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# THE TOWER

## Parish “Build-Out” Moves Forward in 2008!

— by Rev. Michael Ratajczak

**O**n December 10, 2007, Bishop Robert Brom visited our Parish to present his “Dialogue on Sexual Abuse and Other Related Matters.”

About 175 Parishioners were in attendance. Before his presentation, the Bishop delivered an early Christmas gift to us—permission to move forward with the “build-out” of our Parish Campus, with the focus upon our new Church.

We now have the “go-ahead” to hire an architect, hire an interior design consultant, create all the necessary construction documents, and obtain all the necessary city permits.

This is a very significant step forward! This next step will take 18 to 24 months to complete. We presently have enough funds on deposit in the Parish and School Deposit and Loan Trust (PSDL) at the Diocese to accomplish these goals.

In the meantime, it is essential that we continue to be faithful to the Capital Campaign, *“Our Journey Into The Future...Together.”* Keeping in mind that our Capital Campaign is focusing on a number of items, it is crucial that your pledge payments continue and that fulfilled pledges be renewed. We have come a long way...but we still have a long way to go!

Our Capital Campaign goal is \$12.4 million. We have raised \$5.7 million in pledges and presently have \$2.5 million on deposit in the Parish and School Deposit and Loan Trust with the Diocese. Besides what is on deposit we have also accomplished the following items:

*(Continued on page 2)*



View of our new Church footprint from the parking lot—Parish Center is at far right

## Parish “Build-Out” Moves Forward in 2008! — *continued*

*(Continued from page 1)*

1) We have purchased the five-acre parcel adjacent to our Campus for \$589,000 and have spent nearly \$52,000 in clearing the land and fencing the perimeter. This parcel of land will ensure more playground space for our future school and will provide the extra parking that will be needed as we continue to grow.

2) We are paying down our original interest-free loan from the Diocese. When I arrived at the Parish in July 2003, this debt was \$795,000. Two years ago we began paying down the debt at \$11,000 per month, and our current balance is \$531,000.

3) We are making monthly payments on our \$1 million pledge to the Secondary Education Initiative for a new high school in North County. Presently we have paid \$122,000 toward this pledge. Bishop Brom has reassured us that this money is designated money and will be held in trust for the new Pax Christi High School.

4) We engaged Renzo Zecchetto, who designed our Master Plan and our Parish Center, to create the necessary “footprint” of our new Church which was needed for our Conditional Use Permit (CUP) Conformance Review. The Conformance Review was approved by the City of Oceanside in February 2007.

5) Now we have the funds necessary to hire the architect and the interior design consultant, create the construction documents, and obtain all the necessary permits for our new Church and also for the Parish Administrative Center!

As a Parish, you have been generous to the Capital Campaign. This generosity must continue as we move forward. It is estimated, at this time, that the Church will cost \$8.5 million and the Parish Administrative Center will cost \$1.5 million.



Preliminary footprint rendering of the interior of our new Church

We have come a long way...but we still have a long way to go. It is also crucial that we maintain a healthy operational budget. There is no way that we can build more if we cannot maintain the ministries and the building that we presently have. Parishioners will continue to be updated on a monthly basis through the bulletin in regard to the operational budget.

Bill Ipsen, the Chairperson of our Capital Campaign, spoke at all the Masses on the weekend of January 19 and 20. He gave us a more detailed summary of all that has been happening and presented the Parish at large with the updated sketches of the “footprint” of our new Church.

I am so grateful for the strong support that a significant majority of Parishioners are giving to help us turn our dreams into reality.

Trusting in God, we continue to move forward and we allow God to bring this good work in us to fulfillment! ♦

*More information is available  
on the Parish website at [www.stmoside.org](http://www.stmoside.org)*

Click  
**“Our New Church”**  
on the home page to see a slideshow  
of the Church footprint.

Click  
**“Our Journey Into The Future. . . Together”**  
and then the Capital Campaign Flyer  
dated 1/20/08.



View of the interior of our new Church footprint

## Remembering Reverend Ken Kieffer — by Edward Sifuentes, *North County Times* Staff Writer

As a Catholic Navy chaplain, the Reverend Kenneth F. Kieffer spent much of his career ministering to troops stationed all around the world. The call to serve others came early and lasted all his life, friends and family said. He died January 31, 2007, in San Diego at age 78.



“Father Ken,” as he was known, served as a chaplain in Japan, New Hampshire, Morocco, and Hawaii. He retired in one of the places he loved best, Oceanside, in 1991. “He was always so kind and he always took last place,” putting everyone else before him, said Jo Ann Fries,

his sister. “He always said, ‘I’m just a poor Franciscan.’”

Kieffer was ordained a deacon in 1954. Years earlier, he dropped out of school after completing the eighth grade hoping to become a priest, inspired by his Irish Catholic family. He wrote about his life in a brief autobiography for “future Kieffers.” “I recall the joy and thrill of having been called by God to be a priest, overwhelmed by the dignity bestowed upon me,” he wrote. “One thing, however, has always been very clear in my mind down through the years: without the grace of God, the support and concern of my family, I would never have made it.”

He was born in Dubuque, Iowa, he wrote, with “the left leg three and a quarter inches shorter than my right leg. Otherwise, a healthy baby.” After painful operations in childhood, his legs were nearly normal length. They were close enough to play sports as a young man and follow the example of his older brother, Gerald Kieffer, who served in World War II at Iwo Jima and Pearl Harbor. “World War II was raging during my early years in the seminary,” he wrote. “Jerry had joined the Navy and would write me from Pearl Harbor and later Iwo Jima. . . . I’m certain that it was Jerry’s contact during the war that instilled in me a desire to be a Navy Chaplain.”

He grew to appreciate working with the troops in times of hardship and war. He counseled families of those sent to serve during the Gulf War and prisoners when he was stationed at the Naval Disciplinary Command, a Navy prison in Portsmouth, New Hampshire.

While Fr. Ken was stationed at Camp Pendleton in 1979, he bought a home in Oceanside. He traveled around the world several times during transfers of command, but he

always enjoyed Southern California, his sister said. He wrote that he grew to enjoy the status of a military officer, especially after he was promoted to captain in 1981. “If I was spoiled before, this was frosting on the cake.”



Blessing of Animals, February 2006

After retiring from the Navy, he continued ministering at various Catholic parishes in the county, including the Church of St. Thomas More in Oceanside, Mission San Diego de Alcala, Immaculate Conception, St. Francis, St. Mary Star of the Sea, St. Patrick, and Mission San Luis Rey. He also volunteered at various local non-profit organizations, such as Michaelle House, Brother Benno’s, Catholic Charities, and North County Solutions for Change.

“He was a very humble person; not a bad bone in his body,” said Natalie Provinse, a friend and bookkeeper at St. Thomas More. “He will be missed by a lot of people.” ♦

\* This article was excerpted with the permission of the *North County Times*.

*January 31 marks the first anniversary of Fr. Ken’s death. In the past year, I know that many of us have had a variety of moments when we have experienced his*

*absence and grieved his loss. Fr. Ken’s “retirement” was a complete commitment to pastoral ministry, the people of STM, and to so many others in the wider community.*

*He was a shining example to younger priests, inspiring them, inspiring me that the “best is yet to come,” even after and during retirement. Fr. Ken’s death took place on the anniversary of my Ordination and I see his death on that date as a gift of serendipity given to me to strengthen me as I move into my “senior years.” I thank him for all he has done for me, and for all of us, and invite you to join me in toasting him!*

—Fr. Mike



Fr. Ken’s 50th Ordination Anniversary, June



Fathers Peter, Ken, and Mike, June 2005

Checking in at the front desk of North County Solutions for Change, I am greeted by a mother with her precious, porcelain-faced newborn girl who is settled in a bouncy seat. How wonderful it is, I think, that this place is so supportive of families and new mothers. It is not until later when I am on a tour of the apartments and have walked into the same woman's home



Reception desk at a Solutions location in Vista, California

that I realize she is a resident and is working the front desk as a part of her program obligation. This is an example of the organization's tailoring their program to fit the needs of a resident, something that defines the program and is part of its success. This unique place is "really about developing a personal relationship with the people here," says Chris Megison, director and founder of Solutions for Change, or commonly referred to as *Solutions*. At this place it is the people, learning their stories and helping them recreate their lives that make the program successful.



NCSC provides a warm and caring atmosphere on a cold, rainy day

North County Solutions for Change is a not-for-profit organization started in 1999 to help the homeless in our community. The focus is to help homeless families. The mission is to end homeless families in North San Diego County. There are two shelters in Vista: The Solutions Family Center on California Avenue and the Access Center on East

Vista Way. Three programs provide over 180 beds to homeless families in need. *Solutions* offers education, employment, and housing to provide opportunities for families to thrive. Currently, the two locations house 53 families.

When asked how many people are on the waiting list to get into the Family Center, Megison responds that the facility is "packed to the rafters right now." In the third week of November 2007, there were 43 families on the waiting list. According to the annual Regional Task Force on the Homeless there are 11,000 homeless individuals county-wide, and 2,500 of those are considered member of a family. Megison adds, "We see more than 600 homeless in North County alone."

Rather than simply reacting to homelessness, *Solutions* offers valuable opportunities to help families overcome poverty. They create a family plan for educational opportunities, employment, and housing. Personal accountability is created, stressed, and maintained.

*Solutions* addresses behavioral, emotional, mental, and spiritual needs. Families build and sustain healthy and productive lifestyles by attending classes, receiving proper counseling including community building and interactive team exercises.



The NCSC logo

"These people really need an interventionist and a person who loves and cares about them. They need someone who wants to get to the core of the problem. They need so much more than a bowl of soup," says Megison.

The family plan approach provided by *Solutions* involves personal attention and requires help from the community. Megison says, "Jesus would not stop with simply feeding the hungry. He would want to see us grow and mature and develop the relationship." This is rewarding work!

*Solutions* functions best when families and communities share enthusiasm and participation. Megison says, "We need folks who can look at us and get a little piece of the passion that I feel is evident here—people motivated to help children and families end their homelessness. We want people who are willing to share their gifts." If we continue to help one family at a time to get back on their feet, we are helping to put an end to homeless families.

*Solutions'* needs are summed up in three words: wealth, wisdom, and work. "We deal with a host of unmet needs that arise here every day. We have developed our programs around effectively responding to those unmet



needs and helping solve those problems, but there are just so many more,” says Megison. He looks for the people with the gifts who are not afraid to roll up their sleeves and work.

Currently the Terrific Kids Homework Club is in need of tutors. This important new program offers a fun, productive, and supportive learning environment for children to complete their daily homework and fosters success in education. The program is for kindergarten through fifth grade children living in the centers. It is held Monday to Thursday from 4:00 to 5:30 p.m.

These children need to have a good education to have a chance at succeeding in life. This begins with being able to read. Presently, half of the children are reading below grade level. Megison stresses, “We can and have to do something about this now and help these children come up a grade or two. We have a great opportunity, through the Terrific Kids Homework Club, to help and to influence the outcome of this situation.”

Like any not-for-profit organization, *Solutions* needs financial support. Private funding is absolutely essential to the success of the families.



They are currently \$5 short of funding each child, every day. It is members of the local community like Randy and Jana Reznicek, who became proactive and created what is now *Solutions for Change's* biggest fundraiser, an annual Friend to Friend event held at Shadowridge Country Club in Vista. Various members of

Education is stressed here! the community and local businesses donated \$87,000 at the last event in November 2007. “The Reznicek’s are powerful friends for us, and we are grateful for their help.”

St. Thomas More Parishioners have been providing hot dinners on a monthly basis to the Intake and Access shelter, which houses 30-40 people, for over five years. We collect a wide variety of necessary items for the children during our annual Christmas collection and



Local high school student tutors a young resident at NCSC throughout the year. A number of our members also support the annual Friend to Friend Event for *Solutions!*

Current *Solutions* volunteer opportunities include:

- ◆ Prepare and Serve a Meal
- ◆ Terrific Kids Homework Club
- ◆ Wednesday Night Childcare
- ◆ Guitar and Piano Lessons
- ◆ Office Help
- ◆ Grant Writers
- ◆ Handy Men and Women
- ◆ Donation Opportunities by Month

Part of our faith is to give to others in need. We each have a civic responsibility to help our community. Mahatma Gandhi said, “Be the change you want to see in the world.” We must live responsibly and model this behavior for younger generations. This will help to make our city a better place and help to make a difference in our future communities. We are all God’s children. The homeless children are part of our family. ◆

**FOR PRECIOUS HAILEY. . .**  
**WE CAN BEAT HOMELESSNESS**



For more information or to volunteer, please call 760-941-6545 x304 or email at [www.solutionsforchange.org](http://www.solutionsforchange.org)

## Sacramental Blessings

November 1, 2006 – December 31, 2007

## Blessed by the

## Sacrament of Matrimony

Brendan Austin Norbert O'Malley

Victoria Ann Larson

Ashley Benitez

Michaela Roderick Sherman

Chloe Faith De La Loza

Matthew Robert Mummery

Emeline Terese Smiley

Meredith Anne Williams

Stevie Anne Wilmott

Luciano Alejandro Burrola

Emily Rose Allison

David John Dearborn

Harold William Haynes

Jennifer Helen Peterson

Will Riley Peterson

Curtis James Warren

Sebastian Michael Cardinale

Adrienne Luke Cabral

Mercedes Elizabeth Hartdegen

Kaleb Frederick Peterson

Katherine Grace Peterson

Olivia Hope Peterson

Brooke Marian Venzor

Vanessa Barrera

Paulo Roberto Aniano Zurita

Grace Elizabeth Dearborn

Madison Anne Dearborn

Terese Avori McDermott

Myri Thay Maria Parsons

Khalil Dennis La Bauve

Maleia Eileen Pato

Khalil Julian Cammayo

Carter Blake Livermore

Marissa Therese Mendiola

Abigail Gabrielle Mosca

Jacob David Kawano

Tayla Lin Perez

Emily Therese Gray

*Lord, make me an instrument of Thy peace;  
where there is hatred, let me sow love;  
where there is injury, pardon;  
where there is doubt, faith;  
where there is despair, hope;  
where there is darkness, light;  
and where there is sadness, joy.*

*O Divine Master,  
grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console;  
to be understood, as to understand;  
to be loved, as to love;  
for it is in giving that we receive,  
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,  
and it is in dying that we are born to Eternal Life. Amen.*

Lan and Kelley Parsons

Lupe and Clay Pelletier

Kristen and David Dearborn

Peter Hill and Maura Cossarek

## In honor and memory of those who have died

Mark Geiger

Elizabeth Rogers

Alonzo Lovell

Bill Zontine

Chuck Wehner

Ivone Zych

Fr. Ken Kieffer

Jim Kilian

Libuse Rohacek

Owen Fredette

Mary Donahue

Jim Walsh

Lew Crowell

George Duarte

Jack Quirk

Rita Sorensen

Bill Cracknell

Margaret Kidder

Patrick Comstock

Bill Kenney

Leslie Grant

Clayton Provinse

Peg Ayers

Teresa Biernacki

Gerald Hafner

Pat Michel

Steve Kremenik

Roger Lape

Winifred Cortese

Rose Gogan

Alfred Holscher

Haley Knoll

Ernest Walsh

Amber Ahmann

Tricia Borba Vasquez



Made one through Baptism with the risen Lord

## Monday Night Mass Celebrates One-Year Anniversary — by Bret Schanzenbach

It is Monday night. You approach St. Thomas More Church from the parking lot. You draw near and hear a strange sound booming out of the church. Is it... drums? And bass guitar? You do a quick check to be sure you did not make a wrong turn on Cannon Road. No, you are definitely at St. Thomas More. You find out you have entered the...Monday Night Mass Zone!



Altar servers prepare for Monday Night Mass

About fourteen months ago, Ron Briseno was inspired by his P.U.S.H. Youth Group to ask Fr. Mike about having a youth-centric liturgy. After a number of discussions and meetings with

interested parties, presto change-o, Monday Night Mass was born. Monday, December 3, 2007, was the one-year anniversary of Monday Night Mass—and what a year it has been!

About 75 people attended the first Monday Night Mass on the lower level. Over 170 people attended this December's Mass on the upper level. Several months ago it was moved upstairs. The numbers keep growing.

What is Monday Night Mass? The first Monday of every month, the youth of our Parish serve at this liturgy. The teens act as altar servers, musicians, readers, and ushers.



Fr. Mike celebrates the Eucharist on the first anniversary of Monday Night Mass

The Monday Night Mass Music Team (MNM Team) has grown significantly in the last twelve months and is a tangible piece in St. Thomas More's overall Music Ministry mosaic. It is led by Joleen Schanzenbach with help from Mike Wojcik. The sound is coordinated by Jim Treat.

The group started with a few teens twelve months ago and now has approximately twelve singers and eight instrumentalists rotating through the group. Joleen and Mike coordinate teens to play bass guitar, drums, flute, guitar, and piano in an upbeat sound bringing a sort of Renaissance flair to the Parish music.



One of our youth pianists

After Monday Night Mass was launched, Fr. Mike and music director Douglas Lynn asked the MNM Team to share their tempo with the Parish. The MNM Team plays

*(Continued on page 8)*



The Monday Night Mass Music Team members rejoiced by celebrating their first Christmas Eve Mass in 2007

## Monday Night Mass — *continued*



Our talented youth play in the Monday Night Mass Team!

*(Continued from page 7)*

one Monday a month, one Sunday a month, and other special days (e.g., Christmas, Easter, and Pentecost). On a couple of occasions they have combined with the Adult Choir to make an even more joyful celebration for Christ.

The response has been tremendous. Gale Gibbons, High School Youth Minister at St. Thomas More, shares she



Monday Night Mass monthly collections for Stand Up For Kids help stock shelves for homeless teens in Oceanside

loves the energy of young people. Monday Night Mass and the MNM Team nurture this energy. She feels Monday Night Mass provides a place for Youth Group Alumni in the area to gather together once a month.

The younger kids enjoy it. Grace Fredette (7 years old), says, “I love it because the kids do the readings.” Emma (12 years) and David Rudolph (8 years) stated, “It is cool the High School Youth Group and P.U.S.H. come together to pray and worship. We get to honor God by singing great songs. It is fun!”

Monday Night Mass is for the Young at Heart! Anne Marshall, a Parishioner for many years, never misses a Monday Night Mass. She says, “I love the youth. It is the most uplifting Mass we have at St. Thomas More.”

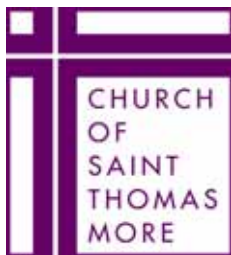
Fr. Mike said it best in his homily at the one-year anniversary Mass, “Who would have thunk it?” ♦



Christmas collection netted 44 fully stocked backpacks for Stand Up For Kids youth to help them through the winter months

## 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 God’s people  
in word and deed.”***

*The Tower is published  
semi-annually by the:  
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