



# ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE CATHOLIC SCHOOL

*Nascantur in Admirazione*

"Let Them Be Born in Wonder."

## St. Thomas PreK-11 School Newsletter

March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2025

### *School Mission Statement*

St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic School exists to form disciples of Jesus Christ. Educated in the Eucharistic culture and classical intellectual tradition of the Catholic Church, students are led to encounters with the transcendental good, true, and beautiful. In wonder, confidence, and virtue, students are prepared to engage our broken world for the glory of God, the good of others, and for their own sanctification.

### **Virtue for the School Year: Hope**

- Having a firm trust that God will help us be with Him in heaven

### **Virtue for Scholastica Term: Obedience**

- Promptly fulfilling the just will of a legitimate superior

### **School Lenten Focus: Making Time for Prayer**

Please consider, as a family, how you might dedicate more time to prayer this Lent, and consider also lifting up the school in prayer, that the Lord would continue to guide us and shed His mercy upon us.



### **~ Upcoming Events ~**

TODAY - March 3<sup>rd</sup>  
**Financial Aid Deadline**

March 5<sup>th</sup>

**Ash Wednesday (no dress-up day due to Reading Month)**

March 14<sup>th</sup>

**End of Scholastica Term**

March 19<sup>th</sup>

**Solemnity of St. Joseph – EF School Mass  
PA Meeting – Zingerman’s coffeehouse, 2 p.m.**

March 20<sup>th</sup>

**Dale Ahlquist Talk – gym, 6:30-8 p.m.  
Report Cards Published**

March 21<sup>st</sup>

**Half day, 11:50 dismissal  
Optional Parent-Teacher Conferences: 1-5 p.m.**

March 25<sup>th</sup>

**Solemnity of the Annunciation – No School**

March 28<sup>th</sup>

**(No dress-down day due to Reading Month)**

April 5<sup>th</sup>

**School Gala – doors open at 5:30**

April 7<sup>th</sup>

**Monday Morning Prayer and Coffee, school library, 8:30-9:15 a.m.**

**Check out Flocknote for Parent Association Info:**

<https://sta2school.flocknote.com/dashboard>



**Tea is Served!**

Today, our upper-school girls hosted a tea for the middle-school girls during the middle-school household time. Everyone was able to come in dressed for the occasion!



## From the Headmaster

To kick off March Reading Month, I read to the students at assembly Oscar Wilde's "The Selfish Giant." This lovely little piece offers striking imagery of the effects of Christ's sacrificial love. It is our search for this kind of quality, found in what is beautiful, good, and true, that causes our school to emphasize the importance of reading good literature. That is something we will be focusing on during this reading month.

Lent is a perfect time to "work out our salvation" and seek deeper conversion. This is also the time of year that we are making personnel decisions for next school year. Please pray that our hiring goes well as we seek to add upper-school positions.

In addition to added positions, we will also be replacing two teachers who will be moving on at the end of this school year. Denise Gruetzmacher, our long-time preschool director and teacher, will be retiring at the end of this school year. Denise needs to devote more time to helping her husband and being with her family. She has done much to develop our preschool culture and instill in it a sense of peace and

joy. She has been a wonderful blessing to our school and I know I can speak for all in saying that she will be deeply missed! Ellie Berger will also be ending her time at St. Thomas after being with us these past two years as our Young 5's lead teacher. It has been a joy to see her work with the students and the sense for beauty that she brings to the classroom. Miss Berger is getting married in June and is looking to move into a new phase of life. We will miss her and wish her all the best in her married life!

## Trivia Night Earnings

I am pleased to announce that our Trivia Night netted over \$2,800! Thanks again to all our volunteers, sponsors, and participants for making it possible. This money will cover our costs for stocking a full, high-school level chemistry lab. Any leftover funds will go toward funding library décor and expenses.

## JV Basketball Update/Tournament Sign-up

The JV Girls basketball team played three games and WON three games last week! The girls have finished the regular season **undefeated** and head into this weekend's tournament, at St. Thomas, with the number one seed! They play their first game, on Thursday afternoon at 4:15pm vs SSA Plymouth B. With a win, the girls will advance to a Saturday 9 a.m. game and then hopefully close the day at 1pm with a Championship in hand! Come on out and support us! GO IRISH!

Regarding the tournament...St. Thomas is thrilled to host the AAIAA Girls Basketball Tournament from Thursday, March 6th, to Saturday, March 8th. During the tournament, we will offer a variety of additional concession items.

- Thursday will kick off with two games starting at 4:15 PM.
- On Friday, four games will take place, also beginning at 4:15 PM.
- Saturday's lineup includes six games starting at 9:00 AM.

In total, there will be twelve games over the course of the three-day tournament. To ensure everything runs smoothly, we need many volunteers in various roles. Please review the available slots below and click/copy the link to sign up. We are grateful for the support and enthusiasm of our basketball families. Looking forward to seeing you at the tournament! Go Irish!

[Girls' Basketball Tournament Sign-up Genius](https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60B0F4FA4AA2CA7FF2-55312624-aaiaa#/)

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60B0F4FA4AA2CA7FF2-55312624-aaiaa#/>

## March Reading Month

### Special Events in March

- THURS. MARCH 6-FRI, MARCH 7
  - Book fair in the library (see 2/19 email from Mrs. Deemer for more details)
- MON, MARCH 10
  - Dress up from the historic era your class is learning about right now.
- MON, MARCH 17
  - Special jeans day with spirit wear or green for St. Patrick and our Irish athletics
- WED, MARCH 19
  - The Feast of St. Joseph- Normal dress code, only the students can wear something red- a shirt, tie, vest, sweater, socks, hairbow, pin, etc. Mrs. Deemer will set up a St. Joseph Table in the school office hallway, and the students can come by before their lunch period to visit the table and receive a St. Joseph cream puff and/or bread.
- FRI, MARCH 28
  - Last day to earn points for the reading competitions
- GRAND FINALE: MON, MARCH 31
  - During morning assembly, we will have our second annual game of Literary Trivia. Two representatives from each of grades 1<sup>st</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> will be selected to compete in trivia competitions (broken up by grade bands) with questions composed by their teachers about literary subjects. Winners of the reading competitions will also be announced.

## Diaper/Food Drive Supporting Guadalupe Workers

Mr. Votel is coordinating, with his 6<sup>th</sup>-grade class, a Lenten diaper/food drive for Guadalupe Workers, an organization dedicated to supporting mothers with unplanned pregnancies who need help. This drive will begin today and finish on April 4<sup>th</sup>. Each K-11 class will be competing to earn the most average points per student.

**The Guadalupe Workers sent some specific requests for food donations. Please limit your donations to these items:**

Canned food: black beans, mixed vegetables, fruit (fruit cups work as well), tomatoes, marinara sauce, chicken, tuna

Non Canned: Spaghetti, regular white rice, dry pinto or black beans, instant mashed potatoes, boxed mac and cheese

Also, please keep diapers and wipes inside their boxes, even if it is a bulk box. That is easiest for the Workers to accept. In terms of the competition, I will count the number of items inside of a bulk purchase. For example, a box of 6 packs of baby wipes or an 8 pack of canned beans would count as 6 and 8 points.

One new element for this year's drive is that we would like students to "earn" the items they bring in to donate so as to make their participation a little more meaningful than merely asking mom to go to the store. Each classroom teacher will be sending home a parent sign-off form for parents to fill out and return with each set of items donated. This form will verify that the student performed some chore or service at home to "earn" the set of items being brought to school at a given time. What chore or service is to be done is entirely at the parents' discretion. If a student brings in items without a corresponding signature, we will of course still accept the donation, but it will not count towards the class total for the competition.

Teachers will track and report items brought in, verifying which items "count" (with a parent signature) towards the class total. The 6<sup>th</sup> graders will be collecting, 1-2 times per week, items from the classrooms. They will also arrange the delivery of items to Guadalupe Workers. Mr. Votel will oversee the whole operation and verify numbers using the teacher reports.

## Diocesan Safe Environment Resource

The Diocese of Lansing uses "The kNOw Program" to equip children, parents, and parishes with the tools to "kNOw" how to identify, thwart, and report harmful behavior. It asks its parishes and schools to offer this to parents as a resource.

According to Bishop Boyea, "This program relies on the fundamental truth that each child is created and loved by God and deserves to be safe. As adults, we must protect all of our children."

Using methods developed by the revered children's educator Fred Rogers and endorsed by physicians at the University of Michigan, "The kNOw Program" delivers lessons about safety, respect, and empowerment in an accessible and trustworthy way to both children and adults.



Unlike other safe-environment programs, this one involves the key adults in children's lives. Training sessions based on grade level (K-2, 3-5, 6-8 [male], and 6-8 [female]) are available for parents and children to view together at

<https://www.dioceseoflansing.org/human-resources/know-program#:~:text=The%20kNOw%20Program%20has%20FOUR,situations%20that%20are%20not%20safe>

## Updated Tutors List

Please see the attached updated list of tutors available for St. Thomas students.

## Gala Reminder

Tickets are now on sale! Please see <https://sta2.org/school/featured-events/greengoldgala2025/> for more gala information and links.

## Bake Sale Supporting Our Robotics Team

A bake sale will be held after masses on Sunday March 30th to support our 4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> grade robotics team and their trip to the invitational in Boston this June. Parents can donate baked goods for purchase. Also, we have a general donation link if anyone would like to donate to Robotics directly: <https://www.zeffy.com/en-US/donation-form/st-thomas-robotics-team>

## Dale Ahlquist Talk, March 20<sup>th</sup>

Dale Ahlquist, celebrated author and speaker and, in Joseph Pearce's estimation, "the greatest living authority" on G.K. Chesterton's life and work, will be giving a talk at 7 p.m. in the school gym on Thursday, March 20th. Mr. Ahlquist co-founded the first Chesterton Academy, a classical high school in Minnesota, which is the flagship school of the Chesterton Schools Network. He will be speaking on "How to Create Complete Thinkers" at 7 p.m., followed by Q & A. Admission is free. Light refreshments will be provided. Attendees are welcome beginning at 6:30 to explore a selection of Mr. Ahlquist's books for sale. This will be another great opportunity for our parish community to deepen its knowledge of classical education.