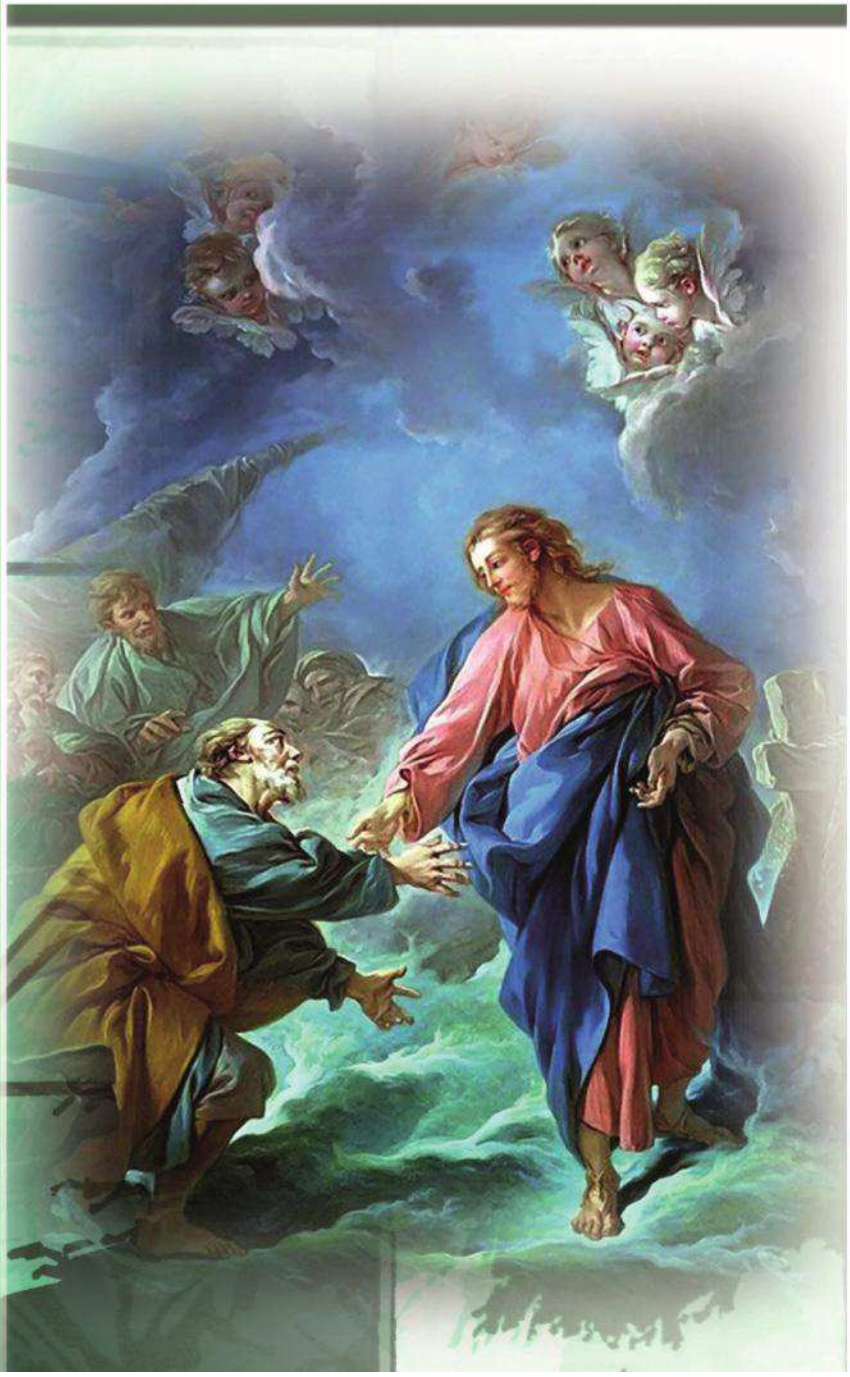
St. Thomas the Apostle Parish
Diocese of Peoria
904 E Lake Ave Peoria Heights
stthomaspeoria.org

19TH Sunday in Ordinary Time

"O you of little faith, why did you doubt?"
Matthew 14:31



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NINETEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Reading I: 1 Kings	19: 9a,11-13a
Reading II: Romans	9: 1-5
Gospel: Matthew	14:22-33

Every once in a while, something happens that we can't quite explain. For some reason, the rules that govern ordinary everyday life are suspended for a moment and we catch a glimpse of a deeper reality. You've had this experience! It might have been a sunset, or a baby's eyes, or the face of your spouse or son or daughter. It might have been a sever storm, or the first snow, or something a stranger did. Sometime, somehow, you've had an experience that lets you see a different reality. What ordinarily you wouldn't notice, suddenly you see. You can tell this happened because you remember the experience. In todays first reading we read of Elijah's experience of God. The presence of the Lord breaks through the mundane and invites us to a deeper way of seeing.

Monday, August 11, 2014
7:00am Jo Ann Gross/Family
8:00am T Joseph Varkey/The Joseph Family

Tuesday, August 12, 2014
7:00am Mary Kaufman/Beth Washburn
8:00am Tom McGinn/Merry Byerly

Wednesday, August 13, 2014
7:00am Myrtle McManus/Richard & Donna Weghorst
8:00am Benefactors of the Franciscan Sisters of St John the Baptist

Thursday, August 14, 2014
7:00am Bob Lapke/Kendrick & Jennifer Arvin
8:00am Mary Nelson/The Centering Prayer Group
5:00pm Homer Jacquin/Family

Friday, August 15, 2014 Feast of the Assumption
6:30am Regina Stewart/Mary Stewart
8:00am Marilyn Roedell/Betty Arnold
9:30am Leonard & Evelyn Keye/Family
12:15pm For the People
5:00pm Marilyn Wood

Saturday, August 16, 2014
8:00am Raphael Sullivan/Gloria Christian
5:00pm Cecilia LaHood/Family

Sunday, August 17, 2014
6:30am Robert C Rush/Paul & Linda McDaniel
8:00am Our Lady of Knock/LAOH
9:30am John Collins/Mary Ward
11:00am For the People
5:00pm Nancy Boehle/Roger & Nancy Sales

SENIOR CITIZENS Monday, August 11 at Noon at the 50's Diner in the Metro Center. All senior are welcome.

CENTERING PRAYER GROUP Monday, August 11 at 7:00 pm.

ROSARY FOR PEACE Tuesday, August 12 at 10:00 am in the chapel.

ST VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY Tuesday, August 12 at 7:00 pm in the parish office meeting room.

BIBLE STUDY Wednesday, August 13 at 8:45 am.

CHARISMATIC PRAYER GROUP Thursday, August 14 at 7:00 pm.

ST THOMAS SCHOOL MEET AND GREET DAY
Sunday, August 17 from 8:30am to 12:30pm.

FEAST OF THE ASSUMPTION MASS SCHEDULE

Thursday, August 14 at 5:00 pm;
Friday, August 15 at 6:30, 8:00, 9:30 am and 12:15 and 5:00 pm.

Our Sympathy

PLEASE PRAY FOR THOSE WHO HAVE DIED THIS WEEK. Mary Peters, sister of Pam Goett: Bonnie Streid, mother of Jay Streid and grandmother of Tim Streid

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Notre Dame You Baseball 8U-12U Travel Teams

Tryouts will be Saturday, August 16, 12:00 pm
Thomas Jefferson Baseball Fields
Contact Tony Shadid at
president@ndyouthbaseball.com

Peoria Area Cursillo

Day of Renewal
Saturday, August 23
Spalding Pastoral Center
Begins with Mass at 8:30 am; ends at 3:00 pm

Call Jackie Skender, 676-5587

ST. THOMAS FOOD PANTRY

Following is the suggested list of food items:

Spaghetti	Spaghetti Sauce	Rice
Canned Fruit	Pancake Mix	Syrup
Dry Beans	Cereal	Tuna
Soup	Crackers	Jelly
Beef Stew	Canned Vegetables	
Peanut Butter	Mac & Cheese	Instant Potatoes

We greatly appreciate your generosity..

At this time we our greatest needs are:
Mac & cheese pancake mix syrup soup

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Please remember St. Thomas Church in your will.

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Richwoods Township Presentation

Improving your heart
through healthy eating habits

For Township residents, 55 and older
August 28 from 9:00—11:00 am
Peoria Heights Congregtional Church

Registration: call Patrick Collier, 672-4926.

Trewyn Peace Pals

Come and have fun as a member of the Peace Pal Program. You will enjoy spending twenty to thirty minutes each with three assigned students in first, second or third grade at least twice per month. The goal is to help improve their reading scores. No reading expertise is required. If you love children, you are already a perfect fit. The program usually begins in October. You can help to truly make a difference in a child's life. Call Lousie McCann, 243-5722.

WEEKLY COLLECTION

	7/27/14	Fiscal YTD
Collections needed	$ 24,000	$ 96,000
Sunday Collections	$ 15,656	$ 79,868
Electronic Collections	$ 3,632	$ 14,528
Total Collected	$ 19,288	$ 94,396
Overage (Shortage)	$ (4,712)	$ (1,605)

We appreciate your generosity.

SeptemberFest

9.6.14 at 6:00pm on the blacktop

BEERS Sample a wide selection of craft and traditional brews. Wine, soda, and water will also be available.

BBQ Enjoy some bbq by Pit Master Todd from Blue Ribbon Catering.

BAGS Show us your stuff! There will be pickup games throughout the night.

BANDS Warm up with an acoustic set from Mindy Watkins, followed by an electric performance by Black 13!

FREE Admission!
Bring your chairs and blankets!

Must be 21 to enter. In the event of rain, the fest will be moved to the new gym.
Contact Dave Wiles at 264-9252 for more information or to volunteer.

View this bulletin online at www.TheCatholicDirectory.com

Toeing the Line

By Michael J. O'Louglin for *America Magazine*

Just before the race, I sat on a stone wall and gazed at the Vermont mountains reflected in a shimmering lake. It was early, but the park was already filled with people, thousands engaged in their personal rituals, calming their nerves or pumping themselves up. I was silent for a few moments, ignoring the commotion. After some encouraging words from my best friend and de facto trainer, I headed to the corrals. The starting gun fired and I was off. Only 26.2 miles to go.

For many, running is a spiritual practice, time to attune oneself to the workings of the mind, one's surroundings and the physical demands imposed on one's body. I had started running to get in shape and, with some cajoling from a close friend, began a quest to complete a full marathon. It was during the training that I realized I had come to depend on running as time to clear my head, to meditate a bit and even to pray. I began to see running as not simply physical exercise, but as a way to connect my spirit to God's.

I am not alone in my newfound appreciation for spiritually infused running. With cropped brown hair and a full beard, Brother Elias Eichorn, 25, is a monk at St. Joseph Abbey in St. Benedict, La., who supplements a demanding prayer schedule with long trail runs through the monastery's 1,200 wooded acres. Brother Elias told me that his runs give him time to process his day and to connect with God. "Running's very much a spiritual thing for me. It's very much part of my relationship with God because it's very much about being spiritually and physically healthy," he said.

Like me, Brother Elias started running to lose weight—at 5 ft. 9 in. He once checked in at over 300 lbs.—but he quickly became aware of the complementary emotional and spiritual benefits of long-distance running. Now, just a few years after his first run with a fellow seminarian, he has completed six full marathons, most recently finishing Boston, perhaps the world's most prestigious race. Brother Elias crossed the finish line in just over four hours and 15 minutes on a day when the temperature flirted with 90 degrees.

The rule of St. Benedict that orders a monk's daily life compels monks to pray six times daily—vigils, lauds, Eucharist, daytime prayer, vespers and compline—and to keep a rigorous work schedule. *Ora et labora*—pray and work—is their motto. If he does not have work to do in the monastery's woodshop, Brother Elias finds time to run between lunch and vespers. On Sunday afternoons, when the monks are free from many of their work and prayer obligations, he runs longer distances.

Forgoing formal prayer while running, Brother Elias lets his mind wander. "Sometimes it's a processing time, when I think about what is going on during the day, or work through what is going on in school," he said. But a certain kind of prayer, lectio divina, offers a method that he said is well suited for meditation on the run. It involves reading Scripture and focusing on a few words or phrases.

"Even though exercise is thought of as tiring, when you do it you feel more energized, physically and spiritually," he said. "It gives me time to relax; it's me-and-God time. Whether it's explicitly saying a prayer or just letting my mind go, it's something for me that relaxes and deepens my spirituality as I do it."

Running Through my Mind Much of what Brother Elias told me about the practice of lectio divina was reiterated in what was, for me, an unexpected quarter. About a week before the Vermont marathon, I had picked up a copy of *Running With the Mind of Meditation*, by Sakyong Mipham, a teacher of Buddhist meditation and a seasoned marathoner, hoping to find some inspiration to get me through the race. As the running maxim goes, a marathon is really a six-mile race: experienced long-distance runners manage the first 20 miles somewhat easily. After that, the liver loses its glycogen stores, a buildup of lactic acid causes muscles to stiffen and the mind suffers. The remaining 6.2 miles feel like hell. The things I had muttered under my breath during the last stage of my first marathon in Providence, R.I., would have made a sailor blush. I was hoping for a more enlightened finish in the Green Mountains.

The Sakyong writes that running and meditation improve both physical and spiritual health and can alleviate pain. It's how we react to the pain, he told me by e-mail, that we understand how we approach the world. "Pain is a natural part of life," he wrote. "We will all have to deal with it at some point, so it is important to look at how we react to it and how we can approach it with a level of cheerfulness."

I'm not sure I was cheerful as I lurched on in pain during those late miles in Vermont. My quads were on fire, my knees crunched with every step, and my face was covered in sweat as the sun beat down. Still, I was not angry and miserable as I had been the year before. Maybe the meditation was working. "Many people believe that meditation is about separating yourself from reality, going to some far off place where it is quiet and peaceful, away from the stress of everyday life," the Sakyong wrote to me. "[But] meditation is more about connecting with who you are in this very moment."

Powered by Prayer When I needed inspiration to keep going, to overcome the pain, the story of Stephanie Baliga reminded me of the mental and physical toughness some runners exude. Stephanie was a wunderkind runner from the age of 9. In college she ran cross country at the University of Illinois. Like many elite athletes, her desire to win and to further her own ambition was her primary motivation. After walking on to the team at Illinois, she finished 21st in the Big Ten, was ranked sixth in the nation and helped Illinois win its first N.C.A.A. regional title. Then one day, during a routine track practice her sophomore year, she broke her foot. "I never really got back to where I was before [the injury]," she said. In fact, it seemed she might never run again. "I

had increased my training a lot, and then my foot pretty much broke in half," she said. "I was running a regular training run, and all of a sudden I went from running to having a broken foot in about five minutes. I was like, 'You're done.'"

While taking time away from competitive running, she began a serious discernment process about what she wanted from life, a journey that ultimately took her to a rough section of Chicago to join a small community of Catholic sisters, the Franciscans of the Eucharist. "The injury made me reevaluate my life, and made me realize that running could not be my entire life," she said, adding that before that time she had little interest in her faith. "Through a series of events, I came to a deeper faith in the Catholic Church. And that, the recovery, was when I really started making running a spiritual activity," she said.

Today, Sister Stephanie, 24, says that physical activity helps her focus her mind on praying and frees her from distractions that come easily. She said that from a Catholic perspective, meditation involves thinking or praying about something specific in an attempt to achieve contemplation. This is the moment when an individual feels God's very presence. Though rare for her, she said the few times she has experienced this feeling happen to coincide with something resembling a runner's high.

In addition to offering her a time to pray and exercise, Sister Stephanie also uses running as a way to serve the poor. Her church is finishing up a massive renovation project thanks to a $21,000 contribution offered by a team, led by Sister Stephanie, that ran the Chicago marathon in 2011. She finished the race in 3:43:53. Sister Stephanie hopes to bring in over $40,000 during the 2012 race.

In the final minutes of my marathon in Vermont, my reliance on spiritual insight helped me get across the finish line. I ran down a bike path with a beautiful view of the lake below but no shade anywhere in sight. I was tired, hungry and incredibly thirsty. I yelled "Oh God!" somewhere along mile 24. It wasn't prayer, but a cry of agony. My friends and family were waiting for me at the finish line, and I realized I could still finish in under four hours—my goal—if I just kept my pace. I muttered what may qualify as a quick prayer: "God get me through this." Thinking back to the Sakyong's book, I tried to envision myself as a garuda, a mythical flying dragon whose image helps the Sakyong finish his races.

I decided to go for it, picking up speed as the crowds increased along mile 25. With the finish line in sight, the announcer declared that runners had three minutes left to break the four-hour mark. I picked up steam and tried to think of nothing but the finish line just ahead. I clocked in at 3:58. In my mind, I looked great with my arms high in the air, waving to my friends. When I saw the photo a few days later, I realized I had actually looked like death, a sort of determined zombie intent on capturing his next meal.

These days remixed pop nonsense still blasts through my headphones as I cruise through Rock Creek Park in Washington, D.C. But only sometimes. Other days, the trees and sunset, the people around me, God, or perhaps nothing at all, are my companions. During my runs, I reconnect with myself, let go of the day's worries, try to be present in the moment and to dream about the future. In these moments I find grace, and I embrace the long silences and the solitude as opportunities for reflection and spiritual growth. And when the finish line seems too far away, I dig for the strength to continue.

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St Thomas
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In recent years St. Thomas Parish has seen an increase in the number of families who need some financial assistance to send their children to Catholic Schools. The rising costs of providing a quality Catholic education to our students—pre-school through grade 12—is increasing to a level that many families simply cannot afford. For the coming school year 33% of our school families will require financial assistance to provide their children with the Catholic education they desire for them. This program allows you to help them.

Since establishing this program in May, through your generosity, we have been able to give $41,000 directly to St Thomas School families to assistant with their tuition costs for the 2014/2015 school year. Both the recipient and donor remain anonymous.

Full details of the program are available in brochures on the tables in the Gathering Space of the church.

For additional information, call Julie Streid at 688-3446.

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SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

Baptism class is held for all parents before the baptism of their child. Please contact Sr. Rachel to schedule the class.
Next Baptisms: August 31 at 11:00 am Mass.

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Saturdays: 4:00-4:45 pm & 7:00-8:00 pm
or by appointment with a priest
Confessions are held in the confessionals in the daily Mass Chapel

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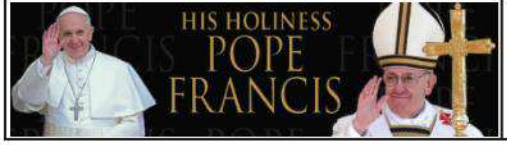

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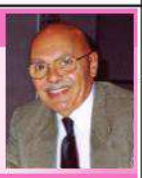
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