

# More About Us

## Summer 2021



### ANNOUNCING

## BECONS *of* LIGHT

Beacons of Light is a multi-year process of pastoral planning for the Archdiocese of Cincinnati. Groupings of parishes will come together as one faith community. These new “Families of Parishes” will be stronger, with the resources to focus more on mission than on maintenance.

Through Beacons of Light, 50-60 parishes will become Families of Parishes throughout the cities and towns, suburbs and rural communities of the 19 counties in western and southwestern Ohio. Pastors and parish leaders will then plan for the future of their Family of Parishes.

### Timeline for Beacons *of* Light

#### FALL 2020:

Beacons of Light Project launch announced. Data gathering from parishes and schools begins.

#### WINTER 2020/21:

Six principles of Beacons of Light are established. Design of parish planning process (including vision points and parameters) begins.

#### SPRING 2021:

Parish and school data is analyzed. Current reality is assessed.

#### SUMMER 2021:

Families of Parishes modeling begins. Draft of parish planning process is completed.

#### FALL 2021:

Draft models of Families of Parishes are published for comment. Parish planning process (including vision points and parameters) is finalized.

#### WINTER 2021/22:

Families of Parishes are finalized and announced.

#### SPRING 2022:

Pastors and parish leaders begin preparing for the parish planning process.

#### SUMMER 2022:

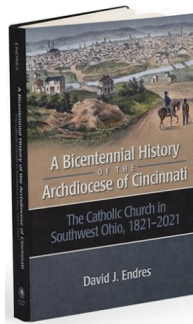
Families of Parishes implementation begins. Each Family starts its parish planning process.

### THE CURRENT REALITY

There are many factors which, when taken together, diminish parish life.

- **Religious practice is declining nationwide.** Fewer people are actively engaged in their faith. In the Archdiocese of Cincinnati, the average Sunday Mass is about one-third full.
- **Demographics in the Midwest are changing.** Live births are declining and the population is moving south.
- **In the Archdiocese of Cincinnati, our resources are spread too thin.** Our current infrastructure and schedules were built for a different era. Out of necessity, priests are appointed as pastors sooner than is optimal.

As a result, most of our church buildings are grossly underutilized, our priests are stretched to the limit, and many of our parishes are not the vibrant communities of faith Catholics need them to be.



## FR. ENDRES' NEW BOOK IS NOW AVAILABLE!

Father David Endres has authored a new scholarly book, *A Bicentennial History of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati*, and it is now available for purchase at the [Archdiocese of Cincinnati Bicentennial Shop](https://shop.catholicaoc.org) or ([shop.catholicaoc.org](https://shop.catholicaoc.org)). This book will certainly deepen any reader's understanding and appreciation of the first 200 years of Catholic faith in this part of our country. The cost is \$29.95.

# Don't Forget to Register your Children for 2021-2022 PSR

PSR Registration Forms can be found on our website Home Page listed under Favorites, Parish School of Religion Registration. Registration forms are to the right. Please fill out form completely and send or mail PSR form and payment to the parish office: St. Thomas More, Attn: Kate, 800 Ohio Pike, Cincinnati OH 45245.

## As I See It

Deacon Michael Thomas,  
Pastoral Associate



### PARISH ALTAR SERVERS PROGRAM RETURNS

At long last we feel it is safe to return to having Altar Servers at **ALL** of our parish Masses. This will include all weekends, weekdays, weddings and funerals, Holy Days of Obligation and special liturgical celebrations throughout the year.

Since the pandemic, we have been unable to use Altar servers for more than a year and a half and basically must start the program over from the beginning. I would like to begin with the junior high students (6th, 7th & 8th grades). Some of them have already been servers so we will start with this group first, then possibly go to the fifth grade. This opportunity will be available for our students in the Parish School of Religion and also those who are being Homeschooled. I would like to have a weekend

schedule in place by the last week of September, which in the beginning will be covered by the school's 6th, 7th and 8th grades.

Please talk about this with your children. Serving at Mass is a great gift to our parish family. But like every activity your child become involved with, scheduling can become a challenge. Serving at Mass is no exception. If your son or daughter becomes an altar server and is assigned to a Sunday Mass, we expect him or her to be there. This will be especially important this year as we are changing the number of servers at Mass from five to three. Ideally your child will serve at the Mass your family attends every week.

Please take time to discuss this with your children. You will be hearing from me as the serving program begins. Along with the gift of your child or children to the serving program, may our parish family continue to grow in its love and celebration of the Eucharist.





IT IS THAT TIME AGAIN TO  
REGISTER FOR RCIA AND  
PSR!!



As a human institution, the Church has always suffered on account of the sins of Her members. This sad truth is something that we are increasingly aware of today. But the Church itself is the Spotless Bride of Christ. It is the Body of Christ on earth, in Heaven and in Purgatory. Those of us on earth are members of the Church Militant. Those in Heaven are members of the Church Triumphant. And those in Purgatory are members of the Church Suffering. But all of us are united under Christ our Head as members of His Holy Body the Church.

We profess our faith in the Church every Sunday. We profess that we believe in “one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church.” What exactly does this mean? First, it means that by the power and working of the Holy Spirit, those who profess faith in Christ are united as “one.” This oneness is a spiritual union that will endure for eternity. It is unbreakable and restores us to the life we were created to live, a life in union with God.

As one family, the Church is also “holy.” Holiness is another way of saying that we are made whole by the life, passion, death and resurrection of Christ, sharing in His redemption. Through His mercy, our sins are forgiven, and we become children of our Father in Heaven.

The word “catholic” refers to the truth that the offer of salvation is given to all. It is a universal calling given to all people who will accept this gift. God did not come to save only a few but all, and many will accept this gift of salvation. It must be said, however, that to accept this gift requires following a narrow road with constant perseverance to the Truths that the Catholic Church professes.

We are “apostolic” in that God chose to establish His Church through the mediation of His Apostles. They were uniquely called to become instruments by which the saving Truth is proclaimed, and the grace won by

the Cross of Jesus is distributed through our seven sacraments. The work of the Apostles continues today through their successors, the bishops, and those who are co-workers with the bishops, the priests. Sinful though they may be, God uses them, nonetheless, to bestow His grace and truth upon the world.

As a member of the one Body of Christ, you are also invited by God to enlarge His family through the sharing of the Gospel and by your life of deep prayer. For this you need the Holy Spirit who will guide you in this mission of evangelization.

Reflect upon the incredible privilege it is to be invited to be a member of the Family of God, the Church. And reflect, also, upon the important duty you have to extend that invitation to others as well as living it authentically yourself.

We are counting on you to invite those you know who may be interested in becoming Catholic to join our RCIA process beginning September 12 at 11:15 am in the Faith Formation room. Invitations can be ongoing through the month of September.

Also, to those of you who are parents we are encouraging you to register your children for our religious education program known as PSR (Parish School of Religion) for grades 1-8 and preschool, also starting September 12 at 8:30 am.

Please remember that if your child is in 2nd or 7th grade, our policy is that they must be either in the school or in PSR to participate in our sacramental preparation process.

In this culture of chaos, the Church through the ministry of wonderful catechists, provides a consistent and comprehensive process of helping you train your children to know the Truths God has revealed and to prepare for the sacraments He offers for their grace filled life!!

All registrations can be done online at our parish website: [www.sttm.org](http://www.sttm.org).

~ Submitted by Becky Ready, DRE

## WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE CHOSEN?

Fear can be like a blob monster—always on the move, always taking ground—because the list of things we fear is long. We fear loss. We fear failure. We fear not being loved. We fear disease. We fear loneliness, darkness, neediness, natural disasters and bad guys—the list goes on into oblivion.

There is only one truth in the world that has the power to vaporize fear! Do you know what it is?

It is knowing and being known by God, being chosen by Him to become His child.

If the truth be told, we're simple creatures in that we were made to be in relationship with God. We're designed to commune, to know and be known by our Creator, to interact with the world alongside Him and under his care. Without Him, we're at the mercy of the world around us and all the fear it brings. Without Him, there's a significant and unfillable void in our souls, because contrary to the popular self-empowerment dogma from the culture, on our own we are not enough.

We're incomplete by design so that nothing but knowing and communing with God will fulfill us—not really, not permanently or completely.

This coming fall, the Faith Formation Commission at St. Thomas More will be offering in person and online opportunities to come together and watch the series: *The Chosen*. Director Dallas Jenkins's new original series, *The Chosen*, is revolutionary. It offers viewers a glimpse into what the daily and extraordinary life of Jesus Christ and his disciples might have looked like 2,000 years ago and invites the viewer into His story. It is the #1 highest crowd-funded media project of all time!

Look for ways to register this fall and join us to watch and discuss Season One of *The Chosen*!! Notices will be in the bulletin, in emails via Constant Contact, and on our website: [www.sttmformation.org](http://www.sttmformation.org).

*The Chosen* is a fresh look at the Gospels for those who have been reading the stories for years or for those who are curious to know more about who Jesus is and was. Stay tuned for future invitations!!

# ST. THOMAS MORE CHURCH

To: All St. Thomas More Parishioners

August 2021

From: The Parish Finance Commission: Fr. Bill Wagner, Chris White (Chair), Chris Braun, Sam DeBonis, Dick Schuler and Robert Kreyenhagen

Our parish operating results are included in this report. The combined parish, school and cafeteria had a profit for the year of \$171,382 which includes a grant of \$306,600 and bequest of \$41,765. During the year, we made payments on the principal of our debt of \$80,755. We completed projects with a cost of \$149,867 and our reserves decreased by \$216,725. As usual, we continued to make expenditures which were necessary to maintain and improve our property. The highlights include:

1. Parish revenue was over budget primarily due to a one-time COVID-19 SBA grant of \$306,600 and one-time bequest proceeds of \$41,765. Without these the Parish would have had an operating deficit of \$177,000. Expenses were below budget primarily due to reduced spending on benefits and archdiocese assessments.
2. Our bank debt continued to fall due to debt reduction collections and we ended the year with \$382,259 in debt.
3. The Sunday collection was up 6% from the prior year, partially recovering from reduced collections during the pandemic.
4. There was \$3,197 of uncollected tuition at the end of the year.
5. Our maintenance and improvement projects included replacing two of the four church air conditioning units, adding bipolar ionization systems to all church and school HVAC units, new desktop computers for all parish and school staff, replacement of some school video boards and additional Chromebook computers for students.
6. There was no festival in 2020 due to the pandemic. In November the parish participated in Giving Tuesday, contributing over \$19,000 to help replace some of the festival income.
7. All financial obligations were met over the course of the year and there were no unpaid bills on June 30, 2021.

Our budget for 2021-2022 is finalized and was developed as a breakeven budget. The budget includes funds to maintain and improve the property.

Lastly, we cannot successfully offer a full service parish without you: our parishioners. In addition to your financial support, we appreciate our volunteers that assist in the various parish ministries. Please give some consideration as to what you can do to support your parish. We thank those who support us financially and through volunteering.

May God Continue to Bless our Parish!

**ST. THOMAS MORE PARISH OPERATING RESULTS**  
**FISCAL 2020-2021**

Account	Jul '20 - Jun '21 Actual	Jul '20 - Jun '21 Budget	\$ Over or (Under) Budget
<b><u>PARISH INCOME:</u></b>			
Ministry & Liturgy Income:			
Sunday & Holyday	\$ 758,230.00	\$ 821,500.00	\$ (63,270.00)
Votive Lights	\$ 3,869.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ (1,131.00)
Mass Stipends	\$ 11,012.00	\$ 9,500.00	\$ 1,512.00
Interest & Dividends	\$ 17,861.00	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 2,861.00
Debt Reduction	\$ 30,349.00	\$ 54,000.00	\$ (23,651.00)
Capital Donations	\$ 23,211.00	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 13,211.00
Flowers, Bequests, Misc.	\$ 27,241.00	\$ 30,000.00	\$ (2,759.00)
<b>Total General Income:</b>	<b>\$ 871,773.00</b>	<b>\$ 945,000.00</b>	<b>\$ (73,227.00)</b>
Religious Formation	\$ 3,378.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ (1,622.00)
Fundraising-Fiscal Year Net	\$ 4,301.00	\$ 50,000.00	\$ (45,699.00)
AOC Campaign & Insurance proceeds	\$ 11,559.00	\$ -	\$ 11,559.00
<b>TOTAL PARISH INCOME</b>	<b>\$ 891,011.00</b>	<b>\$ 1,000,000.00</b>	<b>\$ (108,989.00)</b>
<i>(Does not include designated collections)</i>			
<b><u>SCHOOL INCOME:</u></b>			
Total Student Tuition, Reg Fees, OH Aid	\$ 1,036,198.00	\$ 1,097,250.00	\$ (61,052.00)
Total Income: Cafeteria & Latch Key	\$ 143,219.00	\$ 145,000.00	\$ (1,781.00)
<b>TOTAL SCHOOL INCOME:</b>	<b>\$ 1,179,417.00</b>	<b>\$ 1,242,250.00</b>	<b>\$ (62,833.00)</b>
<b>TOTAL PARISH &amp; SCHOOL INCOME:</b>	<b>\$ 2,070,428.00</b>	<b>\$ 2,242,250.00</b>	<b>\$ (171,822.00)</b>

Parishioners also gave an additional \$54,937 through the second collections (not including the monthly debt collection) during 2020-2021.

Most notably, \$27,332 was donated to our St. Vincent de Paul ministry and \$39,372 to the Catholic Ministries Appeal.

*\*This is a condensed operating statement that highlights parish income and expenditures.  
A detailed operating statement was reviewed by the Parish Finance Commission.*

**ST. THOMAS MORE PARISH OPERATING RESULTS**  
**FISCAL 2020-2021**

Account	Jul '20 - Jun '21 Actual	Jul '20 - Jun '21 Budget	\$ Over or (Under) Budget
<b><u>PARISH EXPENSES:</u></b>			
Priests, Visitors	\$ 63,963.00	\$ 68,505.00	\$ (4,542.00)
Lay Parish Salaries	\$ 234,990.00	\$ 226,828.00	\$ 8,162.00
General & Administrative	\$ 4,380.00	\$ 13,700.00	\$ (9,320.00)
Parish Benefits	\$ 137,740.00	\$ 165,388.00	\$ (27,648.00)
Service Charges	\$ 11,008.00	\$ 8,500.00	\$ 2,508.00
Ministry and Liturgy	\$ 18,366.00	\$ 20,300.00	\$ (1,934.00)
Religious Formation	\$ 8,182.00	\$ 12,250.00	\$ (4,068.00)
Facilities	\$ 151,672.00	\$ 152,986.00	\$ (1,314.00)
Archdiocese Assessment	\$ 76,646.00	\$ 105,000.00	\$ (28,354.00)
Interest Payments on Parish Debt	\$ 15,245.00	\$ 22,000.00	\$ (6,755.00)
<b>TOTAL PARISH EXPENSES:</b>	<b>\$ 722,192.00</b>	<b>\$ 795,457.00</b>	<b>\$ (73,265.00)</b>
<b><u>SCHOOL EXPENSES:</u></b>			
School General and Administrative	\$ 151,417.00	\$ 164,537.00	\$ (13,120.00)
Teacher Salaries	\$ 552,028.00	\$ 568,893.00	\$ (16,865.00)
Instructional Expense	\$ 75,048.00	\$ 47,250.00	\$ 27,798.00
Preschool expenses	\$ 73,676.00	\$ 77,255.00	\$ (3,579.00)
Latchkey expenses	\$ 63,246.00	\$ 28,547.00	\$ 34,699.00
Religion Instructional Expenditures	\$ 6,438.00	\$ 7,500.00	\$ (1,062.00)
Library Expenses	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Cafeteria Salaries & Expenses	\$ 71,947.00	\$ 53,009.00	\$ 18,938.00
School Facilities	\$ 151,891.00	\$ 141,686.00	\$ 10,205.00
Fundraising Expenses	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Capital Projects	\$ 67,739.00	\$ -	\$ 67,739.00
School Benefits	\$ 311,789.00	\$ 314,356.00	\$ (2,567.00)
<b>TOTAL SCHOOL EXPENSES:</b>	<b>\$ 1,525,219.00</b>	<b>\$ 1,403,033.00</b>	<b>\$ 122,186.00</b>
<b>TOTAL PARISH &amp; SCHOOL EXPENSE:</b>	<b>\$ 2,247,411.00</b>	<b>\$ 2,198,490.00</b>	<b>\$ 48,921.00</b>
<b>SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) before one-time grant</b>	<b>\$ (176,983.00)</b>	<b>\$ 43,760.00</b>	
<b>ONE-TIME COVID-19 SBA GRANT PROCEEDS</b>	<b>\$ 306,600.00</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	
<b>ONE-TIME BEQUEST PROCEEDS</b>	<b>\$ 41,765.00</b>		
<b>SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) after one-time grant</b>	<b>\$ 171,382.00</b>	<b>\$ 43,760.00</b>	
 Principal Payments on Parish Debt	 \$ 80,755.00		
Capital projects - Parish	\$ 82,127.00		
 Checking account balance:			
June 30, 2020	\$ 1,175,638.00		
June 30, 2021	\$ 958,913.00		





If you have moved or left the parish and are still receiving St. Thomas More publications, envelopes or information by mail, would you be so kind as to call the Parish Office at 753-2541 to let us know that you are no longer attending and would like to be marked inactive. This would help defray some of the cost to the parish to send out these publications and church information.

**THANK YOU!**



**PLEASE JOIN US ON**  
**October 3, 2021**  
**2:00 - 3:00 pm**

JOIN THOUSANDS OF CHRISTIANS NATIONWIDE TO PEACEFULLY AND PRAYERFULLY STAND BEFORE GOD ON BEHALF OF UNBORN CHILDREN. PARTICIPANTS WILL STAND 10-FEET APART, LINING BOTH SIDES OF A MAJOR HIGHWAY FOR MILES.

**St. Thomas More Church**  
**800 Ohio Pike**  
**Cincinnati, Ohio 45245**



**LIFE CHAIN**



## **ALL PARISH VOLUNTEERS** **NEW CHILD** **PROTECTION PLATFORM**

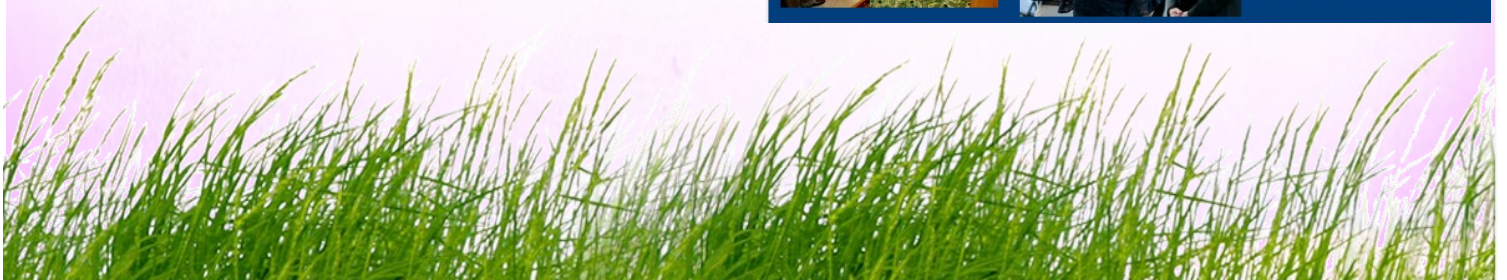
You will be receiving an email invitation to register on SafeParish, coming from the **Archdiocese of Cincinnati**, with the email address of [administration@aocsaenvironment.org](mailto:administration@aocsaenvironment.org). **Safe Environment User Registration will be the subject line.** The email will include instructions on how to register. If you have questions, please contact Linda Caskey, our parish's Safe Environment Coordinator at [lcaskey@sttm.org](mailto:lcaskey@sttm.org).

SafeParish is an organization that specializes in training and education solutions for organizations world-wide. They have 20+ years of experience in providing child safe environment training programs. SafeParish will continue to work with our current background check provider – [Selection.com](http://Selection.com). All training and background information in your current VIRTUS account will be transferred to SafeParish. No new live training through SafeParish will be required if you have completed live child protection training through VIRTUS. Ongoing child protection training will still be required for all volunteers and employees and will consist of quarterly interactive video-based training instead of monthly bulletins.



Mark your calendars for Mount St. Mary's annual Taste & See event on **Tuesday, October 5 at 6:00 pm**. Enjoy an evening with specialty wines, craft beers and appetizers and get reacquainted with Mount St. Mary's Seminary & School of Theology. Tour the 75-acre campus including the chapels, library, grounds and the new Fenwick Hall and Marian Piazza.

RSVP by contacting Gloria Ann at [advancement@athenaenum.edu](mailto:advancement@athenaenum.edu) or 513-233-6159.





## WELCOME BACK!

*Submitted by Candace Hurley, Principal*

Opening Day, August 19, was a great start for the new school year. It was so good to greet all of our students, especially those who were not with us last year because of COVID. While we strongly encourage mask wearing, social distancing, hand washing, etc., we have been able to relax some of the restrictions we had last year such as eating in the lunchroom on a rotation basis, having art and music in those respective rooms and having more freedom with use of the playground. We look forward to bringing back field trips and some special events as well.

STM welcomed many new families and several new staff members. We are energized by our new staff members: Mr. Salvatore Lagonia, Junior High Religion teacher and sixth grade science; Miss Sara Ellis, fourth grade; Miss Brittany Schultz, third grade; Miss Kellie Pairan, first grade and Miss Rachel Riley, Speech Pathologist. In addition, Mrs. Vickey Brazier has joined our staff as a classroom aide. All of them have brought new excitement and enthusiasm to our school.

We continue to upgrade our Chromebooks for our students as well as technology for our teachers to enhance the delivery of instruction in the classrooms. Many of our students have access to new textbooks with up-to-date online components.

Mark your calendar for our Open House on Sunday, January 30, 2022, or call the school office at 513-753-2540 to arrange for a personal tour. It's not too early to be thinking of next year! St. Thomas More is a provider for EdChoice scholarships for students in grades K-8. These scholarships are income-based and families can begin applying for these on February 1, 2022. Come join us where our mission is to ground students in their Catholic faith, inspire them to wonder, and challenge them to give their best to the world.



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