

**SAINT
THOMAS
MORE
CATHOLIC
CHURCH**

*"Jesus on the cross feels the whole weight of the evil,
and with the force of God's love he conquers it;
he defeats it with his resurrection.
This is the good that Jesus does for us
on the throne of the cross.
Christ's cross, embraced with love,
never leads to sadness, but to joy,
to the joy of having been saved and of doing
a little of what he did on the day of his death."
— Pope Francis, The Church of Mercy*



**A Roman Catholic Parish
in the Diocese of San Diego**

✙ Spirituality
✙ Tradition
✙ Community

Mass Schedule

Saturday at 5:00pm
Sunday at 8:30am and 10:30am
Monday-Friday at 8:15am

Eucharistic Adoration

Monday-Friday, 6:30am-7:30pm

Reconciliation (Confession)

Saturday, 4:00-4:30pm

Rev. Michael Ratajczak, Pastor
Rev. Karl Bauer, Senior Priest
Deacon John Fredette
Deacon Thomas A. Goeltz

1450 South Melrose Drive
Oceanside, CA 92056

760-758-4100

760-758-4165 fax

Office Hours: Monday-Friday,

8:30am-12:00noon

and 12:30-4:00pm

parishoffice@stmoside.org

www.stmoside.org



StThomasMoreRCC



**Second Sunday in Ordinary Time
January 17, 2016**



*Jesus did this as the beginning
of his signs at Cana in Galilee.*

—John 2:1-11

Rev. Michael Ratajczak
760-758-4100 x100
michaelr@stmoside.org

Pastor's Column

Empowered by God's Grace and Mercy

All that we are and all that we have is pure gift! Once we surrender to that reality, we experience a freedom that allows us to live joyfully as sons and daughters of God. We look at the world and our lives with a very different set of eyes.

Jesus challenges His disciples, "Unless the grain of wheat falls to the earth and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat. If it dies, it produces much fruit." (John 12:24) Once we die to ourselves, to our need for control, making the world in our own image and likeness, and surrender to the God who creates and sustains us, we begin to live!

Our Faith Life is no longer an obligation, but it becomes a "Thank You," a faith response, to our Loving Creator for all that is given.

In order to respond ever more faithfully and gratefully, we desire to walk more closely with the Lord Jesus, God's Word of Love, given to all us.

So that we can grow in the image and likeness of Jesus, it is important that we are mindful of the gifts of time, talent, and treasure given to us. The natural question that we ask of ourselves is "How can I best use my time, talent, and treasure to make a faithful response to the God who has given all to me?"

When we ask this question, we begin the faith walk that is Christian Stewardship.

This weekend we begin Christian Stewardship Month here at St. Thomas More Parish. Our theme is "Empowered by God's Grace and Mercy."

In our surrender to God, we are mindful that we are strengthened by God's grace that comes to us in the celebration and reception of the Sacraments, and that it is God's mercy that allows us to look beyond our frailties and become the people that God calls us to be.

During the next few weeks, let us drink deeply of God's grace and mercy, and become ever-faithful stewards of the gift of life and creation that has been given to us for this time and this place!

F. Mike

Considering Becoming Catholic?

Has Pope Francis ignited a spark in you to know more about the Catholic faith and become a member of the Church he shepherds?

If you are already Catholic, perhaps you have a new enthusiasm for your faith that you would like to share with a friend or family member who is searching.

Our lives sometimes go through seasons of change, of closeness to God and distance from God. Yet the Father's love is steadfast, full of mercy, and ever-present to those who seek with a sincere heart, no matter what sins or situations have caused separation.

If you have thought about becoming Catholic and beginning a new "season" in your life, contact Kathleen Bell, 760-809-6526, 80bell80@gmail.com.

Vocations

As we begin a new year, let us turn our mind and ear to God, prayerfully listen to him, and resolve to do that which God is calling us to do. If you think God is calling you to a life as a priest, deacon, or religious, explore the possibilities. They are great vocations, full of challenges, and rewarding. To help you get started, contact a priest, sister, deacon, or Deacon Tom at thomasgoeltz@aol.com or 760-727-8442, and May God bless you throughout this new year.

Happy 100th Birthday!

Sister M. Dulcissima, Fr. Rich Lewandowski's cousin, will be celebrating her 100th birthday on January 21! To make this birthday unlike any before, he'd like to surprise her with a hundred or more birthday cards. If anyone at St. Thomas More is willing to help reach that goal, please send a card to:

Sister M. Dulcissima
1428 Monroe Turnpike
Monroe, CT 06468-1478

On the Trail of Martin Luther: Lutherans, Catholics, and the Reformation— An Ecumenical Celebration of Christ

August 31-September 10, 2016 with Fr. Rich Lewandowski

Destination Germany continues to celebrate Martin Luther's legacy, 500 years of Reformation, and Luther's impact on the Church and world history.

Follow in the footsteps of the reformer and visit places across the country where he lived and practiced his beliefs.

Brochures for this pilgrimage are available in the Parish Office.

STM Archives Wants Your Material

The STM Historian is looking for material from Parish events and activities since our church was established in 1985. The kinds of material that are needed include: photographs, newspaper clippings, brochures, fliers, reports, videos, drawings—anything that represents our congregational memory! Please check your drawers, file cabinets, and that creepy ol' box in the attic. You can drop off your donations at the Parish office. Thanks!

For more information and questions, please feel free to contact: Brandon at 760- 845-5450 or brandon.oswald@gmail.com.

Welcome New Parishioners

Brian & Arianna Johnson & Family

Announcing the Baptism of

Nevaeha India Chavez

on January 17

Our Christian community welcomes you with great joy!



Congratulations to

Sam Haro & Melinda Lopez

who were married on January 2, 2016.

Fr. Mike Ratajczak presided at their wedding.



Congratulations to

Steve & Marilyn Lilly

who celebrated their 50th anniversary of marriage January 8.

May God continue to bless your marriage, and may you be an inspiration to other married couples.

Flower Donations

The Altar Flowers for this weekend were given by **Jack Marge Gillen** in honor of their anniversary of marriage.



In Memoriam



Please pray for the repose of the souls of:

Anthony Perez, who died on December 28. Please keep his sister, Manuela Alvarez, and his family in your prayers.

Virginia Dunbar, who died on January 1. Her Funeral Mass was celebrated on January 15 at St. Thomas More. Please keep her family in your prayers.

Dell Marie Rosmino, who died on January 10. Please keep her brother, Frank Kirby, and her family in your prayers.

LaVonne Dumas, who died recently. Please keep her nephew, Don Dumas, and her family in your prayers.

May their souls and all the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

Local Hospitals with Catholic Chaplains Available

If you or a loved one is in one of these hospitals and need the ministry of a Catholic priest, please contact the Chaplain's Office to make the arrangements.

Hospital	Chaplain's Office
Tri-City	760-940-7954
Palomar	442-281-1328
Scripps Encinitas	760-633-7784
Scripps Green	858-554-3698
Scripps Mercy	619-260-7020
UCSD Thornton	619-543-2103
Kaiser Zion	619-528-5188

Our Mission is to:
worship God,
teach and live the Gospel of Jesus Christ,
and serve God's people in word and deed.

Readings for the Week Ahead

Sunday Year C; Weekday Year II
Readings online at www.usccb.org.

Sunday, January 17 (66)
Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

Isaiah 62:1-5
Psalm 96:1-3,7-10
1 Corinthians 12:4-11
John 2:1-11

Monday, January 18 (311)
1 Samuel 15:16-23
Psalm 50:8-9,16b-17,21,23
Mark 2:18-22

Tuesday, January 19 (312)

1 Samuel 16:1-13
Psalm 89:20-22,27-28
Mark 2:23-28

Wednesday, January 20 (514)

Fabian, pope, martyr
1 Peter 5:1-4
Psalm 40:2,4ab,7-10
John 21:15-17

Thursday, January 21 (516)

Agnes, martyr
1 Corinthians 1:26-31
Psalm 23:1b-3a,4-6
Matthew 13:44-46

Friday, January 22 (517)

Vincent, deacon, martyr
2 Corinthians 4:7-15
Psalm 34:2-9
Matthew 10:17-22

Saturday, January 23 (316)

2 Samuel 1:1-4,11-12,19,23-27
Psalm 80:2-3,5-7
Mark 3:20-21

Sunday, January 24 (69)

Third Sunday in Ordinary Time
Nehemiah 8:2-4a,5-6,8-10
Psalm 19:8-10,15
1 Corinthians 12:12-30
Luke 1:1-4;4:14-21

Prayer List *(Call 760-758-4100 x102 to add a name for four weeks.)*

Changa Aguilera
Ernie Aichele
Mary Alexander
Frank Austin
Carrie Autrey
Joshua Avery
Gretchen Baker
Rosemary Ballard
Dee Barakman
Jose Luis Barbosa
Patricia Barbour
Francie Barron
Clarice Bednarz
John Bennici
Regina Bentz
Lisa Berg
Roseanne Berg
Mary Betz
Betty Jean Bielich
Pieter Boets & Family
Zane Breier
Beth Brewer
Janet Brown
Todd Brown
Katie Browne
Jack & Mary Bruzas
Anita Buerger
Shelby Campbell
Brianne Campos
Aria Cappeluti
Jorge Cartajena
Donald Cashmore
Anne Caywood
The Vaughn Clevenger Family
Carl & Dorothy Coleman
James Coleman
Judy Colson
Geoff Coolidge
Steven Cresencia
Lené Crowe
Karen Flaharty Daley
Beverly de Gelder
Velia Deal & Family
Nick Del Sesto
Paul Del Vecchio
Hugo Delgado, Jr.
Cassandra D'Ercole
Christine DeSantis
Cecilia DeSimone
David deVilleneuve
Carole Dillon
JoEllen Doering
Elizabeth Doherty's Aunt Jackie
Art & Dave Dossman
The Dumas Family
The Dunbar Family
Harlan Dunn
Marge Egan
Jerome Elbacha
Arthur Eral
Carolyn Erickson Ey
Victoria Lopez Fenton
The Fiore Family
Fr. James Flanagan
Mary Fleming
Ryan Flum
Ernie Follis
Eugene Franciscus
Kathryn Franklin
The Greg French Family
Brian Frink
Jim Gallagher
The Joe Garcia Family
Kathy Gardner
Joan Gay
Alyssa Gerhard
Jack & Marge Gillen
Merle Glime
The Godfrey Family
Wendy Gonzales' Dad
Rick Gonzalez
Tillie Gonzalez
Lou Gordon
George Gritt
Fred Gritzen and Family
Luke Guent
Susan Hallahan
Pat & Tom Hannon
The Harker Family
Dorothy Harrison
Barbara Hatem
Bill & Mary Haynes
Lilian Hills
Lisa (Lynn) Hodges
Samara Hook
Susan Hori
Iolanda Iacobelli
Sue Johnston
Laura Kater
Dottie Kearney
Connor Kerzie

Peggy Kiernan
Debbie Kinney
Mark Kneisel
Dewey Kolbo
Tony Korwin
Helen Kuhn
Lillian Lachance
The Lamelin Family
Bart Landry
Brandon LeBlanc
Jake Lefferdink
Jeremiah Lemus
Ashley Load
Cassandra & Lauren Loretto
Jack Lucarelli
Joaquin Maldonado
The Maldonado Family
The Maldonado Trejo Family
Paige Mansell
Angeles Martinez
The Matthews & Woodard Families
Gloria Maupin
Colleen McCall
Virginia McConnell
Paige McCoy
The McGinley Family
Ann McMahan
Bob McWilliams
Joyce Meehan
Kalei Mendiola
Chris Mendoza
Lorraine Micallef
Rita Mikridge
Tom Miller
Phyllis Minaya
June Mitchell
Judy Mitchell and her Mother
June Montgomery
Nancy Moore
Elizabeth Muehlbacher
Conrad Murphy
Margie Myers
Angela Nacional
Melanie Nacional
Nida Navarro
Richard Obismitnik
Kare O'Dell
Josephina Ornelas
Laura Paciorek Gloor
Ethan Palm
Cynthia Pearson
Salina Pearson
The Perez Family
Elisa Petrie
Helen Pingtella
Delilah Plasterer
Perry Postulka
The Joe Prokop Family
Barbara Ramm
Jenni Richard
Evelyn Richards
Jan Riley
Rita Ritchie
Lily Robinson
Maria Rogers
The Rosmino Family
Louis Russo
The Russo Family
Rachel Sainc
Cindy Sanelli
Lori Sanna
Linda Schmidt
Joan Shea
Elizabeth Shirzad
Nick Soltau
Bob Sorenson
Drew Spangler
Darek, Vanessa, & Elba Spizewski
Don St. Pierre
Patricia St. Pierre
Sybil Staples
Mike Sterling
Laura Bernard Stover, MD
Pete Sullivan
Julie Teare
Tommy & Ginger Thompson
Sarah Tillinghast
William Tompson
Stephen Toth, Jr.
Olivia Trejo
The Trejo/Beltran Family
The Trejo/Maldonado/Uribe Family
Martin Vertson
Lucy Vienna
Lucy Viramontes
Vanessa Vitiello
Wilson Wanner
Kevin Watson-Graff
Jerry Wechsler
Patricia Zavala
Jeanne Zeltner

Calendar Highlights

More details at www.stmoside.org,
Schedule and Calendar

Jan 16-31 Stewardship Awareness
Jan 17 Liturgy of the Word for
Children at 8:30am and
10:30am Masses
Jan 17 RE.A.CH Classes
Jan 17 Presentation on *Laudato Si*
Jan 19-20 Restaurant Fundraiser at
Nucci's
Jan 20 Matthew Bible Study
Jan 20 Beloved Workshop
Jan 21 Symbolon Bible Study
Jan 23 Walk for Life in Balboa Park
Jan 23 Adult CPR/AED Class
Jan 24 Liturgy of the Word for
Children at 8:30am and
10:30am Masses
Jan 24 RE.A.CH Classes
Feb 6 Knights of Columbus
Breakfast
Feb 10 Ash Wednesday
Masses at 8:15am,
12:00noon, and 7:00pm
Feb 14 Spirited Seniors
St. Valentine's Day Lunch
Feb 29 Day of Reflection
Mar 13 New Member Reception
Apr 10 Spring Sing
Apr 16 Spring Ring

Deployed Military

Gunnery Sgt. Fernando Andrade, Jr.
Lt. Devon Czarzasty
Capt. Branden M. Felker, USAF
Patrick G. Felker, USN
Grant Fischer
Cpt. Ryan J. Fullmer, USMC
MSGT Steve Gallegos, USMC
Sgt. Alex Garcia
Adolfo Granados, MD, U.S. Navy
PFC Samuel Haro, US Army
Cpl Caleb Lemons, USMC
PFC Cody Madere
Jordan Millikan
1st Lt. Jennifer Mozzetta
Jeremiah Gabriel Nelson, USAF
Thomas Kevin Nelson, US Navy
Fireman Griffin Joseph Ochoa, US Navy
Pvt. 2 Jess Phillips, US Army
Nicole Rieger, US Navy
Sr. Airman Robert Spear, USAF
Sgt. Charles Watts, USMC

Pray for Women Religious

Please join us in praying for the women
religious who serve in the Diocese of San
Diego. They have been assigned to days
of the year in alphabetical order.

January 18
Sr. Ofelia Enriquez, RJM
January 19
Sr. Suzanne Ensminger, CSJ
January 20
Sr. Maria Eugenia Espinoza, MFP
January 21
Sr. Carmen Figueroa, SFCC
January 22
Sr. Madeline Fitzgerald, OSC
January 23
Sr. Marie Louise Flick, RSCJ
January 24
Sr. Margaret Flynn, CSN

Mass Intentions

Saturday, January 16, 5:00pm
Tony Caldarone ☩

Sunday, January 17, 8:30am
Fr. Larry Delaney ☩

Sunday, January 17, 10:30am
Mario Vozza ☩

Monday, January 18, 8:15am
Bill Draper ☩

Tuesday, January 19, 8:15am
Donna Doherty ☩

Wednesday, January 20, 8:15am
Art Tanaka ☩

Thursday, January 21, 8:15am
David Malone ☩

Friday, January 22, 8:15am
Ed Koss ☩

Saturday, January 23, 5:00pm
Dick McGeary ☩

Sunday, January 24, 8:30am
Emiliana Maldonado ☩

Sunday, January 24, 10:30am
Boo Falconer ☩

Social Ministries & Outreach

San Diego Walk for Life 2016

We hope you'll join us on Saturday, January 23, for the Fourth Annual San Diego Walk for Life. Each year this event draws together an incredible group of speakers and a powerful lineup of prolife exhibitors for an event that allows participants to celebrate life and to pray for an end to abortion.

Held 9:00am-12:00noon at Balboa Park, the San Diego Walk for Life will feature life-affirming speakers and praise and worship music, and there will be family-friendly activities the day of the event.



Brother Benno's...St. Bonaventure Indian Mission

In this new year, a year dedicated to mercy, please remember the less fortunate. Support them with your prayers and continuing generosity...and may God bless you with his choicest blessings throughout this new year.

STM Mental Health Ministry Network

Are you interested in participating in the Ministry team of the STM Mental Health Ministry Network to help serve as "prayerful companions" for fellow Parishioners experiencing mental health issues, walking with them through the treatment process, and helping to provide Parish-wide education on the subject of mental illness? For more information, contact Tim Keane at 760-758-2717; for referrals, contact Deacon John at 760-758-4100 x104.

Jail/Detention Ministry

Jesus said, "I was in prison and you visited me. What you did for the least of these you did for me." To volunteer and bring the gifts of presence, compassion, hope, and love to those in prison, call Rita at 760-758-4100 x100. For more information, visit www.diocese-sdiego.org/restore, where you will find information on not only visiting those in prison, but ways to provide support for victims or their families and ways to get involved with victim/offender mediation and reconciliation.

Heartnotes

An Adult CPR/AED class is scheduled for Saturday, January 23 at 9:30am.

February Adult CPR/AED classes are scheduled for Saturdays, February 13 and 20, at 9:30am. Reserve your place at drphilg@cox.net or 760-732-1414.

Ways to Help Support Your Parish

We offer a variety of options for easier giving: extra mail-back envelopes included in your packet or credit card and automatic checking/savings account deductions by signing up in the office or online. For more information, contact the Parish Office at 760-758-4100 x100 or parishoffice@stmoside.org. To sign up online, visit www.stmoside.org, then click on Donations, then Online Giving.

Marriage & Family Life

Moms & Kids—Are you a mom with infant through school-age children wanting to meet other moms in our Parish? Want to find a great way to meet friends for both you and your children? Join our dynamic and energetic Moms and Kids ministry! Contact Jen Abelson at jen.abelson@gmail.com for the time and location of our next park play date on Monday, January 18, 3:00-5:00pm. There are also many events throughout the month posted on our private Facebook page. Join us!



Civil to Church Marriage—Are you civilly married, but haven't yet been married in the church? Contact Fr. Mike at michaelr@stmoside.org to begin your preparation!

Beloved Series—Deacon John and Debbie Fredette will be presenting a 12-part series Wednesday evenings, beginning January 20 at 7:00pm. Learn first hand how to experience the mystery, happiness and joy of marriage. **Beloved** will help you live out the Sacrament of Marriage more profoundly, so that your love story is drawn ever more into the greatest love story of all... God's own love for us. Contact Debbie Fredette at 760-758-4100 x110 for additional information.

Restoring Marriage Today—Destination: San Diego. Marriage is fundamental to mankind. But it's in serious trouble. Find out how you can be part of the solution. The Catholic Answers Conference, Restoring Marriage Today, will be held in San Diego March 3-5. For more information and to register, go to: https://catholiccom.formstack.com/forms/ca_conference_2016.

Bishops' Letter on Marriage—Society's Challenges: "We recognize that couples face many challenges to building and sustaining a strong marriage. Some challenges, however, are fundamental in the sense that they are directed at the very meaning and purposes of marriage. (Here) we want to discuss four such challenges: contraception, same-sex unions, divorce, and cohabitation." To read the document go to <http://www.usccb.org/loveandlife/>.

Marriage Moments—Spiritual Gifts include: wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, accomplishments, prophecy, good judgement, communication skills, understanding... (1 Cor 12:4-11). Which of these gifts is your beloved especially good at?

Parenting Pointers—"How, in this materialistic, competitive world, can I raise kind children?" ...Begin by being a kind adult. When your child sees you go the extra mile to help a friend, carry someone's groceries, or invite people in to your life who aren't exactly like you, your child will see loving kindness as the natural way to live." (Mimi Doe)

For more information, visit www.diocese-sdiego.org/Ministries/Marriage and Family Life or call Jen Frost at 858-692-7438.

Catholic Widows and Widowers of North County

Would you like to expand your social life and meet a group of interesting and friendly widowed people? For more information, call Carol Kope at 760-726-0533. See the bulletin board on the lower level for our complete monthly calendar of social activities. RSVPs are required.

Parish Events

Women's Guild News

Game Day on January 9 was such a fun time for 68 folks who enjoyed Dominoes, Farkle, Bridge, Phase 10, and several other challenging games. Food was plentiful, door prizes in abundance, and opportunity baskets were original and eye-popping. Ticket sales and opportunity basket tickets brought in \$2,320! Thank you Marcy Bernier and Trish Feeley, who planned and managed the event from start to finish. Good work!!

The January meeting included the Chinese Auction, with lots more fun as Nancy Wozniak, "auctioneer" extraordinaire, called out winners of the one-of-a-kind and myriad items that went home with them.

Tickets are now on sale for our biggest fundraiser of the year, the annual Fashion Show! As 2016 is an election year, the theme for the February 6 event is "Vote for Fashion" with fashions provided by Draper's and Damon's. See the flyer for details, and tickets will be sold on the plaza for the next several weekends after each Mass, or until all tickets have been sold. Any questions? Contact Valerie Thompson, Fashion Show Chair, at 760-630-1703.

The Annual Day of Recollection on Monday, February 29, is sponsored by the Women's Guild and the Spirited Seniors. The Bulletin flyer gives all the details for this Lenten day of prayer and reflection. Fr. Larry Dolan from San Luis Rey Mission is our guest speaker, and requests attendees bring their bibles for his talk. This promises to be an uplifting experience for us, and will include Mass and a light lunch. Sign up on the plaza after Masses in February.

Blessings for a faith-filled week. —Kathy Gerhard, president

Fashion Show and Luncheon

Vote for Fashion!!! This year's fashion show will be held at the beautiful Shadowridge Golf Club on Saturday, February 6, beginning at 11:00am. We have a delicious luncheon planned, after which fashions coordinated by Draper's and Damon's will be presented by our own Women's Guild models. There is an abundance of great door prizes, along with some terrific opportunity baskets, such as spa day, Italian basket, entertainment basket, Coach purse, jewelry, and many more. Presale tickets will be available January 11 at the Women's Guild luncheon and Chinese Auction, at which time you may pick up tickets for a table of ten or individual tickets. After that, tickets will go on sale each weekend after all Masses. Tickets are again \$45. All proceeds go to our Mortgage/Building Completion Fund. This promises to be a wonderful, entertaining afternoon, so be sure to get your tickets. For more information, contact Valerie Thompson at 760-630-1703 or valgene2@cox.net.

Men's Fellowship Update

Are you hungry for a good message, good fellowship, and a good breakfast? Join us for our Saturday morning men's gathering and breakfast called **iHunger**. To stay informed of what's going on with **iHunger** via SMS text messages, **Text @iHunger to 23559**.

Also, if you find yourself thirsty for occasional fellowship over a beer at a local micro-brewery, or taking a day hike, or going to a ball game together with some other great men from the Parish, **Text @iThirst to 23559**.

Memorial Item Donations Available

Pipe Organ	\$850,000
Christ on the Road to Emmaus Bronze Sculpture for Daily Chapel	\$27,000
St. Joseph and Child Refurbishing	\$1,350
Parish Offices	
Metal Framing Exterior Walls	\$60,000
HVAC Components	\$55,000
Roofing	\$45,000
Exterior Windows and Doors	\$45,000
Exterior Brick	\$30,000
Plumbing	\$30,000
Plumbing Finish and Fixtures	\$10,000

Memorial Item Donations Partial

<i>Jesus, Divine Redeemer and Master of the Universe Mosaic Panels for Memorial Garden</i> (54) 19 available	\$5,000/each
Priests' Dedication Vestments (for extra Bishops and Abbots) (4) 4 available	\$400/each
Pew Seating for the Church (1,000) 714 available	\$300/each
Daily Mass Chapel and Choir Chairs (200) 95 available	\$300/each
Altar Server Albs (15) 15 available	\$125/each

01/13/16

Memorials are a way of honoring those whom we love, whether they are living or deceased. Often, memorials are made for a special intention or in thanksgiving for a variety of blessings received from God.

Listed above are items still available for adoption.

All contributions will be recognized in a special memorial to be displayed in our Parish Memorial Garden.

For more information or to adopt an item, contact Chris Smith
760-758-4100 x120 or chriss@stmoside.org

Take St. Thomas More Home!

Saint Thomas More Tapestry Panels, 26" x 30", are available for \$200/each. This "one of a kind" bust is created of the same materials as the actual tapestry that is in our Church! See the sample hanging in the Parish Office. There are 11 available for purchase now. We are offering these, as well as the STM Posters, at our cost. Order forms and posters are available after all Masses at the Parish Information Table on the plaza

Questions? Contact Chris Smith at 760-758-4100 x120 or chriss@stmoside.org.

Liturgy & Music *Worship God*

Douglas Lynn
Director of Liturgy & Music
douglasl@stmoside.org; 760-758-4100 x140

BREAKING OPEN THE DESIGN

Understanding our Church's design—the Daily Mass Chapel

One of the notable features of our Church is the incorporation of a Daily Mass Chapel. Since moving into the Parish Center, it has been our custom to use a separate space for liturgies such as Daily Mass, smaller weddings and funerals, and the Exposition of the Eucharist on Holy Thursday to create a stronger sense of community when there are fewer people present.

Although the Parish celebrates large Funeral Masses, it is much more common for there to be between 20 and 100 people in attendance. We know from our Bereavement Team's experience that having fewer than 100 people in the main Church lessens our ability to minister to those present because they feel overwhelmed in a largely empty space; their sense of community is diminished.

This was an important design consideration as the Interior Design Team discussed the requirements of the new building, and we asked architect Renzo Zecchetto to include a chapel that could seat 100 people for our smaller liturgies while still meeting the Diocese's mandated seating capacity of the main Church.

His solution was to utilize a time-honored seating arrangement, that is, arranging the chairs "in choir" in the manner of the monastic tradition, where members of the assembly face each other across a center aisle that contains the altar, the ambo, and the presider's chair. This arrangement allows for more chairs in the same space when compared one with the chairs all facing the same direction.

The Four-fold Presence of Christ

More importantly, however, this design highlights the four-fold Presence of Christ. The Church teaches that during the celebration of the Eucharist, Jesus is present in four unique ways—Assembly,

Minister, Word, and Sacrament.

The Assembly

The first presence of Christ is that of his presence in the assembled people of God. Christ is present when the assembly is gathered in his name. This is just as he had promised: "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Mt 18:20). Therefore, every time we come together to pray and sing in any of the Church's liturgies, Christ is present in and with us.

The Priest

A second way in which Christ is with us in the liturgy is in the person of the priest. The priest leads the community in prayer and helps us to understand the words and actions of the liturgy. When he does so, he also acts in the person of Christ, on our behalf. The priest does this by the way he acts and speaks—with dignity, reverence, and humility—so that the living presence of Christ is conveyed in and through him.

The Scriptures

A third form of Christ's four-fold presence to us in any liturgy we celebrate is in the Word of God. No matter whether we participate in a Mass, the other sacraments, or the Liturgy of the Hours, we always hear the Word of God proclaimed in Scripture. Whether that reading is from the Old or New Testament, Christ is present in that Word. And so each time we hear God's Word, from the law, a prophet, a psalm, a gospel, a letter, or any other Scripture passage, Christ is there for us and with us.

The Bread and Wine

The fourth way Christ is present to us in the liturgy is in what the Church calls the "eucharistic species." Christ is especially present



John 2:7

A Note about the Sound

Perfecting sound quality in a prototypical church—no one has built one like this!—is a challenge because the architecture and digital sound system are so complex. In the coming weeks we will continue to work with our programmers and installers to optimize the sound quality.

We have made adjustments every week, and the sound has improved accordingly, but a final solution will take time as we cannot gauge how changes will work with bodies in the room until the weekend.

We appreciate your input and patience as we fine tune the system in the coming weeks. Thank you!

Upcoming Music



JANUARY 24
3rd Sunday in
Ordinary Time



5:00pm

Praise Team

8:30am

Cappella Choir

10:30am

Tower Bells

Faith Formation

Teach and Live the Gospel

Matt Franklin
Youth Advocate
760-758-4100 x161; mattf@stmoside.org

Debbie Fredette
Director of Faith Formation
760-758-4100 x110; debbief@stmoside.org

Family Faith Formation

Today is a REACH Sunday!

Join Us Today, January 17
12:30-2:00pm

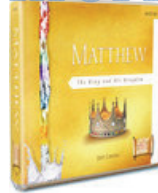
For a talk on Pope Francis' encyclical
Laudato Si'

Care of Our Common Home
Facilitated by
Fr. Emmett Farrell



Adult Faith Formation

Morning Bible Study



Next session is
January 20

Matthew:

The King and His Kingdom
Wednesday Mornings
9:00-11:00am

Sign up today to register and get your
workbook for the next session.

Contact Patt Goeltz for more
information at pattg@stmoside.org.

Sacrament Prep News



MANDATORY Parent Meeting

for families whose children will be making their
First Communion this year. Meeting will be held
on Sunday, January 24, from 12:30-2:00pm on
the upper level of the Parish Center.

Adult Confirmation

Are You an Adult Who Wishes to Be Confirmed?

Classes for Adult Confirmation have begun on Thursday
evenings from 7:00-8:30pm. Contact Debbie in the Faith
Formation office for more information and to register.

Grand Opening of Tommy's Cafe

Come Support the Youth of Our Parish
and Have Fun Doing It!

All proceeds from the café go to supporting the
youth's attendance at events like Steubenville San
Diego and Life Teen Summer Camps.

Evening Bible Study

Sessions Have Begun for



Join Us Thursday Evenings
7:00pm.

Previous week's video shown
at 6:00pm.

Contact Debbie in the Faith
Formation Office for more
information.



Beginning This Week!



BELOVED

Join us for a 12-part series on Wednesday evenings beginning
January 20 at 7:00pm. Learn first hand how to experience the
mystery, happiness, and joy of marriage. **Beloved** will help you
live out the Sacrament of Marriage more profoundly, so that your
love story is drawn ever more into the greatest love story of all...
God's own love for us. Contact the Faith Formation Office for
additional information.

Youth Ministry

High School

STM OCEANSIDE LIFE TEEN
IGNITE

NO IGNITE Monday January 18
in observance of
Martin Luther King Jr. Day

REFUEL

Mid-week Bible Study for High
School
Wednesdays 6:00-8:00pm

Middle School

STM
EDGE
jr. high ministry

Sunday from 4:30-6:00pm
There will not be EDGE on
Sunday January 31

Stewardship & Development

Serve God's People

Chris Smith
Director of Stewardship & Development
chriss@stmoside.org; 758-4100 x120

Collection for Week of January 9/10, 2016

Number of Registered Households	1,178
Offertory	\$19,987.96
Offertory (Loose Collection)	\$1,348.00
Total	\$21,335.96

Mortgage/Building Completion Fund Income

September 15, 2014 to December 31, 2015

Mortgage Offering Collected	\$767,605.15
Less Administrative Costs	\$33,328.00
Payment toward Parish Reserves (10%)	\$75,029.02
Payment toward Mortgage	\$675,261.13
Mortgage Payment Due	\$687,757.15
Mortgage Payment Overage/(Shortfall)	(\$12,496.02)
Memorial Items	\$1,382,849.90

Please continue to support the
Mortgage/Building Completion Fund!

St. Francis and St. Thomas More Offertory Envelopes

Any St. Francis Offertory Envelopes given to the offertory collection at St. Thomas More will be returned to St. Francis.

Any St. Thomas More Offertory Envelopes given to the offertory collection at St. Francis will be returned to St. Thomas More.

TOWERS OF FAITH

Future Support & Estate Planning Options

Towers of Faith is a movement that has arisen due to the visionary leadership and generosity of several of our Parishioners. We stress that this is not about the gift amount, but rather the love and thought behind the gift.

These individuals (*several anonymous*) have included STM in their estate planning. This helps to ensure their ongoing support and a legacy for our Parish. *Towers of Faith* is a valuable portion of our future support.



Examples of the various future planning vehicles are:

Designated Beneficiary Accounts,
Last Will and Testament, Living Trust, Life Insurance,
Stocks and Bonds, Real Estate, and Endowments.

Parishioners who have already included STM in their estate plans are *Towers of Faith* participants. If you are interested, please contact us. Your participation is most welcome and appreciated!

Chris Smith at 760-758-4100 x120, or chriss@stmoside.org.

Empowered by God's Grace and Mercy in 2016

Stewardship is a commitment of our mind and heart to the Lord; a way of life that needs constant renewal and transformation. Perhaps those who seek to make resolutions to be better stewards might find inspiration in one or more of the following examples.

Stewardship of Prayer: Resolve to strengthen your relationship with the Lord through prayer. Notice how often you pray and what hinders you from praying. If you're a beginner, commit to short, daily prayer times.

Stewardship

of Family: Resolve to set aside more time to stay connected with your family. Eat dinner together, schedule regular dates with your spouse, plan family outings, and go to Mass together. Practice patience and forgiveness.



Stewardship of Health: Resolve to get those medical and dental checkups. Adopt healthier eating habits. Add exercise and other physical activity to your daily routine.

Stewardship of Possessions: Resolve to possess a little more "lightly" this year. Distinguish between items that are necessary and those that are considered luxurious and unnecessary.

Stewardship of the Parish Family: Resolve to serve your faith community in some way this year. Is it time to enhance your generosity in some way to the parish?

Stewardship of Money: Resolve to render sacred your annual budget. Reprioritize your financial goals to ensure that the Lord comes first in your spending.

Stewardship of Work: Resolve to be faithful to your daily, work-related tasks and offer them up to the Lord. Be mindful of how you are building the Kingdom of God.

Stewardship of Mind: Resolve to keep your mind active. Commit to being more informed on the issues of the day. Read your Bible and publications that keep you informed.

Stewardship of Neighbor: Resolve to be a person of hospitality and mercy. Make time and space for others who enter your life. Be more aware of those times when someone needs a moment of kindness, a little attention or an affirming gesture on your part.

Stewardship of the Poor: Resolve to live with more compassion and in solidarity with those less fortunate. Remember the poor in prayer, and commit to helping relieve in some way the plight of those who are impoverished. Consider how you are building the Kingdom of God.

—Partially excerpted, ICSC Stewardship January e-bulletin (with permission)

*Not because of our righteousness,
but because of your great mercy.*

—Daniel 9:18

News & Information from the Larger Church

Academy of Our Lady of Peace High School for Young Women—January 18 deadline for applications for the 2016-2017 school year. For more information, visit www.aolp.org/admission.

Healing Beyond a Broken Heart: Practical Tools for Dealing with Grief—Tuesdays, January 19-February 23, 7:00-8:30pm, Mission San Luis Rey, 4050 Mission Ave., Oceanside. Presented by Br. Kevin Moshier, fsp. For more information call 760-757-3659 or visit www.sanluisrey.org/event-registration/?ee=473

High School Placement Test—Saturday, January 23, 7:30am, Cathedral Catholic High School. For more information, and to apply, visit www.cathedralcatholic.org/admissions.

We All Count Volunteer Opportunity—Friday, January 29, 4:00-7:30am, Interfaith Community Services, 550 W. Washington Ave., Escondido. An annual single-day event that provides an estimate of the number of homeless persons living in San Diego County in order to plan assistance for homeless families, veterans, and individuals. For more information and to sign up, visit <http://tinyurl.com/h8as7kb>.

2015 Diocesan Revival—February 2-4, 7:00pm each evening, St. Rita Catholic Church, San Diego. Rev. Anthony Bozeman will be the preacher. There is no charge and all are welcome.

New Paths Support Group for Separated and Divorced—Tuesdays, February 10-May 5, 6:30pm, Sacred Heart Parish Ministry Center, 655 C Ave., Coronado. For more information, contact 619-435-6136 or www.sacredheartcor.org.

STM Scrip News

Remember you can shop online and purchase instant Scrip: ScripNow. Check www.stmoside.org/scrip.htm to sign up.

Do you shop on Amazon.com? You can fundraise for STM while you shop using Amazon Smile and Amazon Scrip—check www.stmoside.org/scrip.htm for details!

Scrip is now available after all three Masses. We appreciate your continued support for the Scrip program. **For more information, visit www.stmoside.org/scrip.htm or contact the Scrip team at 760-758-4100 x150 or scrip@stmoside.org**

P.S. Have you re-registered your Ralphs/Food 4 Less cards so that St. Thomas More receives a percentage of your purchases? Stop by the Scrip table after Mass or visit www.stmoside.org/script.htm for details.

STM Vehicle Donation Program

Do you have a vehicle you want to donate?
Call us, and we'll have it picked up operational or not!
You get the tax deduction!

We can accept vehicles without current registration and can file for replacement title if it has been lost.

As of December 8 we have netted \$60,352 from this program. Thank you donors!



For more information, contact the Parish Office: 760-758-4100 x100 or parishoffice@stmoside.org

18th Annual Divine Mercy Conference—February 5-6, Mission San Antonio De Pala. Mass at 7:00pm on Friday with celebrant Archbishop Julian Porteous. Inspiring video Message of Hope and Healing will follow Mass. Saturday includes speakers Archbishop Julian Porteous, Fr. Christ Alar MIC, Fr. Don Calloway MIC, and Fr. Dave Leon. Music by Donna Lee and friends. Closing Mass at 6:00pm. For more information, contact www.SDdivinemercy.org or 619-276-6637.

Body of Worth Workshop—Saturday, February 13, 9:00am-3:00pm, Birth Choice San Marcos Center, 277 S. Rancho Santa Fe Rd., San Marcos. A Christian-based program where women can learn and understand their biology, the risks of sex outside of marriage, and God's plan for fertility and how to protect the gift. Grandmothers, mothers, daughters, and nieces are welcome. A box lunch will be provided. For more information, contact 760-621-3414 x102 or www.birthchoicedonors.net, then Events, Body of Worth Class.

Fr. Joe's Villages Ladies Guild Annual Charity Luncheon—Tuesday, February 16, 10:45am, "Ooh-La-La Paris" at the Sheraton Mission Valley. \$55 per person; free parking. All proceeds benefit the children at Fr. Joe's Villages. For information/donations, contact Kristi at 858-453-9640 or kristikeith@mac.com or Jane at 858-453-7016 or janehargrove67@gmail.com.

Young Adult Opportunities around the Diocese

Upcoming activities include Theology on Tap and several service projects.

For more information, visit www.yamsd.org.
To receive text updates, text **YAM** to **84576**.

Visit www.sandiegocac.org for activities around the Diocese for adults of all ages.

Catholic Radio—AM 1000/Sirius 130—San Diego

Visit ihradio.com/sandiego

Catholics Come Home

Do you have a family member, friend, or co-worker who has left the Catholic Church? If so, encourage them to visit www.CatholicsComeHome.org.

News from St. Francis Church

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www.stmoside.org • Parishoffice@stmoside.org

Office Hours: Monday-Friday, 8:30-12:00noon and 12:30-4:00pm

Parish Contacts

Updated 10/06/2015

Council Chairpersons: Pastoral-Doug D'Agrosa 760- 941-6800 • Finance-Paul Ibbetson 760- 734-1051 • Development-Ron Briseno 760- 726-4496

Pastoral Council Committees

Religious Education/Faith Formation/Evangelization

.....**Rory Griffin 760-414-3939**
 Religious Education for Adolescents & Children (R.E.A.CH)
Debbie Fredette 760-758-4100 x110
 Liturgy of the Word for Children..... Heidi Madden 760-529-2400
 Sacramental Preparation.....Debbie Fredette 760-758-4100 x110
 RCIA..... Kathleen Bell 760-809-6526
 Moms & Kids.....Jen Abelson 410-570-6962
 Lia Haubert 949-322-6458
 Ecumenical & Interreligious Affairs Regina Aulisio 760-295-5530
 Youth Ministry..... Matt Franklin 760-758-4100 x161
 High School Matt Franklin 760-758-4100 x161
 Young Adults Matt Franklin 760-758-4100 x161
 Religious Education for Adults...Debbie Fredette 760-758-4100 x110
 Bible Study..... Patt Goeltz 760-727-8442
 Centering Prayer Mary Williams 760-758-4100 x100
 Men's Fellowship..... Dcn. John Fredette 760-758-4100 x132
 Women's MinistryDebbie Fredette 760-758-4100 x110
 Vocations Dcn. Tom & Patt Goeltz 760-727-8442

Liturgy**Kathy Arciero 760-231-1022**

Art & Environment Kathy Arciero 760-231-1022
 Bereavement Ministry..... Sr. Maureen Brown 760-758-4100 x131
 Eucharistic Adoration Available
 Interior Design Team Pat & Phil Goscienski 760-732-1414
 Liturgical Ministries.....Douglas Lynn 760-758-4100 x140
 Music Ministry.....Douglas Lynn 760-758-4100 x140
 Sacristans—Altar Guild Diana Diaz 760-758-7870
 Sacristans—Altar LinensAnna Meyers 760-727-4998

Marriage & Family Life **Jen Frost 858-692-7438**

Bringing the Celebration HomeJen Frost 858-692-7438
 Diocesan Liaison.....Andrea Spencer 760-560-6540
 Family Services..... Rev. Michael Ratajczak 760-758-4100 x100
 Marriage Preparation..... Rev. Michael Ratajczak 760-758-4100 x100
 Widows & Widowers of North County..... Carol Kope 760-726-0533

Parish Organizations & Events..... **Lisa & Pat Attardo 760-940-1505**

Annual Gala Chris Smith 760-758-4100 x120
 Historian/Archives Brandon Oswald 760-845-5450
 Knights of Columbus John Murphy 760-497-6117
 Social Activities Henny Jocelyn 760-758-4100 x100
 Spirited Seniors..... Jim & Marilyn Day 760-509-4545

Treasures Rummage Sale.....John & Wendy Murphy 760-497-6117
 Walking Ministry Diane Pal 760-815-2519
 Women's Guild..... Kathy Gerhard 760-732-5951

Social Ministries **Stacey & Morgan Espe 760-224-2699**

Blood Drive Stacey & Morgan Espe 760-224-2699
 Brother Benno's Collection Dcn. Tom Goeltz 760-727-8442
 Brother Benno's Kitchen Server George Jones 760-940-9288
 Christmas Angel Ministry Kevin & Lisa Seufert 760-732-5965
 CPR/AED Classes..... Phil Goscienski 760-732-1414
 Culture of Life Jane Kelleher 760-822-7041
 Disability Facilitation Ann Eriksson 760-305-9985
 Jail Ministry Rita McCarthy 760-758-4100 x100
 Mental Health Ministry Chair: Tim Keane 760-758-2717
 Referrals: Deacon John Fredette 760-758-4100 x104
 Prayer Request Line..... Pat Wong 760-806-1310
 Norma Flanagan 760-630-0180
 Project Linus..... Mary Coxon 760-599-8760
 Social Justice Committee Henri Black 760-758-8137
 Interfaith Committee for Worker Justice

..... Joyce Meehan 760-304-0373

JustFaith Activities Sr. Maureen Brown 760-758-4100 x131

San Diego Organizing Project (SDOP)

..... Craig & Mary Castle 760-727-3097

Solutions for Change Kevin & Lyn Leahy 760-643-0872

Family Shoe Ministry Rick & Heidi Madden 760-470-4998

St. Bonaventure Mission..... Dcn. Tom Goeltz 760-727-8442

Office Support..... **Henny Jocelyn 760-758-4100 x100**

General Support Henny Jocelyn 760-758-4100 x100

Chair Set-Up Lorraine Doering 760-758-4100 x102

Kitchen Manager..... Rebecca Eyer 760-758-4100 x100

Development Council Committees

Annual Catholic Appeal..... Flora Fallone 760-758-4100 x100

New Construction Brian Leahey 760-224-1674

Parish Membership Valerie Thompson 760-630-1703

Planned Giving Chris Smith 760-758-4100 x120

Publicity/Public Relations..... Jane Gladden 760-659-6168

Scrip Sales Mike Nichols 760-727-7522

..... Andrea Sweeney 760-216-6389

Stewardship Chris Smith 760-758-4100 x120

Vehicle Donations..... Diana Diaz 760-758-4100 x100

Welcome Ministry Chris Smith 760-758-4100 x120

Pastoral Staff

Rev. Michael Ratajczak, Pastor..... 760-758-4100 x100 michaelr@stmoside.org
 Rev. Karl Bauer, Senior Priest 760-758-4100 x133 karlb@stmoside.org
 Dcn. John Fredette 760-758-4100 x132 johnf@stmoside.org
 Dcn. Tom Goeltz 760-758-4100 x100 thomasg@stmoside.org
 Sr. Maureen Brown, Pastoral Associate 760-758-4100 x131 maureenb@stmoside.org
 Dcn. John Fredette, Business Manager 760-758-4100 x104 johnf@stmoside.org
 Debbie Fredette, Director of Faith Formation 760-758-4100 x110 debbief@stmoside.org
 Matt Franklin, Youth Advocate 760-758-4100 x161 mattf@stmoside.org
 Stacey Griffin, Faith Formation Office Assistant..... 760-758-4100 x110 staceyg@stmoside.org
 Douglas Lynn, Director of Liturgy and Music 760-758-4100 x140 douglasl@stmoside.org
 Kathy Santy, Assistant Music Director 760-758-4100 x100 kathys@stmoside.org
 Sally Fay, Organist/Choir Accompanist 760-758-4100 x100 sallyf@stmoside.org
 Chris Smith, Director of Stewardship and Development 760-758-4100 x120 chriss@stmoside.org
 Joe Garcia, Director of Maintenance..... 760-758-4100 x151 joeg@stmoside.org
 Henny Jocelyn, Receptionist/Secretary 760-758-4100 x100 hennyj@stmoside.org
 Lorraine Doering, Parish Office Technician 760-758-4100 x102 lorrained@stmoside.org
 Rebecca Eyer, Sacristan..... 760-758-4100 x100 rebecca@stmoside.org
 Brian Leahey, Director of Construction 760-758-4100 x152 brianl@stmoside.org

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at

Nucci's Italian Café

1580 South Melrose Drive, Vista

The Spirited Seniors invite members and their guests to
celebrate St. Valentine's Day with a delicious lunch.

Come and be a part of this wonderful day!



Menu Choices:

Lasagna al Forno

Lisa's Penne

Pollo Picatta

Spaghetti with Meatball

Chicken Caesar Salad



Each entrée includes soup de jour or salad, Nucci's famous garlic knots,
and water, tea, coffee, and soft drinks. Plus, a free glass of wine!

Dessert: Filled cupcakes by **Rebecca!**



Deadline for Reservations: Monday, February 8

Please complete the registration form with your check made to "St. Thomas More Spirited Seniors." Place it in an envelope marked "Spirited Seniors Valentine's Day Luncheon" and return it to the offertory collection or the Parish Office, Box 12, by February 8.



For more information, contact Jim and Marilyn Day at 760-509-4545 or jandmday@cox.net.

1450 SOUTH MELROSE DRIVE • OCEANSIDE, CA 92056 • 760.758.4100 • WWW.STMOSIDE.ORG • PARISHOFFICE@STMOSIDE.ORG

The Spirited Seniors Valentine's Lunch • February 14 • Registration forms due by February 8

Your Name:	Telephone:	Today's Date:
Guest Name(s):	☐ I/We are already members of Spirited Seniors ☐ I/We would like to join the Spirited Seniors	
Email:	Enclosed is \$_____ for _____ memberships at \$10 each _____ x \$18 per member = \$_____ _____ x \$22 per guest = \$_____	
		Total Enclosed: \$

Restaurant Fundraiser **SUPPORT**

St. Thomas More Catholic Church



NUCCI'S **ITALIAN CAFE**

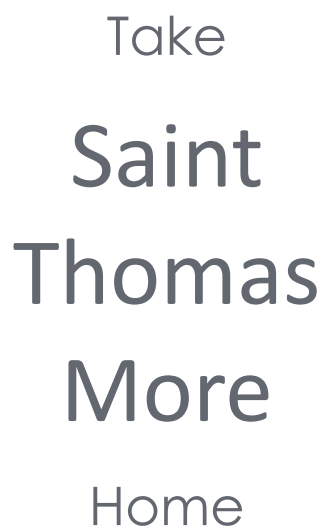
Tuesday January 19 & Wednesday January 20
for lunch or dinner and 20%
of your food and beverage
purchases will be donated to
St. Thomas More Catholic Church

**Come on out for good food, company
and support our building campaign.
Helping your Parish never tasted so good!**

Nucci's Italian Cafe

The Nucci Family ~ St. Thomas More Parishioners
1580 S. Melrose Dr., Ste. 108, Vista, CA 92081
760-598-1005

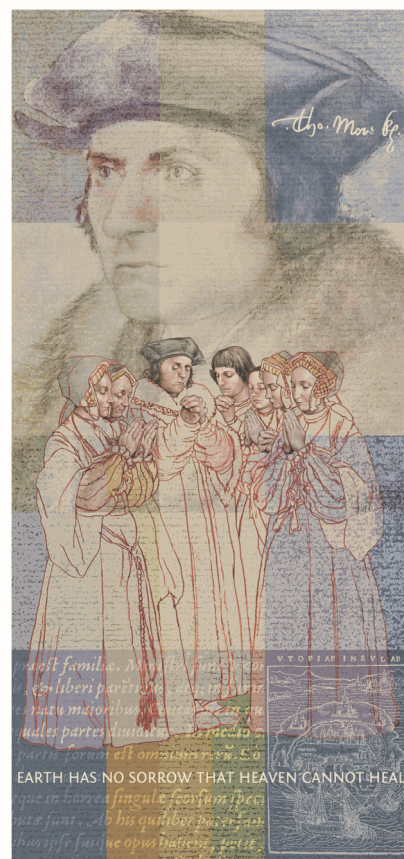
*** You must bring the flyer in today's bulletin for STM to receive credit for your purchase.**



Bust created of the same materials as the actual tapestry that is in our Church! See sample hanging in Parish Office above front desk.



Small Poster 8.5"x19" | \$5 each
Model of the entire tapestry.



ST. THOMAS MORE CATHOLIC CHURCH
OCEANSIDE, CALIFORNIA

Large Poster 13"x29" | \$20 each
Model of the entire tapestry.



For more information, contact Chris Smith, Director of Stewardship and Development
760-758-4100 x120 or chriss@stmoside.org

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☐ YES, I/we would like to purchase _____ Tapestry Panels at \$200 each
 _____ Small Posters at \$5 each
 _____ Large Posters at \$20 each

Name: _____ Phone: (____) _____

E-Mail Address: _____

Please make checks payable to: *St. Thomas More* with memo line: *Tapestry.*

MasterCard, Visa, Discover, and American Express are also accepted.

Credit Card #:

Amount Charged: \$ Exp. Date Signature:

You may also use our online payment system at www.stmoside.org, Donations, Electronic Offering, and make a one-time donation to Other Contributions, Misc. Purchase, with Tapestry as comment.

Thank You!

St. Thomas More Catholic Church | Tapestry 2015

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The Parliament of the World's Religions

October 2015 | Attended by Sr. Maureen Brown and Mary Williams

The Parliament of the World's Religions is a gathering of practitioners from dozens of Eastern, Western, and indigenous religions that meets every two to five years to connect, pray, commune, and call forth the wisdom within our traditions to skillfully face issues of global concern. The very first Parliament, which convened in Chicago in 1893, is today recognized as the birth of the worldwide interreligious dialogue movement. In 1988, the leadership council for the Parliament described its mission as "to cultivate harmony among the world's religious and spiritual communities and foster their engagement...to achieve a just, peaceful, and sustainable world." The Parliament envisions a world in which religious and cultural hatreds are replaced with understanding and respect—and in which the world's most influential institutions move beyond narrow self-interest to realize the common good.

My heart vowed to find a way to attend this Parliament ever since I read Brother Wayne Teasdale's *The Mystic Heart: Discovering a Universal Spirituality in the World's Religions*. Early in the book, Teasdale describes his experience at the 1993 Parliament as a "second Pentecost" (using a term specific to his own Catholic background) in which "the divine showed up and opened everyone, inspiring enthusiasm, mutual trust, receptivity, and a wonderful sense of joy, spontaneity, community, and urgency...The spirit was tangibly present, prying hearts and minds open to receive the impulse of new vision."

So when I heard that the Parliament would convene in Salt Lake City in October 2015, I knew I had to go. My friend Jane, who had long desired to take a road trip through the Southwest, happily joined me for the five-day event. Once there, we met up with Sr. Maureen Brown, the pastoral associate at my church. The three of us went to several of the same Parliament sessions together and we would later share our observations over dinner.

Just walking through the Salt Palace Convention Center, where the Parliament was held, was an interfaith adventure. A wide spectrum of people, colors, music, and smells greeted us, with Sikh turbans, Jewish yarmulkes, Buddhist robes, Christian crosses, Native headdresses, Muslim hijabs, and Hindu saris flowing through the halls. In one area, Tibetan monks created a mandala sand painting while a small indoor Jain temple was assembled a few feet away—all next to a circle of yogic chanters practicing *kirtan* with musical accompaniment by harmonium. Each day, the Sikh community served a free *langar* ("common kitchen") vegetarian lunch to the nearly 10,000 participants. I understood what Teasdale had meant by "second Pentecost"—with so many people of diverse backgrounds purposefully and peacefully *gathered in one place*, beautifully expressing the sacred in the language and art of their own religious tradition. This reflected the Parliament's emphasis on religious *harmony* rather than "unity", with each tradition's uniqueness enriching and deepening a broader chorus of mutual celebration.

Like many other conferences, the Parliament included exhibit halls, concerts, films, large plenary sessions with well-known speakers such as Karen Armstrong, Jim Wallis, and Jane Goodall (the Dalai Lama had been scheduled to appear, but health issues kept him at home, resting), as well as hundreds of smaller presentations and workshops to choose from. The plenary sessions focused largely on the world's contemporary issues and crises: War, Violence, and Hate Speech; Climate Change; Income Inequality; Women; Indigenous Peoples. Smaller workshops included discussions of Islamophobia, guidance in deep listening, dialogues between religion and science, exegesis and alternative understandings of difficult religious texts, a Black Lives Matter panel, mindful eating, the divine feminine, interfaith responses to drone warfare...with so

many offerings among important topics, perhaps the most challenging aspect of the Parliament was choosing which session to attend. I was grateful to see that some sessions, particularly the early morning gatherings, created space for silence, group prayer, and varieties of meditation and contemplation. Tai Chi, mindfulness meditation, gospel services, an interfaith office of the hours, nondenominational healing services, Bhakti (devotional yoga) were among the dozens of such practices offered. In addition, most of the plenary sessions began with a particular group exhibiting one of their forms of prayer, including chanting by Tibetan Buddhist monks and Sufi whirling meditation (dervish dancing). One enlivening interfaith ritual that Jane and I had the opportunity to be a part of was the "Cosmic Mass," led by Episcopal priest Matthew Fox. Roughly following the structure of a Catholic Mass, the ritual celebrates the unfolding of the cosmos with song, story, visuals, chanting, moments of silence, time for grieving, the kiss of peace, drumming, dancing, and a communal meal of bread and wine. (Unfortunately, time and space constraints meant we had to forgo the communal meal during the Parliament).

Another memorable presentation, "Abrahamic Reunion," spotlighted a group of Jews, Christians, Muslims, and Druze (a minority religion in Lebanon, Syria, and Israel) who are praying and working together "to promote love, peace, communication, cooperation, and dialogue among the people of the Holy Land." Several individuals—many of whom reside in Jerusalem and the Palestinian territories – shared their struggles and stories of peace-building in the midst of violence. Their sharing was especially poignant on that particular day, as there had just been several knife attacks and a bus station shootout in Israel that resulted in the deaths of Israeli soldiers and Palestinians.

The Abrahamic Reunion revealed an element the Parliament that I was not so willing to acknowledge at first: an undertone of anxiety. It had come up earlier when an imam, a speaker at one of the plenaries, joked that his backpack —on stage with him —was "really JUST a backpack" (and not a bomb). He was whistling in the dark—but the audience's collective intake of breath suggested that he had struck a nerve. There was, indeed, alongside the joy and beauty of this Parliament, a shared sense of angst and disquiet. Given recent events, it is hard to avoid thoughts about the potential for violence at this kind of gathering. A bit later, religious scholar Karen Armstrong took the opportunity to address these feelings. Explaining that she had been feeling "full of dread and anxiety" lately, she noted that compassion is "not sweet or soft"—not a sentimental form of love or sympathy. Compassion is actually *uncomfortable*, she asserted, and it should be. If compassion is understood as "suffering with," then in our world today, which is full of so much misery, the feeling-tone of compassion *should be* tension, anxiety, sadness, fear. She urged us to *really feel* these emotions—rather than pushing them away—and allow them to "become the grain of sand that disturbs the clam so that a pearl, a jewel of something new, emerges." In other words, transformative change begins with the grace of unsuppressed, uncomfortable compassion.

Daily beholding our exquisite gift of a world raw with wounds and anguish, I need to take time away on occasion to gather strength with others in a wide field of care and intention and love. This Parliament provided such an opportunity. I think it is important for the various paths and lineages and tributaries to simply sit together from time to time, eat, soothsay, listen, perform exorcisms of cynicism and despair, untangle blockages to grace, open again and again to wisdom wherever it blooms, revere the ancestors trembling in our bones, and, I pray—with God's will—become blessings to our descendants. —Mary Williams