

# ST. THOMAS MORE CATHOLIC PARISH

210 Haddow Close, Edmonton, AB T6R 2P3  
Office: 780 434 6313 Website: [stm.caedm.ca](http://stm.caedm.ca)

## CHRISTMAS

December 25th, 2024

Pastor: Fr. Mark McGee

Associate Pastor: Fr. Avinash Francis

Permanent Deacons:

Randy Abele, Tom Sudsbear & Gordon Taylor



## Christmas Mass Schedule

### Nativity of the Lord (Christmas)

**Tue. Dec. 24:** 3 pm, 5pm, 7 pm, 9 pm, 10:30 pm  
and midnight (incense at midnight)

**Wed. Dec. 25:** 9 am & 11 am (incense at 11 am)

### Feast of the Holy Family

**Sat. Dec. 28** at 4:30 pm Vigil Mass

**Sun. Dec. 29:** 8am, 9:30 am, 11 am & 12:30pm

### Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God

**Tue. Dec. 31:** at 5 pm Vigil Mass

**Wed. Jan. 1:** 9 am & 11 am

Regularly scheduled Confessions will resume on  
Jan 4, 2025



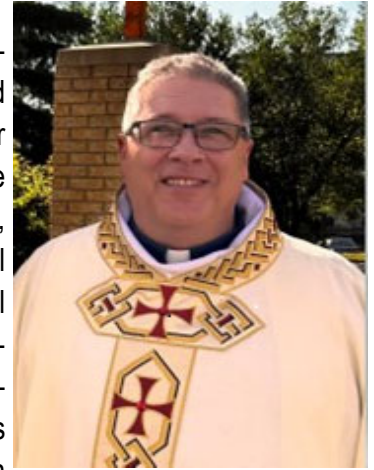
*In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"*

*Luke 2:8-14*

# Message from your Pastor

## HAVE A BEAUTIFUL CHRISTMAS EVERYONE!

I LOVE CHRISTMAS! ... the whole ramped up season, because from start to finish it is BEAUTIFUL! It is so charged with beauty that it really has the power to jump start our spiritual lives and inspire in us the best of our humanity. I love the contemplative call of the Advent season. For those weeks we prepare and plan, and increase our care of others—we give more, we make more time for others, we love more, we do more to get ready for Christmas and make it happen—baking, buying, Christmas cards and church bazaars add to the excitement. Advent is a time we can all grow in prayerful waiting and longing as we get in touch with our need of God. Advent is beautiful because it is a Holy season of recalling those themes of darkness and light, fulfillment of prophecies, and longing for deliverance. The Magnificat of Mary is announced, and innocence triumphs... *“The mighty one has done great things for me and Holy is his name!”* she sings. Holiness is always beautiful; and we are reminded to find what is holy in us and each other. It is, after all, in community, and in our personal relationships, that we are most likely to engage our faith in the most meaningful ways. I love how we are often blessed by the poetry of fresh fallen snow that suggests goodness, purity, and new beginnings and that sets what is ugly to the side. Snow is really more beautiful than inconvenient; and it is always great when it snows and you don't have to go anywhere! Kind of makes you want a flavored coffee or hot chocolate; or to cuddle up under a blanket by the fire with a book. What is awesome about Christmas is how we are surrounded by the beauty of the season. It all helps to celebrate the gift of Jesus in such personal and joyful ways. Everywhere we are being surrounded by beauty: The art of Christmas cards, the decorated church Nave, the St. Thomas More Choir Christmas Concert and other events that gather us together, the beauty of gifts, tinsel and colourful Christmas wrapping, Nativity scenes, bows and boughs and Christmas Trees, with decorations and lights ....lots of lights!



Makes me think of the prophet Isaiah: *“The people in darkness have seen a great light.”* There is so much about Christmas that resists the downward drag of any kind of darkness—spiritual, psychological, or physical—even beautiful colourful Poinsettias revolt against an otherwise dead looking time of year. There is much to help lift our spirits both personally and collectively. No wonder many of us can't help but be caught singing Christmas carols at random—sometimes out loud, or under our breath, or in our cheered-up hearts. The Russian writer Dostoevsky once said, *“We will be saved by beauty”*... so it is no surprise that as we celebrate our saviour, we surround that celebration with so much beauty! Another writer, Ferrucci, captures something of the spirit of this season when he wrote: *“Beauty is a primary principle that touches all parts and functions of our being. It opens us to the world and brings harmony to our relations with others and with nature; it helps us reach out and touch the entire universe... The world is full of beauty, both hidden and manifest. It is enough to be open, look around, be like a child again. And if we will only give it a little attention, we will find it, we will enjoy it, we will be saved by beauty.”* So, what I would like to say is: May you have a BEAUTIFUL Christmas! May there be someone, something, some moment, which captures your heart and attention; and delivers you to a spiritual epiphany of deep gratitude. May this season of beauty increase your gratitude to God for all the gifts of your life, but especially for the gift of the one this beautiful season is all about. You can never truly say you have enjoyed Christmas until you can look up into the Father's face and tell him, with gratitude, you have received His Christmas gift—Jesus. May you deepen in your love and gratitude for the gift of Jesus and all he came to mean to us and what he wants to be for you. May every blessing of this beautiful season be yours to enjoy!

With Much Love and Gratitude,

Fr. Mark



**We invite you to sing along with the choir.** Text is included in this booklet under ONE LICENSE #A-730378

## Midnight Silence

Midnight silence, calm is the sky,  
earth is still and winter is nigh.  
Shining star will light the way  
for our savior born this day.

For all ages God has come  
shepherds greet the Holy One.  
Lowly manger, cattle stall  
bears the Savior of us all.

Tiny babe so full of grace,  
we, your people seek your face.  
Let our hearts keep warm in your light  
as we kneel this holy night.

Angel choirs flood the earth,  
sing the news of Jesus' birth.  
Infant sleeping on the hay  
brings the dawning of the day.

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## Angels We have Heard on High

Angels we have heard on high  
Sweetly singing o'er the plains,  
And the mountains in reply  
Echo back their joyous strains.

*Gloria in excelsis Deo!*  
*Gloria in excelsis Deo!*

Shepherds, why this jubilee?  
Why your joyous strains prolong?  
What the gladsome tidings be  
Which inspire your heav'nly song?

Come to Bethlehem and see  
Him whose birth the angels sing;  
Come, adore on bended knee  
Christ, the Lord, the newborn King.

Text: 77 77 with refrain; trad. French carol, ca. 18th cent.; tr. fr. Crown of Jesus Music, II, London, 1862; tr. by James Chadwick, 1813-1882, and others, alt. Music: Trad. French carol; arr. © 2013, Spirit & Song®, a division of OCP. All rights reserved.

## The First Noel

The first Noel, the Angels did say  
Was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay  
In fields where they lay keeping their sheep  
On a cold winter's night that was so deep.

*Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel*  
*Born is the King of Israel!*

They looked up and saw a star  
Shining in the East beyond them far  
And to the earth it gave great light  
And so it continued both day and night.

And by the light of that same star  
Three Wise men came from country far  
To seek for a King was their intent  
And to follow the star wherever it went.

This star drew nigh to the northwest,  
O'er Bethlehem it took its rest,  
And there it did both stop and stay,  
Right over the place where Jesus lay.

Then entered in those wise men three,  
Full rev'rently upon the knee,  
And offered there, in his presence,  
Their gold and myrrh and frankincense.

Then let us all with one accord  
Sing praises to our heav'nly Lord;  
Who with the Father we adore  
And Spirit blest for evermore.

Text: Irregular with refrain; trad. English carol, 17th cent.; verse 6, alt. Music: Trad. English carol, 17th cent.

## Away in a Manger

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,  
The little Lord Jesus laid down His sweet head;  
The stars in the sky looked down where He lay  
The little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes,  
But little Lord Jesus, no crying He makes;  
I love Thee, Lord Jesus! Look down from the sky,  
And stay by my cradle 'til morning is nigh.

Be near me, Lord Jesus, I ask Thee to stay  
Close by me forever, and love me I pray  
Bless all the dear children in Thy tender care,



### **O Come all Ye Faithful**

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant,  
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem.  
Come and behold Him, Born the King of angels;

*O come, let us adore Him, (3)  
Christ the Lord.*

God of God, Light of Light,  
Lo! He comes forth from the Virgin's womb.  
Our very God, begotten not created.

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,  
Sing, all ye citizens of heav'n above!  
"Glory to God, in the highest!"

*At midnight mass only:*

Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning,  
Jesus, to thee be all glory giv'n;  
Word of the Father now in flesh appearing.

Text: Irregular with refrain; John F. Wade, ca. 1711-1786; English tr. by Frederick Oakeley, 1802-1880 alt.

### **Gloria**

Glory to God in the highest,  
and on earth peace to people of good will.  
We praise you, we bless you, we adore you, we glorify you,  
we give you thanks, for your great glory,  
Lord God, heavenly King, O God, almighty Father.  
Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,  
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,  
you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us;  
you take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer;  
you are seated at the right hand of the Father: have mercy on us.  
For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord,  
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit,  
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

### **All the Ends of the Earth**

*Refrain:*

All the ends of the earth have seen the power of God. (2)

Text: Psalm 98: 1, 2-3, 3-4, 5-6; David Haas, Marty Haugen. Music: David Haas, Maty Haugen. © 1983, GIA Publications, Inc.

### **Today is Born our Saviour**

*Refrain:*

Today is born our Saviour, Jesus Christ the Lord. (2).

Text: Psalm 96:1-2, 2-3, 11-12, 13. Psalm refrain © 1969. All rights reserved.  
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### **Hark the Herald Angels Sing**

Hark the herald angels sing,  
"Glory to the newborn King!  
Peace on earth and mercy mild,  
God and sinners reconciled"  
Joyful, all ye nations rise,  
Join the triumph of the skies  
With the angelic host proclaim:  
"Christ is born in Bethlehem!"

*Hark! The herald angels sing  
"Glory to the newborn King!"*

Christ by highest heav'n adored  
Christ the everlasting Lord!  
Late in time behold Him come  
Offspring of the Virgin's womb  
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see  
Hail the incarnate Deity  
Pleased as one with us to dwell  
Jesus, our Emmanuel

Hail the heav'n-born Prince of Peace!  
Hail the Son of Righteousness!  
Light and life to all He brings  
Ris'n with healing in His wings  
Mild He lays His glory by  
Born that we no more may die  
Born to raise us from the earth  
Born to give us second birth

Text: 77 77 D with refrain; Charles Wesley, 1707-1788, alt.

Music: Felix Mendelssohn, 1809-1847; adapt. by William H. Cummings,  
1831-1915.

### **Holy, Holy**

Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts.  
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
Hosanna in the highest.  
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest.

### **Memorial Acclamation**

We proclaim your death, O Lord,  
and profess your Resurrection until you come again.

### **Great Amen**

Amen. Amen. Amen.

### **Lamb of God**

## Silent Night

Silent night! Holy night!  
All is calm, all is bright;  
Round yon Virgin, Mother and Child,  
Holy Infant, so tender and mild,  
Sleep in Heavenly Peace,  
Sleep in Heavenly Peace.

Silent night! Holy night!  
Shepherds quake at the sight;  
Glories stream from Heaven afar;  
Heavenly hosts sing Alleluia!  
Christ the Saviour is born!  
Christ the Saviour is born!

Silent night! Holy night!  
Son of God, love's pure light  
Radiant beams from Thy holy face,  
With the dawn of redeeming grace,  
Jesus Lord at Thy Birth,  
Jesus Lord at Thy Birth.

Text: Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht; Joseph Mohr, 1792-1849;  
tr. John F. Young, 1820-1885.

## What Child is This?

What Child is this who, laid to rest,  
On Mary's lap is sleeping?  
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet,  
While shepherds watch are keeping?

*This, this is Christ the King,  
Whom shepherds guard and angels sing;  
Haste, haste, to bring Him laud,  
The Babe, the Son of Mary.*

Why lies He in such mean estate,  
Where ox and ass are feeding?  
Good Christians, fear: for sinners here  
The silent Word is pleading.

So bring Him incense, gold and myrrh,  
Come peasant, king to own Him;  
The King of kings salvation brings,  
Let loving hearts enthrone Him.

Text: 87 87 with refrain; Bramley and Stainer's Christmas Carols  
New and Old, 1871; William C. Dix, 1837-1898. Music: Trad. English melody,  
16th cent.; Bramley and Stainer's Christmas Carols New and Old, 1871.

## O Holy Night

*Solo:*  
O Holy Night! The stars are brightly shining,  
It is the night of the dear Saviour's birth.  
Long lay the world in sin and error pining.  
Till He appeared and the Spirit felt its worth.  
A thrill of hope the weary world rejoices,  
For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn.  
Fall on your knees! Oh, hear the angel voices!  
O night divine, O night, when Christ was born;  
O night divine, O night divine!

*All:*  
Truly He taught us to love one another;  
His law is love and His gospel is peace.  
Chains he shall break, for the slave is our brother.  
And in his Name all oppression shall cease.  
Sweet hymns of joy in grateful chorus raise we,  
Let all within us praise His holy Name.  
Christ is the Lord! Then ever, ever praise we,  
His power and glory ever more proclaim! (2)

Text John S. Dwight, 1813-1893. Tune: CANTIQUE DE NOEL, Irregular. Adolphe Adam, 1803-1856.

## Joy to the World

Joy to the world, the Lord is come!  
Let earth receive her King;  
Let every heart prepare Him room,  
And heav'n and nature sing,  
And heav'n and nature sing,  
And heav'n, and heav'n, and nature sing.

Joy to the World, the Saviour reigns!  
Let us our songs employ;  
While fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains  
Repeat the sounding joy,  
Repeat the sounding joy,  
Repeat, repeat, the sounding joy.

He rules the world with truth and grace,  
And makes the nations prove  
The glories of His righteousness,  
And wonders of His love,  
And wonders of His love,  
And wonders, wonders, of His love.

Text: CM with repeats; based on Psalm 98:4-9; Isaac Watts, 1674-1748, alt. Music: T. Hawkes' Collection of Tunes,  
1833; George Frederic Handel, 1685-1759; adapt. by Lowell Mason, 1792-1872, alt.

# CATHOLICS COME HOME: *Re-Membering Church*

## Welcome Home!

Have you ever wondered about the Catholic Faith? Were you baptized in the Church and then been away for awhile? If so, we are so excited to have you here at St. Thomas More Catholic Parish!

Our goal is to provide you with the help you need to understand the Catholic Church and her teachings. We invite you to join us in worship, prayer, and fellowship as you discover/rediscovers the Catholic Faith!

## How do I come home?

There are a number of ways to begin your journey:

1. Go to Mass. (Saturday 4:30pm; Sundays 8, 9:30, 11 & 12 noon) Do not worry if you do not remember what you are supposed to do at Mass. The important thing is that you are there. Showing up is the first step.
2. Ask a friend that practices their Catholic faith about their own experiences with the Catholic Church. That friend may prove quite helpful in accompanying you on your journey home.
3. Contact the parish office to set up an appointment (780 434 6313). This will allow you to spend some dedicated time discussing your specific situation, getting answers to your questions, and learning more about the Catholic Church.

\*If you are already baptized Catholic and maybe left the Church for a while, another great way to journey home is to once again experience the healing Sacrament of Confession. This will allow you to once again fully participate in the Mass, including receiving the Eucharist. Even if it's been a long time and you don't remember what to do, or you've explored other religions, there is nothing to fear. The priest will be glad to guide you through the sacrament of Reconciliation.

## As a Catholic, how can I help a loved one return to the Catholic Church?

Whether you are reaching out to a lapsed Catholic or you're in contact with someone who has shown interest in becoming a Catholic, the first step is to pray for them. Ask for guidance as you discern having a conversation with them about the Catholic faith or if your feeling called, invite them to Mass so they can experience the beauty of the sacraments for themselves. If you need help or are looking for guidance, please don't hesitate to call the parish office (780 434 6313). We are here to help!

## Homecoming Prayer

God of Mercy and Love, you have called us through our baptism to form a community that gathers to share the Word and Break the Bread of Life-- the Eucharist. WE know that some of our brothers and sisters have suffered and no longer feel a part of our community; some have drifted away and are waiting for an invitation. We desire to reach out to all of them, as you have reached out to us. WE pray for them and we pray for ourselves that we may truly be an accepting community, open and welcoming to all. WE pray as Jesus prayed, "that they may be one". Jesus our Lord has shown us the depth of your love and mercy. In His holy name we pray, Amen.

Thinking of Becoming  
**Catholic?**

The RCIA journey of faith is for you

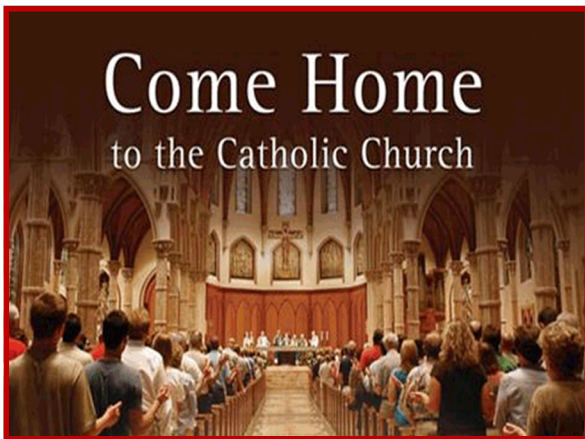
The RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults) process is the way adults enter into "Full Communion" with the Catholic Church (*i.e. those baptised in another Christian church*); or those never Baptised prepare for the Sacraments of full Initiation (*Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist*) at Easter. The Catholic community of St. Thomas More is happy and ready to support anyone wishing to embark on this journey of faith. If this is something you are considering, please call the parish office at 780 434 6313.

RCIA is also an opportunity for personal renewal for Catholics who would like to learn or relearn their Catholic faith. Would you like to journey with those enrolled in our RCIA process by accompanying a new **Catholic Christian** as a sponsor? If you want to deepen your own faith and help guide others in their relationship with Jesus, this may be the ministry for you. If you are interested, please speak to Fr. Mark.

## NICODEMUS NIGHT

"Nicodemus Night" is an information session regarding the process to become Catholic. It is named after Nicodemus, the Pharisee who met Jesus, discreetly and privately, at night (*see John 3:1-21*). This information session is meant for individuals wanting to understand the RCIA process either for themselves or on behalf of someone else. The meeting is scheduled for **Sunday, September 21, 2025 at 2 pm**. "Nicodemus Night" is an open meeting. No registration or commitment is required, but we will collect names and contact numbers to follow up with interested individuals. Those interested are encouraged to attend Nicodemus Night so their questions can be discussed.

Come Home  
to the Catholic Church





## Baptism

Baptism serves as the first sacrament received when entering the Catholic faith. Along with Confirmation and Eucharist, it is one of the three Sacraments of Initiation. Through Baptism, we receive an indelible spiritual mark, making us forever a part of the Body of Christ, the Church. The Catechism of the Catholic church teaches that “through Baptism we are freed from sin and reborn as sons and daughters of God, we become members of Christ, are incorporated into the Church, and made sharers in her mission.” (CCC 1213). For details in Baptism registration, requirements, preparation options and schedule, please see the [Baptism Requirements](https://stm.caedm.ca/baptism/) document which is available on our website <https://stm.caedm.ca/baptism/>. The Church welcomed over 150 children for Baptisms in 2024, and we look forward to continuing baptismal preparation classes in 2025. The first in-person class is scheduled on Saturday, January 18, from 10-11:30am. More dates and options for preparation are listed in the [Baptism Requirements](#) document on our website. Registration is required. Please email [Baptism.STM@caedm.ca](mailto:Baptism.STM@caedm.ca) for all children’s baptism registrations and enquiries.



## First Reconciliation & First Eucharist

First Holy Communion is considered one of the holiest and most important occasions in a Roman Catholic person’s life. It is the first time a person receives the Eucharist, which is the body, blood, soul, and divinity of Christ. Most Catholic children receive their First Holy Communion at the age of 7 or 8 years, which is considered the age of reason. Registration for First Reconciliation & First Eucharist is now open. Go to our website to register or use the QR Code below.

1 <sup>st</sup> Reconciliation & 1 <sup>st</sup> Eucharist – Spring Cycle (3)	Date & Time	Time
Orientation – 1 <sup>st</sup> R/E	Wednesday, Mar 12, 2025	6:00 - 7:00pm
1 <sup>st</sup> Confession - Catechism Session 1	Tuesday, Apr 1, 2025	5:50 - 6:50pm
1 <sup>st</sup> Confession - Catechism Session 2	Wednesday, Apr 2, 2025	5:50 - 6:50pm
1 <sup>st</sup> Confession - Catechism Session 3	Thursday, Apr 3, 2025	5:50 - 6:50pm
<b>Sacrament of 1<sup>st</sup> Reconciliation</b>	<b>Saturday, Apr 5, 2025</b>	<b>11:00am – 1:00pm</b>
1 <sup>st</sup> Eucharist - Catechism Session 1	Tuesday, May 6, 2025	5:50 - 6:50pm
1 <sup>st</sup> Eucharist - Catechism Session 2	Wednesday, May 7, 2025	5:50 - 6:50pm
1 <sup>st</sup> Eucharist - Catechism Session 3	Thursday, May 8, 2025	5:50 - 6:50pm
<b>Sacrament of 1<sup>st</sup> Eucharist</b>	<b>Sunday, May 25, 2025</b>	<b>4:30pm</b>
<b>Sacrament of 1<sup>st</sup> Eucharist</b>	<b>Sunday, June 01, 2025</b>	<b>4:30pm</b>



## Confirmation

Confirmation is necessary for the completion of baptismal grace, making the recipient “more perfectly bound to the Church and enriched with a special strength of the Holy Spirit” completing what was begun with Baptism(CCC 1285).

In the Archdiocese of Edmonton, most young people receive the sacrament when they are 11-12 years old or in Grades 6,7,8. Registration for Confirmation is now open.

To register your child please fill the [Online Registration Form](#) or use the QR Code below

Confirmation – Spring Cycle (2)	Date & Time	Time
Orientation	Monday, Mar 10, 2025	6:00 - 7:00pm
Catechism Session 1	Monday, Mar 31, 2025	6:00 – 8:00pm
Catechism Session 2	Monday, Apr 7, 2025	6:00 – 8:00pm
Catechism Session 3	Monday, Apr 28, 2025	6:00 – 8:00pm
Catechism Session 4	Monday, May 5, 2025	6:00 – 8:00pm
Catechism Session 5	Monday, May 12, 2025	6:00 – 8:00pm
Catechism Session 6	Monday, May 26, 2025	6:00 – 8:00pm
<b>Confirmation Retreat/Confession</b>	<b>Monday, May 31, 2025</b>	<b>10:00am – 3:00pm</b>
Catechism Session 7	Monday, Jun 2, 2025	6:00 – 8:00pm



## *The Sacrament of Reconciliation*

The Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches that "those who approach the sacrament of Penance obtain pardon from God's mercy for the offense committed against him, and are, at the same time, reconciled with the Church which they have wounded by their sins." (CCC 1422).

The Sacrament of Reconciliation is known as one of the two Sacraments of Healing (along with the Anointing of the Sick).

**Contact the parish office for confession times. Please keep in mind that regular confession times will sometimes be disrupted by school Masses or Octaves (Christmas and Easter).**



## *The Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick*

The sacrament of Anointing of the Sick is "given to those who are seriously ill by anointing them on the forehead and hands with duly blessed oil - pressed from olives or from other plants - saying, only once: 'Through this holy anointing may the Lord in his love and mercy help you with the grace of the Holy Spirit. May the Lord who frees you from sin save you and raise you up'" (CCC 1513).

### To receive this sacrament of healing:

- The Anointing of the Sick is a repeatable sacrament not intended only for those who are at the point of death. It is not necessary to delay this sacrament.
- Contact your St. Thomas More parish for more information on receiving the Anointing of the Sick or to make a referral for a loved one.
- Individuals who are hospitalized should reach out to the designated care department or nursing station to call for the on-call priest.



## *The Sacrament of Matrimony*

The sacrament of Matrimony or Marriage is a covenant between a man and a woman by which they "establish between themselves a partnership of the whole of life," and the purpose of marriage is "the good of the spouses and the procreation and education of offspring" (CCC1601).

### Newly Engaged

1. Step one is to meet with the pastor
2. Contact the office to schedule an appointment at 780 434 6313
3. Give the church a minimum of 6 months notice

### Married civilly or Common law or previously Married?

Complete the sacrament of marriage through convalidation (completing what is already begun). **Later Marriage Preparation** is available to help you. For more information please contact the parish office and ask to speak with Fr. Mark McGee.

The next Marriage Preparation program at St. Thomas More will take place on March 14 to 16, 2025. For information and to register, go to [bit.ly/MarriagePrep2025](https://bit.ly/MarriagePrep2025) and complete the form. The registration deadline is on February 14, 2025.





## REPORT ON SACRAMENTS—2024 / 2025

Through Sacramental Preparation, the work of Jesus Christ is being accomplished here at St. Thomas More Parish! The fulfilling desire of parents to receive the sacraments for their children is a joy to behold. The Church welcomed **over 150 BAPTISMS** in 2024. We have also welcomed 260 parents and God parents.

**BAPTISM:** We look forward to serving you with ongoing Baptismal Preparation classes in 2025—both “In Person” and “Online”. Please watch the bulletin for course dates in 2025, plan ahead and call the parish office at (780) 434-6313 to register well in advance of an anticipated Baptismal Sunday (*Dates are Scheduled into 2026*). Please see the “Baptism Requirements Document” on our Parish web site which includes dates for baptismal preparation and Baptism Sundays.

Children may be baptized up to seven years old. After this age, children need to undergo an “accommodated” program and commit to join their sacramental cohort at the next opportunity (*i.e. to then complete 1<sup>st</sup> Reconciliation/1<sup>st</sup> Eucharist or Confirmation depending on age.*) Anyone 16 years of age or older seeking Baptism would normally participate in RCIA (Adult classes).



Baptism is truly the greatest gift you can give your child; and what follows is a journey that takes the child through the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation. It all begins in Baptism! **Congratulations to all our families who have undertaken this great adventure of faith with their children!**



**FIRST RECONCILIATION & FIRST COMMUNION:** At St. Thomas More, there are 3 cycles of 1<sup>st</sup> Reconciliation & 1<sup>st</sup> Eucharist preparation. The **1<sup>st</sup> CYCLE OF 1<sup>ST</sup> RECONCILIATION** classes had 105 students who made their 1<sup>st</sup> Confessions on October 19<sup>th</sup>. **1<sup>st</sup> EUCHARIST for the 1<sup>st</sup> Cycle** was celebrated on the Feast of CHRIST THE KING, on November 24<sup>th</sup>.

The **2<sup>nd</sup> CYCLE OF RECONCILIATION** classes had 97 students who made their 1<sup>st</sup> Confessions on December 7<sup>th</sup>. **1<sup>st</sup> EUCHARIST FOR THE 2<sup>ND</sup> CYCLE** will be celebrated in the new year, on the Feast of THE PRESENTATION OF THE LORD, February 2<sup>nd</sup>. **Congratulations to all the young people who have achieved this important milestone in their journey of faith. The parish shares in your joy!**

The last and 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle of 1<sup>st</sup> Reconciliation/ 1<sup>st</sup> Eucharist for 2024/2025 begins with the Parent Information and Orientation Meeting on March 12, 2025, from 6-7 pm. Register online and register early to guarantee a space for your child. All classes are mandatory, so be sure you can attend all of them. Proof of Baptism is required.

**CONFIRMATION:** At St. Thomas More, there are 2 cycles of Confirmation preparation. **101** students & 12 adults were confirmed in the 1<sup>st</sup> Cycle on December 16. The Parent Information and Orientation Meeting for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Cycle is on Monday, March 10, 2025, at 6-7 pm. Register on line and register early to guarantee a space for your child. All classes are mandatory so be sure you can attend all of them. The child’s Proof of Baptism is required. Sponsors must be practicing Catholics and require proof of their own Confirmation. At least one parent must attend with their child. Candidates for Confirmation must be turning at least 12 in Grade 6 or older and be mature enough to participate fully in this process.



Confirmation involves an extended review of the Catholic faith and involves **PASSPORTS** and **SERVICE PROJECTS** so there’s lots to learn about! The Baptised person is sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit and is strengthened for service to the Body of Christ. It marks the shift from the formation of the young to them taking ownership of their own faith. It is a sacrament of maturity and readiness to be a confident and competent witness. The parents in attendance often report enjoying the many topics discussed just as much as the youth and are learning right along with them!



# St. Thomas More Youth & Young Families Ministries

For more information please contact [shavi.perera@caedm.ca](mailto:shavi.perera@caedm.ca)

**Dear Friends,**

My name is Shavi Perera, and I am the Youth & Family Ministry Coordinator at St. Thomas More Parish.

A little over a year ago, I moved here from Ottawa, ON, and what a year it has been! Over the past year, we have launched six ministries aimed at serving the youth and families of this parish.

Whether it's supplying excited children with endless games and crafts, challenging groups of high schoolers to venture atop a mountain to encounter God, or sitting in front of the Blessed Sacrament with your family listening to dozens of crying babies and fidgety children, this year has been filled with grace and growth.

I encourage you to take some time to familiarize yourself with our programs by viewing the posters in this bulletin and around the church.

I truly believe these ministries have helped young people discover their place in the Church, and helped families and marriages direct their creative efforts back to God in unique ways.

Finally, I must express my heartfelt gratitude. These ministries would not be possible without your ongoing support, dedicated participation, and consistent involvement. Ora pro nobis!

May the hope of the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ rest with you and your family this Christmas.



Merry Christmas,  
Shavi Perera

**ST. THOMAS MORE PARISH  
YOUTH & FAMILY MINISTRY PROGRAMS  
2024/2025**

**SOMETHING FOR EVERY AGE!**

**LITTLE KIDS** | **MOM & TOTS PLAYGROUP**  
Drop-in playgroup for moms and kids. Fellowship for the moms and playtime for our kids. Wednesday mornings, twice a month.

**GAMEZONE | GR. 2-6**  
Drop-in, drop-off fun time for kids on Thursday afternoons. Sports, games, challenges & crafts. Bring your lunch!

**JUNIOR HIGH** | **DUCE IN ALTUM | GR. 7-9**  
High-energy youth night for kids to play games, grow in their faith, and meet new friends. Saturday evenings, twice a month.

**VERSOL'ALTO | GR. 10-12**  
High School Youth Group for teens to hang out with other Catholic teens and deepen their faith. Saturday evenings, twice a month.

**YAMJAM | POST-SECONDARY+**  
Regular events for young adults! Small Groups, Praise & Worship, Adoration, Theology on Tap, Retreats and more.

**FAMILY PRAYER TIME & POTLUCK**  
Monthly gatherings for families to worship God in a welcoming, non-judgmental setting and grow in fellowship over a meal.

**PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**HIGH SCHOOL**

**FAMILIES**

**HEY PARENTS! JOIN OUR EMAIL LIST!**

Primary School Youth Ministry

STM  
GAME-ZONE

EVERY THURSDAY\*  
12:30-3:30 PM

ST. THOMAS MORE PARISH  
210 HADDOW CLOSE NW

## Young Adult Ministry Schedule | 2024

### December

- 6 Advent Holy Hour | 7pm | STM
- 13 Advent Holy Hour | 7pm | STM
- 20 Advent Holy Hour | 7pm | STM
- 29-1 Rise Up Conference | Calgary  
\*Contact for more information

Scan to join our email list



JUNIOR HIGH YOUTH MINISTRY  
GRADE 7-9

## DUCE IN ALTUM

"CAST OUT INTO THE DEEP"

Every 2nd and 4th Saturday  
5:30-8pm

Following  
4:30  
Mass

210 Haddow Close NW  
Our Lady of the Rosary  
Rm.

Scan this QR code to join our email list

HIGH-SCHOOL YOUTH MINISTRY

## Verso L'alto

2ND & 4TH SATURDAYS | 5:30-8 PM

"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life, and have it **ABUNDANTLY.**"  
- John 10:10

FAMILY ADORATION & POTLUCK  
FOR THE FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY

DECEMBER 29, 2024

2:00 ADORATION  
2:45 POTLUCK



Reflection by Deacon Tom  
**The Light and the Life of the World (John 1:1-18)**

When Jesus came into the world it was full of darkness and dead in its sin. His light scattered sin's darkness wherever he went, as the forces of evil could not stand before him and the new life he offered was for all of us. This tiny child has come to save the world, as his very name, 'Jesus', means Savior, for in him was life, and the life was the light of men.

Jesus is 'the way' and shows us the true way to go. He is 'the truth' and reveals the truth of our spiritual surroundings; and he is 'the life' and gives us true life.

To call Jesus "the light" and "the life" is another way to declare that Jesus is God. Jesus is the true 'light of the world', the source of all light and life and through him we can have light and life by following him and living like him.

We are to shine as lights in the darkness of this world by holding fast to the word of life, live in a way that shows we are lights and not allow our light be made dim by sin and by the weights of the world that hold us back from shining bright.

Let us be thankful that today Jesus became flesh and made his dwelling among us, giving us light and life, for Jesus is the 'true light' of this world, and he will be the true light of the world to come.

**PROLIFE PRAYER**

Father and maker of all, you adorn all creation with splendor and beauty, and fashion human lives in your image and likeness. Awaken in every heart reverence for the work of your hands, and renew among your people a readiness to nurture and sustain your precious gift of life. Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God forever and ever. Amen

Did you know that STM has a **Pro-Life Ministry**?  
Call 780 434 6313 to hear more about it!

For those looking for help with a difficult pregnancy situation please contact the **Gianna Centre** 780 482 5111

For those looking for help post-abortion please contact

**WOULD YOU LIKE TO PAY LESS**

**TAXES...AND SUPPORT YOUR PARISH?**

As you consider making year-end and Christmas donations, we hope that you will also consider making a gift to your parish – **St. Thomas More**. In order for your donations to be credited towards your 2024 tax receipt, they need to **be received in 2024**.

Donations made at the Masses on December 31 will be considered 2024 donations; however, any cheques & envelopes dated 2025 or actually received in 2025 will be recorded in 2025.

Donations made at the New Year's day Masses on January 1 will be considered 2025 donations. **PLEASE DO NOT PUT YOUR YEAR END DONATION IN THE COLLECTION ON JANUARY 1 AND ASK THAT IT BE CONSIDERED FOR 2024** because this is not permitted by Canadian tax law. Donations may be mailed but **MUST** be postmarked December 31 or earlier to be considered as 2024 donations.

**ELECTRONIC GIVING**

**Online via STM website – open 24 hours a day!** Go to [stm.caedm.ca](http://stm.caedm.ca), follow the **Donate Now** link and make your donation prior to **midnight on December 31**. The funds will come to the parish and you will receive your tax receipt instantly from CanadaHelps.

**E-transfers – open 24 hours a day 7 days a week!** Make your donation prior to midnight on December 31 using the following email address: [STM.etransfer@caedm.ca](mailto:STM.etransfer@caedm.ca)

- **Please update our office if you have changed your address so that you can receive your tax receipt in the mail.**
- **If you have used your old envelope number of 2023 or older, please call the office to let us know.**

**ADOREMUS**

*Let us Adore*

Join other young adults for an evening of Eucharistic Adoration, and sacred music.

**ST. JOSEPH'S BASILICA**  
7:00 – 8:30 P.M.

Schedule 2024/25

- Oct 5
- Nov 2
- Dec 7
- Jan 11
- Feb 1
- Mar 1
- Apr 5
- May 3
- Jun 7

**CREDO**

*I Believe*

Join other young adults for a series on cultural apologetics. Social and refreshments to follow.

**NEWMAN THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE**  
6:30 – 9:30 P.M.

Schedule 2024/25

- Oct 15
- Nov 19
- Dec 17
- Jan 15
- Feb 12
- Mar 12
- Apr 16
- May 14





## UPDATE ON ST. THOMAS MORE PARISH'S DIVINE MERCY PROJECT

December 2024

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

We stand at the threshold of an incredible new chapter for our community. As we prepare to bring to life a new parish, Divine Mercy, I invite each of you, our faith family, to fervently join in this mission. Divine Mercy Parish is not just about constructing a new building, but about living out our vocation to extend the reach of Christ's message and create a lasting legacy for generations to come.

The need is clear: our community here at St. Thomas More has grown to a point where a new parish is essential to meet the spiritual and sacramental needs of southwest Edmonton. From baptisms, confirmations and marriages, to pastoral services in the community, physical space, and even parking, **we have reached our capacity**. For example, we currently have the privilege of serving over a dozen Catholic schools, with our neighbors, Corpus Christi Parish supporting four schools, and Good Shepherd Parish serving six schools within their respective boundaries. While we are committed to joyfully serving to the best of our ability, continuing at our current capacity undoubtedly compromises our ability to effectively fulfill our mission as a Catholic Parish. Our new southwest expansion will enable us to better serve our faith community here at St. Thomas More, while presenting a special opportunity to carry forward the ministry of Christ.

Our vision is to establish a vibrant Catholic community that compliments St. Thomas More Parish. An extension of our mission and faith family here, Divine Mercy Parish will bring the Good News and serve the needs of rapidly growing southwest communities. Mark 28:19 instructs us to *“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations”*. We are a people sent. It is not just our privilege to lead growth beyond our walls, but also a fundamental precept of our faith, as Catholics, to continue the great commission, and grow the Church's reach.

This project is not something for “others” to handle. It belongs to us. Just as St. Thomas More stands strong today thanks to the faith and sacrifices of those who came before us, those who may never have witnessed the thriving community we

have today, we too are called to build for the future. With your support, this new parish will join St. Thomas More as a beacon of faith for southwest Edmonton.

### **Our Commitment, Our Legacy**

Like any family, as we grow, **so must our capacity** to support one another. Divine Mercy Parish will begin with the foundation that each of us helps to build. Beyond merely a financial appeal, the new Parish is a call to engage, to volunteer, and to pray together as a community. In St. Paul's words, *“Consider this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each must do as already determined, without sadness or compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. Moreover, God is able to make every grace abundant for you, so that in all things, always having all you need, you may have an abundance for every good work”* (2 Corinthians 9:6-8). As a Parish community, our strength has been to band together and represent the Hands and body of Christ within our communities, collectively nurturing our youth from infancy to older adulthood, and walking alongside each other on each stage of our journeys of faith. With our new Parish building project, we have the opportunity to once again live out our faith, building a legacy that will serve thousands of us here today, as well as countless families for decades to come. Our goal is ambitious, but together, we will accomplish it.

### **The Path Forward**

I am excited and honoured to be a part of this momentous project. Beginning in January 2025, the building project will officially kick off, and over the next few months we will be sharing more information on the project, timelines, and more specific ways you can join in. As the project roadmap rolls out ahead, I ask you to set aside some time for reflection and prayer, discerning the ways in which you can share the gifts of your time, unique talents and treasure to this journey. Together, let us take ownership of this mission as we make this vision a reality.

Thank you for everything you do to make our parish family strong. May the Good Shepherd guide us as we answer His call to expand our mission and share His love with all.

In faith and gratitude,



Fr. Mark McGee  
Pastor



Worship, Witness, and Service – these are the foundational pillars for our diocese, as identified by Archbishop Richard Smith in his pastoral letter [Living in the Word](#).

## What are the Pastoral Priorities?

Over the next three years, we will draw inspiration from Mary, our patroness, whose life exemplifies Worship, Witness, and Service. Guided by the Blessed Mother's life and vocation, our pastoral priorities are:

- **Formation for Eucharistic Worship:** We are a faith community that joyfully celebrates and better understands the Eucharist. **What have we started?** Relocating our tabernacle to the sanctuary, Word, Sacrifice, and Crucifix together, and establishing our existing chapel of repose as an adoration chapel, Lenten Mission with Archbishop Smith to preach on Eucharistic Worship on Tuesday March 18, 2025
- **Formation for Confident Witness:** We are a faith community that is confident in proclaiming the Great Commission to spread the Good News of the Gospel within our respective vocations, professions, and communities. **What have we started?** Several strong youth programs especially for primary school, junior, and senior high youth, as well as young adults and younger families, a capstone Summit Retreat for high school youth to the Rockies including a mountain-top mass with adoration, and liturgical ministries workshops, especially jr. server workshops.
- **Formation for Service to Families and Marriage:** We are a faith community that accompanies families, fully recognizing the centrality of marriage and family in God's plan. **What have we started?** A later marriage preparation course to assist couples achieve a sacramental marriage, a 10-week marriage enrichment course that completed this past Advent season, and a planned 1-day "**Christ at the Center**" marriage retreat on February 22<sup>nd</sup>.



A Jubilee Year is a significant moment in the life of the Church in which she celebrates a year of favour. Proclaimed every 25 years since the 13th century, the celebration of jubilee years typically includes pilgrimages, processions, celebrations of Mass, and an invitation to the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

In the Archdiocese of Edmonton, there will be a number of opportunities throughout the year to embark on the "Pilgrimage of Hope," including:

**Solemn Opening of the Jubilee Year - Holy Mass at St. Joseph's Basilica. Sunday, December 29, 10:30 am.** Celebrated by Archbishop Richard Smith. **All are welcome!**

**National Shrine to the Canadian Martyrs Relics Tour. Wednesday, January 22.** Sacred Heart Church of the First Peoples (9:00am-12:00pm) and Corpus Christi Parish, Edmonton (2:00-8:00pm).

**"I Believe..."** A seven-part catechesis series on the Nicene Creed, marking the 1700th Anniversary of the Council of Nicaea. **Starts Thursday, February 13** with sessions in March, April, May, September, October, November. Presented in partnership with Newman Theological College and St. Joseph's College-University of Alberta.

More information will be provided throughout the Jubilee year at <https://caedm.ca/jubilee>





## Father Mark's 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Priestly Ordination: A Witness to the Joy of the Sacrificial Life of a Priest

*“Celebrating 25 years to the priesthood is no small thing. It is an invitation for Fr. Mark, and all of us, to pause and reflect on the great gift the priesthood is to the church.*

*Fr. Mark shared with me the other day: ‘There is no priesthood without community – there are no orphans in the church.’*

*Every vocation, including a vocation to the priesthood, is a way of joining our heart, mind, soul and will to Jesus Christ who prayed to the Father from the Garden before his crucifixion: ‘not my will, but your will be done.’*

*Fr. Mark shared with me that the words of Jesus, ‘You did not choose me, but I chose you,’ have a profound meaning for him.*

*St. Augustine reflects on the role of a priest called to be a faithful shepherd to the people he is called to serve. Typical of St. Augustine, he laments those shepherds who are not faithful to this task, but he concludes in one of these readings:*

*‘Which shepherds are dead?*

*Those who seek what is theirs and not what is Christ’s.*

*But will there be shepherds who seek what is Christ’s and not what is theirs, and will they be found?*

*There will indeed be such shepherds, and they will indeed be found; they are not lacking, nor will they be lacking in the future.’”*

Excerpts from Fr. Kevin McGee’s Mass of Thanksgiving Homily Sept 26, 2024

*“For must not some one of us say something about God, about eternal life, about the majesty of grace in our sanctified being; must not some one of us speak of sin, the judgement and mercy of God?”*

*- Karl Rahner*



*Then Mary said, “Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.”*

*Luke 1.38*





Merry Christmas!!

from all of us at

St. Thomas More Parish Office



We, the Administration Team of STM would like to extend our blessings and the peace of Christ to all those in our parish, who make working here such a joy! Thank you for your ongoing support and commitment to this parish in both practical and spiritual ways throughout the year. We hope to continue to make the parish and the parish office a place where you feel at home. We love our parish family and hope to serve you as best we can. Please feel free to stop by the office, we would love to meet you. Joyous Christmas wishes to all of you!



Fr. Avi  
God  
Fr. Job  
Olivia  
Don Ton Sudbleas  
Paul  
Fr Mark  
Selwa  
Merida  
Diana  
Randy  
Tracy  
Johanna



Thank You

Dear Parishioners, please allow me to extend to you a prayer that the grace and blessings of this Holy Season remain with you throughout the New Year. It is an honour and joy to serve here as your Pastor! I am so grateful for all the exceptional ways so many of you participate in our parish life, especially in this beautiful Advent/ Christmas season. You inspire me by your faith and dedication to St. Thomas More parish. I thank all of you who by your liturgical ministries bring such depth and meaning to our collective worship. I am also hugely grateful for our gifted staff, Deacons, and for Fr. Avinash, our Associate Pastor. This is a very busy parish with many responsibilities and they all do exceptional work with great care and concern for everyone. I am deeply grateful for all of you. Your participation in this community is much appreciated. Joyful Christmas wishes to you, to your families and all you hold dear.

God Bless you!

FR. Mark

*"Christmas waves a magic wand over this world, and behold, everything is softer and more beautiful." -Norman Vincent Peale*



Merry Christmas

Thank you to everyone who has continued to support the financial needs of our parish with **Pre-Authorized Debit (PAD)** or by bringing your **Sunday Giving Envelopes** to the church. St. Thomas More is also set up to accept donations via **INTERAC E-Transfer** at [STM.etransfer@caedm.ca](mailto:STM.etransfer@caedm.ca)

Approximately **50% of the financial support** for our parish comes from PAD and other electronic giving! Consider **switching** to PAD to contribute from your treasure to support St. Thomas More Parish.

The **WINDOW** is the weekly electronic bulletin of the Catholic Archdiocese of Edmonton. WINDOW is the single source of news from the Archdiocese – a ‘window’ into our Catholic community.

Visit [caedm.ca/window/](http://caedm.ca/window/) to view the most recent publication.

