pray for them.**



Cathy Sikes, Larry Bryant, Mary Elva Estrada, Cambri Calaway,
 Stephanie Landreth, Josie Blevins, Patrick Landreth, Fred Nemec,
 Mari Beth, Mable Ginn, Alva Rosas, Blaine Ainsworth, Noe Ramos,
 Gayla Schaefer, Ruthie Weathersby, Debra Wood, Valerie Rich,
 Yolanda Peña, Tommy Pritchard, Kathryn White, Wallace Prukop,
 Juan Rodriguez, Solomon Abdo II, Frank Cain, Estefana Munoz,
 Charlie & Jean Chapman, Stasha Landreth, Eileen Champine,
 Todd Crawford, Rose Pfeiler, Tyler Skidmore, Jim Landreth, Jr.,
 Graciela Garza, Elaine Cain, Arnold Dill, Rita Conroy, Joe Garza,
 Simon Bucknall, Arnold Guerra, Joanna Guerra, Ramiro Trevino,
 Dalia Gutierrez, Tom Crawford, Evelyn Castillo, Frances Hicks,
 T. J. Williams, Nicole Ginn, Susan Chavarry, Jeanette Respondek,
 Jaime Garza, Miles Elliott Martinez, Pat Landreth, Susie Tajchman,
 Cindy West, Elmyra Casner, Harold Prejean, Annette Freeman,
 Fred Guerra, Ravyn Brown, Wilma Grupe, John Bowman and
 Traci Klepac.

Please call/email the parish office to include a person on the 2025 PRAYER LIST.

LECTORS for DECEMBER 20-21, 2025

Saturday, 5:30 PM: Agnes Flores
 Sunday, 8:30 AM: Andres Trevino
 Sunday, 11:00 AM: Paul Pilarczyk



EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF HOLY COMMUNION - DECEMBER 20-21, '25

Saturday, 5:30 PM: Tony Arredondo, Louis Deases
 Sunday, 8:30 AM: Deacon Bill, Matt Kimmel, Rosa Trevino
 Sunday, 11:00 AM: Tony Nelson, Barbara Rychetsky, Karen Vaughan

ALTAR SERVERS for DECEMBER 20-21, 2025

Saturday, 5:30 PM: Able Flurry, Abraum Flurry
 Sunday, 8:30 AM: Casey Gwynn, Gabriel Kimmel, Cyprian Kimmel
 Sunday, 11:00 AM: Carlos Camacho, Sarita Nelson, Charleigh Nelson

USHERS for DECEMBER 20-21, 2025

Saturday, 5:30 PM: D. Kurtz, W. Riebschleager, E. Flurry, J. Freeman
 Sunday, 8:30 AM: B. Gwynn, M. Rektorik, M. Reilly, R. Mendiola
 Sunday, 11:00 AM: D. Bluntzer, M. Ybarra, D. Gonzalez, R. Garcia

"MORE THAN A PROPHET"

John the Baptist was a pivotal figure in the history of Israel. It had been five hundred long years since Malachi had issued his momentous prophecy concerning "the day of the Lord" (3:23). And when John came on the scene, many people recognized him as a prophet, a voice of hope—and perhaps even the fulfillment of that hope! They were so excited that they flocked to the desert to hear him and receive his baptism of repentance.

In today's Gospel, Jesus makes it clear that John is even "more than a prophet (Matthew 11:9). He is the final messenger, "Elijah," the one who would return and prepare the way of the Lord (Malachi 3:1).

John's appearance signaled a turning of the ages, the dawn of the long-awaited Messiah. We, too, are in our own turning of the ages as we await the coming of Jesus, our Messiah. So how can we make our hearts ready for him to come, both at Christmas and at the end of time?

One way, of course, is to confess our sins. But just as John was more than a prophet, God wants to do more for us than cleanse us of sin. He wants to go deeper into our hearts and heal our inner wounds and any attitudes that might be keeping us from fully welcoming Jesus.

Whatever is burdening you, now is the time to cry out to the Lord for healing! He wants you to live in freedom, not under a cloud of grief or resentment or complacency. God's grace is at hand for you today! "Lord, search my heart and set me free!"

Courtesy of Word Among Us

from the Pastor's desk

**BISHOP ELECT THE MOST REV.
BISHOP MARIO ALBERTO AVILES, C.O.
and Eucharistic Prayer during Sede Vacante**

With great joy and deep gratitude to God, the Most Rev. Wm. Michael Mulvey writes to share that the Holy Father, Pope Leo XIV, has appointed the Ninth Bishop of the Diocese of Corpus Christi, the **Most Reverend Bishop Mario Alberto Aviles, C.O.**

On Monday, December 1, 2025 the day of the announcement of the ninth bishop of Corpus Christi, the Diocese of Corpus Christi becomes *Sede Vacante* (Episcopal Vacancy). Bishop Michael Mulvey has been named Apostolic Administrator until such time as the new bishop is installed. No bishop's name is to be mentioned during the Eucharistic Prayer during the time of *Sede Vacante*. When the new bishop is installed, his name alone is to be named in the Eucharistic Prayer.

(from the Pastor's desk)

Diocese of Corpus Christi

ARK ANGEL TREE

Please support the ARK by visiting the ARK Angel Tree in the foyer of the church and help us "undecorate" it by taking an ornament (handmade by our Religious Ed kiddos) with items or toys needed for the children at the ARK. Kindly bring back unwrapped gifts with the tag by December 21. If you have any questions, contact Pauline Pechacek at 281-748-7675.

Pauline Pechacek

CDA CHRISTMAS ORNAMENT SALE

The St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic Daughters will again be selling Christmas ornaments for the Memory Tree. After each weekend Mass, you can purchase an ornament for \$6.00 "in memory of" or "in honor of" a special person you may want to remember or honor at Christmas time. The Memory Tree will be put on the altar for a special Holy Mass at Christmas time. With your support of this fundraiser, the CDAs are able to continue their ministries and charitable works in the parish and community.

Jean Chapman, CDA Ornament Chairperson

Knights of Columbus Council #9318 9th Annual Father Matthew Lyng

**SUPER BOWL EXTRAVAGANZA
FOOTBALL NUMBERS**

Super Bowl Sunday—February 8, 2026

Winning Numbers Pay \$1250.00 Per Quarter (NO OVERTIME)

\$100.00 Donation (need not be present to win)

Tickets are available after each weekend Mass. Your support in this KC fundraising event is most appreciated.

Tony Arredondo, KC Grand Knight

LITURGY OF THE DAY

Reflection on the Gospel Reading (Matthew 11:2-11).

FAMILY CONNECTION: It is easy to look at our world and become discouraged by the apparent absence of God and signs of God's salvation. Advent, however, is a season of hope, in which we acknowledge that salvation is both mysteriously present, even in our world, and yet to be fulfilled.

Together as a family, look through the newspaper for signs of hope that God is at work in our world. Pray that the world will know God's salvation by praying together the Lord's Prayer.

Courtesy of Loyola Press

From the Pastor's desk

CHRISTMAS PROGRAM BY CGS STUDENTS

The Elementary children (CGS kiddos) will be presenting a Christmas Program at 5:15 p.m. on **December 24th** (prior to 5:30 Christmas Eve Vigil Mass) bringing to life the Infancy Narratives in the Bible which they learn through the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd Program. We invite all parishioners to come and support our kiddos and enjoy the celebration of Christmas through the eyes of a child.

Michele Hoelscher, DRE

Holy Mass Readings for the Third Sunday of Advent

**Isaiah 35:1-6, 10; Psalm 146:6-7, 8-9, 9-10;
James 5:7-10; Matthew 11:2-11.**

Parish Website: www.christon624.com

OFFERINGS	<u>ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE</u>	
	12/6-7/2025 Regular Collection:	\$9,365.00
	12/6-7/2025 Online Giving:	\$1,674.00
	TOTAL	\$11,039.00
	<u>ST. PATRICK MISSION</u>	
	12/6/2025 Regular Collection:	\$853.00
	Counters: K. Gallagher and C. Pilarczyk	



*Go to church website
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click on icon
to give online*

SPECIAL OFFERING — DECEMBER 14, 2025

Retirement Fund for Religious

Diocese of Corpus Christi

"MY OFFERING" ENVELOPE BOX

The 2026 "My Offering" Envelope Boxes have arrived. Kindly pick up your box as soon as you can. If you do not see a box for your family and would like offering envelopes, please call or email the parish office that you would like envelopes. Thank you for your support of St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic Church.

Parish Office Staff



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