



MORE About Us

3rd Quarter, 2004

St. Thomas More Parish
Newsletter

Inside this issue:

Notes from the Music Director	2
St. Vincent de Paul	2
Standing or Kneeling?	2
2003-2004 Operating Statement Highlights	2
2003-2004 Condensed Operating Statement	3
From the DRE	4
Cub Scouts & Boy Scouts Honor American Heroes	4

Important Dates:

- 11/20 & 11/21 Envelope Pick-up
- 11/21 Rite of Acceptance at Noon Mass
- 11/27 Rummage Sale
- 11/28 First Sunday of Advent
- 11/29 Parish Reconciliation
- 12/2 First Reconciliation
- 12/4 Tatiana Concert
- 12/8 Immaculate Conception
- 12/15 Advent Evensong
- 1/2 Baby Jesus Breakfast
- 1/27 Confirmation Orientation Session
- 1/29 & 1/30 Men's CRHP Renewal Weekend

The Little Pink House

by Diane Brennan

Have you heard about the Little Pink House Project?

The parish was fortunate to purchase the home at 804 Ohio Pike, right next door to the parish rectory. This was a fantastic opportunity for us to model social justice in our community and to care for those the Spirit sends once it is complete. The St. Vincent de Paul will be managing the house as emergency temporary housing for crisis situations. Throughout the summer, the ROC youth, with help from the boy scouts, PSR families and school families as well as our beloved maintenance staff and MJM flooring, were giving the house a makeover. Formerly completely Pepto-Bismol pink on the outside, it is now white with pink trim. We thank all who made this happen.

Each room was done over with a truly up-to-date and warm feel and I can now happily report the work will soon

be completed and the house will be set and ready for its first family. This home will become a ministry we can all truly be present in as it will need material things, as well as prayers for its occupants. There will be the need for food for meals, gardeners to keep up the grounds, people to come in and clean between families, people to reach out to welcome these new folks to our community and people with skills to help educate and mentor the family. The St. Vincent de Paul and the Social Justice Commission will need new members to join their groups to make the home be successful. More information will come from the St. Vincent de Paul as they name the house, and get it ready to open it to the community to get a peek, but I wanted you to know in case you hadn't heard what our young people accomplished over the summer and get you ready to say "YES" to this new ministry!



The Little Pink House gets a fresh coat of white paint by these hard workers. Diane Brennan headed up the project and those who beared the summer's heat to help out were pleased (as well as STM) with their "final product."



In July STM was blessed to have Margaret Osinski join our staff as Music Director. Margaret has lived in this area for 22 years, and has led the 4:00 Guitar Group at St. Veronica and played the Sunday masses at St. Bernadette for a number of years. She also worked at McNicholas High School as their accompanist for the concert choir and Liturgy Choir. Margaret believes that what we give with our voices is returned to our spirits a hundred fold.

Notes from the Music Director:

When asked what role music plays in worship Margaret responded, "Music plays an very important role in worship. Music has always been a primary means of expression for people whose lives have been touched and changed at the deepest levels. It has an astonishing power as a tool for teaching, testifying, and most importantly, transformation. Its role in worship is indispensable and, in any true spiritual awakening, conveys a potent

spiritual vitality. Music helps to develop the spirit of unity and solidarity through this shared activity by the community. And it's not just any old kind of activity. It is a relatively simple popular activity in which everyone can participate. It is also an activity which requires agreed standards of discipline and self-control: like starting together and keeping in time as a group. Music strongly teaches and reinforces the faith and practice of the singing Christian community.. What we sing we remember and internalize far beyond what we see, read or hear. We are blessed to have a wide variety of music in our hymnals. From sincere, slow, worshipful songs that lead us into the presence of God, to the more contemporary and upbeat songs that soothes one's soul and lifts the spirit, these hymns, which in reality are "sung prayer," create an inviting atmosphere to lead God's people in worship in a powerful way. God has given each of us many special gifts—we have the power and the privilege of using each one to its fullest."

40 Years of SVDP Giving

By Bob Guenther

The St. Thomas More St. Vincent de Paul Society is a ministry of men and women of the parish who help the poor and those in temporary need. We are a person-to-person ministry who meet face-to-face with clients who are suffering. The St. Thomas More Conference was aggregated on December 7, 1964. On December 7, 2004 we will celebrate our 40th anniversary of serving people of this parish and the surrounding area. We work closely with social service agencies and other churches to address the needs of those who are seeking help.

Our fiscal year ended on September

30, 2004. During the year we assisted 145 families consisting of a total of 435 persons. From our Giving Tree 540 persons were assisted. We are appreciative of the generosity and support we have received from our fellow parishioners over the past 40 years. With your support, we are able to maintain a food pantry, the Christmas Giving Tree and assist those in need. We generally assist with food, rent, utilities, medical and prescription drugs. Without your support this ministry would be non-existent.

If you are interested in putting into action your Catholic faith to serve those in need by volunteering, please call the St. Vincent de Paul telephone number at **752-2080 Ext. 150.**

Standing or Kneeling?



In the Spring of 2003 we were given a new "General Instruction of the Roman Missal." In that instruction we were told the appropriate posture during Holy Communion is standing. The Communion Procession is a profoundly religious action. We are the Body of Christ, moving forward to receive the Christ who makes us one with Him and with each other. Standing as everyone receives is a sign of this unity. However, because of the longstanding practice of individuals returning to their places to kneel or sit in private prayer after receiving Holy Communion, this provision has caused some controversy. In an effort to clarify the situation, Cardinal Frances George, Chairman of the Committee on the Liturgy, wrote to Rome. He received a response that it was not the intention to regulate posture so rigidly such that those who wished to kneel or sit would no longer be free to do so. Many churches never got around to asking people to stand after Communion. St. Thomas More was only doing what we were asked to do.

The bottom line is: Please feel free to kneel or sit after Communion if you are more comfortable in doing so.

ST. THOMAS MORE 2003-2004 OPERATING STATEMENT HIGHLIGHTS

During the past year, we had a very small operating surplus of \$5,201.44. This was achieved by good expense control by the staff and a turnaround in the Sunday collections based upon a campaign conducted in the spring. For those who pledged and contributed, we are very grateful.

Our small surplus was also positively impacted by \$13,418 in Bingo income which can no longer be relied on in the future. Bingo was suspended in January due to the lack of a Bingo coordinator. Also, an additional \$5,002 in tuition was paid in advance for the following school year. Without these two additional revenue streams, we would have had an operating loss of \$13,218.

Furthermore, we continue to curtail most capital improvements in order to conserve funds. This will clearly have an impact in the longer term if we don't upgrade our buildings and facilities. We continue to perform all routine maintenance work.

Our expenses were further impacted by soaring health care costs, pension costs, and the mandatory paid subscriptions to the Catholic Telegraph as required by the diocese. These programs alone cost us \$50,000 more than the previous year. There is no end in sight to these rising costs along with the additional costs we now incur for fingerprinting. Our school payroll and costs continue to rise disproportional to the number of additional incoming students. The school marketing committee did make great strides in enrolling 22 additional children this year than last. That's an accomplishment most parishes cannot claim!

We also made the smallest payment on our debt (\$40,000) since the 1998-9 building construction. Our debt remains very high and needs to be addressed. The interest on our debt continues to grow at a faster rate than we are able to pay on either the principal or the interest. This will hinder us with any plans to build in the future.

Our budget for this year has a projected deficit of \$85,000 that includes scheduled debt payments.

Even though our financial challenges continue to grow, we are blessed with a dedicated staff and an exceptional core of volunteers that continue to make our parish a very special place.

We know that with God's help He will help guide us in the future as our parish continues to grow and prosper in His love.

St. Thomas More Parish Condensed Operating Statement—July 1, 2003 through June 30, 2004

	2003-2004	Budget	\$ Over/Under Budget
PARISH INCOME:			
Sunday & Holyday Collections	\$685,828.35	\$680,000.00	\$5,828.35
Votive Lights	\$3,658.46	\$5,800.00	\$(2,141.54)
Mass Stipends	\$4,633.00	\$6,325.00	\$(1,692.00)
Misc Income	\$5,765.99	\$22,000.00	\$(16,234.01)
Gifts & Bequests	\$19,529.25		
Education Fund	\$1,216.00		
Debt Reduction	\$29,694.38	\$22,000.00	\$7,694.38
Total All Special Collections	\$43,698.57		
Parish Socials	\$63.00		
Festival Income	\$80,000.00	\$85,000.00	\$(5,000.00)
Bulletin Income	\$1,100.00	\$750.00	\$350.00
Bingo Income	\$13,418.62	\$53,000.00	\$(39,581.38)
Vision 2000	\$19,224.00	\$20,000.00	\$(776.00)
Marian Grotto Bricks	\$3,200.00		
Catholic Telegraph Subscription Income	\$3,415.00		
Interest & Dividends	\$6,590.12	\$6,000.00	\$590.12
Rental Fees	\$4,775.00	\$4,500.00	\$275.00
Religious Education Fees	\$14,244.78	\$15,000.00	\$(755.22)
Exempt Interest-Ed Endow	\$1,151.00		
Fingerprinting Income	\$1,902.00		
Loan from Archdiocese—804 Ohio Pike	\$82,500.00		
TOTAL PARISH INCOME	\$1,025,607.52	\$920,375.00	\$105,232.52
SCHOOL INCOME:			
Tuition	\$555,522.39	\$508,000.00	\$47,522.39
State Admin Cost Reimbursement	\$70,074.87	\$70,000.00	\$74.87
Registration Fees	\$37,555.00	\$30,200.00	\$7,355.00
Tuition Mgt Sys/Ed Line	\$(3,295.00)	\$(2,600.00)	\$(695.00)
Total Student Receipts	\$659,857.26	\$605,600.00	\$54,257.26
Cafeteria Income	\$53,545.95	\$54,000.00	\$(454.05)
TOTAL SCHOOL INCOME	\$713,403.21	\$659,600.00	\$53,803.21
GRAND TOTAL INCOME	\$1,739,010.73	\$1,579,975.00	\$159,035.73
PARISH EXPENSES:			
Parish Salaries	\$259,546.41	\$268,075.00	\$(8,528.59)
Rectory	\$14,331.56	\$14,660.00	\$(328.44)
Parish Office	\$32,169.97	\$32,600.00	\$(430.03)
Parish Benefits	\$76,205.71	\$77,054.62	\$(848.91)
Transportation & Seminars	\$4,542.80	\$5,400.00	\$(857.20)
Parish Activities	\$982.19	\$3,700.00	\$(2,717.81)
Altar & Sanctuary	\$16,848.63	\$12,900.00	\$3,948.63
Religious Education	\$13,017.48	\$18,200.00	\$(5,182.52)
Adult Faith Formation	\$5,130.83	\$10,750.00	\$(5,619.17)
Youth Ministry	\$521.37	\$1,500.00	\$(978.63)
Pastoral Ministry	\$1,081.22	\$3,000.00	\$(1,918.78)
Catholic Telegraph Subscription Cost	\$17,996.00	\$18,000.00	\$(4.00)
Parish Utilities	\$19,636.61	\$20,700.00	\$(1,063.39)
Other Maintenance Expenses	\$54,595.95	\$52,409.00	\$2,186.95
Payments to Archdiocese	\$59,759.34	\$62,600.00	\$(2,840.66)
Total All Special Collections	\$42,910.97		
Interest Expense	\$10,000.00	\$ -	\$10,000.00
Purchase—804 Ohio Pike	\$83,276.11		
Other Capital	\$8,050.11	\$16,000.00	\$(7,949.89)
Loan Repayments	\$40,000.00	\$125,000.00	\$(85,000.00)
Misc.—Other	\$13,696.29	\$1,500.00	\$12,196.29
TOTAL PARISH EXPENSES	\$774,299.72	\$760,048.62	\$14,251.10
SCHOOL EXPENSES:			
Lay Salaries—Administration	\$109,760.16	\$108,200.00	\$1,560.16
School Office Expenses	\$39,045.85	\$26,900.00	\$12,145.85
School Benefits	\$127,150.30	\$106,642.00	\$20,508.30
Instructional Salaries	\$418,304.75	\$416,171.00	\$2,133.75
Instructional Expense	\$10,259.42	\$12,050.00	\$(1,790.58)
Religion Expenditures	\$4,121.05	\$6,200.00	\$(2,078.95)
Library Expenses	\$(397.79)	\$200.00	\$(597.79)
Technology Expenses	\$5,620.71	\$2,050.00	\$3,570.71
Cafeteria Salaries & Expenses	\$46,439.76	\$46,000.00	\$439.76
School Maintenance Salaries	\$32,599.92	\$32,750.00	\$(150.08)
School Utilities	\$50,321.62	\$43,000.00	\$7,321.62
Other Maintenance Expenses	\$99,829.84	\$94,000.00	\$5,829.84
Capital—School	\$18,986.56	\$22,500.00	\$(3,513.44)
School Exchange	\$(2,532.58)	\$(8,000.00)	\$5,467.42
TOTAL SCHOOL EXPENSES	\$959,509.57	\$908,663.00	\$50,846.57
GRAND TOTAL EXPENSES	\$1,733,809.29	\$1,668,711.62	\$65,097.67
NET INCOME	\$5,201.44	\$(82,286.69)	\$87,488.13

From the Desk of the DRE:

The second graders are studying about the sacrament of reconciliation in preparation for their December 2nd celebration. Among other things, they are learning that God made us and He knows what we need to live a healthy and fulfilled life. We are failing to live up to all we could be when we stray from God's plan. Thus, speaking honestly about sin and our need to avoid it does not shame or degrade us; rather, it is an affirmation of our dignity as beings created in God's image. If we tell ourselves it's okay to sin sometimes because "nobody's perfect," we are selling ourselves short. We should strive to be the wonderful people He created us to be and when we fail we should seek forgiveness and pray for the grace to do better. Please pray for our children as we seek forgiveness from God together with our St. Thomas More community for any way in which we have offended Him or each other.

Cub Scouts & Boy Scouts Honor American Heroes



STM's Cub Scout Pack 452 and Boy Scout Troop 452, with the help of Troop 170 from St. Mary's Parish of Hyde Park, created an American Military Cemetery replica. Each American hero who has given the ultimate sacrifice of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom was represented with a white cross and American flag. The Memorial Service took place Saturday, November 6th at Veterans Park (Union Township).

JulyFest 2004's profit was \$74,421.00.

Considering the weather we were faced with, we are pleased with our results. We are already beginning to plan for JulyFest 2005. If you have any comments or suggestions for games, entertainment, or concessions, please contact Rhonda Roberts 943-9835.

Mark your calendar for July 8-10, 2005 for JulyFest 2005!

Automatic Contributions

Keep in mind that you have the option of having your Sunday contribution automatically debited to your checking or savings account, or charged to your credit card. If you are interested in either method, please complete the appropriate side of the enclosed green form and return it to the Finance Office. You can mail it or drop it in the Sunday collection basket. This method ensures your contribution is made as requested and meets the criteria of the new Federal Check 21 law. It is easy to start, change, or stop upon your authorization and allows for the security of your account number. There is no fee for either service! The use of traditional checks will be used less and less as time goes forward.

Web Site Update:

Check out our web site—it now offers both current and past issues of our parish bulletin, newsletters, and Parish Council minutes. You only need Adobe Reader to open the files. There is a link to download the software if you don't have it.

Congratulations!

Becky Ready, Michael Thomas and John Convery were awarded Certificates in Lay Ministry from the Athenaeum of Ohio on Sunday October 17, 2004 at the annual Graduation ceremonies.

They each participated in a three-year program (John accomplished it in two years) of studies which has trained them in many areas of Lay Ministry. We are grateful to them for their hard work to serve the faith community in a fuller way.

*The deadline for the next issue of More About Us is **January 8th**. Please send submissions to the attention of Leslie Molitor in the Parish Office or via e-mail to lmolitor@sttm.org.*