

St. Thomas More

Roman Catholic Church – Parish Newsletter

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THE TOWER

By God's Grace

— by Jane Gladden

Yes, we're finally in the home stretch. We've watched with wonder as what was once indiscernible as a House of God began to take form as our new St. Thomas More Catholic Church. As spring welcomed new life, we watched the Holy Spirit bring new life to the steel and concrete and glass structure that began to take shape before our eyes. Now we can almost picture the altar gracing our holy sanctuary, the crucifix rising above it, and St. Thomas More depicted in a beautiful tapestry keeping a watchful eye on the church that bears his name. We can envision the Baptismal Font waiting to welcome those who begin their journey as baptized Catholics, the stained glass window in the Reconciliation Room bringing God's own light into our space, the Marian Shrine (a work still in progress) honoring the Blessed Virgin Mary, and the Memorial Garden outside our Daily Chapel where quiet prayer and meditation will bring us closer to our Maker.

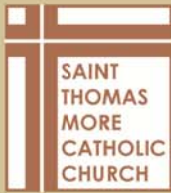
We have been blessed with many, many memorials that are a crucial part of making our Church build-out possible. Here is one example of how some have come together to give and to remember: a number of our Parishioners are honoring their dearly departed children by sponsoring olive trees as a tribute to their loved ones.

Brian Leahey, our Director of Construction, continues to conduct weekly tours of the Church. Even for those who explored the site when Brian first offered them in October, recent tours have brought awe and inspiration as what once could only be seen with the mind's eye is now unfolding before us. A tour truly reinforces the fact that our dream is becoming reality.

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View of the front of our Church, with construction moving along quickly, May 2015



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 God's people in word and deed.



Panoramic interior view (north to east to south) from behind altar position, May 2015 (Interior photo credit: Brian Leahey)

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The excitement builds and the question of the day is: "When will we be able to enter the doors and worship our God in the wonderful new Church that will be our home for years to come?" Here's the good news. In the fall of this year, our doors will open for the first time and Bishop Robert McElroy will dedicate this holy space, blessing our Church and all who enter. What a glorious day that will be. Keep abreast of all good news by reading the Sunday bulletins for more updates in the months to come.

Grace is defined as both an elegance and beauty of form as in charm or fluidity, as well as a manifestation of favor, especially by a superior. I feel we can see grace woven into every facet of our Permanent Church... into each carefully thought out work of art, and in the palpable presence of the Holy Spirit—our superior, guide, and friend.



Side doors and windows of the church with the Baptismal Font (still packaged, bottom right), May 2015

For the past 12 years, Fr. Mike has led us on our journey to this holy space, by God's Grace soon to be the permanent St. Thomas More Catholic Church. In January we honored him as he celebrated the 40th anniversary of his priestly ordination. He recently shared his thoughts about what has been and what is yet to come for St. Thomas More.

"This year we celebrate our 30th anniversary as a Parish. What a way to celebrate! We will move our formal worship of God from our Multipurpose Building, our Parish Center, to our new Permanent Church.



View from corner of Melrose and Cannon, May 2015

It has been a long and challenging road these past thirty years, but it has been very rewarding. Along the way, we have come to realize that a church is not a building, but rather it is the people. What we are presently constructing is the building in which the Church will gather. And with that belief, we have become a very vibrant and alive Parish, serving not only our own Parishioners, but serving the wider community in which we find ourselves.

A number of years ago, a Parishioner said to me: "We already have the Church, the buildings will come!" Now is the time for the buildings to come.



The new Church building will strengthen us and inspire us to continue to answer the call of Jesus to *be* Church!

For all that has been, "Thank You!" For all that will be, "Yes!"

Fr. Mike

Celebration of Fr. Mike's 40th Anniversary of Ordination

—by Jane Gladden

Placement of 12,000-pound Main Altar, March 2015

On January 31, 1975, Fr. Michael Ratajczak was ordained into the priesthood of Our Lord Jesus Christ by Bishop Thomas Gumbleton, Auxiliary Bishop of Detroit, Michigan, beginning a lifelong journey as a priest in service to the mission and ministry of Jesus Christ.

The first disciples heard and responded to Jesus' invitation, "Come, follow me." We at St. Thomas More are continually thankful that at his ordination 40 years ago our pastor answered Jesus' call. We are now blessed to be a part of his flock as he enters what he fondly refers to as his "final stretch."

On Sunday, January 18, 2015, on the St. Thomas More campus, with joy and thanksgiving, Fr. Mike celebrated a beautiful liturgy in a room filled with many friends and family, musicians and ministers,



parishioners and priests. Fr. Mike's longtime friend and brother priest, Fr. Rich Lewandowski, provided much of the joy, laughter, tears and expressions of thanksgiving in his heart-warming homily. It was a true celebration of a man who has committed himself to explore the Mystery of our faith through us and with us.

Following the Mass, the entire Parish celebrated under the tent at a reception gloriously organized by our Reception Team, where stories were shared, and much laughter was heard.

As the Parish enters its fourth decade and nears the completion of its permanent church, we look forward to the months and years ahead, celebrating the leadership of and offering prayers for Fr. Mike, who with his characteristic humor and deep devotion teaches us to be grace-filled followers—just as he is a follower—of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

Photo credit: Marco Colucci



Made One through Baptism with the Risen Lord

Andrew Abelson
Dominic Acquista
Lola Acquista
Emma Antle
Phinneas Beckman
Amanda Burzell
Bodie Callahan
Vivianna Chavarria
Elijah Cox
John Croes
Mackenzie Dean
Emma Del Vecchio
Charles Denning
Samuel Denning
Jack Donovan
Scarlet Egan
Thomas Eral
Hannah Franklin
Gabriel Goeltz
Ava Hernandez
Serena Layoun
Raymond Leyba III
Frank Li Volsi
Kieran Marlaire
Abigail Moore
Kai Morente
Van Phinney
Vera Ramirez
Katie Rasmon
Colt Rieman
Isabel Spencer
Alice Stechschulte
August Wojcik
Lucia Wolcott

Initiated into the Catholic Faith at the Easter Vigil

Sterling Fiore
Johnny Mills



Blessed by the Sacrament of Marriage

Susan Cable Farrar and Richard Antle
Nicole Jacobson and Gregg Acquista
Jennifer Todd and Nicholas Dawson
Angela Petruzzella and Adrian DePaolo
Laura Paciorek and Storm Gloor
Maureen Devlin and Nick Kroll
Abbie Berry and Jeffrey Nickel
Abby Dils and Adam Way



In Honor and Memory of Those Who Have Died

Paul Cassidy
Marilyn Clarke
Brenda Cobian
Elaine Collins
Florence Crull
William Daniels III
Constantino DeFranco
Donna Doherty
Larry Eaks
Diantha Esch
Robert Falconer
George Falkenstein
Margaret Garrett
David Grieg
Skip Hayden
Lillian Herkert
William Hokama
Robert Jacobson
Gloria Jaime
Judith Janousek
Stephen Koonce

Mary Louise Kranz
Bernie Lanrath
Raymond Malinowski
Richard McGeary
Daniel McKeon
Josephine Nelson
Arlene Noles
Maria Olivier
Italo Peveri
Douglass Price-Williams
Joan Rosa
Rita Ross
Dorothy Rouse
Katherine Salter
Maurine Shaughnessy
David Sheehan
Fred Spiegl
David Sweet
Paul West
Enos Williams



oneLORD,
one*Faith,*
oneBaptism....