

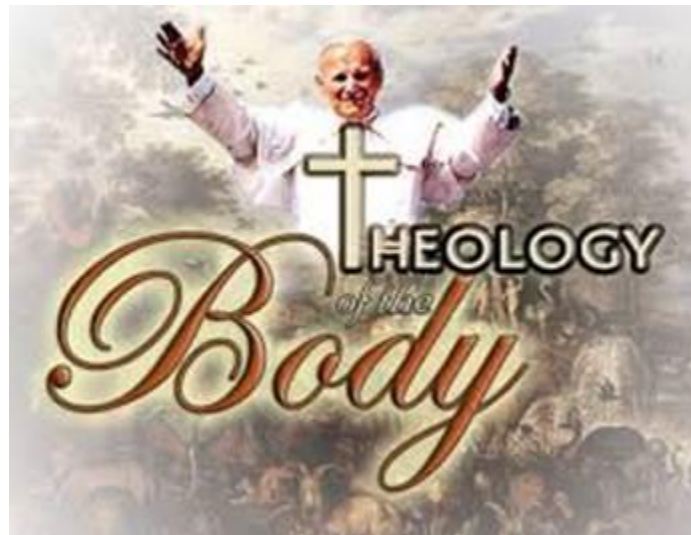


ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Nascantur in Admirazione

"Let Them Be Born in Wonder."

August 18, 2020



This week the St. Thomas faculty comes together and begins a week of orientation and preparation for our 2020-2021 school year. A key element in our training this year will be training in our Ruah Woods Press Theology of the Body curriculum. Our teachers will bring, in an age appropriate manner, the key principles of St. Pope John Paul II's theology of the 'the gift' revealed in the human person to our students and together create a 'culture of gift' at St. Thomas School.

In concert with this teaching, we select our theme of the year to be ***gratia cantantes***—**Gratitude**—and aligning our virtues of the year—this year, one per term to allow more time for students to enter more authentically into the meaning and practice of each virtue as below.

2020-2021 School Theme
gratia cantantes (Gratitude)

Term Virtue Focus

Margaret Mary Term	FORTITUDE	Patience	Bearing present difficulties and challenges with calm trust.
Nicholas Term	JUSTICE	Generosity	Giving oneself in a willing and cheerful manner for the good of others.
Scholastica Term	PRUDENCE	Docility	Humble willingness to be taught and guided by authority.
Boniface Term	TEMPERANCE	Modesty	Living out one's dignity in purity of heart and action.

~ Events Calendar ~

View the complete *St. Thomas School Calendar* [here](#).



Monday, August 24th

First Day of School ~ Half Day

Dismissal at 11:40 AM

Preschool Open House

8:30 – 11:30 AM

Preschool Families can reserve their personal visit time [here](#).

Friday – Monday, September 4th – 7th

No School ~ Labor Day Break

Tuesday, September 8th

[Yearbook Orders Due](#)

Monday, September 14th

Little Flowers First Meeting

3:30 PM Parish Hall

See attached flyer to learn more.

Email [Emily Hanley](#) for questions/register.

From the Headmaster

We appreciate the expressions of gratitude from our parents for the efforts of our reopening team and staff in our providing in-person instruction at St. Thomas School. Our collaboration will continue with the Washtenaw County Health Department as we work together to provide a structured school environment as defined by the state health authorities providing a in-person learning environment of maximum safety for our students and staff. I have been asked to serve on a WCHD schools committee to facilitate ease and clarity of communication between the Health Department and county schools. Please share with me any questions, needs or suggestions regarding our reopening. Our families commitments are listed below for your reference.

The Washtenaw County transmission rate is currently at 2.1% -- Low Risk. Regions at rates at or below 3% are at low risk of transmission.



[CDC Director Says 'It Is in the Public Health Interest' to Reopen Schools for K-12 Students](#)

Children are far more at risk from seasonal flu than COVID-19. With that in mind, schools need to approach reopening schools in a manner that is designed to protect those who are at risk: those ...
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Questions & Answers~

- 1. Are parents allowed in the school to drop off students?**
During our reopening phase, parents and other visitors are only permitted into the office area. Preschool students are dropped off at the breezeway entrance to a staff person who will bring students to the classroom. K-8 students should be dropped off at the main entrance. During the school day parents may meet with their student as needed in the office area.
- 2. If a family member who does not attend the school becomes sick then what restrictions are placed on the students?** Standard wellness procedures should be implemented to avoid the spread of illness within a family. In regard to a positive COVID case in the family, Washtenaw County Health Department is currently defining protocols for handling exposure scenarios and would be in contact with the family to provide required quarantine, etc.
- 3. What will St. Thomas School do if we are required to close school again?**

As we did during Boniface Term last school year, St. Thomas will move to a full online learning program with teacher-student interactive instruction in all core and specials subjects.

Family Responsibilities~

- Measure student's temperature *each morning* to confirm they may attend school.
- Keep student at home if their temperature is at or exceeds 100.4 F.
- Keep student at home until student is fever free for 24 hours without medication.
- If a student demonstrates any additional symptoms [cough/shortness of breath, chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat] contact your doctor and the school. Parents will obtain a doctor's permission for return to school.
- Inform school of any existing respiratory or immunosuppression conditions.
- School is to be pre-notified of any interstate or international travel plans/schedules. The school is to be informed of any student who has had a known contact with an individual who has tested COVID-19 positive.
- Student drop off begins at 7:45 AM.

Face Coverings~

- School will provide each student a face covering lanyard for removal at lunch, etc. with easy access and hygiene. (Parent are welcome to purchase their own: [sample1](#), [sample2](#))
- Face coverings can be multi-colored/designed. No gaiter masks, or inappropriate images, etc.
- Face coverings are required for:
 - All preschool through 8th grade students upon entering and leaving the building
 - All students during any transitions within the school building
 - 5th through 8th grade in the school building and for transition in/out of the building
 - Are removed for lunch
- Face coverings are recommended for recess but optional.
- Face covering for Preschool through 4th grade are recommended but optional.
- Here is a [resource](#) on clarifying common myths regarding children wearing facial coverings.

Modified Band and Choir Curriculum~

- **Instrumental Music:** Mr. Good will begin band class with an alternative curriculum on instructional performance—guiding our 5th and 6th grade students beginning student to learn to assemble/care for their instrument, instruction on the reading of music, and music history. theory and appreciation for both 5th/6th and 7th/8th band ensembles. Mr. Good will also implement for both groups an online platform to allow students to practice their instruments at home, share their recordings, and

receive feedback from Mr. Good each week in one-on-one in class sessions. Mr. Good will provide additional information on being able to assess the current progress of our 7th and 8th grade students on each of their instruments at the start of the school year. Please see the attached information sheet for details for these two classes.

- **Choral Music:** Mrs. Herrmann will be conducting choir with an alternative choir curriculum, classes will be conducted outdoors weather permitting, with her classroom designed for maximum distancing while providing for musical production and movement, while learning the principles of rhythm, music notation, and music genres. Mrs. Herrmann has augmented her classroom to provide students with individual sets of working materials, sound instruments, etc. to provide a stimulating and formative experience of music in her classes,

Lunch~

- Hot lunch service will not be provided presently through the month of September.
- Students will participate in two staggered lunch periods in the cafeteria:
 - Lower school lunch from 11:00 – 11:25 AM
 - Upper school lunch from 11:30 -- 11:55 AM.

All School and Upper School Masses~

- A once per week all school Mass will be celebrated each Monday morning at 8:15 AM in the church.
- A once per week upper school Mass will be celebrated each Wednesday morning at 8:15 AM in the church.

Continuing Our Prayer for Each Other~

“Blessed Mother, grant us the humility, fortitude and charity to fulfill our responsibilities to each other in our diligent practice of the means which allow us to come together in safe community at St. Thomas. Place your protecting mantle over us, and help us as we protect each other and ourselves through these means. Amen.”

“Heavenly Father, just as you decreed victory for Jacob, we ask you this day that you decree victory for St. Thomas School. We join with you in saying to all cosmic forces that would subvert your intercession, ‘The Lord rebuke you. The Lord God who chose Jerusalem, rebuke you. The Lord God who chose Saint Thomas School rebuke you.’ Amen.”

Recommended/Requested Wear for Young Girls

As younger children are seated on the floor at times in gym, choir, or in the classroom, we are requesting that girls wearing skirts, even with tights, also wear ‘playground shorts’ that will allow them to sit modestly and comfortably on the floor. For two examples of

these shorts visit: [Playground shorts 1](#) [Playground shorts 2](#) . Thank you for considering providing these shorts for our younger girls.

Grade School Enrollment Update

We extend a warm welcome to our new St. Thomas families joining!

- **The Kuzel Family**, Greg and Kara ~ Jackson, Preschool
- **The Jeyaraj Family**, Victor and Natalia ~ Savina, Kindergarten, Sabastian, 3rd, Serena, 4th, and Sophia, 5th grade.
- **The Roberts Family**, Scott and Mary ~ Hadrian, Kindergarten
- **The Sharp Family**, John and Nicole ~ London, Kindergarten
- **The Condon Family**, Holt and Winnie ~ August and Blair, Kindergarten
- **The Flores Family**, Ron and Kathryn Dobija ~ Joseph, Kindergarten, Jude, 4th grade
- **The Fischer Family**, Bart and Laura ~ Lola, 2nd grade
- **The Magenau Family**, John and Heather ~ Sebastian, 2nd, Julian 5th grade
- **The Garred Family**, Brian and Amanda ~ Samuel, 4th grade
- **The Kaufmann Family**, Jesse and Lena ~ Michael, 4th grade

Kindergarten (16)—Mr. Pietryga

First Grade (11)—Ms. Kreifels

Second (7) and Third Grade (10)—Ms. Cullen

Fourth Grade (9)—Mr. Creaser

Fifth (7) and Sixth Grade (4) Homeroom—Ms. Block

Seventh (9) and Eighth Grade (2) Homeroom—Ms. Lorang

St. Thomas Athletics ~ Fall Girls Volleyball

Pending release of the governor's direction on August 20th, St. Thomas will join seven teams in the Ann Arbor Independent Athletic Association to compete on the volleyball court this fall.

Following the currently published MHSAA reopening protocols, Coach Cullen will begin volley ball practice outdoors on Wednesday, August 26th. Physicals on file from last year have been approved to be valid for play this fall. Our first game is scheduled for September 8th at Christ the King, our second game will be again Huron Valley at home. Practices will be conducted outdoors. Email Mr. Miller for additional details and to register for the team. A pay-to-play fee of \$50 will be assessed to support our St. Thomas athletics program.

Extended School Program

Beginning Tuesday, August 25th, St. Thomas will offer before and afterschool care from 7:00 to 7:50 AM and 3:20 to 5:30 PM after school. Students are dropped off and picked up

at the Cafeteria entrance door. School re-opening protocols will be fully implemented in the before and afterschool time periods. For more information, please feel welcome to contact our ESP Program Coordinator, [Mrs. Denise Gruetzmacher](#).

ESP Hourly Rates:

1st Child-\$6.50

2nd Child-\$5.00

3rd Child-\$3.50

4th Child—No Charge

St Thomas Little Flowers Club

Who: The Little Flowers Girls' Club is a Catholic program for girls in Kindergarten through 3rd grade based on learning Catholic virtues and growing in grace through the lives of Catholic saints, Scripture and the Catechism of the Catholic Church. Little Flowers strives to bring the Catholic faith alive and inspire the girls to become authentic Catholic women.

What : Within the meetings the girls will hear, read, share and learn about our role model, the Blessed Virgin Mary, our patroness, St Therese of Lisieux, and saints of the church. They will gain a strong self-esteem in being young Catholic girls as well as gain friendships that will support their own beliefs. Throughout the year badges will be earned by studying the saint associated with the virtue, memorizing relevant scripture verses and studying the Catechism.

Please see the attached flyer for more information. To register or if you have any question please email [Emily Hanley](#).

