

St. Thomas More

Roman Catholic Church Newsletter

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THE TOWER

“Our Journey Into The Future . . . Together” By Reverend Michael Ratajczak



Welcome to Volume II of “The Tower.” This edition gives a panoramic view of St. Thomas More. Take time to review our past, come to deeper awareness of our present reality, and anticipate our future with excitement! Here at STM, we experience a sense of spiritual renewal. Living within the Roman Catholic Tradition, we are rooted in the past and open to the future. In our Community of Faith Life, we discover a sense of belonging that is local and universal.

“The Church of St. Thomas More is “Spirituality– Tradition—Community”

Go In Peace To Love And Serve The Lord By Zoraida R. Cozier, Ph.D.

“Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation.” -Mark 16: 15

*“The life Christ won does not work without the cooperation made possible by our participation in it.”
—Francis Cardinal George, Archbishop of Chicago*

“God is very, very, very, very, very, very big,” shouted the five-years olds during a Sunday morning religious education class. The echoes of these young children on the lower level of our parish hall reflected their passion for the bible truths as parishioners simultaneously sang the closing hymn upstairs. Parishioners and visitors had packed the worship space to participate in the liturgy, sing God’s praises, and learn from Rev. Michael Ratajczak. The liturgy both motivates members to follow a Catholic lifestyle and mobilizes members to evangelize.

Despite the growth of secular movements in our society, parishioners at St. Thomas More (STM) deeply commit themselves to Catholicism. At the core of Catholicism is the celebration of the Eucharist. Through the liturgy of the Eucharist, “we experience Jesus’ death and resurrection,” Fr. Mike proclaimed in the April 4, 2004 homily. The Eucharistic Adoration represents this celebration; well over 100 parishioners sign up to spend an hour in prayer to pray in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel each week.



Fr. Mike celebrating Sunday liturgy

Parishioners’ unwavering response to God’s commission to evangelize emanates from the liturgy just as water cascades from a spring. “After receiving the Body and Blood of Christ, we go out to the world and bring that to others, by our actions, by our words,” described Amy Martinez, chair of Liturgy and Spirituality Committee. The call: “Go in peace to love and serve the Lord,” marks the end of Mass, but “the Mass isn’t over, we are just sent out to serve the Lord,” Kathleen Bell, director of Catechetical Ministries, exclaimed.

Evangelization is performed through parishioners’ actions as they experience a unified faith community and engage in stewardship practices. “We are called to evangelize, spread God’s news and love for us,” Sister Maureen Brown proclaimed.

Faith Community

The foundation of this faith community begins with the immediate membership of 1,100 families, members who have a sense of “intentionality, members who choose to be here,” noted Fr. Mike. Parishioners want “family enrichment, spiritual growth, not necessarily fundraising,” he said.

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Parishioners experience spiritual growth and social interaction through organizations such as the Women's Guild, Familia and Little Rock Scripture Studies. Over 100 women participate in the Women's Guild's spiritual and fundraising activities chaired by Leah Stevens. Familia, a family enrichment organization, aims to "develop a Catholic culture in the family," Sandor Gyetvai, Familia organizer, stated. "Familia helps you understand your faith," said parishioner Ellen Ritchie, after 11 women gathered for a gospel reflection. The women agreed that just knowing that Jesus is risen provides them with serenity and purpose in life.

This sense of purpose is carried over into the youth as well. Approximately 335 students participate in the parish's Religious Education programs. With middle school and high school ministries of nearly 100, these teenagers are learning that a Catholic lifestyle permeates every facet of their lives. High schoolers "learn to stand up for their faith and share their faith," according to Gale Gibbons, chair of the High School Youth Ministry. Sharon Hamill, chair of the Faith Formation & Evangelization committee, said that the parish is very responsive to families. Hamill praised Bell's efforts, as the "unsung hero, . . . [Bell] supports the development of faith of young people." Furthermore, Bell declared that STM's partnership with parents has been instrumental to the success of Faith Formation.

STM nourishes its parishioners' needs and reaches out to the wider community. As Bell described, "We get filled up with the scriptures and the word of God, and we give it away to others."

Stewardship

Stewardship practices constitute the interlocking threads of Catholicism among STM and community organizations. Over 625 volunteers participate in activities and events that meet the parish's needs. Stewardship Coordinator, Chris Smith explained, "We are called to provide the means for the faithful to respond to their baptismal call to live the stewardship way of life by matching parishioners' gifts with the ministerial needs of our community."



STM "Huggy Buddies" volunteers deliver stuffed animals to elderly residents in local care facilities

Parishioners' acts of stewardship range from decorating the worship areas, to providing religious and spiritual education for children and adults, to supporting a number of social ministries such as Catholic Charities, Huggy Buddies, Brother Benno's, Birth Choice, N.C.S.C. Homeless Shelter, Casa de Amparo Crisis Abuse Center and AIDS Hospices. Smith projects strong growth in the arena of Stewardship. "It is in doing God's work together that we appreciate everyday as a gift from God, to be lived with joy and thanksgiving," exclaimed Smith.

This issue of The Tower depicts the evolution of STM. The Tower aims to inspire you to find ways to deepen your faith, become a steward (volunteer), and commit yourself to God.

Youth Outreach to Africa! By Chris Smith

"After 5 months of trading emails, Sr. Irene Cullen finally sent the email I'd been waiting for since last summer. The boxes containing over 4,500 pencils, which we mailed last August, had finally reached their school destinations in Africa," exclaimed Diana Diaz! What seems to be such a simple thing to most of us, colored pencils, was a welcome surprise for these African students! The 150 children who participated in our STM Vacation Bible School (SCUBA) last July, collected a variety of pencils for this project. Each child wrote a personal note to go with this special mailing. They sent their best wishes and shared stories about our country.



...and a thank-you letter followed...



Youth reaching out... making a difference!

Dear Diana,

Your pencils finally arrived in Maraca to everyone's delight. I can envision how they will use all the items! I wish I could have been there to read their letters. Have you received Sr. Annet's thank you in the mail as yet? I know their email does not usually work, but she did send a message that the boxes had just arrived!

Please thank the children for their wonderful efforts. I will send you our recent newsletter about the school. You will love the pictures of the children. Since your next Bible school this year is in July, Sr. Florence would be happy to come to St. Thomas More to visit the children and tell them stories about our children in Africa!

New Year Blessing of Peace! Sr. Irene Cullen, RSCJ, S.H. Uganda-Kenya Development Officer

Named after a martyr who was imprisoned for his allegiance to the papacy and Catholicism, the Church of St. Thomas More reflects the passion of the Lord, through its devout parishioners, stewardship, and evangelization. STM's faithful and active parish continues to grow; thus, the perpetual need for new venues to manage the extensive array of activities, events, and worship needs.

Where We Have Been

In 1985, Bishop Leo T. Maher, of the Diocese of San Diego, appointed Rev. Robert White as first pastor of STM. One year later, the early parishioners attended the first



Fr. Bob White celebrates Mass

In July 2003, Rev. Michael Ratajczak became the third pastor of STM and has since guided the parish's spiritual and physical commitments.



Parish Center Blessing, July 1, 2001 by Bishop Robert H. Brom of San Diego

Where We Are

“As the Father has sent me, so I send you.” (John 20:19-31)

Fr. Mike’s devotion to the parishioners, the local community, and social justice issues exemplifies the stewardship and evangelization efforts of the parish. Fr. Mike’s message extends from his homilies and columns to his work with the Interfaith Committee for Worker Justice, and the Congregations for Civic Action.

STM has been an active “Stewardship Parish” for nearly 10 years now. To that end, the Faithful are called to respond to their baptismal call to live the stewardship way of life. Stewardship Coordinator, Chris Smith organizes and directs efforts to involve the stewards (volunteers) in the various parish programs and services. Smith serves as the communication liaison among staff, committees, and volunteers to ensure the best possible match between organizational needs and volunteer capabilities.

Under the visionary and strong leadership of the three main councils: Finance, Pastoral and Development, comprised of close to 35 members, over 625 families actively participate as stewards, by sharing their time, talent and treasure serving the needs of the parish as well as the community.

Pastoral Council

The Pastoral Council, with Linda Brault as Chair, assists the administration with the various pastoral aspects of STM parish life. This council is comprised of five committees and 56 sub-committees, each with specific service needs.



Fr. Mike, Bishop Brom and parishioners during Pastoral visit in March, 2004

Social Ministries instill and carry out a dedication to the church's teaching. Social Ministries provides support to parish members and outreach to the local community. Support for the parishioners ranges from taking the Eucharist to sick and homebound parishioners to offering bereavement support, as well as receptions for survivors. Parishioners also put on their steward hats to assist many community organizations.

Through the liturgy, Christ summons the parishioners to evangelize. “The evangelization portion is so alive,” noted Amy Martinez, Chair of the **Liturgy & Spirituality** Committee. The Eucharistic Adoration that has evolved at STM represents the “heart of the parish,” Martinez said.

(Continues on page 4)



Eternal Hills Mortuary in Oceanside

Saturday evening Mass at the Congregational Church in Carlsbad. Parishioners also hosted the liturgies in their homes until the Chapel at Eternal Hills Mortuary became available. Finally, in 1993 STM parishioners found a more stable home at the Shadowridge Plaza Mall in Vista.

In August 1995, Rev. Peter M. McGuine became the second pastor of STM and led the devoted parishioners in spiritual growth. Under his able leadership, the parish flourished. The first site purchased for STM by the Diocese of San Diego, in 1992, was a 6.63 acre parcel of land located across from the Oceans Hills Development in Oceanside. Fr. Peter and the STM Site Development



Fr. Peter & Fr. Ken, Oct. 1997 Blessing of Animals

Council commenced work to make the vision of the first parish site a reality. However, as the result of rapid parish growth, it soon became apparent a larger parish site and new plans were necessary; the sale of our previously purchased land followed. Fr. Peter, along with the

parish leadership, then began to complete and finalize the Master Plan in order to build on our gift from the Diocese of San Diego: 10 acres of land located at the corner of Cannon and Melrose in Oceanside. In March 2001, eager parishioners relocated to their first parish building, a 22,500 sq. ft. multi-purpose parish center!

The Diocese of San Diego also granted STM a 10 year interest free loan for the campus build out.

A parish website was developed during this period as a resource for parishioners and visitors.



Groundbreaking Ceremony, December 1999

This committee has 230 Liturgical Ministers, and 3 choirs (Adult, Children and Paschal) in which over 100 people participate. Every week, dedicated volunteers share their talents in the visual arts by shaping the liturgical environment in such a way that the tone and mystery being celebrated might be expressed more clearly, beautifully and nobly.

STM also embraces opportunities to interact with members of other Christian denominations. In January



Ecumenical Prayer Service held at STM in January 2002

2002, the first Ecumenical Service in North County was held at STM, with Fr. Peter McGuine and nine other pastors and members of their congregations. Fr. Mike continues to meet with pastors from other Christian denominations. These Churches include: United Methodist Church of Vista, Church of All Saints, San Marcos, San Marcos Lutheran Church, First Presbyterian Church in Oceanside, and Meadowlark Community Church, San Marcos. Pastors meet to support each other as pastors and to recognize their similarities as they continue to provide service to the larger community. Plans are currently underway for another ecumenical celebration, to be held on Thanksgiving Eve to strengthen our connection with other Christian denominations. The fall issue of the Tower will discuss ecumenism in more depth.

Despite its humble beginnings, parishioners have experienced the parish's mission of evangelization. Sr. Maureen Brown, Chair of **Evangelization** exclaimed, "Evangelization is evident in the parish's attitude of openness, sense of hospitality, and welcome." The welcoming environment begins at the door as Ministers of Hospitality greet newcomers and old-timers alike. "Evangelization is the work of the whole people of the church. It is not a committee. It is something that needs to permeate and be a part of everything we do," Kathleen Bell exclaimed. Kathleen and Sr. Maureen agreed that evangelization is about "sharing our faith with others."

The Religious Education program has well over 35 catechists and assistants who serve to share faith with the youth of our parish. STM has successfully encouraged

parents to enroll their children in religious education. "When I first arrived, trying to get a dozen teens interested to coming to religious education was a struggle," Bell lamented. The middle and high school youth ministries now number close to 100. With our current growth in high school ministry, "high school youth are searching and want some support from their church," said Bell.

Approximately 40 middle school youth meet on two Monday evenings each month, under the capable leadership of Ron and Louise Briseno, to learn about God's words and "how faith is relevant



Lisa Attardo instructs 3rd level students

in everyday life," Sharon Hamill, Chair of the **Faith Formation Committee**, stated. Gale and Jeff Gibbons lead the high school ministry. High school youth "pray and play together as young people of God," Gale noted. They participate in experiential learning, discussions, skits, lectures, and community services. In addition, STM has a thriving program of spiritual formation for adults which ranges from weekly scripture study groups to presentations for the adult community. Recent presentations have covered various topics ranging from the Holy Land to parenting. STM also has an excellent group for RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults). This dedicated group of volunteers welcomes persons interested in living a Catholic lifestyle and in celebrating the Catholic Sacraments of Initiation: Baptism, Eucharist and Confirmation.

Parish Organizations & Events Committee, Marriage & Family Life Committee and their volunteers provide a wide array of opportunities for parishioners of all ages to come together, both socially and spiritually.



Jerry & Judy Buoniconti greet parishioners & visitors

Over 100 women participate in the Women's Guild, an organization that promotes social interaction and spiritual growth for parishioners. The Women's Guild, chaired by Leah Stevens, coordinates fundraising activities including the Fashion Show and Craft Fair. The Guild also interacts with members of the Oceanside Deanery of the Diocesan Council of Catholic Women.

Familia, a family enrichment group, aims to integrate Catholicism into members' daily lives. Gospel reflections are held with members of other Catholic churches the last Thursday of each month at St. Mark's in San Marcos. "It's not just on Sundays, but fundamental to everyday life," noted Sandor Gyetvai, Familia organizer.

(Continues on page 5)

Our Journey: Past, Present and to the Future . . . Together! (Continued from page 4)

Development

The STM Development Council, chaired by Randy Reznicek, serves to create a “culture of development” within the parish. This dedicated group assists the pastor in meeting long term goals and objectives, such as the campus build out. “As we grow in numbers and in size, we become better equipped to serve the needs of the community in which we live,” Smith said.



Randy Reznicek discussed Development at Ministry Fair

The stewardship aspect focuses on utilizing members' “time, talent and treasure.” “Many people serve in multiple ministries and much is done 'behind the scenes' so we strive to always let our stewards know how much they are appreciated,” Smith exclaimed. There is an annual Stewardship Appreciation Luncheon, held on Pentecost, to honor and thank these very generous volunteers. Annual appreciation events, such as bowling, plays and Padres games, are also held for the youth of our parish who also serve in various ministerial capacities!

As stewardship continues to grow, “it is vital that we be about the work of building God's kingdom right here and right now,” Chris explained. “As St. Teresa of Avila so aptly put it: *Christ has no body now on earth but yours. No hands, but yours. No feet, but yours. Yours are the eyes through which the compassion of Christ must look out on this world.*”

Finance



Don and Rosanna Eppich discuss current events with Doug D'Agrosa

The Finance Council, chaired by Don Eppich, makes sure that this 22,500 sq. ft. parish center and the surrounding grounds are properly maintained. “They are a hard working and a very capable group. We are fortunate that they donate their services so generously to our parish,”

Smith stated excitedly. Along with Fr. Mike, this council also takes care of overseeing the budget and personnel. In addition, STM is blessed to have a very able and dedicated staff.

Where We Are Going

The future of our STM parish was eloquently outlined in Fr. Mike's March 14, 2004, pastor's column. At that time, he emphasized that the prime concern of the future of our parish is the completion of the planned buildings, the Sanctuary, the Youth Center, and the Administrative Offices. However, all of these ambitious projects are totally dependent upon the availability of funds. Even though the present administrative offices on the lower

floor are virtually bulging at the seams, the new construction will not be done in a piecemeal manner. All three buildings will be constructed together when there are sufficient funds available to complete the entire building program. Fr. Mike also envisions a larger faith community, a parish of 2000-3000 families. He hopes that parishioners will continue to deepen their spiritual commitments as well.



Fr. Mike greets parishioners each week after Mass in courtyard

In light of individual's changing needs, Fr. Mike believes that a tithe of 10 percent would better serve the parish overall. If we “raise our offerings to a tithe, then we wouldn't have to worry about fundraisers,” he explained. It is suggested that 8% go STM, and 2% to other charities of individual choice. This option, along with the option of traditional sacrificial giving, will be explained in more detail at the upcoming Town Hall meetings in June.

In the meantime, our present parish center serves the needs of our rapidly growing parish. “The parish build out will provide more opportunities for all to come together for spiritual study and social activities,” said Sr. Maureen.

With God's help and the perseverance of our dedicated parishioners, the completed complex of the Church of St. Thomas More will further attest to the faith and efforts of its faith community.

“Our Journey into the Future . . . Together!”



Sanctuary (a.k.a. the church)!



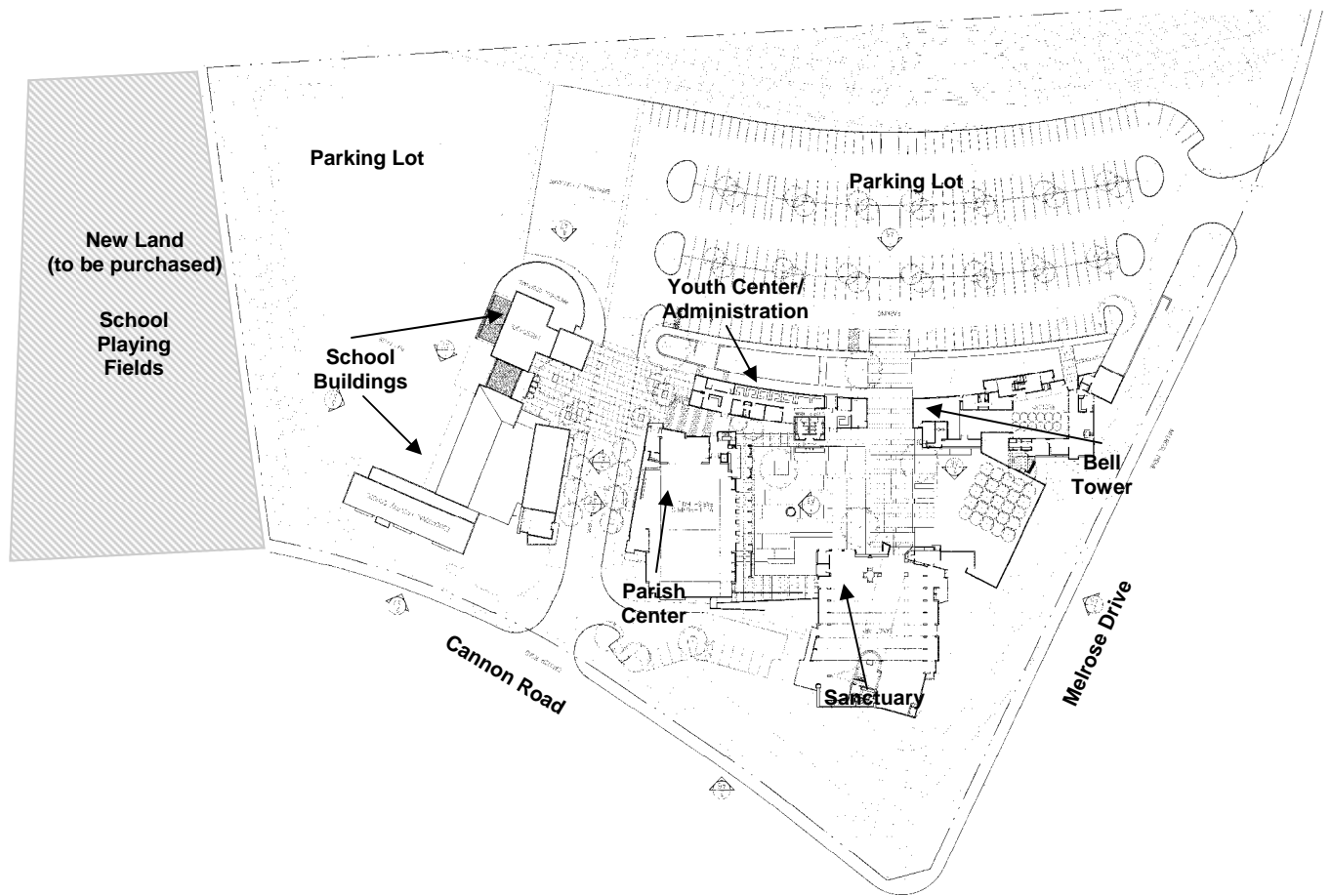
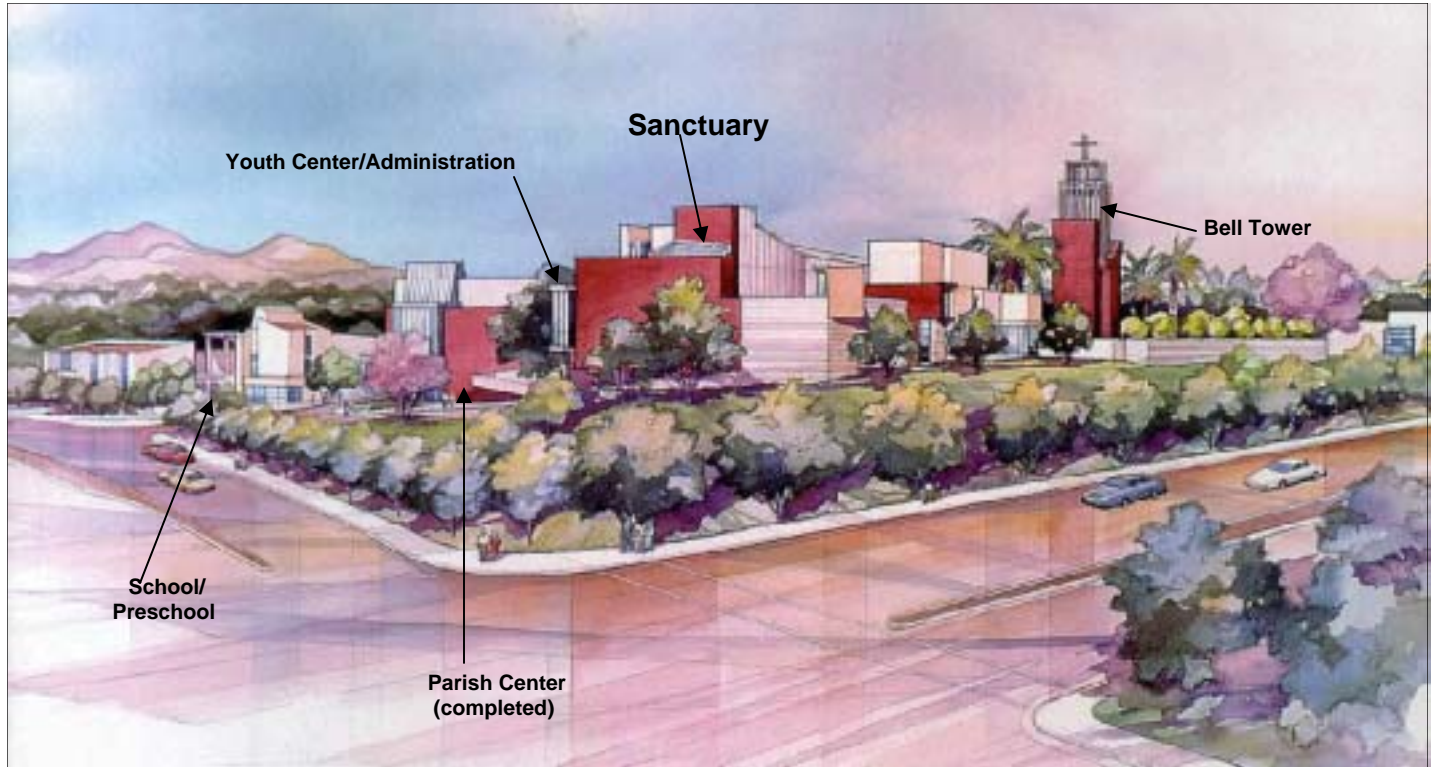
Youth Center/Administration Building



Bell Tower

Enthusiastic parishioners pose by our future building sites.

MORE THAN JUST BUILDINGS—FAITH COMMUNITY



See page 9 to select a date for Town Hall meetings about “Our Journey Into The Future . . . Together.”

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 Into The Future
 ... Together"*

TOWN HALL MEETINGS

Mark your calendars
 now to attend one of
 these very informative
 meetings!

**Wednesday, June 16
 6:30 p.m.**

Light refreshments

**Saturday, June 19
 6:00 p.m.**

Pizza night!

**Tuesday, June 22
 6:30 p.m.**

Light refreshments

**Please RSVP:
 (760)758-4100, ext. 159**

No later than June 7th!



Steve & Jennifer Doering, Dieter Wulffhorst, Susan Doering-Wulffhorst, Mark, Kathy and Michael Doering relax after performing

When gathered for Christmas or Easter Mass, one might gaze toward the choir and hear the violins, guitar, and clarinet of the six Doering siblings. Musical talent spread through the generations of the Doering family and flourished into a current day classical ensemble. Although the Doerings live in different regions, they reunite for holidays, birthdays, St. Thomas More choral concerts, and Christmas and Easter Mass.

Lorraine Doering, Parish Administrative Assistant and Liturgical Minister Coordinator, is married to Steve Doering whose five brothers and sisters have been playing instruments since early youth. Steve plays the violin and is a long time member of STM. Kathy plays the clarinet and visits often from her home in Hawaii. George plays the guitar and lives in Los Angeles with his wife. They are in a band together called the *Brombies* and play original music combining rock, blues, and country, once a month, at the Coyote Bar and Grille in Carlsbad. Susan is a violinist residing in Fresno with her husband who is a professional cellist. They frequently tour as the *Emerald Duo*. Twins

Michael and Mark live in Escondido and often play the violin at Mass in three different Churches on weekends. Their music can be heard at St. Timothy, St. William of York, and Our Lady of Mount Carmel.

Throughout high school and college, Michael, Mark, and Susan traveled the world to places such as Costa Rica, Greece, and Spain performing at and attending concerts. Michael and Mark now give performances at five to six different churches between Christmas Eve and Day. After the travel and business of concerts, the Doering family gathers together to play classical, traditional music. They often play "Over the Rainbow", as it is their mother's favorite. Their latest jam session was this past Easter Sunday. The Doerings plan to continue their music tradition and to pass on the creative legend.

Music continues to flow through the generations, as Steve and Lorraine's daughter, Jennifer, has been active in the STM children's choir for three years. Lorraine now takes time off from her administrative duties to sing in our newly formed paschal choir. So, we see that music really is "All in the Family!"

Feminine Endeavors—STM Women's Guild By Stacy Smyk

St. Thomas More parishioner, Mary Lou Kranz, founded the Women's Guild in 1988 with 30 members, and remained its president until 1991. Now, well over 100 members strong, the Guild defines itself as an organization for all women of the parish with a mission to promote social interaction, complement the spirituality of its members, and fund raise for parish goals. Within the Guild, members meet on the second Monday of each month and also interact with members of the Oceanside Deanery. Lilia Racelis represents STM on the Diocesan Council of Catholic Women. Throughout the year these vibrant women can be found, devoting many hours of hard work to support their mission statement!

The Women's Guild produces parish activities such as the Christmas raffle, bake sales, the craft faire, quilt raffles, and the fashion show. On April 24, the second annual Fashion show took place at the Shadowridge Country Club. The content of the Guild's largest event included the showing of Draper and Damon clothing, a luncheon, and opportunity drawings. A local clothing



Valerie Thompson, Leah Stevens, Fr. Mike & Anne Cline during Fashion Show festivities



Fashion show models and photographer gearing up for the show!

store in Escondido, Draper and Damon provided dress wear and casual attire for eight female parishioners to model in the show. Coupons for a 10% discount towards the clothing were given to the audience. Guild members put together baskets valued between \$50 - \$100 as prizes for the opportunity drawings throughout the program. In addition, several local businesses donated to this fundraiser. Most of the money earned this year will go to the STM building fund.

President, Leah Stevens, welcomes women of the parish to join the organization, and noted: "The members would like to see younger participants join in the socialization, spirituality, and inspirational efforts of the members of the Women's Guild. We welcome all the women of St. Thomas More to join us!"

Retreat master, Rev. Ben Innes joined 37 energetic high school youth from STM at Kamp Kueper, a Catholic youth retreat center in Escondido, for their recent annual retreat. The theme this year was "Surrender" and from Friday-Sunday, April 16-18, activities revolved around what these teens needed to do to surrender and become closer to God.

A dynamic team of four adults and five young people facilitated, led small groups, gave talks and led music. The sessions centered around family, friendships, our bodies, our image of God and idea of faith. Prayer was experienced in very different ways, including the Blessed Sacrament, contemplative prayer, guided meditation, music, daily Mass and the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Fr. Ben challenged these youths to move from being bystanders, on the sidelines...on the fringes...to entering into a deeper relationship with God.



STM high school youth, leaders Gale & Jeff Gibbons, Fr. Ben Innes and young adult leaders pose for commemorative photo at Kamp Kueper

"Retreats are a great way for people to experience faith in a deeper way, and for most, this is probably different than any other way they've experience faith....church...community," exclaimed Gale Gibbons, who leads this great group of high school youth along with her husband, Jeff.

Weekly meetings are held at STM from 7-8:30 p.m. "This is a chance for teens to pray and play together. We are theme-oriented and we generally weave our themes around the Sunday readings," Gale explained. The Monday night meeting after the retreat found this vibrant group of 37 reflecting on their recent retreat experience. Though they each experienced different challenges and reactions during the retreat, it was readily agreed that they came away with several thoughts in common; this was a fun way to share their faith and draw closer to God and one another. There was a comfort zone in bringing out 'the child within themselves' which made this a very fruitful faith experience and definitely a weekend to remember!

Throughout the year this group can be found doing a variety of service projects including cooking at the Fraternity House, Brother Benno's projects, January Souper Bowl drive, and Huggy Buddies (delivering stuffed animals to residents of local nursing homes). There is also a 'Tuesday of the month prayer night' in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel, followed by a trip to Starbuck's to process this faith experience and share refreshments.

It is a delight to watch our high school youth in action! Under the able leadership of Gale and Jeff Gibbons, the high school youth of STM definitely continue to grow in their faith and spirituality. We can be confident that these teens are on the right track to becoming our leaders of the future!

For more information, please contact Gale and Jeff Gibbons at (760) 726-7236, or galeg@stmoside.org.

Medical Emergencies Seminar held at STM By Chris Smith



'Dr. Phil' demonstrates proper technique

Disbelief. Confusion. Panic. Fear. These are natural reactions among persons who are not trained in handling medical emergencies. Most heart attacks, strokes and falls occur in a family setting. If household members knew what to expect and what to do, they could save lives and help their loved ones to avoid long-term complications.

Dr. Philip Goscienski is the Medical Director of the CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) program at STM. He states that a bystander can do a great deal even without knowing how to do mouth-to-mouth breathing and chest compressions.

On April 25, Dr. Goscienski gave a free seminar at STM explaining how to recognize a medical condition that requires immediate expert help. Procedures and pitfalls in calling 911, what to do and what not to do when a person is choking, and other lifesaving suggestions were reviewed at this time. These presentations are particularly directed toward older persons, who often think that they cannot handle a CPR class because of

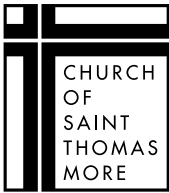
physical limitations.

Dr. Goscienski noted that the response he has received from these sessions has been very gratifying. "One person in particular noted that what she learned was a crucial factor in her husband's survival from a sudden illness," exclaimed our own 'Dr. Phil'!

More than 200 parishioners have been trained in CPR through the CPR program offered at STM! For further information please contact Dr. Goscienski at (760)732-1414 or check for details on the parish website: www.stmoside.org.

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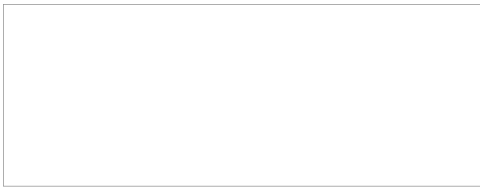
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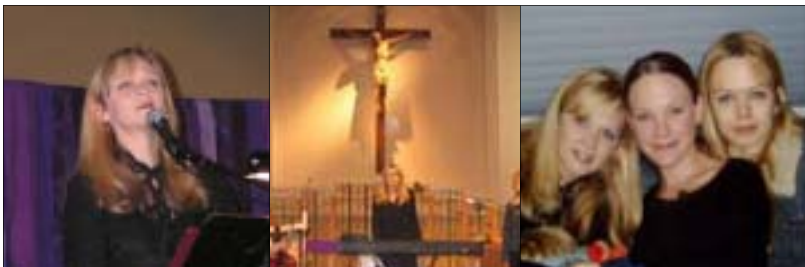
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Concerts—Music for the Soul! By Jane Greenhill



Tatiana performing “I Thirst-The Crucifixion Story”

L to R—Tatiana, Kate, Sonya

In God's plan heaven is veiled from our eyes. However He did provide for us a small glimpse into the divine: He created music. Hundreds of St Thomas More community family members and music lovers were recently enchanted by two magnificent concerts!

Tatiana, a popular Catholic singer and former pop star who has performed in theatre, television and concert appeared on Friday, April 2. This inspirational program was titled “I Thirst- The Crucifixion Story.” Tatiana's mission, along with her husband Matthew, is

to tell stories that could change a life. Those who attended her recent spellbinding performance at St. Thomas More are witness to the power of her gift.

The Valaam Ensemble, the professional choir for the Monastery of the Isle of Valaam in northern Russia, performed on April 30. The free concert was a collection of ancient Kievan chants, folk music of northern Russia and Russian polyphony. The choir performs at the Valaam monastery for tourists and pilgrims in the summer months and during the winter they perform in St. Petersburg or tour worldwide. Their performance at STM was a beautiful experience and a night to remember!

On August 1 at 3:00 p.m. there will be a combination Blessing of a New Organ and Dedicatory Concert at STM! The concert will be performed by internationally acclaimed organist, Tom Hazleton. A public expression of gratitude to the donor of the organ, Jim Kilian, will be featured at the concert. Be sure to mark your calendars now, as this promises to be an inspiring musical event! Concerts that have both entertainment and spiritual value will be part of the continuing growth of our faith community.



The Valaam Ensemble