

Finally, on this the Fourth Sunday of Advent, our Gospel Reading permits us to begin our contemplation of the mystery of the Incarnation we celebrate at Christmas: "Now this is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about" (Matthew 1:18).

The Gospel of Matthew tells the story of the birth of Jesus from Joseph's perspective. Today's Gospel passage is the second movement in this story. In the preceding verses of the first chapter of Matthew's Gospel, the Evangelist has listed the genealogy of Jesus, tracing his lineage through King David to Abraham. In the chapter to follow, Matthew tells of the visit from the Magi, the Holy Family's flight into Egypt, and Herod's massacre of the infants in Bethlehem. (The other stories which we associate with Christmas, the Annunciation, the Visitation, the angel and the shepherds, are found in the Gospel of Luke).

We must not gloss over too quickly the difficult circumstances described in today's Gospel. The way that Joseph and Mary face these circumstances tells us much about these holy people and their faith in God. Joseph and Mary are betrothed to be married. This is sometimes described as an engagement period, but it is more than that.



Betrothal in first century Jewish culture was in fact the first part of the marriage contract. A breach of this contract was considered adultery. Mary is found to be with child. If adultery is proven, the punishment might be death. Joseph has rights under Mosaic Law, but chooses to act discreetly in his plans to break the marriage contract, so as to protect Mary. Then God intervenes.

The message of the angel of the Lord given to Joseph in his dream tells us much about the child

that Mary bears and his role in God's plan. He is conceived by the Holy Spirit. His name will be Jesus, which in Hebrew means "Yahweh saves." He will be the fulfillment of the prophecy heard in today's first reading from Isaiah: "... The virgin shall be with child ... and shall name him Emmanuel [God with us]."

Joseph does as the angel of the Lord directs. He takes Mary to be his wife and accepts the child in her womb as his own. Joseph and Mary are both cooperative with God's plan. They are both models for us of what it means to be faithful servants of God.



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

DIOCESE OF CORPUS CHRISTI, TEXAS • 16602 FM 624 • Robstown, Texas 78380

Phone: 361-387-1312 or 361-387-7842 • Fax: 361-387-9311

Website: [www.christon624.com](http://www.christon624.com) • Email: [stthomastheapostle@christon624.com](mailto: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

**Masses and Intentions for the Week****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**  
*For Rain by Karen Vaughan*  
*All those Remembered on the CDA Memory Tree*  
*†Pedro "Pete" Bosquez by Rosario Gonzalez*  
*†Tomasa B. Valdez (AOB) by Rosario Gonzalez & Family*

**MONDAY, DECEMBER 22, 2025**

12:00 PM: *No Mass*

**TUESDAY, DECEMBER 23, 2025 - Mass @ St. Thomas the Apostle**

12:00 PM: *†David Tajchman, Jr. by +David & Susie Tajchman*

**WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 24, 2025 - Mass @ St. Thomas the Apostle****THE VIGIL OF THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD**

5:30 PM: *†Augustine Carpenter by Danny & Roberta Kurtz*

**THURSDAY, DECEMBER 25, 2025 - @ St. Thomas the Apostle****THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD**

8:30 AM: **Mass @ St. Patrick Mission**  
*Myrtle McCoy by the McCoy Family*  
 10:00 AM: **Mass @ St. Thomas the Apostle**  
*†Deceased Members of the Landreth/Diegal Families*

**FRIDAY, DECEMBER 26, 2025 - @ St. Thomas the Apostle**

12:00 PM: *No Mass*

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 27, 2025**

4:00 PM: **Mass @ St. Patrick Mission**  
*†Gertrude Bluntzer (AOD) by Her Children*  
 5:30 PM: **Mass @ St. Thomas the Apostle**  
*†David and Susie Tajchman (In Memory of Wedding Anniversary)*

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 28, 2025 - Masses @ St. Thomas the Apostle****THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY AND JOSEPH**

8:30 AM: *Parishioners*  
 11:00 AM: **Collective Mass**  
*†Rolando Chapa by the Chapa Family*  
*†Caitlynn Prukop (AOB) by Karen Vaughan*  
*†Tomasa B. Valdez (AOD) 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, Wilma Grupe, Susie Tajchman, Cindy West, Elmyra Casner, Harold Prejean, Annette Freeman, Fred Guerra, Ravyn Brown, John Bowman, Traci Klepac, Sue Malek, and Bill Havelka.

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

**LECTORS for DECEMBER 27-28, 2025**

Saturday, 5:30 PM: Michele Hoelscher  
 Sunday, 8:30 AM: Terri Kimmel  
 Sunday, 11:00 AM: Frank Wilson

**EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF HOLY COMMUNION - DECEMBER 27-28, '25**

Saturday, 5:30 PM: Tony Arredondo  
 Sunday, 8:30 AM: Deacon Bill, Aaron Hoelscher, Fred Ramos  
 Sunday, 11:00 AM: Jesse Garcia, Bill Kelly, Kera Steward

**ALTAR SERVERS for DECEMBER 27-28, 2025**

Saturday, 5:30 PM: Grace Landry, Matthew Cortino, Michael Cortino  
 Sunday, 8:30 AM: Miles Shimek, Joseph Hess, Gabriel & Cyprian Kimmel  
 Sunday, 11:00 AM: Morgan Boatright, Liam Sanchez, Eliana Garza

**USHERS for DECEMBER 27-28, 2025**

Saturday, 5:30 PM: D. Kurtz, W. Riebschleager, E. Flurry, J. Freeman  
 Sunday, 8:30 AM: B. Gwynn, M. Rektorik, M. Reilly, T. Schumacher  
 Sunday, 11:00 AM: B. Boatright, S. Woolf, E. Sanchez, R. Garcia

**"JOSEPH"**

*"He was a righteous man, yet unwilling to expose her to shame." Matthew 1:19*

What an interesting thing to say about Joseph: he was "righteous" yet "unwilling to expose" Mary "to shame". It seemed as if there were two different impulses to Joseph as he struggled to decide how to respond to Mary's pregnancy.

Today's Gospel tells us that Joseph was a righteous man and a devout observer of the Mosaic Law. He was just in his intention to break his union with Mary—she seemed to have violated their betrothal, after all. But still, he didn't want Mary to become an object of ridicule and shame. So he was merciful in his desire to find a quiet solution that avoided public scandal.

When the angel appeared to him in a dream, he reassured Joseph that he didn't need to divorce Mary. The child she carried was part of God's plan to redeem the world. So Joseph let the Lord redirect his ideas and strategies.

This is a lesson for us. God is always calling us into a deeper relationship with him. He might ask us to set aside our plans or take a step in a direction we don't understand. But he leads the way for us. Even though Joseph didn't understand, he was willing to obey. It made all the difference for Joseph and it can do the same for you!

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 11:18-24).

**FAMILY CONNECTION:** Joseph and Mary are our models for family life and for service of God. Even when the circumstances seemed unclear, Joseph trusted God. Healthy family life is built upon trust, trust in God and trust of one another.

Spend some time talking as a family about the importance of trust in your family life, including the ways in which the children trust the adults in the family as well as the ways in which the adults trust the children. Then read today's Gospel. Talk about Joseph's trust of God and reflect together on how your family trusts in God. Pray together that your family life will be built on trust, as was the family life of Joseph and Mary.

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 Fourth Sunday of Advent**

**Isaiah 7:10-14; Psalm 24:1-2, 3-4, 5-6;  
Romans 1:1-7; Matthew 1:18-24.**

**ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE**

12/8/2025 Holy Day Collection: \$585.00  
12/13-14/2025 Regular Collection: \$10,301.33  
12/13-14/2025 Online Giving: \$2,041.00  
**TOTAL \$12,342.33**

12/13-14/2025 Second Collection: \$990.00

**ST. PATRICK MISSION**

12/13/2025 Regular Collection: \$1,020.32

Counters: K. Gallagher and C. Pilarczyk

**OFFERINGS**



Go to church website  
[www.christon624.com](http://www.christon624.com)  
click on icon  
to give online

**"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



Diocesan is proud to be printing

# St. Thomas the Apostle's Sunday Bulletin

**You are invited to help support our Parish!**  
***For opportunities to advertise,***  
***please call 800-994-9817***

## SAWYER-GEORGE FUNERAL HOME

"Our Family Serving Your Family"

(361) 242-3205

12497 Leopard St.



## Katrina Albert REALTOR®

(361) 946-9552 Cell  
(361) 241-5363 Office  
anirtakk@outlook.com  
ucbluntzerrealestate.com  
4250 Five Points Rd #8  
Corpus Christi, TX 78410



## catholicmatch® Texas

[CatholicMatch.com/goTX](http://CatholicMatch.com/goTX)



## Samuel C. Hartman, M.D.

Family Medicine

361-387-3616

## THIRD COAST SEPTIC

RELIABLE. LOCAL. FAMILY-OWNED.

SEPTIC DESIGN • INSTALLATION  
PUMPING • SERVICE • REPAIR  
Residential & Commercial  
Aerobic Treatment & Conventional

TCEQ LICENSED & INSURED  
Fast, Honest, & Professional  
CALL TODAY!

**(361) 774-6614**

[ThirdCoastSeptic.com](http://ThirdCoastSeptic.com)



**Get this bulletin emailed to  
you every week.**

Simply go to

[www.DM.CHURCH/5555](http://www.DM.CHURCH/5555) ...or scan →



DISCOVERMASS

**ADVERTISE HERE**

Promote your Business  
AND support your Parish.

**Give us a call!**  
**800-994-9817**

## FRANCO'S GARAGE Automotive Repair & Service

- Air Condition
- Transmissions
- Brakes
- Tune-ups
- Alignments

**387-5011**

821 E. Main Robstown

## MERRILL A BANK OF AMERICA COMPANY

Andrew Harlan  
Team Financial Advisor  
361-887-4354



**TEXAS FARM BUREAU  
INSURANCE®**  
AUTO / HOME / LIFE

**Brent Klostermann, Agent**  
361.815.0608

**EWTN**

Global Catholic Radio

**TUNE IN**

[EWTN.COM/RADIO](http://EWTN.COM/RADIO)

*The Businesses listed above make this bulletin possible.*  
**Please support them when you can.**

**Sign up to get our bulletin in your email each week.**

**Go to [DiscoverMass.com/subscribe](http://DiscoverMass.com/subscribe)**