

St. Thomas More

Roman Catholic Church – Parish Newsletter

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Yes, We Have Arrived . . . No, We Have Not Arrived

— by Rev. Michael Ratajczak

*These remarks were given at the Dedication of our House of Worship on
December 16, 2015.*

St. Thomas More Church, my brothers and sisters in Christ...Yes, we have arrived!

Over the last 30 years, and especially in the last 10 years, we laughed, we cried, we struggled, we celebrated, we pushed and we pulled, but now we rejoice overwhelmingly, because today our Church has its permanent Home, blessed and consecrated by our Shepherd, Bishop Robert McElroy.

St. Thomas More Church, my brothers and sisters in Christ...No, we have not arrived! We need to remember that this grand accomplishment is not an end in itself, but it is a means to an end.

This magnificent building is meant to help us better worship our God and to strengthen us in our efforts as we reach out in loving service, in the name of Jesus, to the world around us.

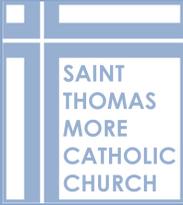
If we fail to do this, we have built to no avail! The building, as beautiful as it is, becomes meaningless.

So, “Yes, we have arrived...” not in a sense of completion, but as one more milestone along our faith journey as St. Thomas More Catholic Church.

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Bishop Robert McElroy and Rev. Michael Ratajczak opened the Bronze Holy Doors



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.



The Tower is published semi-annually by **St. Thomas More Catholic Church**
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Parish Mission Statement

To worship God, teach and live the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and serve God's people in word and deed.



Dedication guests getting their first inside glimpse of our new Church! An amazing reception for this very special occasion followed the Mass.



And, "No, we have not arrived..." because we still have a long way to go. We continue praising our God and reaching out in loving service, sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ, with the world around us.

It is amazing that over 2,000 years ago, Jesus sparked the world with His message, and today, that spark is a vibrant flame searing the souls of over 2.2 billion Christians on the face of the earth, among which are 1.2 billion Roman Catholics.

The key to this phenomenon is not so much WHAT Jesus did, but HOW he did what he did.

Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, the author of *The Little Prince*, once said, "If you want to build a ship, don't ask people to collect wood and do not assign them tasks and work, but rather teach them to yearn for the endless immensity of the sea."

In His ministry, Jesus captured people's imaginations, their hopes and dreams, and He taught them to yearn for the Kingdom of God. God's vision of not how we and our world are, but as we can become and how we can be, with God's help.

That yearning, that desire, continues until today, and it is well and alive in our Parish.

As we undertook this project, in a very real sense, I did not need to assign tasks and work. So many of you simply came forward and took up the tasks that needed to be done.

My job was, and is, to nurture that yearning that Jesus has instilled in you...that yearning for making real God's vision for ourselves and for the world, to make more visible and evident the Kingdom of God!

May this new House of Worship deepen our yearning



Rev. Michael Ratajczak, current and third Pastor, blesses the Baptismal Font and Congregation.

for the Reign of God and give us the strength to instill that yearning in those around us.

People have asked me what I take away from the experience of overseeing this kind of building project.

What I have experienced in these last, almost 13 years, is that if anything is to be successfully accomplished, the players in that project must be willing to accept the stark reality of their need for God's mercy and God's love, have a willingness to accept that mercy and love, and also have a strong desire to freely share that mercy and love with the other players.

There were times, in all honesty and candor, when I felt that I was overseeing the construction of the Tower of Babel, not a House of Worship.

We human beings, architects, owners of construction companies, construction workers, artists, construction site managers working on behalf of the Parish, people on committees helping to give advice on the design, construction, and financing of the project, and yes, Pastors of Parishes—please note that I am including myself in this critique—can often display what I call raging egos.

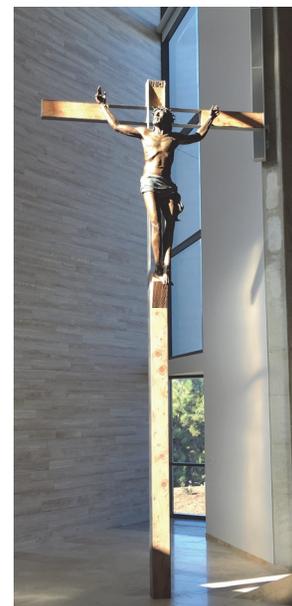
To me, it is a reminder that Original Sin is very much a part of the human fabric, and praise God, can be overcome with the willingness to be

humbled, then the willingness to accept God's mercy and love, and finally, the willingness to share God's love and mercy with others. This is the only way that we can accomplish anything meaningful in this life.

Whatever the project may be in our lives, large or small, if we do not do it in the Gospel Spirit, the project becomes a Tower of Babel.

Thanks to everyone involved in this project, with the help of God, with all of us willing to accept our weaknesses, and with our willingness to accept God's mercy and love to overcome those weaknesses, we are now gathered together in a magnificent House of Worship, not in a Tower of Babel.

This Building was built for God and not for ourselves...



Sculpted by Lynn Kircher, our crucifix depicts Jesus looking heavenward, beyond the present moment.

Bishop Robert Brom, Deacon John Fredette, Rev. Peter McGuine (Second Pastor) and Bishop Robert McElroy.

View more photos at www.stmoside.org/event_pictures.htm and in our upcoming Dedication Video and Pictorial Directory.



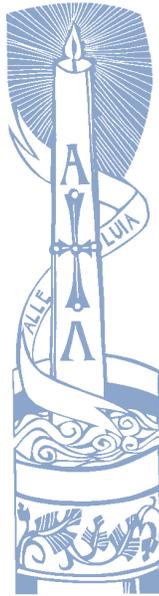
Sacramental Blessings 2015

Made One through Baptism with the Risen Lord

Nicole Acquista
Tasi Asuncion
Trinity Asuncion
Jayce Autry
Anderson Balfour
Evan Barron
Alec Barron
Austin Bonini
Reed Bonini
Madalyn Carrier
Maya Carrier
John Croes
Calvin Davis
Luke Dickerson
Jacob Galang
Jordyn Galvez
Averyanne Garcia
Amy Gogue-Perez
Brandy Goltz
Lillien Jaramillo
Zane Khannakhjavani
Karla Lomiglio
Isabella McCulloch
Jacob McFarland
John McKinley
Kelena Millikan
Audrey Monahan
Payton Packer
Bowen Perretta
Jennifer Pingel
Luca Rogers
Clarice Rosales
Levon Saucier
Elle Tieman
Joyce Wahl

Initiated into the Catholic Faith at the Easter Vigil

William Harper
Barbara Porter



Blessed by the Sacrament of Marriage

Kristopher Clark-Berroth and Vanessa Alexander
Ryan Bonini and Lindsay Daigle
Jeffrey Bonus and Melissa Broshears
Samuel Haro and Melinda Lopez
Kamron Khannakhjavani and Joelle Bonus
Jonathan MacLennan and Heather Youmans
Jeffrey Nickel and Abbie Berry
Peter Perez and Amy Gogue



In Honor and Memory of Those Who Have Died

Daniel Avila
Norma Bautista
Piet Boets
Carol Bolling
Jackie Broussard
Ann Bukovchik
Edmund Burke
Patricia Butler
Stephen Calder
Anthony Calderone
Michelle Carpinelli
Dolly Cole
Robert Del Moral
Edward Dolnik
Deborah Dowling
William Draper
John Ewing
Lois "Boo" Falconer
Theresa Farrell
Maria Filipasic
Gene Fleeman
Alicia Fuentes
Lois Garth
Peter Glenane
Charles Hyde
Richard Johansen

Paul Johansing
Bradley Johnson
Paul Kennedy
Robert Kranz
David Leué
Loretta Martinez
Eleanore Martin-Spinney
Cesarina Morelli
Ralph Mueller
Christine Muleady
Kevin O'Neill
Greg Orscheln
Harold Phelan
Anne Post
Lucy Retz
Sterling Rinear
Constance Ringel
Charles Salter
Douglas Stockton
Fiorina Tusei
Pasquale Vozza
Mary Wallace
Elizabeth Wehner
Marceline Williams
Steven Wilmott
Timothy Wilmott



one LORD,
one Faith,
one Baptism....