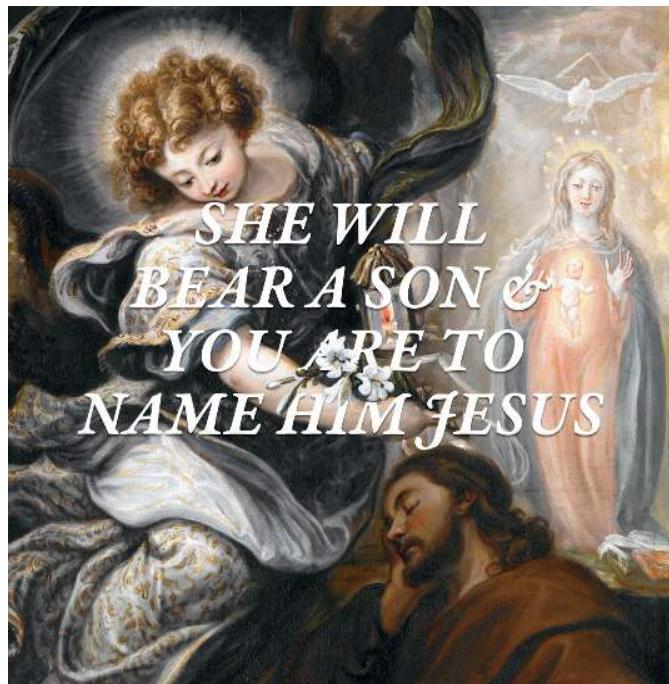


Finally, on this the Fourth Sunday of Advent, our Gospel Reading permits us to begin our contemplation of the mystery of the Incarnation we celebrate at Christmas: "Now this is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about" (Matthew 1:18).

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



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Secretary: Ann Clarke
Housekeeper: Yolanda Tobón
Catholic Daughters of America Court #2290

Deacon: Bill Cleavelin (361-208-2146)
Bookkeeper/DRE: Michele Hoelscher (361-244-2138)
EDGE: Pauline Pechacek
LIFETIME: 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
CONFESIONS @ 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

CONFESIONS @ 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

†Tomas 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/Diegala 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 (AOB) 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

†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, 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

**HAVE A MERRY CHRISTMAS
AND BLESSED NEW YEAR!**

**"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.

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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



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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.

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