

St. Thomas and St. Columban Parishes
810 Fifth Street
International Falls Minnesota 56649

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VISIONS



LENT

2015

St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church
International Falls
810 5th Street
and
St. Columban Catholic Church
1017 4th Ave
Littlefork

Phone: 218-283-3293

Fax: 218-283-3553

Email: stthomasa@frontiernet.net

Website: stthomasifalls.org

Pastor: Fr. Ben Hadrich

Deacon: Fran Zaren

St. Thomas Mass Schedule

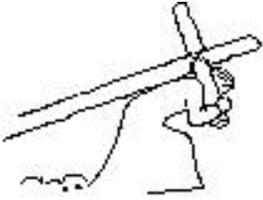
Sat: 5:00 pm

Sun: 10:30 am

St. Columban

Sun: 8:30 am

2015 Lent and Easter Schedule



Ash Wednesday Mass	February 18	8:30am 5:00pm 7:00pm	St. Thomas St. Columban St. Thomas
Stations of the Cross	February 20	7:00 pm	both parishes
Stations of the Cross	February 27	7:00 pm	both parishes
Stations of the Cross	March 6	7:00 pm	both parishes
Stations of the Cross	March 13	7:00 pm	both parishes
Stations of the Cross	March 20	7:00 pm	both parishes
40 Hour Devotion	March 27-29	Begins Friday March 27 at 7:00pm	
Palm Sunday	March 29	5:00 pm 8:30 am 10:30 am	St. Thomas St. Columban St. Thomas

St. Thomas Holy Week Schedule

Holy Thursday Mass	April 2	7:00 pm
Good Friday Service	April 3	3:00 pm
Blessing of the Easter Food	April 4	10:00 am
Easter Vigil Mass	April 4	8:00 pm
Easter Sunday Mass	April 5	10:30am



St. Columban Holy Week Schedule

Good Friday Service	April 3	7:00 pm
Confessions	April 3	8:00 pm
Easter Sunday Mass	April 5	8:30 am



Lent Soup and Service Wednesday Evenings

Soup at 6pm Service at 7pm

February 25
March 4
March 18
March 25 St. Thomas

Diocese of Duluth 125th Anniversary

A celebration of the 125th anniversary of the founding of the Diocese of Duluth kicked off with the Diocesan Assembly and with a Mass of Thanksgiving in October.

The Virginia Deanery (which includes St. Thomas and St. Columban) celebration Mass and history presentation will take place March 1 at St. Martin in Tower, beginning at 3 p.m.

St. Thomas is providing free bus transportation to this event.

The bus leaves St. Thomas at 12:45pm and will begin loading at 12:30pm.

Please call the parish office at 283-3293 to sign up.

Parish Records

The following items were recently added to the parish records.

Baptisms



We welcome into our parish family, through the Sacrament of Baptism, the following:

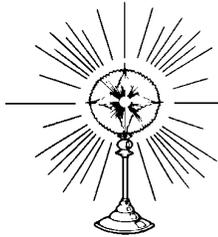
Reid Daniel Carlson
Elijah Ringhofer
Mia Wendt
Dylan Baumgartner



Funerals

Please remember in your prayers those who have passed away and their family and friends who are grieving:

David Zaren
Carol Dalton
Gerry Dobie
Sarah Johnson
Dorothy Iraci
Patricia Hamalainen
Erna Mae Kocinski
Rita Eisterhold
Brad Friesen



FORTY HOURS

40 Hour Devotion
at
St. Thomas
March 27-29, 2015

The Forty Hours Devotion begins

Friday, March 27
7:00pm

Inspirational Message, Praise, and Worship
Opportunities for Confession

During the next 40 hours, the Blessed Sacrament remains on the altar in a monstrance. We are all invited to gather for personal prayer in adoration of our Lord. Adoration continues until 10:30am Mass Sunday, March 29.

If you would like to sign up for an hour or more of Adoration, please call Carol Youso at 283-3769.

Please let someone at the Parish Office know if:

- A family member is in the hospital so that visits can be made and the name added to the prayer list.
- You learn of a death in the church family.
- Your phone number or address has changed so that the church records can be updated.
- A new baby arrives in your family.
- You learn of someone who may be interested in learning more about our church/religion.
- You feel the church can assist you in any way.



Visit the new PARISH WEBSITE!

www.stthomasifalls.org

Bulletins	Newsletters
Ministry Schedules	Online Giving
Mass Readings	Event Calendar
Diocesan News	Vatican News
Fr. Ben's Biblical Blog	Fr. Ben's Podcasts

From Fr. Ben

As we approach the Lenten season I want to assure you and your families of my prayers. I pray this season of prayer, fasting and almsgiving will draw you closer to God and neighbor!

A rich tradition we Catholics share is giving something up for Lent. This Lent I am challenging our entire parish to give up something together—gossip.

The very word *gossip* is one which can have different meanings and I would like to clarify what I mean. I do not have in mind a blanket “don’t ever talk about others if they are not there.” Indeed, there are good ways to talk about others—passing on good news, affirming a quality of another, or celebrating the accomplishments of others. There are even healthy ways to share frustrations about another person’s actions with loved ones provided we focus on a behavior (not a person), leave out their name and try to share good qualities about this person as well.

What I am encouraging us to give up is the sort of talk behind another person’s back that belittles or detracts from their character. The key to understanding what is gossip and what is not is to examine our intention. Am I speaking about another with their best interest in mind or just to attack their character? Am I sharing this frustration to help process a negative experience, or out of a sense of judgment? Am I focusing on a behavior or detracting from someone’s character? Even if something true, is it necessary or kind to share with another?

As I read the Scriptures, texts from the New Testament have a prevalent theme—*unity in the Church*. St. Peter, St. Paul and even Jesus consistently proclaim unity. My intention in this Lenten challenge is to help us take unity at our parishes seriously as well.

Similar to other factions of society, gossip can cause the greatest division(s) in our own parishes—not different desires in the liturgy, not different theological positions, not different priorities, not different approaches to financial decisions and not different perspectives in other areas of parish life. Gossip, however, eliminates construction conversation, creates mountains out of molehills and stifles, distorts facts and may even attack someone’s character.

As I have discussed the reality of gossip with others (without using names and addressing behaviors, not persons), a common response I have heard is, “Well, we live in a small town and that’s just the way it is.” I am not satisfied with this response, and I hope you aren’t either! We have the opportunity not only to improve our own lives, not only to improve our excellent Church family, but to improve our community itself by making a commitment to avoid gossiping this Lent.

With my challenge comes a gift. I have purchased (from my personal account) 600 wristbands that simply state: “I will not gossip.” (Yes, they are purple for Lent!). We will be passing them out at Masses at St. Thomas Aquinas and St. Columban and I would encourage you each to wear one during Lent. The wristband itself will be a good reminder of our goal, especially if you switch wrists when you catch yourself gossiping.

Know that I am challenging myself in this endeavor and will be wearing my wristband throughout the Lenten season. I pray you will join me in following the wise words of Thumper, “If you can’t say something nice, don’t say it at all!”

God bless and know of my daily prayers!

Religious Education

Confirmation

Bishop Sirba will celebrate the Sacrament of Confirmation with us on Wednesday, April 15, 2015 at 6:00pm.

First Communion

First Communion will take place on Sunday, May 3, 2015 at the 10:30 A.M Mass. More details will be coming out soon.

St. Thomas School

2015-2016 Registration time is just around the corner! Have you considered sending your child to St. Thomas School? We are able to use our small class sizes to challenge children to achieve their potential while supporting struggling learners too. Students receive an excellent education, along with self-confidence and spiritual growth as a child of God. Catholic religion is intertwined throughout our day so that faith becomes a normal part of school life for our students. Often it overflows into the child’s family home life too! Financial assistance is available, so don’t let tuition be a barrier. Father Ben reminds us of Jesus’s words: “Let the children come to me.” Mark 10:14.

28th Annual Silent Auction April 11, 2015

“The Night Circus”

a delightful evening of elegant dining, Live/Silent Auction

Tickets \$25 in advance \$30 at the door for sale in the school or parish office soon.

Thank you for supporting St. Thomas School!

Easter Triduum

The Lenten season culminates in the *Sacred Triduum*. These holiest days of the year constitute a single liturgical celebration that begins with the Mass of the Lord's Supper and culminates with the Easter Vigil. During this most intense time of prayer in the Church year, we more seriously focus on the mysteries of Salvation as we literally walk with Jesus through the Cross to the Resurrection.

Holy Thursday — The Mass of the Lord's Supper

At the beginning of Mass of the Lord's Supper, Lent officially ends, though we are encouraged to keep our Lenten resolutions through the Triduum. During this evening's Mass, we begin our walk with the Lord, and focus on the Institution of the Eucharist and of the ordained priesthood, and of Jesus' command concerning fraternal charity, three topics that are deeply connected to each other. As Jesus washed the feet of his disciples, which ceremonially takes place during this Mass, he took on a job reserved for the lowest of servants, and calls us to do the same. In the Eucharist, Jesus gave us his body, blood, soul and divinity in order to strengthen us to follow his example. The evening's liturgy closes as the Eucharist is removed from the Church and taken to the Altar of Repose, and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament continues until midnight.

Good Friday — The Passion of the Lord

The Good Friday service necessarily has a somber tone and begins in silence; the congregation kneels and the priest prostrates himself before the altar and cross as a sign of obedience and unworthiness to be God's minister. This is the one day of the year where Mass is not celebrated anywhere in the world as we focus on our Lord's Crucifixion and death. As the Cross is venerated, we recall the infinite love that Jesus has for us as he gave his life to save us from sin and death.

Holy Saturday — Easter Vigil

Tonight, we celebrate "the greatest and most noble of all solemnities." The Vigil begins after dark, with all of us gathered around the Paschal Fire calling to mind that Jesus is the light of the world, and we hear the great Easter Proclamation. We then hear from the Sacred Scriptures and recall God's saving work throughout history. Following the homily, all present renew their baptismal promises, and the Sacraments of Initiation are celebrated and those seeking to be Catholic are welcomed into the fullness of communion with the Catholic Church. The Vigil culminates with the Liturgy of the Eucharist, and the Lord gives Himself to us to strengthen us to carry His Gospel message to the world!

Blessing of Easter Food — Saturday, April 4, 10:00am

In many parts of the world, it is customary to bring the food that will be served at the Easter meal to the Church to be blessed. The Easter Sunday meal is traditionally a large meal, and brings an end to the rigorous fasting of Lent. Many of the foods that are brought in: meats, milk, eggs, etc... are those foods that were given up for Lent, and will soon be enjoyed. All are welcomed to attend and have their Easter meals blessed!

Pastoral Ministry

Baptism Preparation

We “welcome you with great joy,” *Rite of Baptism*. Please contact the parish office to schedule a preparation course for this sacrament of initiation.

Wedding Preparation

“I am my beloved’s and my beloved is mine.” Song of Songs 6:3

Please contact the parish office at least six months prior to the date of the celebration. FYI: Because our Saturday evening Mass is at 5:00, the latest time available for Saturday weddings is 2:00. Those couples who prefer an evening wedding might consider a Friday evening wedding.

Visits for Homebound, Sick, Elderly

Please give us a call at the parish office if you or someone you know would like to receive the Eucharist or go to confession at home and/or have a visit. We don’t always know who is lonely or feeling neglected unless it is brought to our attention. Presently our priest, pastoral minister, deacon, and several parishioners make visits to homebound parishioners. Also, if your loved one is in the hospital and would like a visit, our staff is honored to do so. Please let us know by calling the office. Very often parishioners are admitted and discharged before we know they have been hospitalized.

If you are unable to attend Mass at church but would like to attend a communion service, you are welcome at any of the following locations:

Monday	2:00 Villa (second and fourth Monday’s)	Wednesday	3:30 Falls Care Center (Massevery other week)
Thursday	11:00 Ranier Roost	Friday	10:00 West Falls Apartments

Clothes Closet

Clean, gently-used clothing and household goods are always needed. The Closet is open once each month for drop off and pick up. Upcoming dates are: **Drop off** (10-2): February 18, March 18, April 8, May 13, June 10, July 15, August 12, September 9. **Pick Up** (9-3). February 19, March 19, April 9, May 14, June 11, July 16, August 13, September 10. Though it helps our volunteers to adhere to the above drop off dates, additional drop off time for those unable to come on the above dates, is from 10:00-noon, each Wednesday.

Servants of Shelter

The Servants of Shelter (SOS) program continues to house persons in need of shelter. In December of 2013, SOS received its nonprofit designation from the IRS, making donations tax deductible. The board is all-volunteer so every donation goes entirely toward serving homeless individuals and families. Presently, SOS rents two apartments and also houses overflow guests at local motels. The SOS Board of Directors is well-represented by St. Thomas parishioners. If you would like more information about SOS, would like to attend a board meeting, or would like to make a donation, please contact the parish office.

St. Thomas Social Concerns is a fund made possible through donations designated to “social concerns.” Our funds are used on a regular basis to provide a grocery voucher to those in need and to provide occasional overnight stays at motels when the shelter is full. Though this ministry is nearly invisible to many in our community, it is well-utilized and much appreciated. Thank you to all who give in any way (including through your prayers), to our parish social concerns.

RCIA 2015

The RCIA is a year-long process for catechumen (non-baptized), to become members of the Roman Catholic Church. It is also a process by which adults who have not yet been confirmed (candidates), prepare for Confirmation. This Easter season year we will welcome **Tonya Becker, Willie Frank, and Colleen Qualey** to full communion and confirmation in the Catholic Church and to our St. Thomas Parish Community. Their sponsors are Sabrina Etienne, Lindsay Frank, and Carol Qualey. Please hold these fellow disciples in your prayers.

Interested in RCIA for next year? We will begin again in September of 2015, but you may leave your name at the parish office at any time to be a part of our next RICA group.

~~Special Offer~~

New This Year!

Fish Stick Meal for children \$5

\$1 off any meal with a donation to the Falls Food Shelf!