

**THOMAS MORE PARISH
PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
Monday, March 19, 2007**

Council Members in Attendance: Fr. Bill Wagner, Vic Ivers, Kathy Hornschmeier, John Duncan, Larry Bush, and Jim Conrady.

Council Members Absent: Janet Tate and Ralph Bedel.

Others in Attendance: Daniel Hunt (Mt. St. Mary's Seminary), Dee Archer, Lori Knight, Mike Neff, David Wynn, Paul Scheve, Ken Schmithorst (Playground vendor), Fritz Schoolfield, Michael Thomas (Deaconate Candidate), John Convery (Deaconate Candidate), and Mike Gennett.

The St. Thomas More Parish Council meeting was called to order by Fr. Bill Wagner at 7:04 PM EDT with a prayer.

Business Manager Report: Mike Gennett gave the report:

The **Archdiocese Fund drive** has gotten off to a great start. As of today, \$17,200 has been pledged toward our goal of \$24,500 or 70%.

We had some **list serv issues** with the organization reports. Some of the reports were sent from email addresses that were not in the list serv and Yahoo addresses were all rejected. We are having a problem with Yahoo email addresses in general. Those who have multiple email addresses should probably have these addresses added to the list serv.

The bid on the **new windows for Heider Hall** has been released. Western Hills Window was the low bid. Work is scheduled to commence on June 11 and should take no more than three weeks. Meeting space will be at a premium at this time since Heider Hall will be closed due to safety concerns. New blinds will also be ordered for these windows. The old ones are falling apart and will not move to the new windows.

Health care costs will rise 5% next year. This is lower than expected. The savings are coming from combining the current PPO and HMO plans into a single PPO and capping lifetime claims at \$3,000,000.00.

The **bids to air condition Heider Hall** and the three classrooms are back. A major electrical upgrade is required for Heider Hall. The bids exceed \$30,000 and will not be included in next year's budget.

We have 249 **school registrations** through today. We will need close to 330 registrations to retain the existing staff. Those families who have not registered need to do so in the next couple of weeks. A revised budget will be prepared the second week of April and sent to Finance. It is important we get the registrations back so we can begin to offer teacher contracts. We can't "hang it out" and hope for more registrations down the road in order to plan a budget. Last year, registrations came in all the way up to the start of school and we were able to add staff accordingly.

Our **Festival team** of Jeff & Rhonda Roberts and Dave McCarthy has notified us that the 2008 Festival will be their last. Fr. Bill stated he has been having some discussions with a serious candidate about becoming the new Festival chair. It will be important to have a new chair in place so they can learn how to manage the Festival with the current team from the early planning stages through the end.

Our annual **scheduling process** is underway. All the staff and key organizations have received a packet to submit their meeting needs for 2007-8 by May 1. Meeting space is at a premium and we need to organize the next year in advance. The staff will meet in early June to work out any conflicts. We are also receiving a number of requests from outside groups to use our facilities. We just can't accommodate everyone's requests. Fr. Bill stated the Archdiocese has a policy regarding non-parish functions that include a \$1,000,000 insurance policy naming the Archdiocese, the Archbishop, and the parish as covered plus signing a hold harmless agreement. Fr. Bill stated a statement needs to be in the bulletin regarding this issue.

Finally, there is a **new law in effect regarding contributions** to churches. All contributions must be posted to our contribution records or the

individual is responsible to have canceled bank receipts verifying the donations. The IRS will not longer accept loose cash or non-documented contributions as a tax deduction. We have the software in place to accommodate this change. Fr. Bill added we will not honor any request to print a letter for donations to the parish that did not take place. It is illegal to do so.

Playground Committee Report – Lori Knight and the PTO Playground committee gave their report. (*The handout detailing the proposed project follows the minutes*).

Lori stated:

- The PTO is requesting permission to market for funds for a playground. Looking to use profits above expenses.
- It will not impact other projects the PTO traditionally supports.
- Three bids were received:
 - We are recommending Walnut Grove (Ken Schmidthorst's company). Copies of the three bids handed out as hardcopy.
 - We are happy with this layout, price, etc.
 - Funding will be targeted through alumni, PTO, etc. Trying to appeal to a broad cross section of people.
 - Initially the plan is to build phase 1, but the entire footprint of the surfaced area will be done at that time.
 - There seems to be an issue with reinstalling the existing equipment somewhere. There are now federal guidelines. Existing structures are grand-fathered: if we move it, we have to update it.
 - Looks like a total bill of \$19,846. Lori believes that scripts, fundraisers, etc. will bring in extra dollars. The only concrete number she has is \$3K, or so, profit from previous fundraisers.
 - Lori acknowledged that if we do not have the money up front it will not start. Council agreed that the funds must be in place before any work begins.
 - Lori has a flyer she would like to circulate to get donations. Needs to be done after the Archbishop's Fund Drive which wraps up at Easter.

- PTO's biggest Fundraiser is the Walk-a-thon... Will do some marketing there. This is scheduled for April 16th.
- Lori said they talked about Pavers as fund raisers... Larry Bush asked about plaques for donors. Also, the donations will be processed through the Business Office so that all the donations are Tax Deductible...
- There is a need to coordinate the fundraising to make sure we do not hit the local businesses twice. Rhonda Roberts will need to coordinate this activity.
- Looking for grants. Lowe's has it. Also points out that some businesses do an employer match... Fr. Bill also suggested looking for grants.

Fr. Bill stated he felt it was a worthwhile project. However, the school board had mentioned at a recent meeting they were rethinking the issue. Lori stated no one had contacted PTO regarding any change. Fr. Bill further stated the project must be clearly identified as a PTO project and can not collide with any parish capital campaign and can not collide with the Festival. This needs to get off the ground fairly quickly. The Archdiocese is conducting a demographic study of the area and we have no idea when it will be done or what the next steps will be. The diocese just extended the building moratorium for two more years.

Kathy Hornschemeier stated it took 10 years to get the current playground done.

Lori stated that the PTO plans to budget funds for the annual maintenance required for the playground.

Mike Neff asked about the disposal of the old playground equipment. There was an open discussion regarding the liability issues on this equipment. The equipment was believed to be grandfathered in as long as it remained in the current location. More research needed to be done regarding the eventual use and disposal of the old equipment.

Kathy Hornschmeier then made to motion to approve the PTO Playground project. Larry Bush seconded it. The vote was 5 to 0 to approve the project. Fr. Bill stated he accepted Council's recommendation and the project was approved to move forward.

Parish Ministry Reports – each parish organization and pastoral staff member filed a report prior to the meeting. Copies of the reports follow the minutes.

Kathy Hornschemeier had some questions she wanted clarified from the reports:

- The Boy Scouts state they have incurred bank fees totaling \$706 in the past 18-24 months.
 - *Response*---The amount is closer to \$600 and the period of time is 25 months. Part of the issue arose when 5th/3rd added to six of our accounts services and fees we did not ask for. It took over 4 months for this to get resolved. Our 5th/3rd accounts are a master contract with the Archdiocese. You work with a staff downtown on issues like this rather than in the branch.
 - As stated earlier to the scouts, this has been referred to our 5th/3rd offices for review. A decision will be forthcoming.

- The Boosters stated in their report they do not have a Porter to lock up the gym two nights a week.
 - *Response*---Our Tuesday night Porter quit the first of the year. Porters are volunteers who come and unlock and lock up. We need someone to step forward to fill Sunday and Tuesday nights. All the Booster board members have been assigned keys. They prefer to have someone lock up for them. We have no one that has come forward. Fr. Bill stated he was not going to ask the staff to stay late at night to do this. He suggested we might need to do away with the entire Porter system and have parishioners lock and unlock for themselves.

- A question was raised as to how the Booster Winterfest did.
 - *Response* - Winterfest made a profit of \$5,152 which was applied to the outstanding gym floor debt. The remaining balance due on the floor is \$4,804.00.

- What is the Code of Conduct about?

- *Response* – The Code of Conduct was put into place to ensure everyone including school parents behaves in a professional, Christian manner during sporting events.

John Duncan asked about a statement on the Deacon's report regarding Eucharist Ministers purifying the vessels. The response was that someone that is at the Priest or Deacon level must do it. This has been addressed by our Worship Committee.

Vic Ivers asked about the concern on the Bingo report regarding the lack of volunteers. Mike Gennett stated they are having problems some nights more than others. A couple of weeks ago only two volunteers showed up. It was asked if we assign by group to volunteer. The response was we assign by grade. People complained in the past about the cigarette smoke. We banned smoking when the law went into affect in December. Yet, the number of volunteers has not improved.

The question was raised about the Adopt a Highway. There are signs up and down Beechmont Avenue regarding our parish being responsible for the highway. Signs start at the Hamilton/Clermont County line and are repeated in front of Hooters, Planned Parenthood, etc. It was stated that Social Action decided not to the project and the signs are up.

Pastor's Report – Fr. Bill gave his report.

The **Festival** will not be doing a car raffle this year. It did not do well last year. There will be a **grand prize** of \$10,000.

The Archbishop is in the process of **evaluating all the Pastors**. The staff, Parish Council, and 10 parishioners will be sent a letter to gather their input on the Pastor's performance.

The **Parish Mission** was very successful. It was well attended. Bill Wegner was terrific and will be asked back. Fr. Bill stated he was seeking input if we should have a Mission once a year or every other year. Jim Conrady stated he preferred once a year.

A **new alcohol policy** is forthcoming from the diocese. Each parish will be asked to put a policy in writing. The major change will be that for kids only events alcohol will not be permitted. This does not apply to the Festival, for example, since there are many other things taking place besides the kid's games.

The school committee has raised the issue regarding the need for the **modular classrooms needing bathrooms**:

- There currently is a diocese wide moratorium on all construction.
- When we have a capital campaign, we will look at it at that time.
- Putting money into the modular classrooms is not a wise move.
- We would have to eliminate a classroom to add bathrooms which we can not do.
- The issue of no bathrooms was discussed with Parish Council, Finance, and School Committee prior to buying the buildings. All three organizations agreed to buy the buildings with this understanding.
- The teachers and the kids love the buildings. They have central air.
- School Committee changed their mind on the new Heider Hall windows. They would prefer to use the money for plumbing in the modular classrooms. (The window contract has already been signed and we can't change our mind at this point.)
- The buildings can't be moved because of underground conduits and the location between the gym and the west school entrance is where the expansion is planned to be someday. They would have to be moved again to facilitate construction.

The **next church beam** back may have **lights added** to them in the near future. We still need more lighting in the church especially at night.

We have had two very **tough funerals** in the past two weeks. The parish has done an outstanding job of stepping forward to help the Rachel Casavant family. The father is left with six children to care for.

Our budget can not be taken for granted. We must be very careful with everything we do. We are paying nearly \$9,000 a month on the parish debt and interest. This amount will start to rise in a few years. We will have to find that money. State government may not be as supportive of parochial

schools in the future. We receive a substantial amount of aide for the school. Things can change overnight.

Mary Malloy is leaving the parish. She was a part time musician who played at some of the weekend Masses.

The **communal Penance service** went well with the four parishes.

Insurance pressures are mounting. Costs keep rising.

In **804**, our Katrina resident has gone back home. We have a new family in the house now.

The **parish mission statement** needs to be revised. Council should jot down phrases and make some recommendations to change it. The changes should be emailed to Fr. Bill or Mike Gennett.

We have to candidates that are going to be **ordained Deacons** on April 28th: Michael Thomas and John Convery. The parish is planning a reception after the Noon Mass on April 29th.

The **Presbyteral Council** is planning a celebration of the Archbishop's 25th Anniversary for December. The diocese money issues continue to loom: the investments are down and the parishes owe lots of money to the diocese.

McNicholas High School is looking for a new Principal. Their costs are rising like everyone else's. There probably will be some structural changes there. A Finance Committee will be added. McNick is very strong academically

New Business -

Mike Gennett asked for a council volunteer to work on the school family contribution letters that are scheduled to go out in the fall. This is our version of the successful St. Veronica program. John Duncan volunteers to be the council representative. This work will get underway during the

spring and early summer. Probably one meeting will be required to prepare the letters.

John Duncan voiced his concern about the lack of urgency in getting the school registrations in. He thinks some don't take it seriously.

Kathy Hornschemeier made a motion to adjourn. Jim Conrady seconded it. The meeting adjourned at 8:45 PM. Fr. Bill led the group in a prayer.

NEXT MEETING IS APRIL 16TH - 7:00 PM

St. Thomas More New Playground General Information

Playground Equipment Research Team (PERT)

PERT is a subcommittee of PTO formed in September 2006 to research various playground equipment options (materials, cost, vendors, installers, etc.) and to make recommendations to the PTO Board, PTO general assembly, Parish Council, and Fr. Wagner (and any other groups at STM that should be consulted) for final approval. We did most of the research and communication online, with the exception of a few team meetings and then two on-site vendor meetings.

Team members: Lori Knight, Denise Higgins, David Wynn, Shelley Brazier-Pairan, John Burns, Fritz Schoolfield, and Jerry Tucker.

STM currently has a wooden play system in an area approximately 51' x 54'. Parts of it are broken and unusable. We considered refurbishing the existing structure, but have been told that there is very little we could do to improve its current state. The children of the parish and the school would be better served with a brand new play area.

After meeting a few times and polling students, parents and teachers, PERT came up with a "Request for Bid" package that was sent to several vendors. The following information was included in the package:

- 1) Types of playground equipment that we were interested in
- 2) Student polling information (what the kids wanted; see results on next page)
- 3) Our concerns over funding; bid should be broken down into phases
- 4) Exclusions of playground equipment we knew that we did not want
- 5) Pictures of STM's existing structure

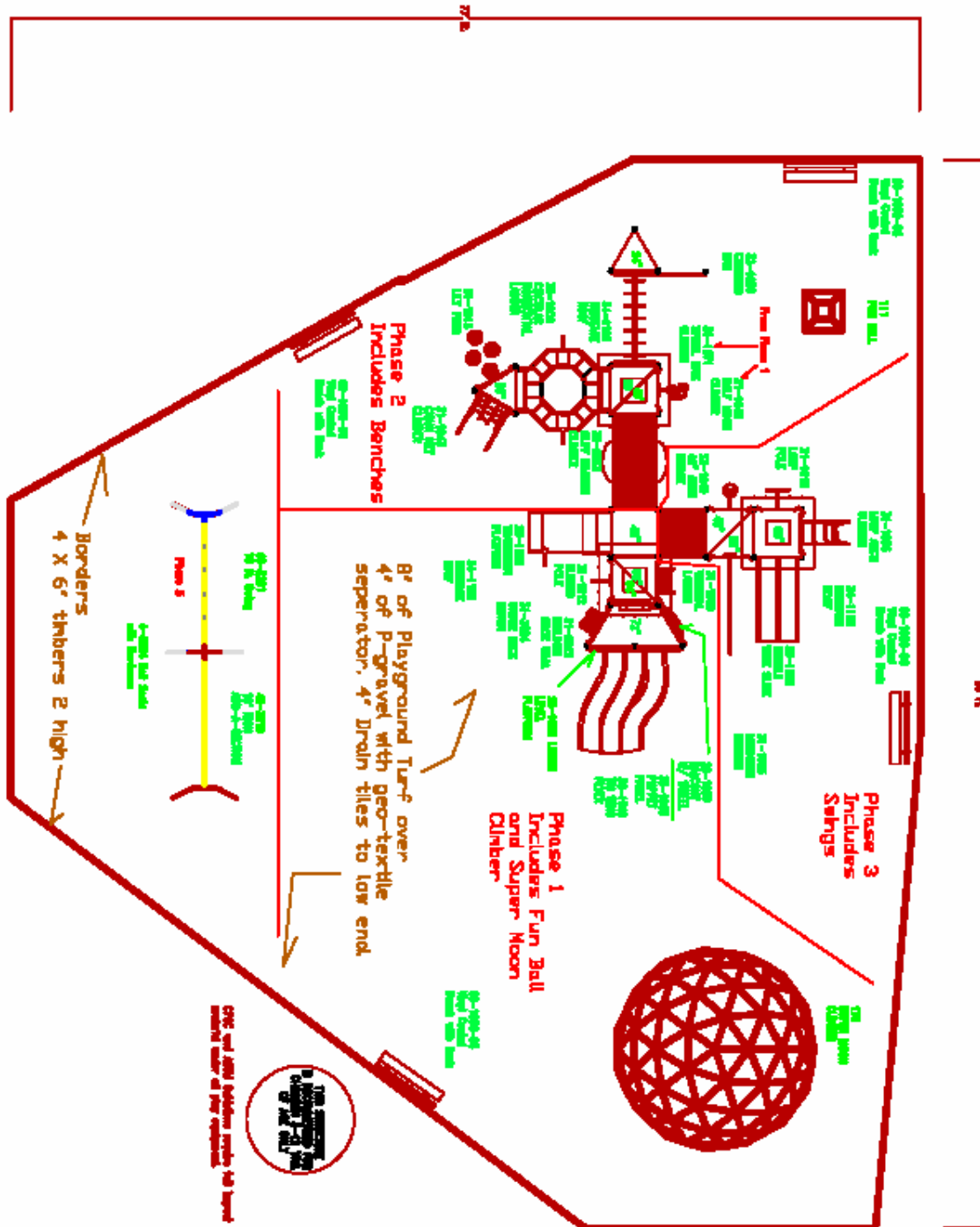
PERT received bids from three different vendors (copies will be handed out at meeting). In summary:

					Total	Site Mat'l	Supervisor
Vendor Name	Play System	Phase I	Phase II	Phase III	Bid	Include?	Included?
Service Supply Ltd.	Landscape Structures	30,204	23,345	23,730	77,279	No	No
	Cost of supervisor to work with our volunteers: \$1000 per day						
David Williams & Assoc.	GameTime	17,256	13,368	2,740		No	No
	Installation	5,100	4,300	900		No	Yes
	Subtotal	22,356	17,668	3,640	43,664		
Walnut Grove Playgrounds	Recreation Creations	19,846	10,151	7,057	37,054	Yes	Yes

PERT's Vendor recommendation: Walnut Grove Playgrounds

Reasons: Ken Schmithorst of Walnut Grove Playgrounds is extremely easy to work with. He met with PERT on-site and was very straightforward with his information.

He will be on site for the project to direct our volunteers. His bid was the lowest of the three received and we are confident that he is the best choice. Ken has volunteered his skid steer loader and an operator to dig the pit and spread the materials.



St. Thomas More Elem. School Playground Proposal
Walnut Grove Playgrounds Ken Schmithorst 923-4880

Miscellaneous Notes:

- 1) Phase I includes site preparation and materials for the pit for the entire playground area, Phases I - III. That is why it is so much more expensive than the other phases. It makes more sense to do the area prep and foundation work up front, rather than do that part in phases. The play area is shaped in such a way as to eliminate a lot of extra area that would need base material and playground mulch.
- 2) If pressed for money, we could omit the Funball (\$653) & Supermoon Climber (\$1,546) from Phase I and move them to Phase II or III.
- 3) We understand that the project cannot be started without full funding up front. PTO has pledged to roll over the profit from 2006-2007 to 2007-2008 to continue to raise money for a new playground. The PTO President, Treasurer, and Secretary are all on the 2007-2008 Board as well (will be finalized at the April election meeting, but all are unopposed).
- 4) If the required money is raised prior to the end of the 2006-2007 school year, we would like to have construction of Phase I completed prior to the start of school in August. We understand that we cannot start construction prior to Julyfest weekend (7/13-7/15). All other considerations will be examined as to an appropriate time for tear down and construction. No dates will be set in stone without Fr. Wagner's prior approval.
- 5) The new playground would occupy the area where the current playground exists, plus some. The current playground is approximately 51' x 54'. The new playground (all three phases) would be approximately 90' x 77 ft. (see Walnut Grove Playground Schematic for shape). The area is a six-sided polygon with the widest area across being closest to the parking lot. The shape was determined by the placement of the "pods/phases" and we tried to keep extra area to a minimal so we could cut down on the playground mulch and other base material that would be needed.
- 6) The swings (Phase III) are located in the back, farthest away from the parking lot, so children would not be running in front or behind them to get to the other pod areas.
- 7) Possible names for the playground:

The Generations Playground Refers to the many families who have been and will continue to be

at STM for several generations.

The Legacy Playground Same as above

The Kids' Place

Have a contest to name the playground (final approval from Parish Council & Fr. Wagner)

St. Thomas More New Playground Volunteer Labor Support Plan

Parish Families / School Families

We have no doubt that when requested, STM families will “step up to the plate” to help with this project. This project is something that will benefit all of the children of the parish and that many people have voiced that the Parish needs. At the appropriate time, we will send out requests for volunteers for this project. We will ask that they bring tools if needed, and they will be scheduled for times and certain duties depending on their capabilities.

There are several parish families who are in or have been in either the landscaping or construction industries. We hope to have their help in this endeavor as well.

Vendor: Walnut Creek

The vendor has volunteered his skid steer loader and operator to dig the pit and spread the materials.

Ken Schmithorst will be on-site to supervise volunteers during construction.

St. Thomas More New Playground Financial Support Plan

STM PTO

The 2006-2007 PTO Board has pledged all profit above budgeted expenses to the funding of a new playground. The projected profit for the 2006-2007 fiscal year is \$8,847. PTO shows a profit of \$2,361 as of 3/14/07.

The Scrip program is running nicely and is already at 115% of its projected budget. PTO is looking into ways to keep the Scrip program up and running over the Summer as well as making it easier for parishioners at large to purchase Scrips. The PTO Walk-A-Thon is budgeted to bring in \$8,900 profit and it is scheduled for April 16th, 2007. Other PTO fundraisers have performed as budgeted or better this year.

STM Alumni Support

The Alumni Association has approximately 75 registered members to date. The Alumni Reunion Area at Julyfest 2006 was a big hit with attendees and the Alumni Association expects more for Julyfest 2007. Plans of an "Alumni Challenge" to raise money for the playground include requesting \$1 per year of attendance at STM at a minimum. The class that returns the most money would get special recognition. Possible funds: $75 \times \$8 = \600 at a minimum if everyone participates.

Direct Donations: Parishioners

Tax deductible donations per attached "Patron" form. Forms could be inserted into bulletins and would be available on the school and parish web sites. Possible funds: ??

Direct Donations: Local Businesses

Tax deductible donations per attached "Patron" form. Possible funds: ??
In-kind donations if applicable

Other Fundraising Possibilities

Engraved pavers for walkways around the playground area (like the Grotto pavers)
School "Pennies for the Playground" penny fundraiser competitions
Sponsorship of playground benches

Possible Grants

Lowe's (\$5,000 max) <http://www.toolboxforeducation.com>

Pay It Forward Foundation (\$500 max)

<http://payitforwardfoundation.org/educators/grant.html>

Online research will continue to try to find more grant possibilities

Matching Funds Employer Donations

Some example companies: Avon Productes, Federated Department Stores, Fidelity Investments, General Electric, Kraft, Kroger Co., McDonald's, Morgan Stanley, Verizon

http://www.case.org/new_mg/company_search/company_search.cfm?keyword=B6FD0EF6-D1A4-4457-A389A565E3418A37

Possible funds: ??



With this check donation, I become an honorable

St. Thomas More Playground Patron

Name: _____

Address: _____

Please check all that apply:

I am: a Parishioner a School Parent an STM Alumni
Other

Send this form and check donation to:

St. Thomas More Parish
Attn: Business Manager
800 Ohio Pike
Cincinnati, OH 45245

Checks payable to "St. Thomas More".
Please note "PTO Playground" in memo section.



Together we can change thisto this!

Thank you for your support!!!

ORGANIZATION REPORTS FOLLOW:

Parish Council Committee Report Form

(Please copy and paste to a Microsoft Word Page. When completed, send via email no later than Friday, March 16, 2007, to all parish council members at parishcouncil@sttm.org)

**St. Thomas More Organization Report for
the Monday, March 19, 2007 Parish Council Meeting**

Organization Name: Faith Formation

Key Organization Leaders/Officers: Becky Ready

- Highlights/Key Accomplishments: (This is not intended to be a laundry list of everything the group has done, but rather a overview of the key accomplishments this past year):

Parish School of Religion (PSR):

The new year started out with a new progress report designed to share with parents the status of each child as a “disciple of God”. The focus areas of

evaluation were: Demonstrates respect and Christian love for others, reflects Christian values in behavioral choices, shows desire to learn God's ways especially in completing required grade level activities, and shows discipline in attempting to become a better version of self.

Since this is our third year of giving ACRE tests, we decided to add the 8th grade this year, so we can see areas of strength and areas of weaknesses in our program between 5th and 8th. We will be sending home the individual results of the ACRE test to the parents of participating 5th and 8th graders in PSR as well as the 5th and 8th graders in the school.

In February our catechists were treated to a Day of Recollection at the Athenaeum organized by the Eastside DREs. This is an event we offer each year to all catechists in this eastside vicinity for their spiritual growth. We have a terrific group of catechists this year. In fact our numbers have reached 43.

We have begun a process of collecting all PSR parents' email addresses in a distribution list. This will provide us with a more efficient way of contacting parents when necessary.

Each month I have been creating a formation tool called, *A Treasure of Traditions*. It is a one page format highlighting many activities that families could do at home together in order to strengthen our Catholic traditions. It can be found on our www.sttm.org website for PSR families. It is also sent home monthly in the school's monthly packet. This is an effort to connect our parish families to the wealth of opportunities coordinating with our liturgical calendar that are available to them with the hope that families can be encouraged to "walk the talk", to become more faith filled domestic churches in their homes. For it is only in teaching our little ones how to live our faith that it truly can become more vibrant as a transforming agent in our society's future.

We plan to compile a bibliographical resource list of all our valuable resources so that more catechists can become aware of their availability and potential use.

The registration and ordering process for next year will begin shortly. Any help or ideas you can give to encouraging people to register their children now would be helpful. Typically still too many wait until August which

doesn't help us in planning, preparing and processing for the needs of those who will be attending.

We are currently planning an Easter brunch for our catechists not only to thank them for their many hours of dedicated service, but also to plan and prepare for next year's needs.

Having Diane Brennan help in coordinating the PSR Sunday program this year has been an incredible help. Her presence has brought energy and dependability and greater connectedness to all the catechists' efforts and the program goals.

Michele Klysz Robben, our Preschool Catechist Coordinator, and Joanne Buchanan, our Preschool Program Coordinator, have also been an immensely helpful team. Together they have consistently nourished the catechists, reached out to parents and grown the program. We are totally indebted to their efforts. Many new and exciting events have been offered to our preschool families this year because of their dedication and loyalty to Christ and our parish church.

Sacraments

We are currently preparing for first communion with the second graders. We have met for our initial meeting to go over the entire process and to offer support ideas for parents. We will be meeting again on Saturday, April 21, for our big Jesus Day Retreat. Photos are earlier this year on April 24; rehearsals are May 8th; the first communion masses will be May 13. In conjunction with Elizabeth Ministries, we will be celebrating a Marian Event including a May Crowning and a living rosary with all first communicants May 1st.

We also are preparing for confirmation with the 8th graders and two young adults. We are continuing the process we began last year of dividing the confirmandi into gender like groups, all girls or boys. Each group is led by the gracious efforts of parents. Their dedication is a blessing. We have had two sessions concerning the theology of confirmation with our small faith groups so far. We have two more sessions to go. The confirmation retreat is scheduled for May 19. Confirmation will be celebrated at the Cathedral on Wednesday, May 23, with St. James of the Valley and Our Lady of the Rosary.

RCIA

We are currently in the third phase of RCIA, purification and enlightenment. This is a time similar to a long retreat in which the candidates and catechumens are reflecting more interiorly on their relationship to Christ and his Church. We are organizing a retreat for them on Saturday, March 31, on which day we will also be rehearsing for the Easter Vigil when they will become fully initiated.

Following the vigil, we will enter into the 4th phase called Mystagogy. This year we will focus on a study of the resurrection of Jesus for seven more weeks. We also will be looking at how our new neophytes can be better connected in our parish. They will be taking a spiritual assessment survey to help them reflect on which ministries they would most like to participate in.

The RCIA Inquiry sessions for our next group of candidates will be offered on the first Sundays throughout the summer at 11:00 in the Faith Formation Room. Our new brochures are located in the plastic holders at church entrances. Please encourage the council to evangelize and invite any one interested in inquiring about our Catholic faith. I am pleased to report that I have interviewed four adults and three youth interested in joining our process for next year already! God is great! He continues to move when and where we can be most surprised.

ADULT FAITH FORMATION

Our Moms group has experienced a huge loss recently in the death of Rachael Casavant. Rachael has been in our Moms group since its beginning and was designated one of our leading facilitators. She will be greatly missed.

We will be starting a new series with our present moms and extending an invitation to any other women in the parish who are interested. The new series is called *The Great Adventure* which is geared to helping us understand our salvation history by looking at the Bible chronologically from Genesis through Revelation. On the 3rd Wednesday of every month, through DVD and workbook participation we will be learning how God

gradually revealed his plan to re-establish the broken relationship between Himself and His treasured creation.

Our weekly book club is also going strong. Currently we are reading a book by Fr. Ronald Rolheiser called the *Holy Longing*. He is expanding our understanding of what the Catholic Church is and how our “holy longing” for God should be directed and nourished. We will continue to reach out to others who are interested in sharing and discussing the wisdom of reading spiritual books together in our journey of faith.

We have started a new adult faith formation class called *Catholic Matters*. This is being led by our soon to be deacon, John Convery. With John’s love of the Church and his teaching background, he is a perfect match for our efforts to grow adult faith formation in the parish. We are using the new book, the *U. S. Catholic Catechism for Adults*, as our text. We are truly grateful that 40 people have signed up for this seven week adventure. We will be continuing this 7 week format every fall and spring. Finding a room big enough was a challenge this time. This will continue to be a source of frustration as we build on our efforts to encourage our parishioners to better know their faith. Perhaps it’s time for us to group together, pull resources and pray for a winning lottery ticket to build that new Family Faith Formation Center! ☺



Parish Council Committee Report Form

(Organizations will copy and paste to a Microsoft Word Page when assigned.)

parishcouncil@sttm.org

St. Thomas More Organization Report for

Parish Council Meeting March 19, 2007

Organization Name: Deacon Jerry’s Report

Key Organization Leaders/Officers/Pastoral Employee:

- Prepared a brief statement as to your organization's contribution or your contribution as employee to the parish. This would be like a brief mission statement:

Worship Commission:

This past summer began piping in Gregorian Chant music before masses. Added two additional speakers in the church to improve sound system. In October a number of Commission members attended the "Gathering Faithfully Together" workshop by Fr. Michael Joncas to study some of the upcoming changes to our liturgy. Invited the Elizabeth ministry to take part in the parish All Souls Annual Memorial Celebration as well as having the Blessing for Expectant mothers at all masses the 3rd Sunday of Advent. Held Evensong during Advent. Approved new server's advancement program. Approved the new "Purification of Vessels" procedure. Held training for new Eucharistic Ministers. Planned all Advent and Christmas liturgies. Put together the Lenten liturgical schedule. Coordinated the recent parish mission given by evangelist Bill Wegner. New lights were installed in the front of the sanctuary. Have scheduled a training workshop for new lectors. Are now in the process of planning for Holy Week and the first mass of newly ordained deacons.

Social Action Committee:

Successfully took part twice during the summer in the River Downs racetrack ministry where we fed both physically and spiritually workers @ the racetrack. Continue to support our St. Vincent DePaul, SEM pantry, Project Hope in Brown county, and St. Joseph in West Union. With our monthly food collection throughout the year. Chairperson Terri Severyn attended the "Social Action Summer Institute" sponsored by the Archdiocesan Catholic Social Action Office. Held a Baby Shower in August for A Caring Place. During the parish festival successfully sponsored the signing of the minimum wage petition for the state of Ohio. Looked into taking part of the state "Adopt a Highway" project. We found that there is a lot of confusion in this project and thus decided not to take part in it. Organized our parish

Advent Giving Tree project which turned out to be our most successful to date with over 800 gifts collected and distributed. Held a simple soup supper on Ash Wednesday featuring a guest speaker Billie Kuntz, director of Clermont County Community Services. This kicked off our parish wide Operation Rice Bowl project. Presently are looking into a project to get out the message of the tragedy taking place in Dafur.

Sacraments:

Baptism: Since my last report we have added several catechist to do the Baptismal Preparation class. We have 5 ladies doing the class 3 of whom are part of the Elizabeth Ministry. Fr. Bill and myself had 61 baptisms since last May and are looking forward to the two new deacons coming on board.

Marriage: Since my last report Fr. Bill and myself have had 15 weddings and have at least 10 more booked for this year. I have added one more couple to our FOCCUS couples which now numbers 6. Our Celebration of Marriage was very successful with Deacon and Mrs. Tim Schutte's presentation, great food and lot's of dancing. I continue to work on a number of annulment cases and am presently helping John Convery during his internship.

CRHP:

Men's team #5 and woman's team #7 both experienced a very faith filled formation period during the past year. They completed their journey in faith by holding two outstanding CRHP weekends. The woman's weekend held Feb. 2/3 had 17 new participants and the men's weekend on Feb. 17/18, stunted by bad weather added 7 new men to the rolls of CRHP. Both new CRHP teams are presently forming to began again spreading the Good News of Jesus Christ in our parish.

Miscellaneous:

For the 4th year in a row we have a seminarian, Dan Hunt assigned to St. Thomas More. He has attended a number of the activities going on here as well as spending a morning in the parish office to see how things run.

> Date: Thu, 15 Mar 2007 2:59:11 -0400
> From: <guenther5405@fuse.net>
> To: parishcouncil@stttm.org
> Subject: St Vincent de Paul Report
>
> Organization: St Vincent de Paul
>
>
> Key Organization Contact: Bob Guenther
>
>
> Mission Staement: Ministry of volunteers administering to the poor within our parish area. Contact is made as the results of calls received through the Parish office fom people in need.
>
> Highlights: The most important aspect of our minisrty is the Spirituallity of our members. In conjunction with the St Martin Deanery, we are going through a renewal process of spirituallity. John Convery will be our new Spiritual Advisor to lead us in this endeavor.
>
> On june 18 th The Deanery will have our annual Run for the Poor. All proceeds benefit the Poor. More information will be provided later.
>
> Over the past 8-12 months we have seen a significant increase in the number of requests for assistance. We have been able to meet these needs do to the generosity of our Parishioners.
>
> We have been pleased with the over all success of the Thomas More House which is currently occupied.
>
> Old Issues: None
>
>
> New Issues: None
>

Parish Council Committee Report Form

(Organizations will copy and paste to a Microsoft Word Page when assigned.
parishcouncil@stttm.org)

St. Thomas More Organization Report for

Parish Council Meeting March 19, 2007

Organization Name: Elizabeth Ministry

Key Organization Leaders/Officers/Pastoral Employee: Maria Pour/Linda Bader/Becky Ready

Prepared a brief statement as to your organization's contribution or your contribution as employee to the parish. This would be like a brief mission statement:

The Elizabeth Ministry is designed to provide Christian support for families during the joys, challenges and sorrow of the childbearing years. With a host of 20 ministers, we have the depth to assist families with most situations.

Highlights/Key Accomplishments: (This is not intended to be a laundry list of everything the group has done, but rather a overview of the key accomplishments this past year):

- Welcomed 4 new members, and are sending enrollment information to 3 very interested women.
- Ministered to 10 families
- Hosted Marian Event in May. Held “1st time” Living Rosary with the 1st Communicants
- Hosted the Epiphany Celebration with PSR. Invited parishioners to bring gifts for “baby Jesus”. All “gifts were donated to A Caring Place.

- Additional blessing for expectant parents held during mass during Advent, thanks to the Worship Commission
- Launched the “Baby Bottle” campaign for A Caring Place during the Epiphany Celebration. Hosted a ‘coffee and donuts’ to allow parishioners to return bottles (filled with monies) – all donated to A Caring Place
- Pray for those asking for our intercession through our Blessing Bouquet and prayer journal in the back of church.
- Developed a Memorial Service with the guidance of Fr. Bill, for those who have lost babies through miscarriage, stillbirth, infant crisis, abortion – to be held March 20th at 7pm with a reception following.
- Working with the Casavant Family, who have most recently had the tragic loss of their mother of 6, Rachael - a fellow minister, and the loss of their infant baby girl. We have worked closely with them to manage a website enabling parishioners, friends, family to sign up for meals, childcare, grocery shopping, etc. Working with their schools as well, to streamline information and help for them. Directing donations to memorial funds, STM scrip, gift cards for the family. Helped the family immediately and have been in constant contact with them and the outpouring of support through the community. We will be providing resources to help them as they work through their grief.

Short list of old issues your organization has not resolved:

Short list of new issues that Parish Council needs to be aware of:

You are all invited to attend the Memorial Service, Tuesday, March 20th in the church. Reception immediately following.

Parish Council Committee Report Form

(Organizations will copy and paste to a Microsoft Word Page when assigned.
parishcouncil@sttm.org)

**St. Thomas More Organization Report for
Parish Council Meeting March 19, 2007**

Organization Name: St. Thomas More Athletic Booster Club

Key Organization Leaders/Officers/Pastoral Employee:

Brian Jones, President

Rick Kellerman, Vice President

Jeff Roberts, Treasurer

Lisa Marcinko Miller, Secretary

John Clements, Athletic Director

Prepared a brief statement as to your organization's contribution or your contribution as employee to the parish. This would be like a brief mission statement:

The Booster organization gives our young parish members the opportunities to participate in many different sports. This allows them to develop their athletic, team and social skills. By offering various sports programs, quality facilities and equipment it helps attract new families to our parish and school. We believe that providing these sports programs is a privilege that all of our parish children deserve.

Highlights/Key Accomplishments: (This is not intended to be a laundry list of everything the group has done, but rather an overview of the key accomplishments this past year):

- Boosters held the first annual Winterfest this past January. The profit will go to reduce our debt to the parish for the cost of the gym floor. We raised \$5,100 profit which reduced our debt by over half in turn helps the parish reduce its debt.
- We have started a track team with 31 STM children participating.
- We had a record number of team participating in all of the sports we offer.

In the fall a drainage system was put in on the ball field so it won't be so wet for the spring games.

- .

Short list of old issues your organization has not resolved:

Wall space for banners. Alumni do not want their banners taken down but we are quickly running out of space. We are looking into a smaller alumni banner.

Short list of new issues that Parish Council needs to be aware of:

- Porters. The boosters had to porter at least two nights a week for the year. This has always been taken care of in the past by the parish.
 - The Archdiocese safety audit would like pads on the wall under the auxiliary side baskets. Parish office has asked if we could help, but the funds are not available with the current budget. This will be looked into when the budget is reviewed for next year.
 - Gym time availability – As the parish and school grows so does our program. This winter was very difficult scheduling teams for practice time.
 - Parents and coaches not conducting themselves in a Christian manner. We have re-issued the Coaches Code of Conduct. We are looking into having it re-written to include not only the coaches' conduct but the parent's conduct as well.
-

**St. Thomas More Organization Report for
the Monday, March 19, 2007 Parish Council Meeting**

Organization Name: Chancellors Club

Key Organization Leaders/Officers:

- Highlights/Key Accomplishments: (This is not intended to be a laundry list of everything the group has done, but rather a overview of the key accomplishments this past year):

Since our last report to pastoral council we have had a Day of Recollection in Advent for ourselves and area parishes. We had almost forty people attend. It was held at the Comboni Mission Center. Along with the two Bible Study groups we hosted an evening reception at the recent Parish Mission. We are currently exploring the possibility of establishing a Parish Nurse program. We continue to meet at area restaurants once a month for lunch. Attendance at these lunches grows each month. We are planning a one day summer trip to Maria Stein.

- Short list of old issues not resolved:

None

■ Short list of new issues that Parish Council needs to be aware of:

Nothing at this time, thank you.

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Report to Parish Council March 2007

Organization Name: St. Thomas More Alumni Association

Key Organization Leaders/Officers:

President	Lori (Zibulka) Knight	Class of 1983
Vice President	Kelley (Dwyer) Lang	Class of 1979
Secretary	Cassandra (Wahl) Feldhaus	Class of 1958
Treasurer	Open	
Events Coordinator	Open	

Organization's Purpose:

The purpose of the St. Thomas More Alumni Association will be:

To celebrate the bonds of friendship and family formed by past students

To promote the educational excellence of current students

To continue to grow in our Catholic faith with one another in the future

Highlights/Key Accomplishments: (This is not intended to be a laundry list of everything the group has done, but rather an overview of the key accomplishments this past year):

- 1) Hosted a successful Alumni Reunion Area at Julyfest 2006; received many new registrations during the weekend.
- 2) Current alumni registrations at 75 people, but a lot of interest was generated during Julyfest. There are many alumni that can be easily

located (parishioners, school families, friends/family of registered alumni, etc.) if we have the time to do it.

3) 2007 Distinguished Graduate Award presented posthumously to Marilyn Link DePowell, STM Graduating Class of 1958. The announcement sent to Alumni is on the next page. Dick Schuler presented the award to Mrs. DePowell's family at Mass on 1/28/07. Mr. Schuler attended McNicholas High School with Mrs. DePowell.

4) Kathy Hornschemeier has scanned hundreds of old photos (parish & school) into the computer and put them onto CD's. I have posted them on AOL pictures for private viewing, and emailed the link out to registered alumni. We have gotten a lot of positive responses about the pictures, as well as a great deal of information about the pictures ... who is in them, what the event was, year taken, etc. Thanks Kathy!

Short list of old issues not resolved:

Short list of new issues that Parish Council needs to be aware of:

We will be contacting registered alumni in regards to soliciting donations for the new playground, after approval from Parish Council.

We will have another area at Julyfest 2007 for Alumni Association "mini-reunions" and information.

Submitted by: Lori Knight 753-0178

The 2007 STM Distinguished Graduate Award

Marilyn Link DePowell STM Graduating Class of 1958

Marilyn Link DePowell has been named the 2007 STM Distinguished Graduate by STM's Education Committee. This posthumous award will be presented to Marilyn Link DePowell's family on Sunday, January 28th, 2007 at the 10:00 a.m. Mass. A reception will follow at 11:00 a.m. in the Parish Dining Hall.

After graduating from St. Thomas More in 1958, Mrs. DePowell went on to Archbishop McNicholas High School (Cincinnati, OH). She then went on to college at Our Lady of Cincinnati and Xavier University earning a BA and Masters in Education. She taught at Cincinnati Public Schools, at Washington Park Elementary School.

The following is information that was included in the application for the National Catholic Educational Association's Distinguished Graduate Award:

- 1) Mrs. DePowell taught for more than 40 years, using her talents and love of children to reach students in several Catholic elementaries before moving to the challenge of the local inner-city public schools.
- 2) Mrs. DePowell was always willing to put the needs of her school community ahead of her own. She worked in after-school programs in addition to classroom teaching duties, in order to help provide a caring environment for latchkey children.
- 3) Mrs. DePowell spent hours of her time advising and observing new teachers, including her own daughter-in-law, as a Praxis assessor for the State of Ohio.
- 4) Mrs. DePowell's two children all attended Catholic schools through their elementary and secondary careers. She believed that the strong foundation established in those formative years was critical for the academic and spiritual foundation of her children.

The Alumni Association hopes that you are able to attend the 10:00 a.m. Mass this Sunday to celebrate the opening of the 2007 Catholic Schools Week activities, as well as to celebrate the life of a truly wonderful woman who graduated from St. Thomas More School in 1958, Marilyn Link

DePowell. Please join us afterwards as well for the reception in the Parish Dining Hall immediately following the Mass.

STM's Catholic Schools Week Open House will be held Tuesday, January 30th from 6:30 p.m - 8:00 p.m.. Feel free to stop in!!!

St. Thomas More Organization Report for

Parish Council Meeting March 19, 2007

Organization Name: PTO

Key Organization Leaders/Officers/Pastoral Employee:

President: Robyn Yates - 943-4242 - hofie71@fuse.net

Vice President Ways and Means: Paula Nyika-Makore Mandhiza

Vice President Family Involvement: Kim Steinmetz

Secretary: Gwen Farwick

Treasurer: Lori Knight

Teacher Representative: John Gracheck

Prepared a brief statement as to your organization's contribution or your contribution as employee to the parish. This would be like a brief mission statement:

- To promote the well being of the students and young parishioners of St. Thomas More School and Parish.
- To advance the interests of the school with a "Christ-centered" educational environment.
- To create and foster a spirit of cooperation among parents, students and School/Parish administration.
- To encourage active participation by the members in school affairs.

Highlights/Key Accomplishments: (This is not intended to be a laundry list of everything the group has done, but rather an overview of the key accomplishments this past year):

- Have enhanced the PTO communication approach – see Newsletter for additional details.
- We have provided funding for teachers to start up their classrooms and for class coordinators to assist with party, craft, and or musical costume costs.
- We have provided field trip funding.
- We have provided community building events that double as fund raisers (Movie Nights, Max and Erma’s, Scallywag Tag, Chuck E Cheese, Skating Parties)
- We contributed to the purchase of new Accelerated Reader Tests.
- We purchased approximately 2200 new/used books for the library.
- We hosted a Parish Mission Reception.
- Awarded 2 new digital cameras for the school
- Awarded the Art Departments with several sets of modeling clay
- Paid for Sound Field systems that were installed this school year
- Contributed to the cost of One Call Now, the new Lunchroom system, and the PA extensions to the modular classrooms
- Have raised a significant amount of \$ to be allocated to phased playground project, pending review and approval by the Parish Council. In addition to raising funds, a team was established to research wants and needs of the school, and to research applicable vendors.
- Have offered an educational series to parents at our PTO meetings (Sexual Education and Development, Emotional Intelligence in Children, and A parent’s survival guide to Homework.

Short list of old issues your organization has not resolved:

N/A

Short list of new issues that Parish Council needs to be aware of:

We are seeking approval to move forward with the playground upgrade project submitted under separate cover.

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Parish Council Committee Report Form

(Organizations will copy and paste to a Microsoft Word Page when assigned.
parishcouncil@sttm.org)

St. Thomas More Organization Report for Parish Council Meeting March 19, 2007

Organization Name: JULYFEST 2007

Key Organization Leaders/Officers/Pastoral Employee:

Jeff and Rhonda Roberts

Dave McCarthy

Prepared a brief statement as to your organization's contribution or your contribution as employee to the parish. This would be like a brief mission statement:

JulyFest 2007 will be our last as General Co-Chairs. Notice has been given to Fr. Bill. We would like to work this year with whoever takes over for next year for easy transition.

We will be dispensing with the car as the Grand Raffle prize and will be offering **\$10,000** in cash as the 1st place prize this year.

Highlights/Key Accomplishments: (This is not intended to be a laundry list of everything the group has done, but rather a overview of the key accomplishments this past year):

Short list of old issues your organization has not resolved: Continue to support JulyFest 2007

Parish Council Committee Report Form

(Organizations will copy and paste to a Microsoft Word Page when assigned.
parishcouncil@sttm.org)

<p style="text-align: center;">St. Thomas More Organization Report for Parish Council Meeting March 19, 2007</p>
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Organization Name: St. Thomas More Bingo

Key Organization Leaders/Officers/Pastoral Employee:

Katrina Shepherd and Rhonda Roberts

Prepared a brief statement as to your organization's contribution or your contribution as employee to the parish. This would be like a brief mission statement:

The NO-SMOKING Ban has definitely hurt us, we had 67 last week and 99 the week prior. We have been averaging around 85 since the December ban took affect.

We are in need of volunteers, and this continues to be an issue. School families as well as PSR and parish members are not supporting this fundraiser. Ideally if an announcement could be made from the pulpit by Fr. Bill encouraging volunteers would be appreciated.

The Core Team continues to work diligently to make Bingo successful, but we cannot do so without assistance from the parish.

Highlights/Key Accomplishments: (This is not intended to be a laundry list of everything the group has done, but rather a overview of the key accomplishments this past year):

Short list of old issues your organization has not resolved: **VOLUNTEERS**

Short list of new issues that Parish Council needs to be aware of: NEED FOR VOLUNTEERS.

Principals Report-March 17, 2006

Staff

- Letters of intent have been distributed to all staff. Staffing proposals for 2007-08 will be presented to Fr. Bill by the end of March.
- The following teachers have been recognized by the Archdiocese for their service to Catholic education. STMEC will determine when the certificates of recognition will be awarded.
- Miss Sharon Fryman and Mrs. Trisha Cordes have joined the school staff. Miss Fryman replaced Miss Back in fourth grade when Miss Back relocated to Columbus after a Christmas engagement. Mrs. Cordes begins in first grade on Monday, March 19. She is replacing Diana Olson who left for medical reasons. "Meet the Teacher" nights have been held for parents to familiarize them with the new staff. Both are veteran, certified teachers from the former Christian Center Academy. Mrs. Cordes is a member of the parish and former PSR teacher.

Students

- Enrollment for 2007-08
- Seven STM students qualified to participate in the regional science fair at the University of Cincinnati. Two of our students were selected to move on to the state level of competition.
- Our Lego Robotics team
- Students are participating in Operation Rice Bowl as a part of our Lenten observance. Additionally, students in grades 1-8 will pray the Stations of the Cross. Students in grades 2-8 will celebrate the sacrament of reconciliation prior to Easter.

Marketing Efforts

- We continue to use the Community Journal as a marketing tool. Additionally, an ad will be included monthly. The school requests

that two lines of the marquee be reserved for school registration information.

Facilities/Programs

- Smartboards have been installed in 8 classrooms as well as in the Heider Hall commons area. Response from students and staff has been very positive. This has been coupled with United Streaming video for multimedia instruction that aligns with state standards. Using smartboards as instructional tools will continue to be a part of staff development for the 2007-08 school year.
- An additional computer lab in the Heider Hall area is still under construction. This was to be operational earlier this year, but a significant amount of technician time was devoted to repairing damage from the virus that hit our network this January. The Heider lab will provide convenient access to Accelerated Reader testing for teachers in Heider and the modulars which will relieve some of the congestion for the main lab. Up to 12 students at a time will be able to use the mini-lab.
- We have completed our conversion from onsite Accelerated Reader to the web-based Renaissance Place, to the delight of our computer technicians. This eliminates the need to host and manage the Accelerated Reader program on our server and local machines. The annual subscription fee (\$4.00 per student) allows students to access the entire Accelerated Reader quiz library instead of the school constantly needing to purchase individual quiz titles at \$2.50 each. Renaissance Place also allows additional programs to be accessed, including Star Reader, literacy quizzes and vocabulary quizzes. At this time students may access our Renaissance Place server from home; a link is provided on the school Edline page. Teachers will monitor test reports to determine if this access meets our needs in terms of data reliability.

Other:

- Our second progress report on our School Improvement Plan is due to the OCSAA in May.
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