

St. Thomas More

Roman Catholic Church – Parish Newsletter

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THE TOWER

A Year of Celebration By Lisa Baca

Let us pray, dearly beloved brethren, to God, the Father Almighty, that He may multiply heavenly gifts upon these His servants whom He has chosen for the office of the priesthood. May they, by His help, accomplish what they undertake at His gracious call. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Excerpt from “The Bestowal of Office” portion of the Sacrament of Priestly Holy Orders

This year at St. Thomas More Parish, we celebrate two special Ordination anniversaries: Fr. Mike’s 30th Anniversary and Fr. Ken’s 50th Golden Jubilee!

Fr. Mike celebrated his 30th Anniversary on January 31, 2005.



During the Litany of Saints, the ‘priest-to-be’ lies prostrate on the ground before the ‘laying on of hands’ by the Bishop.

While a 30th anniversary is not typically recognized, Fr. Mike agreed that a celebration would be good for the parish. He reminds us to always celebrate the good things in life, the gifts from God – “No excuses!”

Fr. Mike was the youngest of 6 children. God has called on his family many times. His grandparents were blessed with grandchildren who wanted to follow God – six times over. Two priests and four nuns are numbered among the grandchildren. Spirituality runs deeply in the family.

Fr. Mike knew at an early age that he wanted to be a priest. In the fourth grade the Catholic schoolteacher asked, “Who wants to be a priest?” Confidently, he raised his hand (of course he thought all the boys would.) It turns out, he was one of two. We aren’t sure what happened to the other student, but we are thankful that Father Mike followed his early calling.

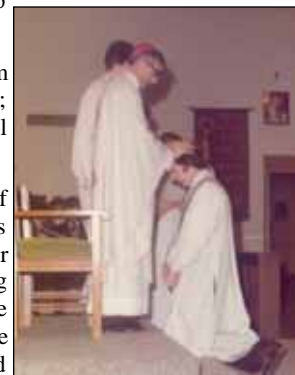
Fr. Mike attended one year at the University of Michigan but felt lost in a sea of 4,000 students. So, he decided to attend a much smaller, Catholic college, St. Mary’s in Orchard Lake, Michigan. His class went from 4,000 students to 24 students. Yes, 24!

He then entered St. John’s Provincial Seminary in Plymouth, Michigan. On January 31st, 1975 he was ordained by Bishop Thomas Gumbleton in Mt. Clemens, Michigan.

In 1975, a priest was often defined as someone set apart from other Catholics. Priests wore special clothing (clerical black); they lived in a special house (a rectory); they led a special lifestyle (celibacy).

All three still remain true. But 30 years later, being ‘a part’ of the parish instead of being ‘set-apart’ is one of Father Mike’s ‘favorite parts’ of his ministry. He believes that he is a better preacher when living in the midst of the parish and not being set apart. The parish is the heart and soul of the church, and he loves the excitement of being in the trenches. To enter into the heart of life with people, to feel the height of their joy and share the depth of their sorrow is a very privileged position.

When asked about the administrative side of his duties, Fr. Mike replies delightfully, “It is part of my ministry, I don’t separate it.” He knows it is an important part of making



The Bishop, followed by other priests, comes forward and lays hands on the newly ordained priest.

ministry happen in the parish community. He is also deeply grateful to the many leaders of the parish who keep it humming smoothly. “I feel that I am giving more of myself to the Lord today than I did 30 years ago, but I still have a long way to go before I am able to give the Lord everything,” Fr. Mike shared.

Fr. Ken celebrates his 50-year Golden Jubilee June 24, 2005.

Fr. Ken was one of his family’s 9 children in Dubuque, Iowa. His Irish grandmother and mother would often say what a blessing it would be to have a priest in the family. Well Grandma got her wish, 3 times over. Fr. Ken had 2 cousins who also became priests. Spirituality runs deeply in this family too.



Concelebrants at Fr. Mike’s 25th Anniversary Mass at Santa Sophia include fellow priests of the Diocese, former classmates, and his cousin, Rev. Richard Ratajczak, who is to his right.

Like Fr. Mike, he also knew from a very young age that he wanted to become a priest. When other little boys were playing with trucks, getting muddy or pretending to be soldiers, Fr. Ken would often play “Priest”. He would pretend to say Mass with his brothers in the congregation.

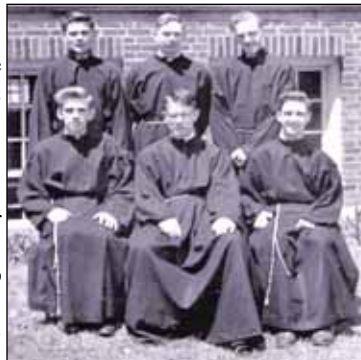
You might think it was divine intervention that led Fr. Ken to the Franciscans; actually it was perhaps the intervention of his 7th Grade Catholic School Principal. One day after a bit of trouble (of which he can’t recall the specifics) he was called to the principal’s office. It seemed as though his gifts were no longer appreciated at the school. As he pondered what he was going to tell his father (all 6 ft. 4 in. of him), he saw a man who was dressed strangely coming out of the convent. The man was Fr. Terrance, a Franciscan who was at the convent hearing confessions. Fr. Ken had never seen a Franciscan before as they lived way across town. On that very same day, the library cart came around at the school, and books were set up on the ledge of the chalkboard. A book caught Fr. Ken’s attention. It had a picture on the cover that looked like the man he saw earlier that day. A Franciscan – talking to the birds. Fr. Ken thought, “Wouldn’t it be nice to be able to talk to the birds?” So he asked to go across town to meet the Franciscans.

Fr. Ken knew he had to leave school, so he asked the Franciscans if they ever took 7th Graders. They said, “In rare cases, if they are exceptional students.” Fr. Ken thought, “Oh brother.” So, he got the nuns to fudge his grades a bit, and he was accepted in September of 1942.

Fr. Ken went off to St. Joseph Seminary in a town about 20 miles southwest of Chicago. However, boarding school meant expenses and the family could not afford the tuition, room and board. All they could scrape together was \$5/month and Seminary officials accepted their sacrifice. In his 4th year his father passed away, and expenses became much more difficult. However his brothers and sisters continued to put him through school.

After boarding school, Fr. Ken made his Simple Profession—committing himself to a life with God. In June of 1948 he went to Novitiate – BOOT CAMP for Franciscans. He spent 1 year and 1 day learning the ways of the Franciscans. The 1-day was just to make sure the year was completed. This took place in Teutopolis, IL.

Following that, he studied philosophy for three years at Our Lady of the Angels Seminary in Cleveland, OH. In July 1951 he took his Solemn Vows. From there it was back to Teutopolis and St. Joseph, where he attended the Theological Seminary. Because of the war, he was ordained after 3 years (normally it took 4), and he became a Simplex Priest. That meant he couldn’t preach or hear confessions until he completed his schooling and received his faculties. In June 1956, he finished his studies at the Seminary.



Fr. Ken and classmates at St. Joseph Minor Seminary in 1947.



Fr. Ken’s Ordination on June 24, 1955 Church of the Nativity, Dubuque, Iowa.

From there he led a very exciting life, serving God and people in many, many ways. He joined the Navy, and on December 8, 1961 he took the Naval Oath. After attending Chaplain School, his first assignment was in North Carolina. He spent time with: the Marine Air Group in Japan, the Navy Prison in New Hampshire, the Naval Communication Station in Morocco, the Marine Base at Camp Pendleton, Boot Camp at MCRD, the 1st Marine Air Wing in Okinawa, the San Diego Naval Hospital and the Marine Brigade in Hawaii. He ‘retired’ from the Navy on October 1, 1991.

Fr. Ken continually looks for new ways to serve. So upon retiring from the Navy, he asked himself, “Where would St. Francis be today?” St. Francis was terrified of lepers in his day and would avoid them at all costs. Then, one day, St. Francis came upon a leper and



Above left: Fr. Ken was promoted to USN Lieutenant in 1963.



Above right: Fr. Ken celebrated Mass for troops in Thailand in 1989.

instead of being terrified, he felt God’s divine presence and got off his horse and went to the man and hugged him. From that point on, he had great compassion for lepers and reached out to them instead of turning away from them. In 1991, the equivalent was AIDS patients. So, like St. Francis, Fr. Ken reached out, and continues to reach out to those struggling with the horrible disease.

Today Fr. Ken serves in many ways: the San Diego Mission, the Army/Navy Academy in Oceanside, reaching out to AIDS patients, and lucky for us, serving at St. Thomas More. He will be honored this year at a banquet for Jubilarians in St. Louis. It will be a fraternal celebration. He will also celebrate Mass this summer with his family at the Cathedral in Dubuque, Iowa. He feels blessed with rich experiences, good health, wonderful friends and the love of his family. We are blessed with his joyful presence and his bountiful gifts!

To Father Mike and Father Ken...

God bless your anniversaries with happiness and peace, and with His many wondrous gifts of joy that never cease, and through the days and years to come, may He be at your side, Your Guardian and Protector, Your never failing guide. “Well done, good and faithful servant.” —Matt. 25:23



Fr. Ken is surrounded by parishioners wishing him well at the Luau dinner party held at STM in honor of his 50th Ordination Anniversary.

SOCIAL JUSTICE —Making a Difference! By T.L. Keenan, Peter Hasapopoulos, Sr. Maureen Brown



Sr. Maureen Brown and representatives of St. Thomas More attended the PICO Rally in Sacramento, California.

The Church of St. Thomas More has joined forces with 9 other North County Churches (five of which are Catholic) by becoming an Associate Member of Congregations for Civic Action, which was founded by a number of Catholic and Protestant clergy five years ago. Civic Action strives to strengthen family and community life by bringing fellow Christians and other faiths together in efforts to address community problems. Recent successes have been: shutting down 15 drug houses in Oceanside, securing \$1,000,000 for sidewalk construction to ensure safe walking routes for school children in Fallbrook, and leading the way for an affordable housing strategy in Oceanside. Congregations for Civic Action is affiliated with PICO (People Improving Communities Through Organizing), a national network of fifty faith-based community organizations that was

founded by two Jesuit priests. Currently, Civic Action is working actively with sister organizations across the state on the goal of ensuring that all California children (under age of 21) have affordable health insurance available.

On April 13, 2005, 33 clergy and parishioners from 7 Civic Action churches flew to Sacramento for a PICO town hall-style rally related to insuring California’s children. The town hall meeting was attended by over 4,000 people and included over 15 legislators of both parties and the governor’s top health official. The goal of the meeting was to make providing health coverage to all kids a top priority for California’s most influential elected officials. Patti Meade, STM parishioner, commented, “It was overwhelming to see 4,200 people gathered in one room, supporting one cause, but the truly staggering number is 800,000 – the number of children in California who do not have health insurance and are unable to receive proper medical care.” In San Diego County alone there are approximately 90,000 uninsured children. Amy Martinez, also from STM, remarked “By the evening’s end, I thought, ‘How can we make the parish aware of this problem?’ By speaking up, talking with everyone we know and using all means of communication about this issue, we can make a difference in the lives of these children, who are the future of this great state of California.”

At the meeting we learned that two proposed bills in the state legislature would provide funding for a multi-year plan to fill the gap by leveraging state funds to attract more federal money and by simplifying the enrollment process for children’s health insurance programs. The bills are SB 437 by Senator Martha Escultia, D-Whittier and AB 772 by Assembly woman Wilma Chan, D-Oakland. SB 437 had been approved by the Senate Health Committee with bi-partisan support the day of the town hall rally. Sr. Maureen Brown from STM shared how she and three other parishioners from STM turned a tour of the Capitol the day after the rally into an opportunity to “lobby for our children by going to the offices of our representatives to ask for their support of the two bills that will be coming before them. We were very nervous, but each time we got better and better at expressing ourselves.”



Insure the Children!

The hopeful part of this effort is that 90% of California’s children already have health insurance, and of the 800,000 who don’t, over half are eligible for existing programs but are not enrolled for lack of awareness or for lack of a simple enrollment process. In other words, if we really want to see every child covered, it can be done! Civic Action will spend the next few months building a local coalition of hospitals, schools, and business groups, that share our goal. Also, Fr. Mike and other local clergy submitted an editorial to the North County Times on this subject. Watch for it soon. You can help by sending a letter or an email to your state representatives asking them to support the aforementioned bills.

To work on this effort, please contact: Sr. Maureen Brown at 760-758-4100, ext. 131 or maureenb@stmoside.org or

Congregations for Civic Action: Peter Hasapopoulos, at 760-745-1630 or email: phasapopoulos@sbcglobal.net.

To learn more about the **Healthy Kids Campaign**, please visit the following websites: PICO: www.PICOcalifornia.org or www.piconetwork.org
100% Campaign: www.100percentcampaign.org.

When our beloved John Paul II passed away, it is said that the world wept. Four million people came to Rome with an outpouring of love. The Solemn Funeral was not only attended by the world's dignitaries and heads of state, but by millions of his faithful followers. Among those privileged to attend, were Fr. Peter McGuine (Pastor of St. Thomas More from August, 1995-June, 2003) and his family, who were visiting him in Rome at the time. Fr. Peter's parents, Deacon Tom and Shelly McGuine, were kind enough to share their thoughts on this incredible experience.

"Shelly and I had reservations to visit our son, Fr. Peter McGuine, who is the vice rector of the Pontifical North American College in Rome, in April of this year. During the first part of our trip to Ireland, we were informed the Pope had died. When we arrived in Rome, we could see the many pilgrims arriving from all over the world. Our son was waiting at the airport, and we headed for the Pontifical College where we planned to stay for the week.

There are more than 150 seminarians at the college, and almost all expressed the deep loss they felt over the Pope's death. Some of these men stated that in their lifetime, they knew no other Pope than John Paul II.

The next day, Shelly and I headed for St. Peter's which was only 5 blocks from the seminary. As we approached the outer perimeter of St. Peter's, about 9 blocks away, we could see a sea of people, many holding banners and flags from various countries. We entered a line of people, which was the beginning of a 7 hour procession to see the body of the Pope. Police seemed to be everywhere. The path to the Vatican was cordoned off preventing anyone from skipping into line ahead of the people already in line. Bottled water was given to anyone who asked for it. If any pilgrim left the line, which consisted of a row more than 40 people across, they could not re-enter the line. The crowd was so tightly packed together, there were times one could not even raise one's hands above his/her head. At times one stood motionless for more than 15 minutes, shoulder to shoulder, before the line moved again.

The tone of the pilgrims was very somber as we entered the Basilica. As I looked at Pope John Paul's body, his facial expression and posture displayed a Pope finally at peace after so much illness. I thought back to 1988 when Shelly and I had the privilege of receiving communion from the Pope at the exact spot his body now lay. I thought to myself, "This is a funeral for a man whose funeral will be the largest ever seen in the world and in history. What a privilege God has given Shelly and me to be with the Pope in this time in history."

The funeral Mass and the viewing of his body took place on days of sunshine and warmth. As the Pope's body was brought into St. Peter's Square followed by the Cardinals, Bishops, Priests, and Deacons of the Church, a sense of the universality of our faith struck me. More than three hundred thousand people filled St. Peter's Square as fighter jets and military helicopters circled high above the crowd. In the VIP Section there were 17 heads of government and 140 people representing Orthodox Churches throughout the world.

Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger presided at the funeral service. Little did anyone know he would be Pope Benedict XVI in only a few short days. The 2 ½ hour funeral service was culminated by the holy Eucharist being distributed by over 650 priests. The men from the Pope's household then assembled to carry the body back into St. Peter's for his final commendation. They lifted the pine casket and proceeded to the entrance of St. Peter's, but before they entered they turned to face the three hundred thousand people and the millions watching TV all over the world to say farewell a last time.

Being at the Vigil and funeral Mass of a Pope was unbelievable. I walked away from those events knowing God has called us to have faith in him, and faith in whoever will be called as his successor. For me John Paul lived the message of "do not be afraid." No matter the concern, trial or tribulation in your lives, "do not be afraid." Trust in God, His Church and His people, and we can all be greeted by Jesus who will tell us, "Welcome, all you who were faithful, for the kingdom belongs to you." —Deacon Tom and Shelly McGuine



Fr. Peter and Pope John Paul II May 2004



The funeral Mass for Pope John Paul II, was said to be viewed by more people than any other in history.

Photos courtesy of Deacon Tom McGuine



It is interesting to note that our new Pope, Benedict XVI, has not chosen the name of one of the Apostles, as has been a mark of contemporary pontiffs since Pius XII. Instead, he has chosen a name steeped in monastic history in imitation of St. Benedict, the co-patron of Europe & the founder of western monasticism. This may indicate a trend toward the centralization of the Vatican within the new European Community, with an emphasis on reasserting Europe's Christian oriented cultural heritage.

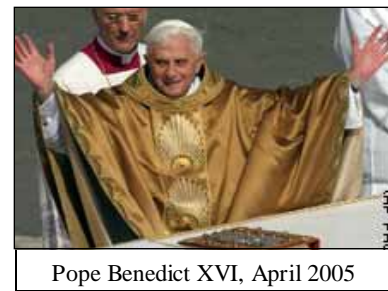
The name may also be taken in honor of Benedict XV, who led the Church from 1914 to 1922 during WWI and its stormy aftermath. A common bond exists between our present Pope and Benedict XV scholastically as well.

Benedict XV oversaw the establishment of the first Code of Canon Law and as Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Cardinal Ratzinger co-produced the second

edition of the Code of Canon Law. Saint Benedict who lived in the 5th & 6th centuries and Benedict XV, who lived at the turn of the 20th century, were men dedicated to peace and holiness. During this time of a constant threat of wars, there is a great need to continue to uphold John Paul II's declaration of peace toward all nations. Our new Pope hopefully will define his reign as an emissary of peace for the 21st century and by unifying the New Europe with its traditional Christian roots.

When Pope John Paul II died, we the faithful at St. Thomas More, came together at a Mass which celebrated his life. Many of us were here following morning Mass when Pope Benedict XVI was elected as our new Pope.

We now enter this new era with these words from our Pastor: "We pray for our Church and our new universal Pastor, Benedict XVI, as we move through this transition of leadership. We are reminded that the Holy Spirit is with us, leads us, and guides us, as we make our journey of faith, and as Church, steadfastly witness to the Kingdom of God in this world." — Fr. Mike Ratajczak



Pope Benedict XVI, April 2005

What Does God Look Like? Preschool Article. By Gloria Larson



Our dedicated Catechists enjoy working with their classes!

What a wonderful thing - the mind of a child and how they see the world! This story is one that you may have heard from your own child or grandchild!

A Kindergarten teacher was observing her classroom of children while they were drawing. She would occasionally walk around to see each child's work. As she got to one little girl who was working diligently, she asked what the drawing was. The girl replied, "I'm drawing God." The teacher paused and said, "But no one knows what God looks like." Without missing a beat, or looking up from her drawing, the girl replied, "They will in a minute."

When I attended a class of the 3, 4 and 5 year olds one Sunday morning, I asked the children what they thought God looked like. The children each took a moment to think and then raised their hands. "He is tall." "He looks like a spirit." "He looks like a heart." "He looks very nice." All of their responses were positive and exactly what they believed he looked like. Sally Fay, catechist of the 5 year old class, said, "It is fun to see the children sharing so much energy and love of God!"

The curriculum for the early years helps children discover that God is already present in their lives, their homes and families. It incorporates discovery and thinking, social relationships, music, art and prayer. Children discover and value all life and all creation as God's gift to us. They discover they can make a difference and change our world for the better.

Class meets two Sundays a month during the time of the 10:30 Mass on the lower level. Enroll NOW for classes beginning in September. For information on this program, please contact Kathleen Bell (760) 758-4100, ext. 110.



STM children have fun with hands-on activities.

Development Update By Chris Smith

MANY THANKS TO "OUR JOURNEY INTO THE FUTURE... TOGETHER" DONORS!!!

During the first six months of our Capital Campaign, we realized \$4 million in new pledges from 650 households! With the \$1.2 million previously donated toward this effort, we now stand at \$5.2 million toward our ultimate goal! The money raised in this campaign is slated for our new Church/Sanctuary, Administration Building and Youth Center, five-acre additional land parcel, retirement of our debt and \$1 million for the Diocesan Secondary Education Initiative. We will begin discussion this summer with the Diocese, and will update the Parish as information becomes available.

Check out our progress on "Our Journey Into The Future... Together" link on our website at www.stmoside.org.

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Rediscovering Catholicism — Rediscovering Your Faith By Gloria Larson

What is Faith? By definition faith is: the belief in, devotion to or trust in somebody or something. As Catholics, we have Faith in God and Faith in the Church. We believe in our traditions, our Church teachings, and our Catechism. We believe, but do we always understand? Catholics come in all shapes, sizes, and colors. Some Catholics are born into the faith, so it is an inherited reality. Others turn to Catholicism as adults and it is an exciting discovery. Regardless of how you came to be Catholic, there may still be some unanswered questions that trouble or puzzle you. Are you looking for a safe environment where you can freely ask questions about your faith? Deacon Tom and Patt Goeltz have created such an environment.

Attending *Rediscovering Catholicism* is a mixture of adults seeking to find answers about their faith and those fulfilling Confirmation requirements. Beverly Kowallek commented that, “It was really refreshing to take the class and get a good overview on what our faith is all about”. The class uses *The Catholic Way* by Bishop Donald Wuerl and *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* as guides. *Rediscovering Catholicism* started as a class for adults who needed to fulfill the parish’s adult confirmation requirement. In the beginning there were only a few taking the class for their own personal development.



Deacon Tom and Patt Goeltz facilitate class

The first class had approximately 8 individuals attending. But, interest grew and others saw that this class met a need they had—to explore the teachings of the Church and how they applied to their life. Now there are over 20 people enrolled. One of the class highlights is an ‘Early Mass’ celebration that is held at the Goeltz home. The class is invited to their home for an evening of fun and faith-filled discussion surrounding the origins of many traditions within our Mass. Patti Meade said, “I really enjoyed the dinner and how the Goeltz’s tied in the early Christian way of celebrating the Mass in peoples’ homes”. Another highlight is a retreat that is held at the end of the class. These retreats have taken place at the Prince of Peace Abbey and the San Luis Rey Retreat Center in Oceanside. These retreats allow the class to participate in discussions on various topics, small group interactions, and time for self reflection. Patt says, “The true spark from the class comes from the open discussion and dialogue among the attendees. The discussion format of the class allows all the participants the ability to discuss their faith freely without worrying about saying the wrong thing.”



Several members of Rediscovering Catholicism Class at break time!

Deacon Tom and Patt Goeltz give wholly of themselves to their classes; they draw from their extensive knowledge on the theology of the Catholic church, and on their own personal experiences. This truly gives the participants a sense of belonging to a faith-filled family. By the end of the class, after many months of sharing thoughts, ideas and questions, there is a definite feeling of Joy, Faith and Family among them. Remember there is always something new to discover and what is more important than coming closer to the Lord? For more information on this class please contact:

Deacon Tom and Patt Goeltz at 760-727-8442.

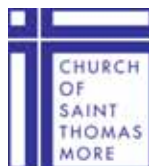
CHURCH OF ST. THOMAS MORE—THE TOWER

In naming our Parish newsletter we remember
The Tower of London
where St. Thomas More spent his last days
and suffered a martyr’s death.

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Parish Mission Statement:
“To worship God,
teach and live the Gospel of Jesus Christ
and serve His people in word and deed.”