

More About Us Winter 2009



Submitted by Fr. Bill Wagner,
Pastor



Lent has a long history. It began as a preparation for Baptism at Easter, the first great feast celebrated by the Church dating back to the beginning of the second century. The forty day period was celebrated by the whole Church and not just by those about to be baptized. In fact, the custom of attending daily Mass during Lent began rather early as part of the preparation for celebrating Easter and Baptisms. This practice of daily Mass eventually developed throughout the rest of the liturgical year.

Lent has been restored as a communal preparation for Baptisms. You are probably aware by now of the presence of our catechumens and candidates at the Liturgy of the Word during Sunday Mass. Most of you have experienced the Rite of Sending (to the Bishop), the Scrutinies and other rites celebrated by all of us with our candidates and catechumens during the Sunday Masses. "The initiation of

catechumens is a gradual process that takes place within the community of the faithful. By joining the catechumens in reflecting on the value of the paschal mystery and by renewing their own conversion, the faithful provide an example that will help the catechumens to obey the Holy Spirit more generously." (*Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*)

Our faith is the most precious gift we possess; it is our life. In today's world, faith is challenged from many voices. Some want to keep the voices of faith silent in the public square, some entertainers consider it necessary to publicly declare that they are "former Catholics" so that they are accepted into what they perceive to be a politically and culturally proper society. Some feel the separation of church and state means that the Church should not be visible in any form. The faith can become fragile for some of us caught up in all of this. We need to do all we personally can to keep our faith strong and to share it with others. If we believe in the Lord as the meaning of our lives, then surely we must believe that what his church offers is good for our country.

Lent is the traditional time to not only celebrate the gift of Baptism, but to strengthen our commitment to the Lord and his Church. Our faith is communal so why not do something with the faith community like attend weekday Mass on occasion, or make the Way of the Cross, or contribute to the life of the parish by volunteering to sing with the choir, work with the St. Vincent de Paul Society, attend Simple Supper meal on Ash Wednesday, attend a Bible Study or some other activity? Lent should be an important time for us; it always has been for the whole Church.

Peterloon Campout October 2008



Peterloon is the Dan Beard
Council Boy Scout encampment
held in the fall every two years.



STM Boy Scout Troop 452



WELCOME TO OUR NEW FIFTH GRADE ALTAR SERVERS

Submitted by Deacon Michael Thomas

We would like to welcome new servers from our **Parish School of Religion**. They are: **Nick Robben, Nicholas Murrell** and **Emily Feldkamp**. Special congratulations to **Nick Robben**, who has already earned his Silver Cross



New servers welcomed from our **St. Thomas More Parish School** are: **Grady Bajorek, Brian Cabell, Taylor Crouthers, Sophia DiCarlo, Sydney Evans, Madeline Fehn, Madison Gentile, Jonathan Gray, Blaise Harpring, Max Harpring, Abby Johnson, Will Johnson, Will Kamphaus, Sam Meisman, Jack Mulloney, Julia Nelson, Adam Neltner, Jordan Ritter, Justin Scales, Jack Schoose, Charlie Scott, Brad Shepherd, Nick Staderman, Emily Tekulve, Jake Vaughn, Evan Winkelman, David Winkler** and **Jarrett Yates**.

We would like to acknowledge, congratulate and thank the following servers: **Paige Noday**, an eighth grade student at St. Thomas More School, who has earned her **Gold Cross** and **Garrett Guthrie**, a freshman at McNicholas High School, who has earned his **Silver** and **Gold Cross**. **Garrett**, a former PSR student, has been a server since fifth grade. He has not only been a huge help on weekends, but also throughout the summer, Christmas and spring vacations. We would like to thank the above servers for their dedication to this ministry.

We would also like to thank **all** our servers for their efforts to enrich our liturgies by their presence and attention to detail. And a special thanks to the **parents** of our servers for their continued support of their children's participation in this important ministry.

Congratulations to Charlie Tekulve!!

Charlie has been chosen as an emerging artist by the **Kennedy Heights Art Center** and currently has a few pieces on display there. The theme is **Prelude 2009: The Human Spirit Revealed**. Admission is free. Hours are Saturdays from 10 am - 4 pm. For more information call 631-4278 or visit their website at www.kennedyarts.org.

February Artwork

Blown like smooth dunes, by the wind overnight,
the crusted snow glistened in the morning sun's light.

The brilliance danced on the canvas I viewed;
I stood in awe - all faith renewed.

Untouched by man, this scenic vision
proved Nature's palette conquered her mission.

The winter scene won the artist a prize
for it dazzled and kept the focus of my eyes.

Her magic she wove all through the night -
Nature's painting complete to view in daylight.

~Joan Adams Burchell

2009 Golden Wedding Anniversary Mass

For couples celebrating their 50th Wedding Anniversary in 2009, a Mass will be held on Saturday, May 2nd at 2:00 pm at St. Peter in Chains Cathedral. Please call Kate Roelker at 753-2550 by March 6th for invitations to attend this Mass.



*Anniversaries reflect
Hearts of Gold
Endless love stories
As yet untold*



2009 Wedding Acknowledgements

For those couples celebrating their 25th, 50th, 60th, 70th and 75th Wedding Anniversary in 2009, the Archdiocese will send out a special acknowledgement, so please call Kate Roelker at 753-2550 with your information.

Christopher Robin



FOLLOW YOUR FAVORITE CARDINAL TEAM SCORE & STANDINGS



Follow the Cardinals to the championship!
You can catch all the scores on our parish website

http://www.stm.org/stmcardinals.htm#Schedules,_Scores_&_Standings

Boys Winter Basketball CYO website link

To check on scores and Standings for Boys Basketball, log on to:

<http://www.cyosports.org/boysbasketball/75.html>



2009 IS HERE!

Submitted by Diane M. Brennan
Youth Minister and Junior High Religion Instructor



Yesterday I heard it is the end of the white pages as we know it, the encyclopedia is becoming obsolete, and apparently my landline is facing extinction. Street maps may one day only be available via GPS or internet? 2009 is here! Yeah?

Now about that resolution business...I usually do not make one. I seldom keep them. It makes me feel guilty when I fail. This year though, I think maybe I should...

I resolve to keep teaching children how to look things up in the library. You remember them, the place where you go to borrow a book without paying for it, you read it and care for it and then return it?

I resolve to keep demanding respect and discipline from the students I minister to and myself, especially since I believe this gives them a sense of worth and value. You remember that feeling? When you weren't a number but a person?

I resolve to keep my landline until they take it away. I like the fact that I can choose to not know who is on the other line and still answer or ignore you at my whim and I will NEVER get call waiting. (see resolution #2)

I resolve to keep teaching map skills to students. I don't think Jerusalem is on the GPS and without it how can my students appreciate where Jesus walked and how far Paul traveled to convert Gentiles?

I resolve to continue to push critical thinking for my self, in my thoughts and my deeds, and in my classroom. I will push to question why we do what we do, in our society, so I can truly live like Christ wants me. He read, right? I think maybe he would have used email and texting if he was here today... Facebook anyone?

This year I will not give up! Have a great year!

MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE SACRAMENTS OF MARRIAGE AND BAPTISM

In the gospel passage Mark 1:14-20 Jesus calls the first four disciples with the simple phrase, "come follow me". Their response is immediate; they stop what they are doing and follow the Lord to share in his work of salvation.

Is our Lord calling you to discipleship but you don't know what you are being called to do? Please consider offering your time and talents in the ministries related to the sacraments of marriage and baptism.

St. Thomas More has a number of exciting ministry opportunities for you to serve as an individual or as a couple. We are experiencing a significant increase in the number of marriages this year; with twenty-two scheduled to date. Ministry opportunities include the following:

MARRIAGE COORDINATOR – assist the priest or deacon in setting up the church as well as directing and coordinating the activities of members of the marriage party and guests during the marriage rehearsal and marriage liturgy.



FOCCUS COUPLE – meet with an engaged couple informally in your home to help them review and understand their results from answering 150 questions in the Facilitating Open Couple Communication, Understanding and Study (FOCCUS) Assessment Tool.

BAPTISM PREPARATION – conduct a one-hour training session for parents seeking baptism of their child. Show a video and explain the beautiful symbolism in the Sacrament of Baptism. Describe the requirements and responsibilities of the sacrament, the parents and the godparents. These sessions are held in the Faith Formation Room at 11:00 p.m. on the second Sunday of each month.



Training for these ministries will be provided. Please contact Deacon John Convery at 753-2568 or jconvery@sttm.org if you are interested. Thank you for all you do for St. Thomas More Parish.

Why Pray At All?

Submitted by Becky Ready, DRE



One of the most curious facts about prayer is that we do it at all. Believers often overlook this fact because prayer is such an integral part of life that it's just part of our mental furniture.

So why do we pray?

One huge reason is because Christ did and we are followers of Jesus. Jesus urges us to bug God and not give up. That might seem weird to those who are not Christian. Why would God not just answer us the first time? Why make us keep coming back, maybe even year after year, with the same seemingly fruitless prayer?

The reason is that in the struggle of prayer, we don't change God. He changes us. St. Augustine tells us that God made us without us, but he does not save us without us.

Jesus prayed all the time. He was perfect, sinless, without any selfishness, laziness or pride. His character was flawless. His mind was beyond brilliant. He suffered no emotional scars from a difficult family upbringing, no personality disorders or balanced self-esteem—no lacks, no wounds, no imperfections at all. And yet, over and over again in the Gospels we find him praying.

If he who was perfect needed prayer in order to fulfill his life's mission, what does that imply for us who are so imperfect, so weak, so vulnerable to every sort of temptation and wounded by every kind of sin?

Add that to the culture in which we find ourselves.

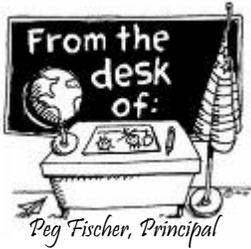
We live in a post-9/11 world where the necessity of creating a Homeland Security Department intensifies our fears. We are daily reminded of the threat of war and the reality of terrorism. The trust in our American economy is shaking. Research tells us that only 25-30% of Catholics are attending Church regularly. The dignity of human

life is being ignored in unimaginable ways.

Could the time be riper for a return to the rosary as a prayer for peace and unity that the world cannot give?

That is why we have decided to offer a **monthly rosary prayer service** at St. Thomas More. We will meet **the third Wednesday of every month at 6:30 pm** in church. We have decided to offer this special prayer opportunity for the intentions of our parish families and of all families in our nation. Since the family is the cornerstone of society, holy families will lead to a strong nation. Our families need prayer more than any other time in our nation's history. There is so much confusion and hostility against our families, our children and our religion in this country and elsewhere.

So, mark your calendars for every third Wednesday evening, bring your favorite rosary and join us as we prepare to witness God's mighty works among us.



As you read this article, likely St. Thomas More is celebrating Catholic Schools Week, always the last week of January. This year's theme, "Celebrate Service"

Dave McCarthy) and 3 cafeteria staff (Vickie Ditchen, Alice Chaney and Mary Rettig) keep us clean and fed! With more than 300 students and 20 teachers in the building every day-those are big jobs! Of course our 3 latchkey staff, (Chris Denison, Liz Hart and Robyn West) can be counted on before and after the regular school hours to help working parents by providing a safe, fun environment.

events. Additionally, class officers help with decisions such as school wide service projects and give input on various facets of school life including lunch menus and uniforms. Other students take charge of minor tech support tasks and audiovisual services. And did you know that during the summer, our "Super 8" program, under the direction of Diane Brennan, religion teacher/youth minister, is a major force for such tasks as moving desks, maintaining the grounds, and cleaning up after Julyfest? Mrs. Brennan and her crew meet 8 times over the summer for morning Mass, work sessions, lunch and fun.

fits so well with our school! Pitching in and serving others is a part of our everyday life at STM, and a significant focus of our efforts to bring our students to a fuller understanding of their faith and their future role in our world.

But my vote for most significant service at STM is that provided by the students. Service is encouraged early on with classroom jobs and helping students learn simple courtesies, such as holding the door for others. As they get older, more difficult and significant service tasks include lunchroom duty, which begins in fifth grade. Being responsible for helping the kindergarteners with their milk, keeping the tables and chairs clean, and assisting with the lunch line is a big job for the fifth grade, but by midyear they're handling it like pro's! And our junior high students...well-they can tackle about anything! Students serving as class officers run class meetings, plan agendas and organize

Service is at the heart of our faith, and at the heart of our school. The opportunity to serve is an opportunity to grow in faith and in connection to our community. As we begin our school enrollment for 2009, I hope that you will consider the values taught at St. Thomas More to be important enough for your child to embrace to "Choose MORE." For information on our school program, please call the school office at 753-2540. Visit our website at www.sttmschool.org.



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