

Saint Thomas More Catholic Church

A Lenten Spiritual Series



February 20 – March 20, 2024
Tuesday through Friday

Dear Friends,

As Lent approaches, we warmly invite you to participate in our enriching Series of Lenten Sessions. Designed to deepen your spiritual journey, these sessions offer unique insights into faith, scripture, and community. We are excited to present a series of discussions led by knowledgeable speakers who will share their expertise in various aspects of spirituality, sacraments, social justice, and biblical teachings. Join us in this journey of faith and fellowship to enhance your connection with Jesus and His teachings. We look forward to welcoming you and sharing this meaningful experience together.

Fr. Thai Le

SERIES OVERVIEW

- The Lenten Series runs from **February 20 to March 20, 2024**, in both English and Spanish.
- See the Calendar on pages 4 and 5 for the complete Lenten Series schedule.
- Each session includes a PowerPoint presentation, discussion, and a Q&A segment.

REGISTRATION

- Register at the door for \$5 per course and bring a guest for free.
 - *Alternatively, obtain a Lenten Series Pass for \$50 to access all courses.*
- Proceeds will be used to support the parish's educational ministry:

SESSION DETAILS AND DESCRIPTIONS

Unlocking Our Inner Potential: A Journey to Peace and Fulfillment

Fr. Thai Le **Tuesday, February 20** **7:00 PM – 8:30 PM** **St. Thomas More—Church**

Join Fr. Thai for an enlightening exploration into the depths of our being. Discover our inherent capacities for thought, design, hope, and living righteously. This session will guide you through understanding the potentials and practices that lead to a life imbued with peace, joy, and fulfillment. Embrace this opportunity to deepen your understanding of yourself and your spiritual journey.

Transforming Suffering into Peace and Confidence

Fr. Thai Le **Thursday, February 22** **7:00 PM – 8:30 PM** **St. Thomas More—Hall**

In this insightful follow-up to the previous session, Fr. Thai addresses a profound question: Why do some people persist in suffering? Explore the impact of constant suffering on our peace, joy, and enthusiasm in life. Fr. Thai will discuss alternatives to enduring suffering, demonstrating how changing our thoughts can help us reclaim the peace, trust, and confidence we value. Delve into understanding the potential outcomes of life's pain and thoughts, and learn practical ways to transform suffering into a more fulfilling life experience.

Adam and Eve in the Lens of Evolution: Unraveling Truths and Myths

Fr. Dave Heney **Thursday, February 29** **7:00 PM – 8:30 PM** **St. Thomas More—Church**

Join Fr. Dave in a thought-provoking exploration of the Adam and Eve story and its place within the context of evolution and faith. This session delves into questions like: Are the Biblical narratives in harmony with evolutionary science? What does the Catholic Church actually teach about human origins, and how does evolution integrate with this understanding? Fr. Dave will elucidate why the story of Adam and Eve is perhaps the most crucial and misunderstood narrative in the Bible, offering key insights into our fundamental beliefs about human existence.

Exploring the Jewish Foundations of the Eucharist

Fr. Leo Ortega **Friday, March 1** **7:15 – 8:45 PM** **St. Thomas More—Church**

Delve into the origins of the Christian Eucharist with Fr. Leo as he reveals its roots in Jewish traditions. This session will explore how the Eucharist is a synthesis of the Jewish synagogue service and the Passover meal, adapted by early Jewish Christians. Understanding our Jewish-Christian heritage is essential to comprehending the Eucharist and the broader context of Christianity.

The Power of Communication in Fostering Relationships and Prosperity

Fr. Bao Nguyen **Wednesday, March 6** **7:00 PM – 8:30 PM** **St. Thomas More—Church**

Explore the vital role of communication in nurturing relationships and achieving life prosperity. This session focuses on the intricacies of verbal and nonverbal communication, emphasizing how empathy and understanding are affected when

communication fails or becomes avoidant. Fr. Bao will discuss the concept of divine communion and its influence on developing humility, patience, and enthusiasm in our interactions with others.

The Challenge of Loneliness: A Faith-Based Approach

Msgr. Austin Doran *Thursday, March 7* **7:00 PM – 8:30 PM** *St. Thomas More—Hall*

Addressing the United States Surgeon General's health advisory on the epidemic of loneliness, Fr. Austin Doran will explore this issue in the context of our faith in Christ Jesus. This session will delve into understanding loneliness in society, our communities, families, and within ourselves, guided by our communion with Christ. Fr. Austin will offer insights on living more connectedly with the Lord and others, fostering a culture of caring and belonging, and how our faith can help us confront and mitigate loneliness.

The Eucharist: The Heart of Catholic Life and Sacraments

Fr. Leo Ortega *Friday, March 8* **7:15 PM – 8:45 PM** *St. Thomas More—Church*

Fr. Leo will guide participants through the Catholic Church's teachings on the Eucharist, the spiritual cornerstone of faith. This session will highlight the Eucharist's role in the apostolate and its connection to other Sacraments, emphasizing its significance as not just a sacrament but as Christ Himself.

Embracing a God-Intended Healthy Life: Mind, Body, and Spirit

Rosa Linda *Tuesday, March 12* **7:00 PM – 8:30 PM** *St. Thomas More—Church*

Discover the pathway to a healthy spirit, mind, and body as Linda delves into the importance of self-care and cultivation. This session will focus on understanding and managing diabetes, dispelling myths, and empowering attendees with knowledge about its development and control. Learn practical strategies to manage diabetes effectively, ensuring it doesn't control your life.

Abrazando una Vida Saludable como Dios la Pretendió: Espíritu, Cuerpo y Mente

Rosa Linda *Miércoles 13 de marzo* **7:00 PM – 8:30 PM** *St. Thomas More—Iglesia*

Descubre el camino hacia un espíritu, mente y cuerpo saludables mientras Linda profundiza en la importancia del autocuidado y la cultivación. Esta sesión se centrará en entender y manejar la diabetes, disipar mitos y empoderar a los asistentes con conocimientos sobre su desarrollo y control. Aprende estrategias prácticas para manejar la diabetes de manera efectiva, asegurando que no controle tu vida.

Entendiendo el Ayuno y la Abstinencia en Cuaresma: Más Allá de la Disciplina Física

Dc. Rogelio Gracia *Thursday, March 14* **7:00 PM – 8:30 PM** *St. Thomas More—Salon*

Acompaña al Diácono Rogelio para explorar el significado más profundo del ayuno y la abstinencia en Cuaresma. Esta sesión va más allá de la práctica tradicional de abstenerse de comer carne los viernes, profundizando en cómo el ayuno puede transformar nuestros pensamientos y actitudes hacia Dios y hacia los demás. Este enriquecedor curso, impartido en español, ofrecerá perspectivas sobre el crecimiento espiritual durante la Cuaresma.

The Eucharist: A Source of Sacramental Grace

Fr. Leo Ortega *Friday, March 15* **7:15 PM – 8:45 PM** *St. Thomas More—Church*

In this session, Fr. Leo will delve into the Eucharist as the fundamental source of Catholic life, drawing on the teachings of St. John Paul II. Understand how "The Church lives by the Eucharist," as articulated by St. John Paul II, revealing the fullness and extraordinary impact of this sacrament on the Catholic faith and practice.

Overcoming Life's Challenges: Managing Negative Emotions

Fr. Thai Le *Wednesday, March 20* **7:00 PM – 8:30 PM** *St. Thomas More—Church*

In this session, Fr. Thai will address how to cope with life's adversities and control negative emotions. He will explore strategies to learn from adverse outcomes, plan for the future, and avoid repeating past mistakes. Fr. Thai will share essential approaches to maintaining balance and positivity when faced with challenging thoughts and feelings.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
February 19	February 20	February 21	February 22	February 23
	Inner Components Fr. Thai Le <i>St. Thomas More—Church</i> 7 PM		Transforming Suffering Fr. Thai Le <i>St. Thomas More—Hall</i> 7 PM	6:00 pm Station of the Cross Lenten Soup
February 26	February 27	February 28	February 29	March 1
			Adam and Eve Evolution Fr. Dave Heney <i>St. Thomas More—Church</i> 7 PM	6:00 pm Station of the Cross Lenten Soup Foundation of the Eucharist Fr. Leo Ortega <i>St. Thomas More—Church</i> 7:15 PM
March 4	March 5	March 6	March 7	March 8
		Power of Communication Fr. Bao Nguyen <i>St. Thomas More—Church</i> 7 PM	The Challenge of Loneliness Msgr. Austin Doran <i>St. Thomas More—Hall</i> 7 PM	6:00 pm Station of the Cross Lenten Soup Heart of Catholic Fr. Leo Ortega <i>St. Thomas More—Church</i> 7:15 PM
March 11	March 12	March 13	March 14	March 15
	Intended Healthy Life Rosa Linda <i>St. Thomas More—Church</i> 7 PM	La Vida Saludable Rosa Linda <i>St. Thomas More—Church</i> 7 PM	Ayuno de Cuaresma Dc. Rogelio Gracia <i>St. Thomas More—Hall</i> 7 PM	6:00 pm Station of the Cross Lenten Soup Sacramental Graces Fr. Leo Ortega <i>St. Thomas More—Church</i> 7:15 PM
March 18	March 19	March 20	March 21	March 22
		Overcoming Life's Challenges Fr. Thai Le <i>St. Thomas More—Church</i> 7 PM		6:00 pm Station of the Cross Lenten Soup



Born and raised in the Philippines, **Fr. Leo Ortega**, studied Occupational Therapy at the University of the Philippines, where he received his Bachelor of Science degree. He continued his studies in the same field at the University of Southern California receiving his Master's degree in 1995. As a board-certified occupational therapist, he has worked in neuro-rehabilitation for many years. He entered St. John's Seminary in 2002 and was ordained for the Archdiocese of Los Angeles in 2008. Fr. Ortega served in the following parishes: St. Thomas the Apostle, Los Angeles, 2008-2012 (Associate Pastor); St. Stephen Martyr, Monterey Park, 2012-2016 (Pastor). In 2016, he was sent to Rome to pursue doctoral studies in Dogmatic Theology at the Pontificia Università della Santa Croce. He successfully defended his doctoral dissertation in January 2021, entitled: *The Sign of Kenosis in the Theology of David N. Power: Its Resonances with the Argentine Theology of the People, The Church of the Poor*.



Msgr. Austin Doran was born in Dublin Ireland. His family came to Los Angeles when he was four years old. He attended Catholic schools in Los Angeles, and then the University of Southern California. At age 20 he entered St. John's Seminary in Camarillo and was ordained in 1978 as a priest of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. After eight years serving as associate pastor in several parishes, he was asked to undertake graduate studies in Spiritual Theology, and then served for eight years as Director of Spiritual Formation at St. John's Seminary. From 1998-2010 he served as pastor of Our Lady of Grace Church in Encino, CA, and then served 12 years as pastor of St. Anthony Church in San Gabriel, CA. He retired in July of 2022, and now resides and helps as a priest at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church in Rowland Heights, CA.



Rosa Linda (AKA Linda) Gallegos, RN, CDCES, has been a Registered Nurse and certified Diabetes Care and Education Specialist for the last 30 years and has been in the medical field for 42 years. Presently, she works for Martin Luther King Community Healthcare. Linda's previous works included LA County General Hospital, Glendale Memorial, LA County Research in Diabetes, Scan Health Plan, Harbor UCLA Hospital, Health Care Partners, and Optum. She covers almost all

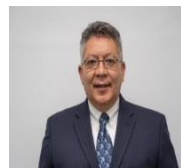
aspects of diabetes, from gestational, teenagers, adults, and seniors. She teaches all aspects of diabetes, from medications, insulins, glucose monitors, glucose sensors, and insulin pumps. Under her scope of practice, she teaches nutrition.



Fr. Dave Heney is the pastor of St. Bruno Catholic Church. The son of a scientist, he was ordained in 1978 and holds a Master's Degree in Marriage, Family, and Child Counseling from USC. He is the author of "Don't tell me what to do, a Catholic understanding of modern moral issues" and "Luke 10 Leadership," and "Physics & Faith, what modern science reveals about our universe" He leads an annual Holy Land Archaeological Tour, now in its 20th year. In 2002 he founded the University Series.



Fr. Bao Huy Nguyen is a priest of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. In 2010, he successfully defended his Master's thesis on the spirituality of Cardinal Nguyen Van Thuan, with original research done in Vietnam. In 2021, he obtained a doctorate in canon law (Juris Canonici Doctor) in Rome. Fr. Bao is currently serving as an assistant professor of canon law at St. John's Seminary in Camarillo.



Deacon Rogelio Garcia has been a parishioner at STM for about 28 years. He joined the Deacon formation in 2006 and was ordained a permanent deacon in 2011. He has been serving St. Thomas More Catholic Parish for 13 years as a deacon. He has a MA degree in Education and a MA degree in Pastoral Theology from LMU.



Fr. Thai Le is a native of Viet Nam and studied at St. John's Seminary in Camarillo, CA. He was ordained a parish priest in May 2008 for the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. He has served four years as an associate pastor at St. Paschal Baylon in Thousand Oaks. In May 2009, he studied Marriage and Family Counseling from California Lutheran University, in Thousand Oaks and graduated in May 2012. In 2012, he sent to serve three years as an associate pastor at Nativity Parish in El Monte and one year at Immaculate Heart in Los Angeles. In 2016, he was transferred to St. Thomas More Catholic Church as an administrator for two years and later became the pastor of this parish up to the present.

Questions and Suggestions

Contact

Parish Pastoral Council

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