



The Utopian Herald

November 2011

Vol VI Issue II

Mission Statement

Centered in the Gospel of Jesus Christ, St. Thomas More Parish empowers its members to grow in faith and act in love. Rooted in the Roman Catholic tradition and embracing the teachings of the Second Vatican Council, we are a faith community where all are welcome.



Dear Friends of St. Thomas More:

From the Pastor

The blistering temperatures of our Arizona summer are now (happily) a fast receding memory and the chilly mornings remind us that the holidays are fast approaching. Autumn is my favorite season here in the desert, in part because parish life springs back into action after a laid back summer.

Our 4th annual Oktoberfest was a great success and we look forward to a number of dinners and dances in our social hall. As always, thanks to the many volunteers who make these events possible!

In a few weeks we will all experience the liturgy in a new way as the 3rd edition of the Roman Missal comes to the United States. While there is always some awkwardness whenever change comes into our lives, I believe that within a short time we will all come to appreciate the beauty of the new translation and continue to praise and worship the Lord in the lively style that is a hallmark of liturgy at St. Thomas More.

I have had a number of parish members express fears that the roles of girls and women in the liturgy may be curtailed, as they have been at a few parishes in our diocese. Let me assure you that we have no plans to follow this disturbing new trend.

As we prepare to celebrate Thanksgiving once again as a parish community I am constantly reminded of how grateful I am to serve as the pastor of the St. Thomas More community. It is always challenging and life giving.

In closing, I pray that the upcoming Advent and Christmas season are a time of great happiness and joy for you and your families, and a time in which we all grow in appreciation of the gift of faith and love that God pours out upon us.

F. Jim



Advent Reconciliation Service

Wednesday, December 14

7:00 p.m.

**Plan on attending this service in
preparation for Christmas.**

Spirituality on Tap

St. Thomas More would like to invite you to share an experience of prayer. Our hope is that through an engaging experience led by guest speakers, that the community of St. Thomas More will have a deeper appreciation of the different prayer styles established in the context of our Catholic Tradition.

Some of the upcoming speakers will be sharing prayer through art, with scripture, Franciscan prayer, and Benedictine prayer. All styles will invite us to go deeper and give us a rich sense of our Catholic Traditions and Heritage.

We invite you to join us November 10 at 7:00 p.m. as we explore how art and prayer can bring us closer to God.

If you have any questions please feel free to call the Parish Office.

Lunch and Learn with Deacon Ron



Lunch and Learn is a weekly study presented at lunch time from 12 noon to 12:45 p.m. It is informal and you can bring a bag lunch and eat while you learn. The series is exploring the Protestant Reformation, the causes, the theologies, and the Catholic response. This series will continue thru mid December.

In January the series will begin again with a new topic. Look in upcoming bulletins or on our website for more information on the next topic and the date it will begin. Then, plan to bring your lunch and learn with Deacon Ron. No books, no homework!

Christmas Angels

This year we are sponsoring Catholic Social Services Foster Care Program, Maggie's Place, families from Deer Valley and Peoria District Elementary schools and Adobe Mountain detention center. We will have plenty of tags to select from and the guidelines are on the back of the tags.



The generosity of St. Thomas More last year benefited 325 children. The gift cards were given to teachers, counselors, foster parents, and advocates to purchase gifts for the specific needs of each child. Because those who were purchasing gifts knew the children personally, it allowed them to not only meet each child's needs, it allowed for a little extra per child.

We ask that you pay close attention to the return date on the back of the tags. If you have any questions, please call the Parish Office. Thank you for your support.

“Patience is not waiting, it’s how you act while you’re waiting.”

TIME TO REFLECT

It is hard to believe that we are almost to Thanksgiving again and before we blink our eyes it will be Christmas, then the New Year of 2012!! Where does the time go?

It seems that as the years fly by and things happen we seldom stop and reflect on the events in our lives but say to ourselves: "I must take some time to reflect, pray, or just sit with this. Not right now, I will do it when I have time!"



Now is the time, what better time or season to stop and reflect on the events of this past year than Thanksgiving? I mean, can you name the events of the past year that have shaped you or your family?

Have you taken the time to understand what impact these events have had and maybe continue to have?

This past summer I celebrated twenty-five years living in the religious community of Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters. I had to actually stop and pinch myself to think that I had been a sister for twenty-five years!!!! I couldn't possibly be that old! Then as I thought about the places I had lived, the ministries I had been involved with and adventures I had been blessed to embark on and see through to the completion, I was utterly amazed. After taking some time to actually stop and reflect on the past twenty-five years, I could easily see the hand of God in

There had been some really difficult times when I wasn't sure where I was going, what God was asking or even why I had made this seemingly silly decision to throw in my lot with this particular bunch of religious women. I am sure all of you whether you are married or not have asked, at least in passing, a similar question. Hopefully, like me, it is passing and you do know that you are following the path that God has intended for you. As I continue to reflect I begin to see that the good and beautiful, the joyful and peace filled times out weight the sad and difficult ones by at least twenty to one. Those are pretty good odds, at least I think they are since I am not a betting woman.

The more important thing to me isn't the difficulty of the situation or even the joy or satisfaction I have received, but the lessons I have learned. Those things that help me to become a better minister, a more caring and compassionate listener or just a more faithful and faith filled person. So as we celebrate Thanksgiving and sit at the table with our family or friends, let each of us pause for a moment look at the faces around us and remember those whom we love that are absent and reflect on the past twelve months. Can you see the hand of God gently guiding your life, not by force or coercion but by invitation and example? To be able to see these blessings, one must make the time to stop, and reflect on all that has happened and see that it is good.

Sr. Ginger Downey

Rite of Acceptance

Have you ever been intrigued by a travel brochure or the travel section of the Sunday newspaper? They lay before us all the marvels and wonders of distant and different lands. They may show us places and things that we've never seen; or hint at adventures that can't fully be described. Usually we spend a minute or an hour imagining what the journey might be like and then we turn the page or set the brochure down.

Those who come to us to find out about the Catholic church begin with a period of inquiry. The period of inquiry might be compared to reading a travel brochure. What kind of journey might this be? What might we encounter on the way? Where might we end up? These are important questions, but asking them is not the same thing as taking the journey.

The Rite of Acceptance into the Order of Catechumens - celebrated at the end of the period of inquiry - is something like sign-up day. At this liturgy, the inquirers who have asked the questions and now are ready to embark on the journey arrive at our door. We greet them and ask them what they want. They want what we told them, that we could help them discover: faith, baptism, eternal life. We mark them with the cross, for this is the sign of all who are on this journey. We give them the holy scriptures: it is the guidebook that we use on the way. We promise to be with them on this trip, for we are still on it ourselves. And we give them wise guides - sponsors, catechists, pastors and many others - to surround them and support them as they learn the ways of the road.

Any good travel agent will tell you that she or he cannot guarantee how a journey will end, or what exactly will happen along the way. We can't say, either, what will happen along this way. But in faith we can say that if we and those we invite on this journey are faithful to the one who has called us to make it, then the end of the journey will be more marvelous than we imagined at the onset.



ATTENTION: ALL WOMEN OF THE PARISH



- Are you new to the Parish?
- Have you been in the Parish awhile but really don't know anyone?
- Do you feel like your spiritual needs are not being met?
- Do you feel overwhelmed by holiday planning and organization?
- Do you feel like you just need some time to have fun and talk to other women?
- Do you just need a night OUT?

If your answer to any of these questions is Yes...then the **SISTERS** group is for YOU. This group is open to ALL women in St. Thomas More (and friends from other parishes are welcome too). It is a unique type of women's group - no dues, no attendance taken, it is not a sodality or a formal women's group. We gather together to tell our stories, to share, to laugh and of course enjoy refreshments. The acronym stands for Sisters In St. Thomas, Encouraging, Rejoicing, Sharing.

SISTERS is an informal group of women who originally came together when the parish community was brand new and the surrounding area was just being developed. Being strangers in the area, a few women reached out to others to form relationships and share their stories. That was 14 years ago.

The membership has changed over the years but the group itself continues today and meets every second Monday of the month from October to May at 7:00 p. m. in the Modular Building (Building C on the campus). The meetings vary from month to month. They include speakers, exercise sessions, game nights, prayer, other spiritual and fun activities and always refreshments.

We begin with an introductory Fashion Show and Luncheon in September, include a Retreat in the Spring and conclude with a Potluck and Game Night in May. We invite all women of the Parish to come and experience our meetings. Come by yourself or with a friend. Either way you'll meet and get to know a lot of wonderful fellow parishioners.

We're looking forward to seeing you.



A year ago, I was devastated by the unexpected loss of my job. I am a single mother of two wonderful children and I was trying to deal with the loss of the job and how I was going to support my teenage daughter. I found ways of dealing with grief - I asked for a Stephen Minister. A Stephen is someone who would listen to my concerns and help me find resources for my job search. As a result of this experience, a seed was planted in my heart - a desire to be there for others who faced similar circumstances.

A year later, I was approached to become involved in leadership with Stephen Ministry. "It sparked something in me, I went to the training, and I've been with it ever since." I have had the opportunity to share my gifts in the Stephen Ministry leadership team. It has had a positive ripple effect on many other aspects of my life as a result. It helps me handle my friendships and family relationships more maturely. I think I've developed a more compassionate and listening nature.

Would you like to be part of a ministry that makes a real difference in others lives when they need it the most? Would you like to make a difference in your own life? Consider becoming a Stephen Minister. The training equips you to do an excellent job as a Stephen Minister as well as to improve the quality of all your relationships. Some of the topics covered are listening, feelings, confidentiality and providing Christian care. If you would like to learn more about how to become a Stephen Minister, contact Linda McDowell 623.566.8222 or lmcdowell@stmglenale.org. A training session is starting in January and I look forward to sharing my experience with you.

Walking together in love. Growing together in Christ.

Tina Gantner

Disciples of Jesus (DJs) are Hoping to Buy an ‘Arc’!

Ever striving to meet the learning needs and interests of the students in fun and creative ways, the fifth grade classes in the Faith Formation program have a new focus this year. The discipleship-based lectionary curriculum is helping the **DJs** learn how the Word of God is rooted in Catholic social teaching and to discover ways they can participate in making the world a better place.

The students are involved in two major efforts this year. They are helping our parish’s St. Vincent de Paul pantry by promoting a yearlong food drive within the Faith Formation program. And they joined Heifer International in their efforts to end hunger and poverty by empowering families with a sustainable way to support themselves through the gifts of livestock and training.

The **DJs** stapled the St. Vincent de Paul food bags for the Fall food drive and will visit the pantry to learn how the pantry helps families in need in our parish community. In a more global outreach, the **DJs** have adopted the country of Uganda in Africa through Heifer International. During the year, the students will learn about the people in Uganda and how the Church ministers to them. In addition, the **DJs** hope to earn enough money through fundraising activities to buy an ‘Arc’ with a menagerie of animals that will help children and families supported by Heifer International become self-reliant in feeding and supporting their families. The **DJs** will earn money by hosting monthly hotdog and nacho sale prior to the start of Faith Formation class times.

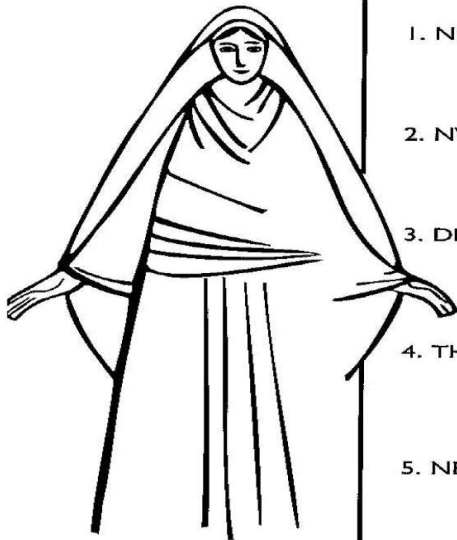
Anyone interested in making a monetary donation to help the **DJs** reach their goal of buying an ‘Arc’ may contact Ann in the Parish Office at amaloney@stmglendale.org.

The Perfect Role Model

Answers elsewhere in this publication

Mary is an example for all of us. She was close to Jesus and responded with love. She showed us what it was like to be a true follower of Jesus.

Unscramble the letters to discover events in Mary’s life. Use the Bible quotations if you need help.



1. NCUINANTAINO	Luke 1:26-38

2. NVOIISTIAT	Luke 1:39-56

3. DDNIEGW TA NAAC	John 2:1-12

	(3 words)
4. THBRI FO SUSEJ	Luke 2:1-20

	(3 words)
5. NETSAEPNIORT	Luke 2:21-38

6. TOFO FO EHT SCORS	John 19:25-27

	(4 words)
7. DFGININ SESUJ NI HET PLMEET	Luke 2:41-52

	(5 words)
8. STEPTNOCE	Acts 1:13-14, 2:1-4

Was that a typo? It may seem a bit early to start celebrating but it really isn't, in a few weeks we will begin a new liturgical year. So what does that mean to us? Are you a person who makes New Year's resolutions for January 1? We all tend to use birthdays or the new calendar year to resolve to improve *something*. At the start of a new year you notice the plethora of commercials for weight loss, smoking cessation patches, and gym memberships. The familiar resolutions of losing weight, exercising more, eating healthier abound.

Those goals are all fairly measurable and concrete giving us a physical benefit. But this New Year isn't about January 1, it's about November 27, the beginning of our new liturgical year, Cycle B to be precise. So what? I mean really who cares, so we read from the Gospel of Mark this year, what difference does that make. Well, how about making a *spiritual* New Year's resolution? What would happen if we change one little thing in our faith lives? Perhaps we could add a "Good Morning God" and a "Good Night God" to our day. How about attending mass during the middle of the week once a month? Would it be so hard to say a prayer for that driver that just cut us off or is driving like a bat out of Hades rather than cursing him? Could we pick up a book like "Mission" by Mark Link S.J. to read a daily reflection? There are dozens of things we could do to boost our spiritual being. Most don't involve a club fee, admission costs or even an ounce of perspiration. Who knows what could happen in a year with spiritual New Year's resolutions...just don't wait for any TV. commercials to cajole you into "*purchasing*" a spiritual resolution...they need to come from your heart.

Gaby Franzoni
Youth Ministry Coordinator

What if we had listened...

"Well-informed people know it is impossible to transmit the voice over wires and that were it possible to do so, the thing would be of no practical value."

-- Boston Post, 1865



"This telephone has too many shortcomings to be seriously considered as a means of communication. The device is inherently of no value to us."

-- An internal Western Union memo, 1876

"I think there is a world market for maybe five computers."

-- IBM chairman Thomas Watson, 1943

"There is no reason anyone would want a computer in their home."

-- Ken Olsson, founder, chairman & president of DEC, 1977

"Television won't last because people will soon get tired of staring at a plywood box every night."

-- Producer Darryl Zanuck, 20th Century Fox, 1946

"That rainbow song's no good. Take it out."

-- MGM memo after first showing of The Wizard of Oz

"Drill for oil? You mean drill into the ground to try and find oil? You're crazy!"

-- Drillers who Edwin L. Drake tried to enlist to his project to drill for oil in 1859

"A rocket will never be able to leave the earth's atmosphere."

-- The New York Times, 1936

"The concept is interesting and well-formed, but in order to earn better than a 'C', the idea must be feasible."

-- Yale University management professor in response to student Fred Smith's paper proposing reliable overnight delivery service (Smith went on to found Federal Express Corp.)

UPcoming EVENTS

New Year's Eve Dance
December 31

Italian Dinner
January 28

Celebrating Marriage Dinner
February 11

Bus Trip to Tubac Arts Festival
February 11

St. Joseph's Dinner
March 24

Cinco de Mayo
May 5



Thanksgiving Mass

Wednesday
November 23
7:00 p.m.

Children are invited to bring their wagons to present the food donations for St. Vincent de Paul



"Who needs a silly wishbone anyway?
I've got prayer."



Save the date ...Plan to end the old year and start the new year at the :

St. Thomas More
3rd Annual
New Year's Eve Dance
A masquerade event to be enjoyed by all!

Tickets are \$25 per person and will go on sale December 3.

- Answers to A Perfect Role Model
1. Annunciation
 2. Visitation
 3. Wedding at Cana
 4. Birth of Jesus
 5. Presentation
 6. Foot of the Cross
 7. Finding Jesus in the Temple
 8. Pentecost

"There are two ways to live your life. One is as though nothing is a miracle. The other is as though everything is a miracle."

-- Albert Einstein



*May the peace of God
Which is beyond all understanding
Keep your hearts and minds in the
Knowledge and love of God
And of his Son, our Lord Jesus Christ*

*Christmas is a grace-filled time,
A time for families and friends to gather
and to be renewed in spirit*

*We hope that you and your family
and guests will join us to give thanks
to God for his many gifts and blessings*



Christmas Mass Schedule

CHRISTMAS EVE

Saturday, December 24
4:00 P.M. - CHILDREN'S LITURGY
6:00 P.M. MASS
8:00 P.M. MASS
11:00 P.M. - MIDNIGHT MASS

CHRISTMAS DAY

Sunday, December 25
9:00 A.M.
11:00 A.M.
PLEASE NOTE - NO 7:30 A.M. MASS

NEW YEAR'S WEEKEND
(Mary, Mother of God)

Saturday, December 31
5:00 p.m.
Sunday, January 1, 2012
7:30, 9:00 and 11:00 A.M.

Growing in Faith, Acting in Love

LABEL

Return Service Requested

Non-profit org.
U S Postage
Paid
Permit # 38
Glendale AZ

6180 W. Utopia Road
Glendale, AZ 85308

