



MORE About Us

1st Quarter, 2004

St. Thomas More Parish
Newsletter

World Celebration of Marriage Dinner

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Important Q2 Dates:

- **April 30**— Sports Banquet, 6:30 pm
- **May 9**—First Communion 10:00 am & 12:00 pm Masses
- **May 15 & 16**—Women’s CRHP Weekend
- **May 23**—Confirmation, 2:30 pm, Cathedral
- **May 27**—Spring Musical, 7:00 pm [Dress Rehearsal 1:15 pm]
- **May 31**—Memorial Day, Parish Office Closed
- **June 2**—8th Grade Graduation
- **June 4**—Last day of Classes at STM

On Saturday evening, February 14th, fifty of the Parish’s married couples came together for an evening of good food, music and celebration. After the 4:30 Mass the couples met for drinks/hors d’oeuvres and fellowship. As you entered the dining hall you could hear the familiar voice of Frank Sinatra but it was actually Don Fangman from “Fang Sings Frank.” He was so good that Jack Sutter could not stay in his chair and had to move to the music on the dance floor. The dining hall was transformed into a formal dining room with candlelit tables and elegant table settings. A delicious meal was prepared by Vickie Ditchen and served by the junior high CCD students. Fr. Bill welcomed everyone and led the group in a prayer. The



Leo and Lucille Wenstrup enjoying the Marriage Dinner
Of all the couples attending, they were married the longest—nearly 68 years!

speaker for the evening was Deacon Jim Miller, Engaged Encounter Chaplain and Deacon of St. Columban. Deacon Jerry presented certificates and wedding cakes to the honorary guests, those cou-

ples celebrating their 25th, 40th, 50th and 60th anniversaries. A good time was had by all.

What a way to spend Valentine’s Day!



Parish Mission

On March 8, 9 and 10, St. Thomas More’s Parish Mission took place. The theme for our mission this year was “Jesus, the Heart of our Church.” Our presenter was Fr. Paul Desch, Director of Friarhurst Retreat House. We were treated to his unique style of speaking and storytelling as he focused on the topics of prayer, community and discipleship. One of the



highlights of each evening was Fr. Paul’s enthusiastic leading of everyone in song. On Monday night the mission concluded with evensong. A reception followed on Tuesday evening and was an opportunity for parishioners to socialize. The final evening concluded with a Ministry Fair where parishioners

could get information on our various ministries and sign up for a ministry. Ministry sign-up sheets are in the vestibule of church if you could not make the Ministry Fair or if you have not yet returned a sign-up sheet. If you were unable to attend the Parish Mission there are recorded tapes available for sale. Please call the Parish Office at 752-2080 Ext. 110.

Unity Candle

From the Desk of Deacon Jerry

Since we will soon be heading into the wedding season here at St. Thomas More, I thought this article might be of interest. By the way, we do allow the use of a *Unity Candle*.

“Many engaged couples plan to include the unity candle as part of their Catholic marriage. Some couples have no particular interest in the candles. Others discover that their parish discourages or forbids the unity candle.

The unity candle is a popular custom, but it does not appear in the description of the wedding in the Catholic rite of marriage. According to the custom, someone representing the bride’s family lights a candle in the sanctuary before the ceremony. Someone representing the groom’s family does the same. After the exchange of consent



and the ring ceremony, the couple light a third candle from the two that are already burning. To many people, this simple ceremony carries the symbol of one family forming from two.

Still some parishes prefer that the unity candle not be used. The Catholic wedding ceremony is quite complete without it. The primary symbol of the wedding is the exchange of consent between bride and groom : “I, (name), take you, (name), to be my wife/ husband.” Those words should be the highlight of the ceremony.

If the couple does use a unity candle,

it should not be placed on the altar where we place the bread and wine for Mass. Such a candle belongs on a separate table, still visible to the people. The symbol makes more sense if the bride and groom do not extinguish the two original candles, as though they were severing relationships with their families. Still, even though the candle looks lovely and makes a nice souvenir, if the other parts of the ceremony are done well, the unity candle won’t be necessary.”

This bulletin insert originally appeared in *Ministry & Liturgy*, a pastoral planning resource used by the worship leaders in your parish as an aid for better liturgy. Copyright © 2002 Resource Publications, Inc., 160 E. Virginia St. #290, San Jose, CA 95112, (408)286-8505. Paul Turner, pastor of St. Munchin Parish in Cameron, Mo., holds a doctorate in sacramental theology from Sant’ Anselmo University in Rome. Comment online at www.rpinet.com/wwwboard/forum8/.

From the Principal

We’re now into the home stretch of the school year as our fourth and final quarter began on March 29. It’s a good time for us, as a school and as parents, to look at our goals for the year. We can savor our accomplishments, and plan for a strong finish to this academic year.

As a part of our School Improvement Plan created in the accreditation process, our goals for this year included increased emphasis on gospel values to help develop our sense of Christian com-

munity where all members feel accepted and respected. Results of last year’s School Satisfaction Survey indicated that our Kindergarten students had felt rather “left out” of our school worship activities. This year’s monthly school prayer services were scheduled to allow participation of all of our classes. The themes of our services included “The Beatitudes,” “Catholic Saints,” and “The Gifts of Love” as teachable, prayable moments designed to actively involve

the participants, and highlight a chosen gospel message.

Use of technology as a teaching and learning tool was a second focus of our School Improvement Plan. Implementation included the use of Edline, upgrading of classroom computers, additional multimedia/networked audiovisual carts as well as staff training. A computer curriculum was developed, and the class added to report cards for Grades 1-8.



Peg Fischer looks on as Vicky Kohl (STM 1st Grade Teacher) receives WARM 98’s “Great American® Teacher of the Week” Award. Mrs. Kohl has taught at STM for 19 years.

The movement toward data-driven decision-making has had significant impact on elementary education, increasing use of normed assessments. Primary grade teachers will be adding a new tool to their assessment program. A team from STM recently attended training in Dibels (Dynamic Indicators Of Basic Early Literacy Skills). This assessment program provides ongoing assessment of reading skills, which are so critical in the primary grades. The first round of Dibels testing will be completed during fourth quarter and results shared with parents.

I’m excited and proud of the progress we’ve made this year! Thanks to all of our teachers, staff and great volunteers for your support and enthusiasm which I hope will continue to make this a productive year...one in which we all grow “in grace and wisdom.”

God bless you!

Peg Fischer, Principal

First Communion Retreat by Becky Ready

As a way of preparing students for First Communion, our catechetical team tried something new this year: a Saturday Retreat. Each child accompanied by a parent explored the importance of the Eucharist to the Church and the meaning of Eucharist in their own lives by attending together five different stations located throughout the church grounds. They learned how to make unleavened bread, painted and decorated a blessing cup, learned songs about communion with Jesus, created an altar cloth and toured the church through a scavenger hunt. At the completion of all station activities, everyone enjoyed a wonderful lunch provided by Vickie Ditchen, our cafeteria manager. To

close the day, Fr. Bill concluded our retreat by presenting an instructional Mass furthering our understanding of the Eucharistic liturgy.

Here are some of the comments from the evaluation forms:



"The retreat helped me understand more about the communion process. It was very informative and the catechists made it enjoyable."

"The retreat was very nicely designed. Each activity revealed wonderful information and made everything very real."

"This is my third first communion with St. Thomas More and this has been the greatest involve-

ment of parent and child ever!"

"I enjoyed being able to share the day with my daughter. It was informative and fun at the same time."

"I feel this was an incredible idea...very good way to bring everyone together to talk and learn about first communion."

"This was a wonderful idea! The children were so alert."

"The stations were wonderful, very interactive and hands-on which helped the children stay interested and remember. Very meaningful for children and adults alike."

All seemed to thoroughly enjoy their day.

STM Welcomes New Parishioners

Our newest little parishioners through the Sacrament of Baptism:

Logan Matthew Toft, son of Brett & Lisa—**Morgan Taylor Svarda**, son of Josh & Mandy—**Aidan Salvatore Marques**, son of Quentin & Joellen—**Bridget Anne Baker**, daughter of Scott & Julie—**Mackenzie Orion McWhorter**, daughter of Brian & Kristen—**Matthew Richard Schoose**, son of Michael & Angela—**Ian Patrick McDaniel**, son of Patrick & Lisa—**Henry Adam Jeffers**, son of Daniel &

Jamie—**Barrett Scott Reith**, son of Scott & Angela—**Emma Rose Kamphaus**, daughter of Neil & Jennifer.

And our other new members:

Nicholas & Natalia Buschur, Thomas & Joyce Cole, Gregory & Allison Crouthers, Michael Duritza & Sara Leonard, Robert Ell & Angel Miller-Ell, Earl & Myrna Findley, Ronald & Jill Flake, Christopher & Lisa Frye, Sandra Garfold, Douglas & Elizabeth Golden, Robert & Jacqueline Gray, David & Evelyn Hale, Joseph & Kelly Haugh, Robert

Hudson, James & Jill Hurlburt, Michael & Michelle Kennedy, Jim & Arlene Kipling, Scott & Jackie Lau, Lisa Martin, Chris & Leslie Morehouse, Gregory Neuman & Michelle Hernandez, Fares Qadri & Suzan Al Mu'asher, Anthony & Tracy Rees, Scott & Angela Reith, Michael & Maryann Ritter, Joel & Mary Rivas, Paul & Catherine Salupo, Robert & Therese Seither, Benjamin & Julie Slusher, Nick & Michelle Spurck, Josh & Mandy Svarda, Hugo & Debra Tostado, James & Carl Tribble, Anthony & Heidi Vannelli, Carole Westerkamp.

Seniors News

by Michael Thomas

First of all, we were all saddened by the death of our former leader, Jackie Kramer. Jackie's love and dedication to all of us will never be forgotten. Because of her vision we are now able to grow into new areas in our service to the Parish and each other. We extend our deepest sympathy to Dick and his children at this most difficult time.



We assure them of our prayers and join them in thanking God for the wonderful gift Jackie was to them and all of us.

We have our first major event behind us. On March 16 twenty-two of us braved the cold weather and set out for the Museum Center to view **Saint Peter**

and The Vatican The Legacy of the Popes. It was very impressive and all who went had a fantastic afternoon.

Then on Thursday April 1, we gathered at 1 pm to pray the Stations of the Cross. We offer a special word of thanks to Herb Wottle who provided the music for our prayer. Please watch the bulletin for the time/location of our next meeting.

Holy Communion to the Sick...To Give or to Receive

By Michael Thomas

We now find ourselves amidst the Celebration of Our Lord's Resurrection. We recalled how he suffered and died for us. Far more important is that he rose from death, giving us hope in our sufferings. He has given us his Body and Blood as food to strengthen us. Many of our parish family cannot be with us on Sunday to celebrate the Day Of Resurrection. I speak here of those members of our parish family who are confined to their homes because of sickness. Those whose lives are intimately bound to the sufferings of Jesus. In a special way these parish members should be linked to us in our Eucharistic Celebrations, especially on the Lord's Day.

I invite you to join with others of our community, who already take Holy Communion to the sick after they attend Mass on the

GIVE



From
God's House...

Would like
to give
Holy Communion
to the Sick

*Please call
Michael
Thomas
752-2080
Ext. 127*

weekend. If you think Jesus is inviting you to this important ministry, please give me a call (752-2080 Ext. 127). I would very much like to discuss this with you. There will be a time of training and discernment towards the end of April.

I also invite you, who are confined to your home and would like to receive Holy Communion to call and let me know.

We all need to continue to reach out to those who are sick. Perhaps your family could make a special visit to a loved one or friend who is sick and confined either to their home or a care facility. This is a fantastic way for the whole family to spend part of the Lord's Day. We cannot let these special people ever think we may have forgotten them.

RECEIVE



...to Your House

Would like
to receive
Holy Communion
in your
Home

*Please call
Michael
Thomas
752-2080
Ext. 127*

Congratulations to our STM Students on Honor Roll

FIRST HONORS

4th: Amanda Bradley, Jennifer Ruhe, Jennifer Foltz, Michael Mulloney, Michael Nimmo, Ian Saylor, Natalie Welage; **5th:** Jeffrey Archer, C.J. Howitt, Sarah Nimmo, Patricia Walsh; **6th:** Hannah Aicholtz, Emily Bradley, Danielle Carroll, Adam Farwick, Robbie Kuhlman, Rachel Neltner, Evan Quesnell, Jenny Severyn; **7th:** Sarah Buchheit, Michael Harrington; **8th:** Beth Perry, Fritz Schoolfield, Kelly Smyth.



SECOND HONORS

4th: Michael Fehn, Max Harmon, Sarah Lindsey, Mark Rastani, Daniel Schoettelkotte, Lindsay Shepherd, Matthew Kamphaus, Brian Roberts, Kyle Scales, Haley Stultz; **5th:** Chaelon Brennan, Michael Callahan, Kelly Carns, Melissa Clement, Heather Denison, Robert Farwick, Justin Mulloney Nicole Piening, Brendan Walsh, Hayley Wilson, Jamie Zumach; **6th:** Connor Bechtol, Maureen Fehn, Allix Harrington, Daniel Hermanns, Alison Rebelo, Chelsea Ritter, Joey Schoettelkotte, Brittany Zumach; **7th:** John Casnellie, Megan Farwick, Joseph Gavieres, Kelsey Grau, Tara Molitor, Jake Powers, Zach Stultz; **8th:** Matt Buchheit, Christy Carns, Maggie Fehn, Katie Griffin, Shannon McCarthy, Jennifer Mitchell, Amanda Piening, Anne Schoettelkotte.

CARDINAL AWARD

4th: Jennifer Christman, Justin McCall, Timothy Schimpf, Jacob Wilenbrink, Tyler Barger, Ryan Henning, Austin Shaffer, Stacey Thompson, Tyler Vickers, Hannah Wilson; **5th:** Jacob Grieco, Alex Gumbert, Ashley Mackey, Michelle Mersman, Hannah Schoolfield; **6th:** Taylor Bechtol, Beau Bockenstette, Tyler Crawford, Jill Dyer, Joe Frazier, P.J. Hartman, Andrew Lamping, Jessica Murphy, Emily Osterling, Jill Ruhe, Jacob Tetrault; **7th:** Ashley Atkinson, Michael Glaser, Erin Goosman, Caitlen Jansen, Carolyn Schoolfield, David Strack; **8th:** Victoria Bailey, Kayce Farwick, Matt Foltz, George Gumbert, Nathan Lockard, Jessica McCall, Joey Mink, John Osterling, Nick Rutherford, Tyler Stitt.

We mourn the loss of the following parishioners:
Lois Scheidler–January 8th Rebecca Hurlburt–January 11th
Betty Smith–February 17th Jacqueline Kramer–March 14th