GLORY TO JESUS CHRIST!



GLORY FOREVER!



ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH

19 W. Bruce Ave. Gilbert, AZ 85233
Mailing Address: *P.O. Box 667 • Gilbert, AZ 85299-0667*
Office Hours 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM • Wednesday, Thursday & Friday
Please give a courtesy call or send an email before coming to the parish to make sure someone is in the office.
Office: (480) 497-6726 • Fax: (480) 907-7819 • **Pastor's Email: saint.thomas.pastor@gmail.com**
If you have a sacramental emergency, dial the office phone and press 2.
PARISH WEBSITE: www.stabcc.org
For parish bulletin and announcements sent by email, contact Kathy Richard: krichard2003@yahoo.com
Served by:
Father Michael Bezruchka, Pastor • Deacon Michael Sullivan
Parish Advisory Board:
Danny Forbes • Emma Gilsdorf • Cal Karnya
Cathy McCormick • Charlie Rawlins • Jeff Sims • Liz Zackowski
Sunday Divine Liturgy:
Vigil Vesper Liturgy (Saturday) at 5:00 PM
Sunday Divine Liturgy at 10:00 AM • Divine Praises at 9:45 AM
Matins/Morning Prayer:
Monday, Wednesday, and Friday 7:30-8:30am unless noted otherwise in bulletin.
Holy Mystery of Penance:
Confessions are heard starting one hour before the scheduled Divine Liturgy
is to begin for a total of 30 minutes. Confessions also available by appointment.
Chaldean Catholic Holy Liturgy: Sunday at 6:00 PM

Welcome to St. Thomas the Apostle!

Our parish community welcomes all those visiting with us today. We thank you for joining our community in praising the Lord as we remember His great love and mercy for us. We hope that you will join us again soon and bring a friend. If, per chance, you are looking for a spiritual home based on the Sacred Scriptures, the teaching of the Apostles, the ancient Church Traditions in the context of a liturgical life and fellowship, please consider our parish! Speak with Father Michael or Deacon Michael if you would like more information.

Parish Schedule

Friday **December 1**
Matins 7:30 a.m.
Byzantine Basics class in hall 6:30-8:00 p.m.

Saturday **December 2**
Church cleaning derby 9:00 a.m.
Vigil Vespers Divine Liturgy 5:00 p.m.
Intention: +Peter Broznak by the Kowalczyk family

26th Sunday after Pentecost
Sunday **December 3** **Tone 1**
Holy Prophet Zephaniah.
Third Hour 9:45 a.m.
Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.
Ephesians 5:9-19; Luke 18:18-27.
Intention: Parishioners of St. Thomas

Tuesday **December 5**
Vigil Vespers Divine Liturgy 7:00 p.m.
Intention: +Peter Broznak by the Kowalczyk family

Holy Father Nicholas, Archbishop of Myra in Lycia
Wednesday **December 6**
Solemn Holyday, Mitigation of fasting
Festal Matins 9:00 a.m.

Thursday **December 7**
Matins 7:30 a.m.

Friday **December 8**
Matins 7:30 a.m.
Maternity of Holy Anna
Vigil Vespers Divine Liturgy 7:00 p.m.
Solemn Holyday
Galatians 4:22-31; Luke 8:16-21.
Intention: Dominic Bronson by Ted and Christy Bronson

Saturday **December 9**
Church decorating derby 9:00 a.m.
Vigil Vespers Divine Liturgy 5:00 p.m.
Intention: +Andria Kowalczyk by the Bullock family



27th Sunday after Pentecost
Sunday **December 10** **Tone 2**
Martyrs Menas, Hermogenes and Eugraphus.
Third Hour 9:45 a.m.
Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.
Ephesians 6:10-17; Luke 17:12-19.
Intention: Parishioners of St. Thomas
After Divine Liturgy, St. Nicholas Dinner.

Tuesday **December 12**
Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe
Divine Liturgy 5:00 p.m.
(5pm Divine Liturgy start time is correct)
Hebrews 9:1-7; Luke 1:39-56.
Intention: Manon family by the Bronson family
Our Lady of Guadalupe party in hall afterwards.

Wednesday **December 13**
Matins 7:30 a.m.

Thursday **December 14**
Matins 7:30 a.m.

Friday **December 15**
Matins 7:30 a.m.
Byzantine Basics class in hall 6:30-8:00 p.m.

Saturday **December 16**
ECF: younger children 3:30-4:30 pm.
Vigil Vespers Divine Liturgy 5:00 p.m.
Intention: Michael & Barbara Little by Doreene Stacy
After Divine Liturgy, Holy Supper.

Sunday of the Forefathers
Sunday **December 17** **Tone 3**
Third Hour 9:45 a.m.
Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.
Colossians 3:4-11; Luke 14:16-24.
Intention: Parishioners of St. Thomas
ECF: older children 12:00 noon

Wednesday **December 20**
Matins 7:30 a.m.

Thursday **December 21**
Matins 7:30 a.m.

Friday **December 22**
Matins 7:30 a.m.
Royal Hours 7:00 p.m.

Parish Schedule

Saturday December 23
Vigil Vespers Divine Liturgy 5:00 p.m.
Intention: Special intention for Diane Hvasta by Doreene Stacy

Sunday before Christmas, of the Holy Fathers
Sunday December 24 Tone 4
Third Hour 9:45 a.m.
Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.
Hebrews 11:9-10, 17-23, 32-40; Matthew 1:1-25.
Intention: Parishioners of St. Thomas
Great Vespers 5:00 p.m.
Vigil of Christmas

Christmas, the Birth of our Lord, God and Savior Jesus Christ
Monday December 25
Holyday of obligation
Divine Liturgy of St. Basil 10:00 a.m.
Galatians 4:4-7; Matthew 2:1-12.
Intention: Parishioners of St. Thomas

Synaxis of the Theotokos
Tuesday December 26
Solemn Holyday
Divine Liturgy 9:00 a.m.
Hebrews 2:11-18; Matthew 2:13-23.
Intention: +Eleanor Shields by Fr. Doug and Nancy Lorig

Holy Apostle, First Martyr and Arch-Deacon Stephen
Wednesday December 27
Matins 7:30 a.m.
Divine Liturgy 7:00 p.m.
Acts 6:8 - 7:5 & 47-60; Matthew 21:33-42.
Intention: +Luke Garrison by Honora Bullock

Thursday December 28
Matins 7:30 a.m.

Friday December 29
Matins 7:30 a.m.

Saturday December 30
Vigil Vespers Divine Liturgy 5:00 p.m.
Intention: Cathy McCormick by Doreene Stacy



Sunday after Christmas
The Holy and Just Joseph, Husband of Mary; David, Prophet and King; and the Holy Apostle James, Brother of the Lord
Sunday December 31 Tone 5
Third Hour 9:45 a.m.
Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.
Galatians 1:11-19; Matthew 2:13-23.
Intention: Parishioners of St. Thomas
Great Vespers 7:00 p.m.
After Vespers, New Year's Party

Circumcision of Our Lord, God and Savior Jesus Christ
Monday January 1, 2018
Holy Father Basil the Great, Archbishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia
Third Hour 9:45 a.m.
Divine Liturgy 10:00 a.m.
Colossians 2:8-12 & Hebrews 7:26 - 8:2; Luke 2:20-21, 40-52 & Luke 6:17-23.
Intention: Parishioners of St. Thomas

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ASKING FOR HELP: Our parish could use your assistance with decorating on December 9. We also need help preparing for the Holy Supper on December 16. Please speak to Carol Paolo to let us know which date or dates you'd be able to help us. She can also be reached at cpaolo21@gmail.com. Thank you.

THE EUCHARISTIC PROCESSION on Sat. Nov 4, 9-11:30am was a blessed success. We thank all those who participated.

OKTOBERFEST RESULTS! Our celebration brought in $3,804.15 ($4,582.00 raised minus $777.85 of expenses) to support the parish. Congratulations to us!!! Thank you to all who helped make it a success.

REMINDER: VOCATION ICON PRAYER PROGRAM. A vocation icon and prayer continue to circulate among the families of the parish. Special prayers are prescribed for each day of the week. If you haven't already, please sign up to bring the icon into your home and pray with it for a week.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Continued from bulletin

PHILIP'S FAST: It is the tradition of our Byzantine Catholic Church to fast in preparation for Christmas beginning November 15. Although the fast is optional, the season is penitential in our Ruthenian Metropolia in America. The traditional fast is to abstain from meat and dairy all days of the fast through Christmas Eve's Holy Supper, and to abstain from wine and oil on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. The minimum fasting required by the Church for most of the year is abstinence from meat on Fridays since Jesus died on the Cross on Good Friday. Eating no meat on Wednesday is also encouraged throughout most of the year as the betrayal of Judas began two days before Good Friday. We are encouraged to prepare for Christmas by doing MORE than the minimum our Ruthenian Church requires. Fasting helps us empty ourselves of sin to make room for God in our hearts. For this reason, our fast must be accompanied by prayer. Prayer and fasting will bear fruit in great spiritual joy on the glorious feast of the birth of our Savior. So let's get ready!

WHAT TO EAT ON DECEMBER 22 & JANUARY 5? By tradition, we do not eat meat or dairy (strict abstinence) on Christmas Eve or Theophany Eve. Though this is "optional," we become more authentic Christians when we do some optional things that benefit our spiritual life. Since Christmas Eve lands on a Sunday this year, it is naturally more festive. Therefore, it is recommended we observe strict abstinence on December 22 instead of December 24.

AFTER THE FAST COMES THE FEAST!! After fasting faithfully, the Church traditionally calls us to feast for a time. December 25 to January 4 is a time of such celebration and feasting. Therefore, do not eat like a glutton but feel free to eat well, including meat on all of those days including Friday.

BYZANTINE BASICS: Adult catechesis classes continue with Fr. Michael. Classes will usually be every other Friday from 6:30-7:30pm. Our next scheduled classes are December 1, December 15, 2017. For 2018: January 12, January 26, February 9, March 1, March 12, April 13, May 4, May 18, and June 1. Please mark your calendars. More Christ our Pascha catechisms are available for a $30.00 donation.

SPECIAL COLLECTION FOR RETIRED RELIGIOUS. "Thanks to support from the Retirement Fund for Religious, we are now in a much better position to care for our elders," writes a religious sister. Your donation helps her religious community and hundreds of others provide for aging members and plan for long-term needs such as medications, nursing care, and more for thousands of sisters, brothers, and religious order priests. This special collection is for the weekend of December 9 and 10. The deadline for these donations at the parish is December 24. Please write "RFR," Retirement Fund for Religious" or "Retired Religious" in the memo line of your check in a separate envelope. Please be generous to those who have given a lifetime to working very directly and diligently in the Lord's vineyard. Thank you.

A NOTE ABOUT VIRGINIA: Virginia Hill is one of the founding members in our parish. She would meet and greet everyone coming into our church. She would welcome, give the history and give tours through our church to everyone who entered through our doors. She is now 94 and soon to be 95 years young. She enjoys coming to our church. Because of her age and physical well-being, she at times goes unconscious. She is under Americare Hospice. They are notified when Virginia has a problem. Last time Virginia had a problem, they said she will come out of it. Not to worry. If she needs a nurse they will send someone. We do not call 911 because she is under hospice care. In our parish we have at least four nurses who attend our services. Sometimes we even have a doctor. Virginia is in excellent care by our own medical parishioners. When she has an episode her Power of Attorney and her home are notified immediately. They are well aware of Virginia's health and what she experiences. Please be assured Virginia is being taken care of well.

AN OPPORTUNITY FOR GIVING Gilbert Fire & Rescue Department is coordinating the 2017 "Collecting Clothes and Toys for Gilbert Girls and Boys" for families needing assistance this Christmas season. Trees with tags of items that children need/want, and donation boxes will be placed at a variety of locations throughout Gilbert including

town buildings (please see the attached flyer). They have placed a tree with tags at Fire Admin, Muni 1 and Freestone Rec and a variety of Gilbert businesses that you can pull from to purchase an item off a child's wish list. (Children/families are selected from Gilbert Public Schools by the social workers.) Items that are purchased for a specific child from a tag off of a tree must be delivered to Fire Admin no later than December 14th so they can get the items to the families the following week before school lets out for the winter break. They are in need of: New unwrapped toys—like family board games, Legos, sport items, arts and craft projects, new clothing & shoes, gift cards for teens (lotions, nail polish, movie tickets, etc…for teens because we always need gifts for the older kids). Thank you.

NEW SAINT NICHOLAS FUND HAS BEGUN: For those of you who would like to donate money to St. Thomas, earmarked and restricted for charitable causes, you now have the opportunity. These funds will be sent to charitable organizations in the region who give to individuals who are in need. It will also be available in special cases for parishioners who are rarely in need of financial help at the discretion of the pastor. You can do so by writing a check to the parish with "St. Nicholas Fund" written in the memo line and placed in a separate envelope clearly marked "St. Nicholas Fund" with your name on it.

NEW SYSTEM FOR LITURGY STIPENDS will be underway beginning January 1, 2018. Details will be coming out around mid-December including information on the transition from the system we have now.

PARISH OFFICE CLOSED for the holy days on December 6, December 25, December 26, December 27 and January 1 in addition to the normal days that the parish office is closed. Have a blessed Christmas season!

MARCH FOR LIFE: Folks, mark your calendars and plan ahead! On January 20, 2018, join pro-lifers of all nationalities and faith backgrounds from around the state in downtown Phoenix for the Arizona for Life March and Rally, an event celebrating and advocating for the beauty and dignity of every human life. Gather at 11 AM. March begins at 11:30 AM at Cesar Chavez Memorial Plaza (2nd Ave. & Washington). Rally at Wesley Bolin Memorial Park from 12:30-2:00 PM. This will be a family-friendly event with live music, entertainment, food available at the march launch site, and inspiring speakers, including Bishop Thomas Olmsted, as well as international pro-life advocates Pam Tebow and Stephanie Gray. (Note, this event is not on the version 5 Master Calendar.) More information (including mostly verbatim this announcement) can be found at https://azliferally.org

CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

December 6: Feast of St. Nicholas. See calendar for services.

December 8: Vigil of the Feast of Maternity of Holy Anna. See calendar for services.

December 9: Decorating for Christmas: 9:00am. We need at least 10 people.

December 10: Potluck Sunday

December 12: Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe. 5pm Divine Liturgy. Mexican parish dinner in hall afterwards.

December 16: Holy Supper in the hall starting after Divine Liturgy.

December 25: A great feast and Holy Day of Obligation. See calendar for details.

January 5, 2018: Theophany Vigil with Blessing of Water

January 6: Theophany, a Great Feast and Holy Day of Obligation

January 13: Take down Christmas decorations. We need at least 10 people.

January 20: Pro-life march 11am - 2pm in Phoenix. See announcement for more details. (Note, this is not on the version 5 Master Calendar.)

January 27: 10:00-11:30am: Talk on financial planning by Steve Sanchez.

COLLECTIONS

November 5, 2017

Tithes: Adults	$1,373.00
Improvements, Remodeling	$60.00
Donations	$34.25
Candles	$35.00
Priest stipend reimbursement	$155.00
Coffee Social	$8.00
Gift Shop	$9.35
Oktoberfest	$221.00
Total deposit to checking	$1,895.60
*Minus special collections	$0.00
Total for St. Thomas:	**$1,895.60**

November 12, 2017

Tithes: Adults	$1,625.00
Ascension	$20.00
Donations: Non Parishioners	$271.00
Improvements, Remodeling	$100.00
Candles	$49.45
Eparchy travel reimbursement	$58.10
Gift Shop	$18.00
Oktoberfest	$674.00
Total deposit to checking	$2,815.55
*Minus special collections	$0.00
Total for St. Thomas:	**$2,815.55**

November 19, 2017

Tithes: Adults	$1,171.00
Holyday: Entrance Theotokos	$5.00
Thanksgiving	$1.00
Donations: Non Parishioners	$90.00
Donation from Chaldeans to buffer and deep clean the hall floor	$800.00
Candles	$47.75
Coffee Social	$2.00
Gift Shop	$45.50
Oktoberfest	$33.00
Total deposit to checking	$2,195.25
*Minus special collections	$0.00
Total for St. Thomas:	**$2,195.25**

November 19, 2017

**Anaheim Loan payment	$643.51
Total deposit to Money Market Account	$643.51
Total for St. Thomas:	**$643.51**

November 26, 2017

Tithes: Adults	$1,140.00
Holyday: Entrance of Theotokos	$15.00
Thanksgiving	$125.00
Donations: Non Parishioners	$17.00
Improvements, Remodeling	$150.00
Candles	$30.00
Rent: Church, Hall	$30.00
Coffee Social	$10.00
Gift Shop	$5.00
Total deposit to checking	$1,522.00
*Minus special collections	$0.00
Total for St. Thomas:	$1,522.00

November 29, 2017

Oktoberfest check	$140.00
Total deposit to checking	$140.00
*Minus special collections	$0.00
Total for St. Thomas:	**$140.00**

November Totals for St. Thomas

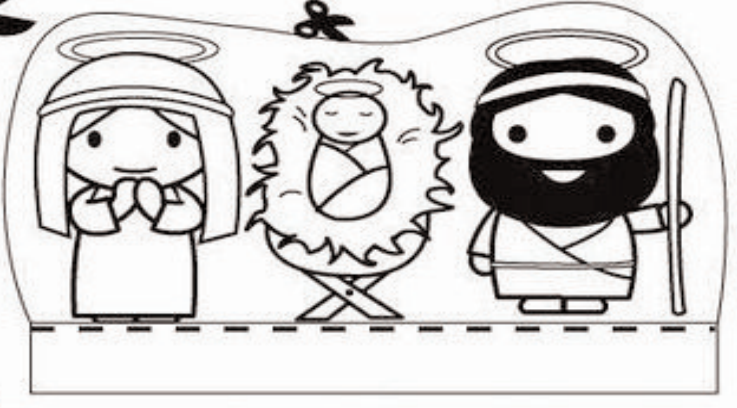
Total deposits	$9,211.91
*Minus special collections	$0.00
Total for St. Thomas	**$9,211.91**

**These funds are special collections which are remitted to the eparchy.*
***These funds are deposited to the Money Market account as the loan to our Anaheim parish is paid back to us. Final payment is due in Sept. 2029.*

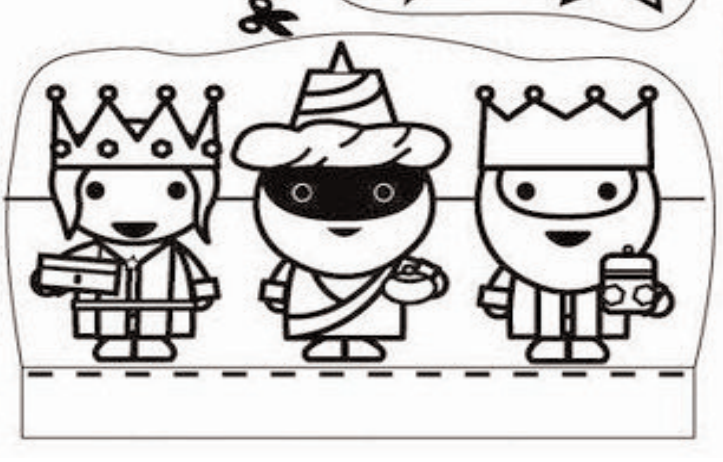


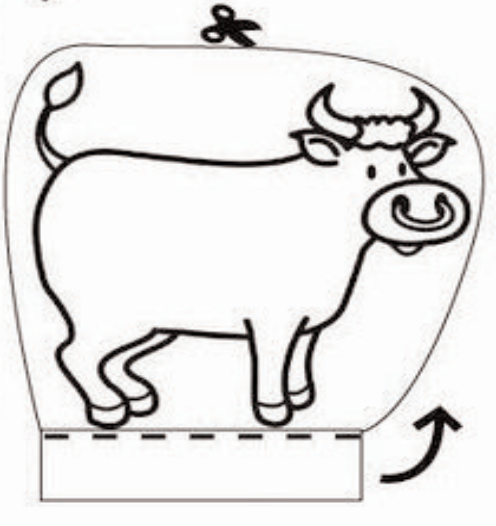












REMEMBER THOSE WHO REQUEST OUR PRAYERS

O Divine Physician of Souls and Body, rest your healing and protecting hand upon your servants:

Donald Thompson, Jr., Stephanie & Terry Faust, Lisa Kirila Mendez, and Eileen Derevenko. Scott Karnya, Sam Karnya and all those in service to our country.

"With the souls of the just brought to perfection, give rest, O Savior, to the souls of your servants, keeping them for the blessed life with you, for you love us all."

+Andria Kowalczyk, +Eleanor Shields, +Sr. Jean Marie Cihota, +Peter Broznak, +James Sandrock, +Fr. Wes Izer, +Cathy Simpson, +Anna Hrynik, +Joseph Hrynik, +John Hrynik, +Walter Hrynik, +Mary Perun.

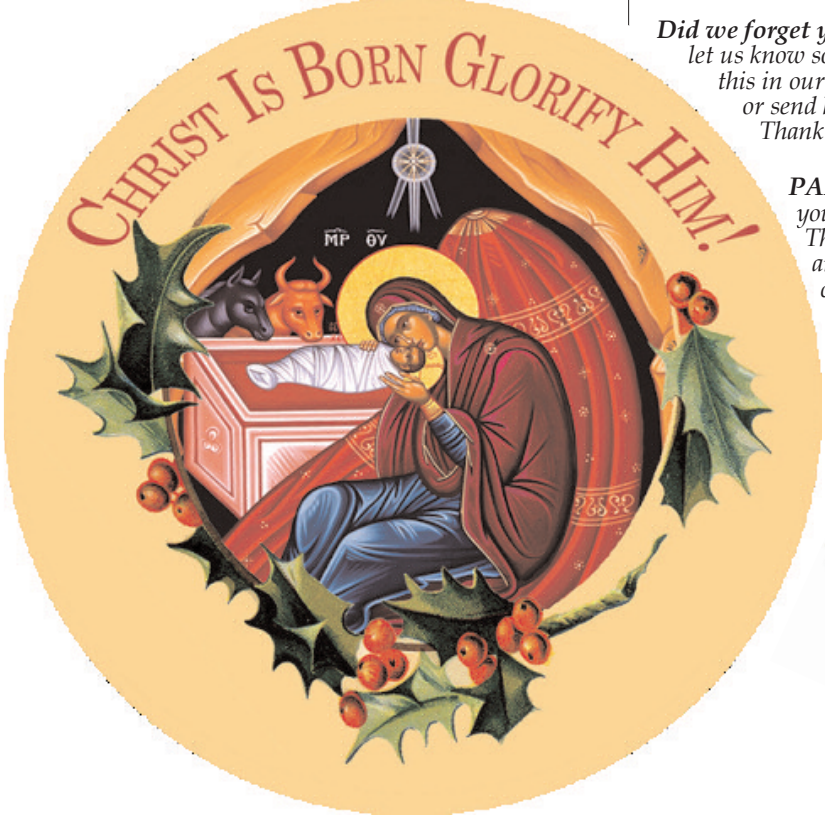
BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

Happy Birthday

Taylor Dugie	December 1
Brian Matthysse	December 6
Damian Forbes	December 10
Max Bronson	December 12
Rhiannon Moore	December 18
Jan Person	December 19
Dr. Nick Kowalczyk	December 22
Emma Bronson	December 26
Yellow Schreiber	December 26
Anna Moore	December 30
Noelle Auayo	December 30

Happy Anniversary

Reg and Diane Parker	December 27



Did we forget your birthday or anniversary? *Please let us know so we can update our records and include this in our bulletin next year. Talk to Liz Zackowski or send her an email: lizzack74@gmail.com. Thank you.*

PARISH EMAIL ANNOUNCEMENTS: *If you would like to be placed on the St. Thomas list for receiving the parish bulletin and announcements via email, please contact Kathy Richard: krichard2003@yahoo.com*

