



# ST. MARGARET, QUEEN OF SCOTLAND

ST. THOMAS CHAPEL • SPRINGFIELD

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27 November 2022 – *The First Sunday of Advent*

Dearest Friends:

Just last week, parishioners were invited to participate in a “Town Hall” meeting to discuss the necessity of doing renovation work on St. Thomas Chapel in Springfield and to review our financial situation as a community of faith. This and preceding conversations with our Master Planning Committee, Pastoral Council, and Finance Council have all proven fruitful. The community’s insights, desires, and visions presented have been invaluable. I thank you for all the hard work! Hurricane Ida precipitated the need to execute this plan; over a year after she came ashore, it is time for us to move forward in executing the next phase of this vision to preserve our past and to move forward into a future filled with hope.

Currently, we are paying down debt incurred in Phase II of our Master Plan (the renovation of St. Margaret Church and the Parish Grounds) at a rate of \$12,000 per month amortized over a fifteen-year loan note; it is my hope that we can pay this off more expeditiously.

The St. Thomas Project will involve roof work, the addition of insulation, the removal and replacement of siding, the addition of new windows, new pews and sanctuary appointments, the reorientation of the bathroom and the removal of the current facility, painting, lighting, and other aesthetic improvements. Tower lighting will also be added outside of the Church for safety. Such a makeover will improve lighting, heating, and cooling while preserving the space’s quaint but historical integrity. The total cost of the project is estimated to be **\$800,000**. We need to raise half of the money of this project so that we can ask the Diocese of Baton Rouge for a loan for the remainder of the project, which would be amortized in our current debt load and refinanced.

On the back side of this letter, you will find a **pledge card** to help make this purchase a reality. I know this seems like a lot of money but think of the scope of the project upon which we are about to embark. Remember too that no major capital improvement projects have been done to St. Thomas since the 1980s! (Imagine if you did no work on your house for forty years how much it would cost to get it “up to par!”) Though the purchase price seems like a large sum, think of the project in this way: currently, we have around 1,100 registered families in our parish. **If every family committed to give an extra \$14 to our parish every week for the next year in addition to their normal contributions**, we would generate nearly \$900,000 – more than enough to begin the project.

I urge you to use your **Capital Improvement or Building & Maintenance Fund Envelopes** for this purpose every month! It will help us generate the money necessary to begin this campaign but also to quickly pay down our remaining debt. Remember, until we collect half of the monies needed (approximately \$400,000), we will not be able to begin construction. Proper timing is imperative. If we wait too long, construction costs will increase, and our chapel will continue an inevitable spiral of deterioration. It is my hope and goal that we can raise half of this money by May and begin construction as soon as all diocesan permissions are received. In order for this dream to become a reality, I need your help! I know that this additional sacrifice is impossible for some; **no gift is too small to assist our community**. Other families may be able to afford more than a one-time pledge of \$728 (the equivalent of \$14 a weekend for one year); if so, **we would appreciate you giving even more to this important project**. Such giving is sacrificial; it will “sting” a little. Please continue to commit your regular offering as you so generously do!

Please prayerfully consider how you, as a family, plan on making a small sacrifice to secure a prominent future for our community of faith and return your commitment card to the parish office or by dropping it in any collection in the coming weeks. Remember, just twenty-five or thirty dollars a week more in addition to your normal contributions will make this possible! Thank you in advance for your generosity!

Yours in the Lord,

Very Reverend Jamin Scott David, JCL  
Pastor