

Saint Monica-Saint Thomas the Apostle Parish

www.smstaparishsf.org

First Sunday of Lent ~ February 22, 2026

St. Monica Catholic Church

470 24th Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94121
Tel: 415-751-5275

Office Hours:
Monday - Friday
9:00 AM - 3:30 PM



St. Monica Catholic Church MASS SCHEDULE

Saturday Vigil
5:00 PM

Sunday
8:00 AM (Vietnamese)

11:00 AM

Weekdays
8:30 AM (Monday-Saturday)

Rosary
8:00 AM (Monday-Saturday)

Confessions
4:00 PM - 4:40 PM Saturday

Administrator

Rev. Ben Rosado
pastor@smstaparishsf.org

In Residence

St. Monica Rectory
Rev. Paulinus Iwuji, SMMM, Ph.D.
Catholic Chaplain VA Hospital

St. Thomas the Apostle Rectory
Rev. Te Van Nguyen
Vietnamese Ministry
Catholic Chaplain for UCSF

Rev. Andrew Spyrow
Vicar for Clergy

Deacon

Rev. Mr. Kristopher Compagno
dcnxristopher@gmail.com

Parish Staff

Administrative Assistant
Jessica Montgomery
parishoffice@smstaparishsf.org

Music Ministry
Alix Jerinic
alixjerinic@gmail.com

St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic Church

3835 Balboa Street
San Francisco, CA 94121



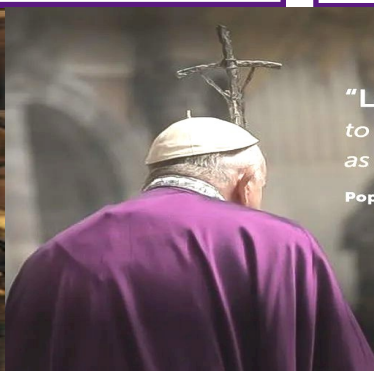
St. Thomas the Apostle Church MASS SCHEDULE

Sunday
9:00 AM

Weekdays
8:30 AM
(Monday, Wednesday,
and Friday)

First Saturday
Mass
8:30 AM

First Saturday Adoration
9:00 AM - 10:00 AM



**"Lent is a time of grace
to the extent that we listen to Him
as He speaks to us."**

Pope Francis, Message for Lent 2023





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Dear brothers and sisters,

God has given us the grace of another Season of Lent, this sacred time to draw closer to God than we have in the past. To do so, we can “give up” and “take up” certain activities. We are to enter into a deeper relationship with God by what we do and do not do during these 40 days of journeying with Jesus. We walk through Lent with him who sacrificed for us.



I am certain we are all familiar with the practice of giving something up during Lent. For some, this could be chocolate, coffee, meat, social media consumption, watching television, or a host of things we normally do, or maybe do too much. By giving up these things for Lent, we open up the opportunity to do something for the Lord.

We give up things for Lent, so that we can also take up holy and good activities in their place. We can free up time to pray more than usual, to fast so that we have something more to give to those in need, and we can use our time to serve others in a variety of ways. This is not just good for those in need, but pleases God, and is good for us. It stretches our hearts to love and give in a generous way, to give as Jesus does.

Let us take some time to reflect on what this year’s Lent can become. It can be the best Lent we have ever had if we enter into it with all our heart, mind, and strength. It can be a Lent where we discover how near God is to us as we make efforts to draw near to him. Let us begin!

Fr. Ben

“In the face of my darkness, You are light. In the face of my mortality, You are life.”
~ Saint Gregory of Narek (Feast Day February 27th)

***Welcome to all who worship with our parish family,
whether long time residents or newly arrived in the parish.***

***If you are not registered, please fill out this form and put it in the collection basket or
mail it to the Rectory.***

Name _____

Address _____ City _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

☐ New Parishioner ☐ New Address ☐ New Phone Number ☐ Remove from List

☐ Send Sunday Envelopes

☐ St. Monica ☐ St. Thomas the Apostle

You may register online at: <https://www.osvhub.com/smstaparishsf/directory/register>



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LENTEN FAST AND ABSTINENCE

As in the past, the following regulations are in place for abstaining and fasting during Lent:



- **ABSTINENCE:** Everyone 14 years of age and older is bound to abstain from meat on the Fridays of Lent and Good Friday.

- **FAST:** Everyone 18 years of age and older but under the age of 60 is also bound to fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday.

The law of fasting allows only one full meal a day, but does not prohibit taking some food during the day, so long as this does not constitute another full meal. Drinking liquids during the day is permitted. When health or ability to work would be seriously affected, the law does not oblige. In the spirit of penance, the faithful should not lightly excuse themselves from this obligation.

PARISH LENTEN SCHEDULE

St. Monica Church

Fridays - Stations of the Cross - 9:00 AM (following our 8:30 AM Mass)

St. Thomas the Apostle Church

Fridays - Confessions at 5:30 PM

Stations of the Cross at 6:00 PM followed by our Lenten Soup Supper

If you'd like to sign up to bring soup or bread to one or more of the Lenten Friday Suppers, please contact Fr. Ben or the Parish Office.

All are welcome. We hope to see you there!

HELP OUR CHURCHES BLOOM FOR EASTER!



As we approach Easter, we are beginning to accept offerings for the purchase of flowers for Easter for our two churches. You may use the Easter Flower envelope in your envelope packet or by picking up an envelope on one of the tables in church. You may make an offering in honor/memory of a loved one, and we will place the envelopes on the altars of our churches during Easter. Please drop off the completed envelope in the regular collection or at the parish office. Additionally, you may also donate online by using the QR code:

Thank you for your generosity.





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GOSPEL REFLECTION

As we enter the season of Lent, the Church invites us into 40 days of intentional reflection, repentance, and renewal. These readings remind us that Lent is not simply about giving something up, but about making room for God. This season calls us to look honestly at how we are using the time entrusted to us and whether our daily choices reflect trust in the Lord.

Our first reading from Genesis takes us back to the beginning and reveals the goodness of God's original design. Out of love, God formed humanity, breathed life into us, and placed Adam and Eve in a garden rich with beauty and abundance. Their life with God was marked by trust, gratitude, and attentiveness to His presence. Time itself was a gift that was ordered around relationship with the Creator.

That harmony was disrupted when doubt entered their hearts. Tempted by the serpent, Adam and Eve questioned God's goodness and turned their attention away from Him. In that moment, they chose their own judgment over God's word. This same temptation remains familiar to us. When our time becomes filled with distractions, busyness, or self-reliance, it becomes easier to lose sight of God's presence and purposes in our lives.

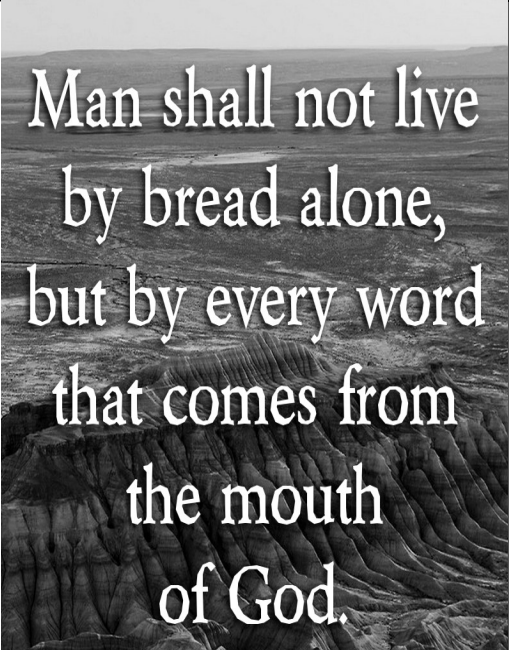
In our second reading, St. Paul reminds us that God did not abandon humanity to this broken pattern. While disobedience led to sin and separation, obedience leads to restoration. Through Jesus Christ, the new Adam, God offers mercy, healing, and new life. Conversion is possible because grace is given. Lent invites us to slow down long enough to receive that grace and allow it to reshape how we live.

The Gospel then shows us what faithful stewardship looks like in practice. Jesus enters the desert, fasts for 40 days, and confronts temptation directly. He does not rush past this time of testing or seek to escape it. Instead, He remains rooted in Scripture and attentive to the Father's will. By giving time to prayer, silence, and trust, Jesus reveals that spiritual strength grows where time is intentionally placed in God's hands.

Lent invites us to follow this same path. It is a season to examine whether our schedules leave room for prayer, Scripture, and quiet attentiveness to God. This may require setting aside certain distractions or habits so that time can be reclaimed for what matters most. When we intentionally place God at the center of our days, gratitude deepens, trust grows, and stewardship becomes a way of life.

By embracing these 40 days with purpose, we prepare our hearts to celebrate Easter renewed, restored, and ready to live more fully as disciples of Christ.

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Man shall not live
by bread alone,
but by every word
that comes from
the mouth
of God.

WE INVITE ALL OUR PARISHIONERS TO SPEND TIME IN FELLOWSHIP

ST. MONICA CHURCH - FRIENDSHIP SUNDAY Friendship Sunday will be held on the first Sunday of each month following the 11 a.m. Mass. To volunteer, please e-mail Fr. Ben.

ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE CHURCH - SOCIAL SUNDAY will be held on the 2nd Sunday of every month in the church's vestibule after the 9 a.m. Mass. To volunteer please e-mail Fr. Ben.



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Mass Intentions

St. Monica			
Mon.	02/23	8:30 AM	Joe Daly †
Tue.	02/24	8:30 AM	Parishioners
Wed.	02/25	8:30 AM	Parishioners
Thu.	02/26	8:30 AM	Tong Choi Ngan †
Fri.	02/27	8:30 AM	Parishioners
Sat.	02/28	8:30 AM	Parishioners
		5:00 PM	Parishioners
Sun.	03/01	11:00 AM	Parishioners

St. Thomas the Apostle			
Mon.	02/23	8:30 AM	Parishioners
Tue.	02/24		No Mass
Wed.	02/25	8:30 AM	Parishioners
Thu.	02/26		No Mass
Fri.	02/27	8:30 AM	Parishioners
Sat.	02/28	8:30 AM	No Mass
Sun.	03/01	9:00 AM	Kathleen Hayes †

Please be advised bulletin collection reporting amounts will be delayed because of Presidents' Day and Mission Publication's deadlines. Thank you for your understanding.

Request a Mass Intention

Mass intentions for 2026 may be offered in honor of loved ones at either St. Monica or St. Thomas the Apostle Churches. For scheduling and additional information, you can either stop by or mail the parish office at 470 24th Ave. SF, CA 94121 or email (parishoffice@smstaparishsf.org). Please list all your Mass intentions and requested dates. You can also call Jessica at 415-751-5275.

BAPTISM INQUIRIES

For baptismal inquiries please contact Jessica Montgomery at (415) 751-5275 or email parishoffice@smstaparishsf.org to sign up and schedule an appointment with Fr. Ben.

All are welcome to join us
Monday - Saturday at 8:00 AM
to pray the Rosary at St. Monica Church.

&

All are welcome to join us
on the First Saturday of every month for
Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament
from 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM at
St. Thomas the Apostle Church.

ST. MONICA & ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE PRAY FOR US