



St. Thomas of Canterbury Tales

December 2011

From the Rector:

Greetings in the name of Jesus Christ:

It seems hard to think of this, but Thanksgiving and Christmas are just about here. As we approach this first season, we would do well to remember what Thanksgiving is really about. Sure we enjoy the company of friends, family, football, and great food, but what does Thanksgiving really mean to you?

Are you in your lives truly thankful for all that you have? Are we as a nation thankful for the things that we have?

This past Sunday we had Bishop Strauss and Fr. Dibble and his family at church to start a project in the life of St. Thomas of Canterbury. This is truly a new thing to be thankful for. We have hopes and expectations of growth in the service of Christ. Won't you come and join in the growth.

You as an individual may not be able to change the collective thought of the nation, but you can change your own thoughts and outlook on life. Look at what you have and give thanks to those around you and to God our Father for all of the blessings and yes the struggles in your life that have made you a better stronger person. Have a joyous Thanksgiving and join with us as we prepare for the coming of Christmas.

God Bless you all.
Fr. Bill

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CHRISTMAS SERVICE

A midnight Mass will be celebrated on Saturday December 24th, starting at 11:00 PM with a Service of Lessons and Carols.

BISHOP STRAUSS VISITS ST. THOMAS SPEARHEADS NEW INITIATIVE

On November 13th, our Bishop, Norman Strauss, joined more than 20 members of the family of St. Thomas' at a Eucharist Service concelebrated by Father Andrist and Father Richard Dibble. In the course of his homily, the Bishop welcomed Father Dibble to our church and made clear his support for a Bible Study program - a new initiative - which the young priest (recently ordained right here at St. Thomas') will be leading. The service included the singing of many familiar hymns, and a solo by Emily Dibble. Father Dibble with his wife, Caroline, daughter, Emily, and 3 other of their 5 children then joined the parishioners and clergy in a post-service covered dish luncheon.

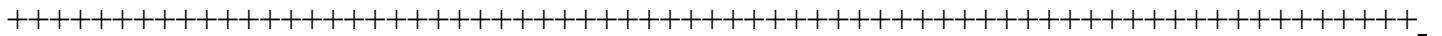
Father Rich (as some of us have already taken to calling him) will hold the first Bible session on Tuesday, November 22nd at 7:00 PM. He has chosen to begin with the Book of Nehemiah; which many of you will know concerns itself with *'building-up'*, a theme we hope will underscore much of our activity at St. Thomas' in the days ahead - not to mention how spending some time studying the great book can enrich our preparation for the coming Nativity. If you were fortunate enough to have attended the Lenten lessons and meditations which Father Rich led at this church just a few months ago, then you are familiar with the nurturing spiritual sustenance which this seemingly young man can offer. God willing, he will prove of much assistance to Father Bill by leading a program which can help to energize the family of St. Thomas', and lead to parish growth.

Father Dibble will be traveling approximately 80 miles from West Winfield, New York for each session. Surely, that represents a commitment to which we can respond.

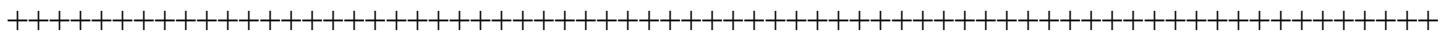
WILL YOU ???

PS: Since you are almost certainly reading this after Nov. 22; you may want information about the continuing Bible Study sessions. Please call Art LeBlanc @ 664-5034, or David Bullard @ 695-3765 or Elaine Stanley 737-6909

Art LeBlanc

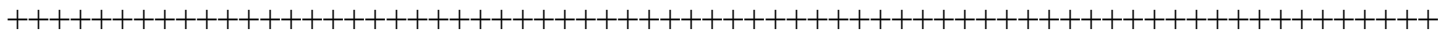


These photos are from the Service described by Art above. Fr. Bill is administering Holy Communion; Emily Dibble singing a hymn, Fr. Rich Dibble is reading the Gospel and Bishop Strauss preaching. Many more pictures are on exhibit down stairs.



ACW

The ACW of St. Thomas' will hold a spaghetti dinner and auction on Friday December 2nd, starting at 6:30 pm. Being auctioned are a number of "Barbie Dolls" that Elaine has gotten and prepared for sale. Each doll has a set of clothes that have been washed, ironed and put on the doll. Also being auctioned are a number of pieces of art work, This will be the main fund raiser for the ACW this year.



ADVENT

Advent (from the Latin word adventus meaning "coming") is a time of expectant waiting and preparation for the celebration of the Nativity of Jesus at Christmas. It is the beginning of the liturgical year which commences on Advent Sunday.

The Advent wreath, or Advent crown, is a Christian tradition that symbolizes the passage of the four weeks of Advent in the liturgical calendar

It is usually a horizontal evergreen wreath with four candles and often, a fifth, white candle in the center. Beginning with the First Sunday of Advent, the lighting of a candle can be accompanied by a Bible reading and prayers. An additional candle is lit during each subsequent week until, by the last Sunday before Christmas, all four candles are lit. Some Advent wreaths include a fifth, "Christ" candle which can be lit at Christmas. The custom is observed both in family settings and at public church services.

The most popular colors for the Advent candles are purple and rose. Purple is the historic liturgical color for three of the four Sundays of Advent and once was the color associated with royalty; it symbolizes Christ as the "Prince of Peace." Rose is the color for the Third Sunday of Advent, known as Gaudete Sunday from the Latin word "rejoice". Gaudete Sunday anticipates the joy of the Christmas celebration, so its color is a mixture of Advent purple and Christmas white.

The Advent coin card is another way to remind us and prepare us for the celebration of the Blessed Nativity. Each evening, when lighting the Advent Wreath with the Advent prayer for that week, we can add a coin to the card as part of our Christmas offering.

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CONGRATULATIONS

Happy Birthday

Happy Anniversary

December 25th

Jim Myers

January 28th

Fred DeWald

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ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting of St. Thomas of Canterbury will be held on January 8, 2012 after Service. All reports will be given and new members of the Vestry will be elected.

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CHRISTMAS FLOWERS

Please see Nancy with the names of those you wish to remember with Altar flowers for Christmas. All names will be listed in the Christmas bulletin.

