

St. Thomas More

Roman Catholic Church – Parish Newsletter

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THE TOWER

“Our Journey Into The Future . . . Together” Moves Forward!

— by Rev. Michael Ratajczak

In these very exciting and challenging times in the life of our Parish, we continue to look to breaking ground once again. Meanwhile we are busy with all the necessary preliminaries in order to be ready for the shovel to hit the dirt in 2008.



Doug D’Agrosa, Pastoral Council Chair, points out the “promised land” for our future Church and Bell Tower.

We have formed a New Construction Committee and an Interior Design Team. Each group is composed of 17 parishioners who have been invited and have willingly come forward to share time, talent and treasure in moving us into the future.

In this **Tower Newsletter** edition, we focus upon the New Construction Committee whose task it is to see us through the Conformance Review of our Conditional Use Permit (CUP), to interview and engage an architect who will begin the process of design development and prepare a complete set of construction documents, and then to oversee the actual construction of the Church from start to finish.

I am very grateful to Brian Leahey, who has accepted my request to chair this committee. And I am grateful for all the members of this committee who will ensure that our Church will be well-designed, well-built, and cost effective. Please take time to read Brian’s follow up to **Holy Ground is Moving and Shaking**, found on page two of this newsletter!

From its modest beginning in 1985 with Fr. Bob White celebrating Masses in private homes and at Eternal Hills Mortuary, engaging an architect to assist with a design concept for the original property, along with establishing a temporary home in a storefront of a strip mall in Shadowridge in 1993, the Church of St. Thomas More started to grow.



In 1995, with the arrival of Fr. Peter McGuine, the growth of the community required celebrating some Masses at the Rancho High School gym and setting up

(Continued on page 2)



Parish flourishes as we look to the future!

tents in the parking lot for others. The original property was then sold, a master plan was adapted and expanded for our new property and

Four parish town hall meetings were held, and we are now moving forward to build our Church, Bell Tower, Daily Chapel, Parish Administration Center, and eventually, our Parish Academy as we continue at St. Thomas More on **“Our Journey Into The Future . . . Together.”**

In 2005, St. Thomas More celebrated our 20th Anniversary of being a Community faithful to Jesus, continuing His Mission and ministry for this time and this place. Imagine: in 2010, as we celebrate our 25th Anniversary, Bishop Brom will be with us to consecrate our altar and bless our Church, our permanent home! The day will be here “in the twinkling of an eye!”

Know that I am eternally grateful for each and every one of you who, in any way, is helping to bring this good work to fulfillment!

the present Parish Center was built!

Since I, your third Pastor, arrived in 2003, we had parish leadership meetings to determine the path of our future.

Holy Ground Is Moving and Shaking — Part Two! — by Brian Leahey

Early in 2006, the call went out to a number of parishioners inviting them to become a part of an historic moment – to become members of the New Construction Committee, which will oversee the building of our Church. Sixteen other parishioners, and I, accepted Fr. Mike’s invitation to form this committee that will make the build-out of our Parish Campus a reality. Among the 17 of us there is great expertise in all areas of building and construction, heating and air-conditioning, acoustical engineering, lighting, flooring, contract review, and a variety of other talents that will be extremely beneficial to our Parish in the construction of our Church.

This committee will now see us through the Conformance Review of our Conditional Use Permit (CUP), will interview and engage an architect who will begin the process of design development and prepare a complete set of construction documents, and will oversee the actual construction of the Church from start to finish.

Presently, the substantial conformance package which is to be presented to the Planning Department of the City of Oceanside is being prepared and will be presented in the very near future. When review and approval is received, the New Construction Committee, which has had only an initial meeting, will



Brian Leahey

move into “high gear.”

Once we get the “green light” from the City of Oceanside, the building corners of the Church will be staked. This will provide a footprint that will be an exciting visual for our Parishioners, in that one will be able to actually “see” and “step” into the area of our Church!

As I dream about our Church, which will seat 1,200 people, I’ll share with the committee my desire to create an operable glass wall that will open to the Plaza, and will provide space for an “overflow” assembly, and I want to ensure that the Church will be energy efficient, utilizing the westerly prevailing winds in cooling the building.

(If you have any ideas or suggestions for our Church, I ask that you put them in writing and drop them off at the Parish Office. Karen Oshinski, Parish Secretary, will make sure that they get to my mailbox, and I’ll make sure that your ideas are discussed at our committee meetings.)

Once we satisfy the Planning Department of the City of Oceanside, we will interview architects and engage one to begin the process of design development and to prepare a complete set of construction documents. As we continue to move forward, please make sure that you are praying for our efforts and the efforts also of the Interior Design Team. Stay tuned! Good things are coming our way!

Milestone Year for CPR/ AED Program — by Phil Goscienski

When Tom Oshinski completed a CPR/AED class on a recent Saturday morning, he joined 299 of his fellow parishioners. All were graduates of a program that began five years earlier at St. Thomas More. In a setting where saving souls has a higher priority than saving lives, the notion of CPR, (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) training may seem out of place. However, our modern hospital system has

Catholic roots that date back to the Middle Ages. In any public facility that holds large numbers of people it is certain that there will be an occasional serious medical emergency. An important factor is the availability of the Automated External Defibrillator (AED), a device that has dramatically increased the likelihood of survival in cardiac arrest. When we acquired an AED early in 2001, a small group of parishioners learned how to use it. It quickly



Tom Oshinski — 300th person to be CPR certified

became obvious that the many activities taking place in our facility demanded that more trained persons

needed to be available when no member of the core group was there.

Parish response was overwhelming with 500+ parishioners showing an interest in learning CPR; over 300 have taken a class and have met requirements for certification by the American Red Cross. Parishioners have provided funds for training devices. The Women’s Guild donated a second AED so that no one is more than a few seconds away from a lifesaving defibrillator. The five members of the parish who have become certified as CPR instructors donate their time to conduct one or two classes every month as well as

to offer monthly “tune-up” sessions at which graduates can perfect their skills. The pragmatic group of instructors recognizes that some individuals are unable or unwilling to learn CPR but no one should be ignorant of other steps that they can take when a loved one collapses from a stroke or heart attack. An annual presentation for such persons, “*What to do in a medical emergency if you don’t know CPR,*” has already saved at least one life. It covers much of what students learn in CPR classes: how to recognize the early signs of a stroke or heart attack, call 9-1-1, and how to maintain an airway. The next presentation will take place on Sunday, February 4, 2007.

Already known as “the safest church in town if you’re going to have a heart attack,” this faith-based organization has made the surrounding communities safer as well. There is already a ripple effect as other faith communities throughout the country learn about what the members of STM have accomplished. Our story has appeared in a variety of publications including the *Saturday Evening Post*, *Currents*, American Heart Association newsletter, on radio, newspapers and magazines. We will never know where this story ends. *Details: www.stmoside.org/cpr.htm.*

A St. Thomas More Thanksgiving Tradition — *by the Spirit of Thanksgivings Yet to Come*

In November of 2005, a new St. Thomas More family tradition was started. On Thanksgiving Day of that year, a turkey dinner was served to about 30 people. Along with the turkey, stuffing, cranberries and all the trimmings, there was much visiting, meeting other families and relaxation. Attendees were welcome to bring a dish to pass, but it was not necessary. The only requirement of coming to the dinner was to bring a good appetite and be ready to share the Thanksgiving spirit with others.

As the tradition continued this year, 84 people attended the dinner on November 23. They entered the lower level to tables set with candlelight, linen tablecloths and linen napkins, dishes and wine glasses, just as any family dinner table is set. The couples who provide and prepare the dinner plan it to be just that—a family dinner. Before dinner, the football game was even shown on the large screen, just as it is in many homes on that afternoon!



Good food, conversation and fellowship were plentiful!

Many men and women pitched in to distribute all of the platters of turkey, bowls of potatoes, and all of the other dishes to each table while the food was hot. The atmosphere was festive and the food was delicious! Many positive comments have been shared by those who have attended the Thanksgiving Dinners, such as, “We left a few pounds heavier and our hearts full of joy,” “Being served to clearing the tables was a very personal touch to a relaxing, enjoyable Thanksgiving feast!” “It was a wonderful and enjoyable Thanksgiving dinner,” “Thank you for the time you spent to make the occasion outstanding.”

Next year, on November 22, 2007, the third annual Thanksgiving Dinner will be held at STM. For those of us with family out of town and for people who would love to share the holiday with members of our parish family, we look forward to having even more people come for dinner and spend the afternoon together. This is a tradition that we hope to keep for many years.



A very enjoyable time was had by all in attendance!

St. Thomas More (1478-1535) was strengthened in life and prepared himself for martyrdom by fervent adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.

In one of More's prayers, published after his death, we read, "O sweet Saviour Christ, by the divers torments of Thy most bitter Passion, take from me, good Lord, this lukewarm fashion or rather key-cold meditation, and this dullness in praying to Thee. And give me Thy grace to long for Thy Holy Sacraments, and especially to rejoice in the Presence of Thy blessed Body, sweet Saviour Christ, in the Holy Sacrament of the Altar, and duly to thank Thee for Thy gracious visitation therewith."

The Eucharistic Adoration Committee comprised of John O'Donnell (Chair), Pauline Lapre, Jack Lincoln, and Joyce Meehan have been very busy in bringing the Blessed Sacrament Chapel and Eucharistic Adoration to the forefront of our communal prayer life here at STM.

We are grateful for the ministry of this committee which is helping us to be a more Eucharist-centered Community!



Parishioners of all ages spend time in prayer and reflection in our Blessed Sacrament Chapel.

Here is the fruit of their labor thus far:

1. Beginning January 2, 2007, the Blessed Sacrament Chapel will be open Monday—Friday from 6:30am to 7:30pm.
2. The recitation of the Rosary will take place in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel Tuesday through Friday immediately following the Morning Mass. The recitation of the Rosary will also take place every Thursday at 6:00pm.

3. There will be 23 days of Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament during 2007. Each day will have a special prayer intention.

Each Exposition Day will end with a family hour in which families with young children will be invited to spend at least 15 minutes in prayer together before the Blessed Sacrament.

Having always been an advocate of the Blessed Sacrament Chapel, John O'Donnell fills a vital role in this ministry. He and his committee ensure the proper care of the chapel so that all who enter may be at peace to spend some quiet time in prayer with Lord. He is waiting for you.

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament—2007 Schedule

January 5, Friday
Feast of St. John Neumann:
"For God's Blessings on this New Year"

January 18, Thursday
Week of Prayer for Christian Unity:
"That We May See Ourselves as
Brothers & Sisters in Christ"

February 2, Friday
Feast of the Presentation:
"For an Ever-deeper Realization of
Jesus as the Messiah"

February 20, Tuesday
Feast of Blessed Jacinta & Francisco Marto:
"For Fidelity to our Lenten Resolutions"

March 2, Friday
Feast of St. Agnes of Bohemia:
"For an Increase in the Virtues of
Patience and Charity"

March 16, Wednesday
Feast of St. Clement Mary Hofbauer:
"For the Success of Our Lenten Renewal Week
'Spirituality for a New Millennium.'"

April 6, Friday
Good Friday—No Exposition of the Eucharist

April 25, Wednesday
Feast of St. Mark the Evangelist:
"For All Christians to Spend More Time
with the Scriptures"

May 4, Friday
Feast of Blessed Michael Giedroyc:
"For All Who Struggle with Physical Pain"

May 15, Tuesday
Feast of St. Isidore the Farmer:
"For a Greater Appreciation of the
Dignity of Physical Labor"

June 1, Friday
Feast of St. Justin:
"For the Quest of Truth"

June 15, Friday
Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus:
"For a Greater Awareness of
God's Love for All People"

July 6, Friday
Feast of St. Maria Goretti:
"That the Virtue of Chastity May Be
Lived by All Christians"

July 26, Thursday
Feast of Ss. Joachim and Anne:
"For All Grandparents"

August 3, Friday
Feast of St. Peter Julian Eymard:
"For the Strength Not to Give in to Despair"

August 14, Tuesday
Feast of St. Maximilian Kolbe:
"For Fidelity to the Faith in Times of Adversity"

September 7, Friday
Feast of Blessed Ozanam:
"That Christians May Recognize Christ in the Poor"

September 14, Friday
Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross:
"That Christians Will Unite Their
Crosses to Christ's Cross"

October 5, Friday
Feast of St. Mary Faustina:
"That All People May See the
Essence of God as Divine Mercy"

October 17, Wednesday
Feast of St. Ignatius of Antioch:
"That Christians Remain Committed to Christ,
Despite the Cost"

November 2, Friday
Feast of All Souls:
"For All Who Have Gone Before Us in Death"

November 20, Tuesday
Feast of St. Rose Philippine Duchesne:
"For a Deepening Sense of Gratitude
for All God's Gifts"

December 7, Friday
Feast of St. Ambrose:
"For Greater Faith, Hope, & Less Anxiety as
We Await the Second Coming"

December 13, Thursday
Feast of St. Lucy:
"That the Light of Our Faith Will Take Away
the Darkness of All Sin"

Transformation occurs each day of our lives. In nature one season slowly turns into the next. In our families we watch as our children gradually grow physically, mentally and spiritually. Very often these transformations are so subtle that we don't notice them; they simply happen. The Environment and Art Committee year after year, season after season subtly transform a gymnasium into a holy and special place of worship.



A&E team members enjoy a break during preparation for Christmas 2006.



Advent 2006



Man lift is often in use!

Chairperson Kathy Quinn and her team provide our parish with liturgically suitable surroundings through the design and production of flower arrangements and altar backdrops as well as indoor and outdoor banners. This very dedicated group combines, visionary, artistic,

and engineering talents to bring together beautifully designed displays.

The ministry works on these changes at the parish sometimes on a daily, and in a few cases on an hourly basis.

“There have been a few events at the church where we have only had three hours to change the set up before the next event” says Quinn. In addition to the obvious artistic

strength of this group, there is also a lot of physical labor involved. The altar banners are carefully engineered to be light weight enough to hang onto the back drop, but sturdy enough to endure long term storage and reuse.

The committee uses a book provided by the diocese as a source of information for each day of the liturgical year. This



Christmas 2005

book includes guidelines for flowers and particular colors during different liturgical times of the year.

The ministry members of this team, Bob Wong, Joe and Charlene Buhlert, Sondra Parks, Carol Thomson, Mary Castle and Pat Cope all work together to create the backdrops that we see in Mass each week. Each is uniquely created with a wide variety of materials ranging from acrylic paints, foil papers to many different types of fabric. Our parish has enjoyed the visionary talents of this group since its early storefront days!

When the parish moved to our present location in 2001,

Charlene and Joe Buhlert became instrumental with the creation and care of all the hanging banners on both the inside and outside of the upper level of the Parish Center.

As we continue to move forward on our journey and until we are in our new permanent home, our Church, let us continue to enjoy and reflect on these beautiful and unique creations welcoming us each time we enter our worship space.



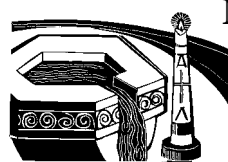
Palm Sunday 2006



Lent 2006



Easter 2006—The Risen Lord



Made one with the risen Lord! Baptisms November 2005 — November 2006

Blessings be with you today and every day to come ... Through caring acts may your life be lit with love. Through kindness may contentment be your reward, with gentleness may you journey well, with truth and beauty may you follow a path that wherever you go whatever you do says grace and joy abides with you!

—Susan Kramer

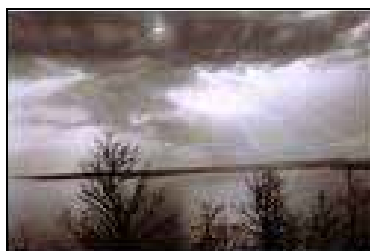
Sean Merrill Cleary
 Kayla Mary Patterson
 Davis Caroline Berry
 Jack Thomas McCarthy
 Alexander Robert Zeisse
 Dominic Joseph Holquin
 Gabriel Joseph Aguilera
 Olivia Rose Marie Hartdegen
 Nycholas Sebastie Woolsey
 Owen Jay Zack
 Jackson Robert Bell

Olivia Jane Fresca
 Samantha Helene Henry
 Junie Zold Baratti
 Vickie Lynn Cap
 Matthew Christopher Jonte
 Makayla Lee Murillo
 Kimberly Lisa Quick
 Jeffrey Alan Talavera
 Chloeann Cabral
 Zhoelyn Cabral
 Isabella Linda Hernandez

Lucien Alexander Strona
 Cole Thomas Trail
 Deroyn Michelle Trail
 Alexandria Elizabeth Browne
 Adam Sterling Draves
 Tyler Robert Myers
 Joaquin Francisco Souza
 Emma Grace Ritter
 Sara Kate Siegel
 Michael Anthony Allison
 (Rupp)

Ryan Craig Reilly
 Andrew Maxwell Shepherd
 Dominic Vincent Berona
 Kristina Marie Gonzalez
 Sean Michael Stokowski
 Leonard James Geiger V
 Julia Noelle Osborn
 Randy Allan Preisendorf
 Jai Annon Williams
 Brendan Austin Norbert
 O'Malley
 Victoria Ann Larson

In Memoriam



Eternal rest, grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God rest in peace.

Amen.

Blessed by the Sacrament of Matrimony

God please bless this marriage in warmth and strength. Give these two people guidance, love, and understanding to be the best that they can be. Be with them through the difficult moments and the beautiful ones. Teach them that marriage is a loving process and challenge.

Amen.



**In honor and memory of those who have died,
 December 2005 — November 2006**

Mary Ann Gough
 Robert Evensen
 Mary Norelli
 Antoinette Novy
 Robert Gotti
 Glenn Wariner
 Henry W. Davis
 Catherine DiLullo
 George Bronzan
 Marion Colldeweih
 Joseph Hendrickson
 James Swarbrick

Patricia Ann Thompson
 Anne H. Davis
 Bernard Weiler
 Loretta Murdock
 Paul Jin Yoo
 Gus Gruerio
 Charles E. Darcy
 Mary Murphey
 Florence "Nita" Ruetters
 Nancy Gail
 Donald Goodman
 Elizabeth Rogers

Mark & Vickie Cap May 6, 2006
 Lynn & Joyce Butcher August 5, 2006
 Bao Chao Nguyen & Julie Nguyen August 5, 2006
 Daniel Carr & Maureen Egan August 12, 2006
 William Goeltz & Theresa Jocelyn August 19, 2006
 John D'Agostini & Anna Luy August 26, 2006
 Justin Bousquet & Tamara Alesi September 9, 2006
 Harold Haynes & Mary Bager September 14, 2006
 Donald Dumas & Irene Balli-Dumas September 16, 2006
 Kelly Logan & Cheyenne Reyes September 23, 2006
 Garrett Lynn & Teresa Ramirez October 14, 2006
 Frank & Valerie Sonntag October 28, 2006

My last trip to New Orleans a few years ago was seeing a city of large crowds, revelry, and great restaurants. In September Sister Maureen and I went to see how our parish can help to restore the lives of at least a few of the people who have been challenged by this most disastrous of events. Our goal is to help the members of the parish of Saint Peter Claver clean and rebuild their homes and to know they are not alone.

Fr. Mike Jacques, the Pastor of Saint Peter Claver, is very caring and active. As soon as possible after Katrina, he found as many of his parishioners as he could and went to Houston and surrounding areas to meet with them and celebrate Mass. He felt strongly that getting the church



Much repair work remains and a team of STM parishioners is preparing for their trip to help out in February, 2007.

campus restored so the parish family had some place to come home to should be his first priority. They have a beautiful sanctuary and a very active congregation that has repaired the church along with getting the school up and running. Because they have taken in children from neighboring schools, both parochial and public, that are not yet open, they are accommodating 294 students in a campus planned for 300 and feel very blessed to have a place to gather, worship and educate.

Getting back into their homes is the next phase of their recovery. All of the staff members we met with were evacuees, and they came back to destroyed or severely damaged homes. They are victims themselves who are trying to get their lives back while helping their neighbors. The culture of New Orleans is to live in close proximity with family and friends from many generations.

Robert Cooper, a Seminarian doing his internship at Saint Peter Claver, is from the city. Before his parents evacuated, his father, a dentist, had his practice not far from their home in the Saint Bernard area. After Katrina, he came back to find the entire subdivision of 27,000 homes and his office completely unlivable. The water had gone over the roof of his office and up to the second story of their home. Though many of the houses in his neighborhood were being repaired, his parents have lived through a previous hurricane and felt they could not endure the possibility of another one in the future. They have now relocated, and Robert is the only member of his family left in the city. His biggest adjustment has been

having his family one and a half hour away instead of five minutes. Robert gave us a tour of the city and seemed excited about the fact that the city had just recently removed all the cars that were displaced randomly by the water. Most houses had markings on the front door indicating they had been searched for people and pets, who did the search, if bodies were found, and how many. This and the sight of a baby walker hanging from an upstairs window and other personal items strewn around was to me a striking reminder of the very human side of this tragedy.

As in any disaster, there are random houses that appear to be intact with people living in them, but most in the low lying areas are in dreadful condition. Government Trailers are abundant as 40% of the residents have returned, and

there are many individuals cleaning and repairing houses. We had lunch at the “French Quarter” which isn’t far from Saint Peter Claver, and those formerly packed streets and restaurants had a few people but no lines and a very different atmosphere from what I remembered.

(—Wilma Rolland)

Our Parish has continued to support the families of St. Peter Claver by providing Christmas packages which included gifts, a personal message and a family picture for 33 of their families. Forty of us, 32 parishioners and 8 lay associates from my religious community, look forward to going to New Orleans in February to let the families of St. Peter Claver know we have not forgotten them, and we will stand and work with them to bring their lives back to some order, peace and safety.

Many families are not able to save for their home rebuilding as it takes all their income to cover rent and basic needs. Others can only afford materials but count on us to do the repair work.

An appeal for help goes out at STM in January. All assistance is very much appreciated!

(—Sr. Maureen Brown)



STM volunteers prepare for shipping!

For Mary Coxon, the idea of helping frightened children in the hospital makes a lot of sense. She remembers the day years ago, when at age 5 she had her tonsils taken out. She was so scared she pulled off the anesthesia mask. “I’d do anything to save someone from that kind of terror,” Coxon said.

Now she works with Project Linus volunteers in the Tri-City area, sewing security blankets for children in the hospital. They call themselves blanketeers.

Her group of about 10 Tri-City area women makes dozens of quilts and afghans each year for children who are very sick or maybe just very scared. “This is something they can cling to,” Coxon said. The blankets go to area hospitals, abuse shelters and inside the trunks of police cars for children in road accidents or other traumatic situations.

Project Linus, a nationwide nonprofit, has given out nearly 13,000 homemade blankets in the San Diego area since 1996. “It’s for any kid who needs a hug during a crisis,” said Ursula Sorensen, coordinator of the project’s San Diego chapter.

The Tri-City blanketeers are among hundreds throughout the county who are crocheting, knitting and quilting blankets for the project. Some are made quilt guilds and church groups. Others come from retirement homes and Girl Scout troops. Most of the blankets are distributed in the county, but some have gone to other places such as Hurricane Katrina victims and mudslide survivors in Tijuana. “It’s a big community project,” Sorensen said.



Jo Lanzrath, Maria Elena Gonzales, Nancy Wozniak and Shirley Kudzia are part of the Project Linus Team at STM

The project began in Colorado when Karen Loucks-Baker read about how a security blanket helped a toddler through chemotherapy. She started collecting handmade blankets and it grew from there.

The Tri-City group meets twice a year at St. Thomas More Church in Oceanside to collect what they made, sew in Project Linus labels and share stories from around San Diego. Marcy See recalled the story of a little girl in the hospital who wouldn’t talk to anyone. “When she got the blanket she snuggled up and finally was able to say something and cry,” said See who has been making the blankets for 10 years.

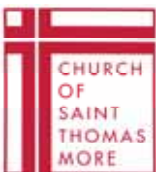
Sorensen is known for the red wagon piled high with Project Linus blankets she brings to children in the hospital. Kids get to pick one to keep. “When you see a little smile on their face it’s worth it,” Sorensen said. “Some are hooked up to IV’s, but they still have their blankie tucked under their arm,” she said.

Blankets are made in several sizes, including neonatal, 20 inches by 20 inches or 22 by 22; baby size, 34 inches by 36 inches; toddler to youngster, 36 inches by 42 inches, and teenager, 40 inches by 60 inches. Materials must be washable and free of odors from pets, smoke and scented fabric softeners because of the sensitivity of children undergoing chemotherapy.

For information about the Tri-City blanketeers, call (760) 599-8760 or the San Diego Chapter, (858) 274-2652. For Project Linus information, see www.projectlinus.org. *This article was reprinted with the permission of the San Diego Union Tribune.*

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.



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

The Tower is published
semi-annually by the:
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