



ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Nascantur in Admirazione
"Let Them Be Born in Wonder."

St. Thomas School Community Newsletter September 20, 2021

***Margaret Mary Term Virtue:
Kindness***

School Year Theme ~ *Beneficentia* (Generosity)

School Mission Statement

In partnership with Catholic families, St. Thomas seeks to nurture future Catholic scholars, leaders and saints. Assisted by the Holy Spirit, we inspire students to grow intellectually through a classical Catholic curriculum, forming confident youth leaders grounded in virtue. We guide children to become friends of Jesus—to love as He loves, and join our Catholic community's rich tradition of proclaiming the Kingdom and bettering our world.





This Monday our 5th Grade class, with Mr. Snyder and Mr. DiLaura, made a pilgrimage to our diocesan cathedral, St. Mary's in Lansing, to attend Mass celebrated by Bishop Boyea. Together we offered our prayers for the entire St. Thomas school community and for the school year ahead.

~ Events Calendar

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



Tuesday, September 21st

4th - 8th Grade Altar Boy Training

3:30 - 4:30 in the church

Monday, September 27th

October Lunch Orders Due to Main Office

(See attached order form and instructions.)

Thursday, September 30th
School Development Teams Meeting
7:30PM ~ Parish Hall

Friday, October 22nd
St. Thomas School Fall Festival

Wednesday--Thursday, November 3rd-4th
Margaret Mary Term
Parent~Teacher Conferences

Friday, November 5th
No School - Records Day

Friday, November 19th

Save the Date~!

St. Thomas Parent Evening
with **Dr. Mary Healy**

Made in the Image of God: Faith, Gender and Education

Wine and Hors D'oeuvres
7:00 PM ~ Parish Hall

From the Headmaster

Curriculum Update~

As planned when we made our transition to classical learning at St. Thomas, we have continued to evaluate the effectiveness of our curricular resources in their serving to meet the primary goals of our classical Catholic curriculum. At the heart of our curricular goals is equipping children *to think*—to move beyond a less conscious, ‘programmed’ response to circumstances and instead be able to ask key questions, seek insight, identify what is most important, and to evaluate evidence. The capacity to think versus react to the world around us is that ‘liberality’ or freedom expressed in the phrase ‘Catholic liberal education’, to which classical Catholic education is commonly referred.

This year we have made significant improvements in our grammar and mathematics tools used to support students—to lead them in understanding and using more deeply the language of English and the language of Mathematics. In both cases, our previous tools prompted a less conceptual, procedural use of both English and Math. Our new grammar program – *Well Ordered Language* published by Classical Academic Press, and our new mathematics program -- *Dimensions Math*, published by Singapore Math, are providing our students with the vantage point of a deeper understanding and utility in the skills, structure and application of English and Math, allowing them to both appreciate and use these languages at a more proficient and effective level. Both of these programs are being used in other classical settings--both recommended by Hillsdale College’s Blaney Initiative for classical education.

Teachers are implementing these two new tools with an awareness that they will involve a transition for our students in moving from more simplistic expectations to a deeper grasp of both grammar and mathematics. This is obviously a natural passage as students are both challenged by and supported in being able to function at a more proficient level. Unfamiliarity will be a natural experience as students grow fluent in the fuller understanding that both these tools afford. For example, knowing and recognizing linguistic patterns and structures of speech in the diagramming of sentences. Or,

developing as early as 3rd grade algebraic intuition and strategy in solving story problems. These more conceptual understandings all the while being supported by the memorization of key grammatical parts of speech (with jingles!) and all multiplication and division math facts by 3rd grade.

As they use these tools for the first time, teachers will be patient with students, monitoring their assimilation of the new approaches, and provide guided assistance in initial lesson instruction, support in exercises, additional help and adjusted pacing as needed. We will also avoid measuring both our students' progress and the fruit of their efforts with a previous standard of ease and ability. Ease, of course, is not an indicator of quality of understanding and application. We will provide students encouragement when they do not have an immediate, recalled response to questions and problems--a very healthy experience of challenge in which we want them to be remain confident and through which they can experience the deeper quality and power of their thinking.

St. Thomas Parish Children's Choir Begins

This Thursday, the newly forming St Thomas Parish Children's Choir welcomes those in grades 3-8. We will sing periodically at the Sunday 9:30 am Mass and special events from October to May 1. Weekly rehearsals take place on Thursdays from 4:30--5:30 in the St. Thomas School choir room beginning Thursday September 23. Please contact [Ginger Hermann](#) or [Jeanne Marie Gerig](#) for more information.

Lunch is Served!

We are pleased to be able to offer ordered lunches beginning Monday, October 4th. The attached lunch order form is due by Monday, September 27th. Note that milk is to be ordered separately for all lunch meals. Please use [eFunds](#) to pay for your month's lunch order, turning in your order to the school office by the due date indicated at the top of the order. *Bon appétit!*

St. Thomas Development Plan Update ~ Join us!

We invite everyone interested in the future of St. Thomas School to join us at our upcoming team meetings at which we will develop

- a new mission statement,
- statements of our cultural values for students, faculty and parents,
- operational and crisis management plans, and
- marketing and development plans

As we look to the continued growth and development of St. Thomas School. Please feel welcome to contact our team leads for more information. Join us in the parish hall at 7:30 PM on~

Thursday, September 30th

Thursday, October 28th

Thursday, December 2nd

Mission and Vision: Lead ~ [Mike Hanley](#)

Cultural Values: Lead ~ [Lindsey Robitaille](#)

Operational & Crisis Management Plans: Lead ~ [Tim DiLaura](#)

Marketing & Development Plans: Lead ~ [Chris Russ](#)