



Saint Monica Saint Thomas the Apostle Parish

St. Monica Catholic Church

470 24th Ave., San Francisco, CA 94121

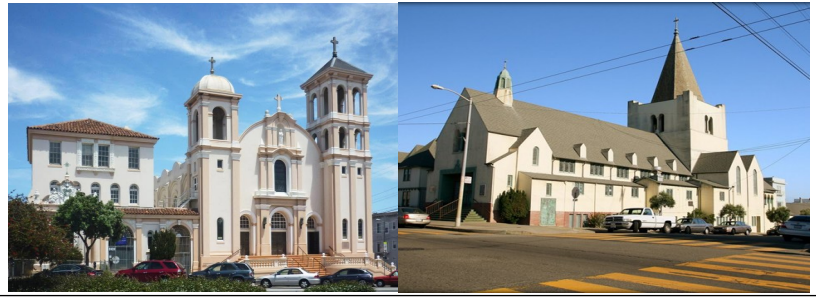
Telephone: (415)751-5275

www.smstaparishsf.org

Office Hours: Mon-Fri 9am-5:30pm

St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic Church

3835 Balboa St., San Francisco, CA 94121



Augustine was extraordinarily intelligent and ambitious, but as a young man he abandoned the Catholic faith. He embraced Manichaeism, lived for years with a woman outside of marriage, and sought success, pleasure, and intellectual prestige. Monica watched the son she loved move farther and farther away from the faith in which she had raised him.

Augustine tells us that his mother wept for his spiritual death more intensely than mothers normally weep for the physical death of their children. Yet Monica never gave up. She prayed, fasted, wept, and continued asking God for his conversion, even when there seemed to be little human reason to believe that her prayers would be answered.

At one point, Monica begged a bishop to speak with Augustine and convince him of his errors. The bishop refused because Augustine was still too proud and advised her instead to continue praying. Moved by her perseverance, he finally reassured her with the famous words traditionally remembered as: **"It cannot be that the son of these tears should perish."**

This is Saint Monica's first great lesson for us. Many parents suffer because their children no longer practice the faith, attend Mass, or live according to what they were taught. There may come a time when we must speak less to our children about God and speak more to God about our children, trusting in the mysterious power of His grace.

Augustine eventually decided to leave North Africa for Italy. Knowing that Monica opposed his departure, he deceived her and secretly sailed away while she spent the night praying in a chapel near the sea. To Monica, this must have seemed like a disaster: after years of prayers and tears, her son was escaping from her and apparently moving even farther away from God.

Yet Providence was already answering her prayer. Augustine went to Milan, where he encountered Saint Ambrose. He began listening to the great bishop's preaching and gradually discovered that the Catholic faith he had rejected was far more profound than he had imagined. His intellectual objections began to disappear, although his heart still resisted conversion.

Finally, during his famous struggle in the garden at Milan, Augustine heard a child's voice repeating, *"Tolle, lege"*—"Take and read." He opened the Scriptures and read Saint Paul's exhortation to abandon the works of darkness and put on the Lord Jesus Christ. Augustine surrendered to grace, and at the Easter Vigil of 387 Saint Ambrose baptized him.

Imagine Monica witnessing that baptism after so many years of prayer. What had appeared to be a disaster—Augustine's departure for Italy—had actually brought him to Milan, to Saint Ambrose, and ultimately to Christ. Saint Monica therefore teaches us never to judge the whole action of Providence according to what we can see at the present moment.

Sometimes we see only the person we love moving farther away, while God already sees the road by which He will bring that person home. We should never presume to decide how another person's story will end. God can act where we cannot act, open doors we cannot open, and bring good even from circumstances that appear hopeless.

After Augustine's baptism, mother and son began their journey back toward North Africa. They stopped at Ostia, near

Clergy

Rev. Javier O. Ravasi,

Parochial Administrator

pastor@smstaparishsf.org

In Residence:

**Rev. Paulinus Iwuji, SMMM,
Ph.D.**

VA Hospital Chaplain

St. Thomas Apostle Rectory

Rev. Te Van Nguyen

Vietnamese Ministry

UCSF Chaplain

St. Thomas Apostle Rectory

Deacons:

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Ray Moreno

Maintenance

Joe Goebel

Custodian

Andres Montufar

Office Volunteer

Mass Times

St. Monica

Sunday

11:00am

Saturday

5:00pm (Vigil)

Weekdays

Mon-Fri 8:00am

Confessions

Mon-Fri before and after Mass

Saturday 4:20pm

Sunday after Mass

St. Thomas the Apostle

Sunday

7:30am (Vietnamese)

9:00am

Weekdays

Mon, Wed, Fri 8:30am

First Saturday

8:30am

First Saturday Adoration

9:00am - 10:00am

PASTOR'S LETTER



From August 25 to 27, I preached a triduum at St. Monica Parish in honor of our patroness, Saint Monica. During those three days, following especially the testimony of her son Saint Augustine in his *Confessions*, we reflected on her life, her perseverance in prayer,

and her extraordinary trust in God. I would like to offer here a brief summary of those reflections.

Saint Monica was born in North Africa around the year 331 into a Christian family. She married Patricius, a pagan man of difficult temperament, whose conversion she eventually witnessed through her patience, prayer, and example. Yet the greatest suffering of her life would not concern her husband, but her son Augustine.

August 30, 2026: Twenty-second Sunday in Ordinary Time

Rome, where they shared one of the most beautiful moments recounted in the *Confessions*. Standing together at a window overlooking a garden, they spoke about eternal life and contemplated what the joy of heaven must be like.

For years they had been spiritually separated: Monica believed while Augustine rejected the faith; she prayed while he resisted. Now they were united not only as mother and son, but in the same Catholic faith. Monica told Augustine that there was nothing more she desired from this life. She had wanted to see him become a Catholic before she died, and God had granted her prayer.

Shortly afterward, Monica became ill. When Augustine and his brother worried about where she should be buried, she told them not to concern themselves with her body. She made only one request: **"Remember me at the altar of the Lord, wherever you may be."** She did not ask for a monument or to be buried in her homeland; she asked for the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

More than sixteen centuries later, during our triduum at St. Monica Parish, we did precisely what she asked: we remembered her at the altar of the Lord. We also placed there the intentions closest to her heart: our families, mothers and fathers, and especially those sons and daughters who have wandered away from God and His Church.

Saint Monica could never have imagined, during the years when she wept for Augustine, everything God would eventually make of her son. That wandering young man would become a priest, a bishop, a Father and Doctor of the Church, and one of the greatest saints in Christian history. **We too do not know what God can make of the person for whom we are praying today.**

Saint Monica therefore teaches us never to give up on a soul. We must pray, sacrifice, wait, and trust, leaving the hour of conversion to God. May she intercede for our families and especially for those who are far from the Church, and may she obtain for us the grace to meet them one day in the eternal joy of heaven.

Fr. Javier Olivera Ravasi, S.E.

CALLING ALL SINGERS

The Parish is forming a new choir and we are looking for volunteers who would like to sing for the 11AM Mass. Prior choral experience is not required, but greatly appreciated. Most important, however, is a desire to learn and to foster a spirit of reverence and love to Almighty God and among our fellow brothers.

If you are interested in joining, auditions will be held on Sunday, September 6th after the 11AM Mass or by appointment. To schedule an audition or to learn more information, please send an email to pastor@smstaparishsf.org



Sunday Gospel reading: Matthew 16: 21-27

"From that time Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised. And Peter took him and began to rebuke him, saying, "God forbid, Lord! This shall never happen to you." But he turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance to me; for you are not on the side of God, but of men."

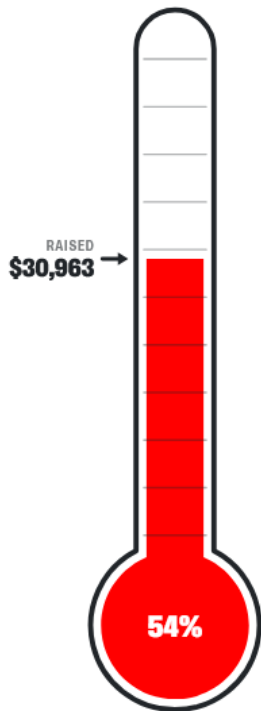
Then Jesus told his disciples, "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. For what will it profit a man, if he gains the whole world and forfeits his life? Or what shall a man give in return for his life? For the Son of man is to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay every man for what he has done."





Archdiocese Annual Appeal

Parish Goal: \$57,058



Clergy Support — 35%

Funds priest formation, retreats, sabbaticals, and retirement needs, plus the Office of Vocations, which supports discernment for the priesthood, diaconate, and religious life.

Parish Ministry & Schools — 25%

Supports Catholic schools, Faith Formation and Youth Ministry (catechesis, sacramental prep, OCIA), the Office of Worship, and Marriage & Family Life programs.

Social Ministry — 23%

Funds hospital and prison chaplains, the Office of Human Life and Dignity, Restorative Justice, Ethnic Ministries, and the Tribunal.

Universal Church & Communications — 17%

Supports the Holy See, USCCB, California Catholic Conference, and the Archdiocese's communications, including *Catholic San Francisco* magazine.

Archdiocesan Annual Appeal 2026 Goal: \$6,450,000

To learn more about the Archdiocese Annual Appeal, and to donate, please visit <https://sfarch.org/aaa/>



ARCHDIOCESE OF
SAN FRANCISCO

EL COMBATE ESPIRITUAL 2026

CONFERENCIA DE HOMBRES CATÓLICOS DEL ÁREA DE LA BAHÍA DE
SAN FRANCISCO

Septiembre 12

8:30am - 3:30pm

Iglesia Star of the Sea

Inscripción:

7:30am - 8:30am

Costo:

\$30 (hasta el 7 de septiembre)

\$40 (día del evento)

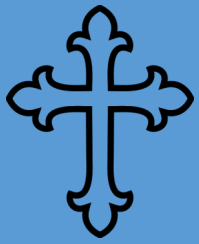
Registrarse en www.sfarch.org/hombres

CONFERENCISTA PRINCIPAL:

PADRE JAVIER OLIVERA RAVASI

CONFERENCISTA ADICIONAL:

PADRE GERARDO VASQUEZ



Children's Catechism Classes
Registration is open for classes preparing children for **First Holy Communion and Confirmation**. Classes begin **Sunday, September 20, 2026**. We encourage all parents of catechism-age children to register soon. To register or for more information, contact Terry at (415) 465-2133.



Order of Christian Initiation for Adults

Interested in becoming Catholic, or completing the sacraments of initiation? The OCIA program prepares adults for entry into the Church. Email pastor@smstaparishsf.org for more information.

Liturgical Calendar

Sun 08/30	22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time
Mon 08/31	Monday in Ordinary Time
Tues 09/01	Tuesday in Ordinary Time
Wed 09/02	Wednesday in Ordinary Time
Thurs 09/03	St. Gregory the Great, pope and doctor
Fri 09/04	Friday in Ordinary Time
Sat 09/05	St. Teresa of Calcutta, virgin

New to the Parish?

Sign up to be an official parishioner and for Friday Adoration



Adorers Needed

For Friday Adoration

Every Friday from 9:00am to 5:00pm



Our Lord is waiting for you!

What is Adoration? What is a Holy Hour?

Adoration is a Catholic devotional practice of spending time in the presence of Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. It is a practice that finds its seeds in the earliest days of the Church. To spend a Holy Hour with Him is to fulfill His request to St. Peter in Gethsemane: "What? Could you not watch one hour with me?" (Mt 26:40). A plenary indulgence is granted when you go to Adoration for at least a half hour (and you are detached from sin, go to Confession, receive the Eucharist and pray for the intentions of our Holy Father the Pope).

Sunday Collection

Collection	Sunday Collection
St. Monica	
English	\$1,236
St. Thomas the Apostle	
English	\$1,272
Vietnamese	\$424

Mass Intentions

	St. Monica		St. Thomas the Apostle	
Sunday 08/30	11:00am	Mercedes Yazdani	9:00am	Parishioners
Monday 08/31	8:00am	† Lucio Aguirre	8:30am	Lai Sung Lam
Tuesday 09/01	8:00am	† Ela Kalek		No Mass
Wednesday 09/02	8:00am	† Arthur Park	8:30am	Alliance Business Trip
Thursday 09/03	8:00am	† Seby Pereira		No Mass
Friday 09/04	8:00am	† Kurt + Elipidio Ramos	8:30am	Anthony Vella
Saturday 09/05	5:00pm	† Parishioners	8:30am	† Alex Gonsalves