

# Memorial Mass For Thoma, Local Distinguished Flier

DEC 12 1944

Nestor, John

A mass in memory of Lt. Edward Paul Thoma, 21-year-old son of Mr. and Mrs. John J. Thoma of 801 Evans Street, killed in action on June 20, while over German territory, will be celebrated at 8 a. m. on Thursday in St. John Capistrano's Church. Invitations have been extended to relatives and friends.

During the past week the parents received the Distinguished Flying Cross, and the Air Medal and one Oak Leaf Cluster, awarded posthumously, by direction of the President of the United States.

The citation accompanying the award of the Distinguished Flying Cross follows:

"For extraordinary achievement while serving as deputy leader of a bombardment group of a B-17 aircraft on a bombing mission over Germany, 20 June 1944. On this date, the lead aircraft of the group in which Lieutenant Thoma was flying was forced to leave the formation. Demonstrating outstanding skill, Lieutenant Thoma assumed the lead of the group and directed the formation through an excellent turn at the initial point. In spite of heavy flak Lieutenant Thoma refused to take evasive action which



LT. EDWARD PAUL THOMA  
Cited Posthumously

might have interfered with the accuracy of the bombing and continued straight and level over the target. Fragments of anti-aircraft fire from a shell bursting directly below his aircraft penetrated the fuselage, killing Lieutenant Thoma almost instantly. The courage, coolness and devotion to duty displayed by this officer reflect the highest credit upon himself and the armed forces of the United States."

## SECOND CITATION

The Air Medal and One Leaf Cluster citation follows:

"For exceptionally meritorious achievement while participating in five separate bomber combat missions and while participating in sustained bomber combat operations over enemy occupied continental Europe. The courage, coolness and skill displayed by this officer upon these occasions reflect great credit upon himself and the armed forces of the United States."

He is survived by his parents, Mr. and Mrs. John Thoma, a brother Pfc. John J. Thoma Jr., U. S. Air Corps, stationed in Florida, and a sister, Mrs. Irene Nestor, Bethlehem. The husband of the latter, Pvt. John Nestor, U. S. Air Corps, is stationed in California.

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