

Steeple Talk

Volume 6, No. 9

November 4, 2012

News from the STA Mass communities:

7:15 Daily Mass: Deacon Carl Bunje has been in the hospital this past week with an infection but seems to be recovering slowly (at this writing).

7:30 Sunday Mass: This early Mass is popular with folks who like to get a quick start on their Sunday activities.

8:45 Sunday Mass: Fr. Mike Miller graciously stepped in as celebrant on October 28, when scheduled presider Kevin Ballard, S.J., was unable to come at the last minute.

10:30 Sunday Mass: Bass singers are needed for the community choir. See choir director Paul Prochaska after Mass.

12:00 Sunday Mass: Gregorian chant Mass in Latin, sung by congregation and choir, with Renaissance motets, every week.

12:15 Daily Mass: Downtown workers are frequently in attendance at this Mass..

STA Site Committee plans:

Monthly Meeting:
2nd Thursday of the month

Next regular Site meeting:
Thursday, November 8, 2012
7:30 pm, Thomas House Library

Agenda (tentative):

- Site security
- Garage storage
- Basement hall enhancements

Monthly newsletter:
Sunday before 2nd Thursday

Editor: Kay Williams, 650-328-2781, kaywill@pacbell.net

Bishop McGrath visits STA:



Bishop McGrath & Terry McCaffrey



Attentive questioners with Bishop McGrath

On Sunday, October 14, Bishop P.J. McGrath of the Diocese of San Jose celebrated 8:45 a.m. Mass at STA. Following Mass, Bishop McGrath joined the congregation at a reception in the Thomas House basement hall, where he mingled with the coffee drinkers and then participated in a slightly more formal session of questions and answers with those assembled.

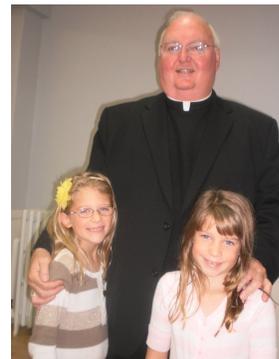
P.J. McGrath is an engaging story-teller and a candid, pastoral leader. He said, "We should all be able to ask questions. It's a very dysfunctional family that cannot talk. We don't have to agree, but we should be able to have the dialogue."

In that spirit, Bishop

McGrath answered questions frankly and shared his views openly on issues of concern to Catholics today.



St. Thomas Aquinas Church



Samantha & Riley Fisher get close to the bishop.

Stewardship and citizenship:

Thomas House Library

Committee recognized: The annual STA Site Stewardship Award is being presented to the Thomas House Library Committee, celebrating the diligent work that has resulted in a lovely library in the Thomas House that is open to all. Congratulations to librarians Ted Baer, Jean Doten, Roberta Kehret, Judi Swope and Philip Warman!

Those Prop. 34 signs: It is not a usual sight to see political signs in front of a Catholic

church. But the case of Prop. 34, the CA ballot initiative to replace the death penalty with life imprisonment without possibility of parole, has reached deep into the Catholic consciousness. Supporting Prop. 34 is a legitimate, non-partisan lobbying effort on behalf of an important moral issue, on which all of California's Catholic bishops have spoken with one voice of support. As a religious institu-

tion, the Catholic Church is within its rights, as a non-profit, to speak out forcefully on non-partisan political issues without threatening its non-profit status. This is an issue that people across the political spectrum support and is a core right-to-life issue. Our pastor Fr. Matt Stanley consulted with the Diocesan office and permitted the "Yes on 34" signs to be placed on church property.

**NEWSLETTER OF THE ST. THOMAS
AQUINAS CHURCH SITE COMMITTEE**

751 Waverley Street
Palo Alto, CA 94301

St. Thomas Aquinas Site Committee:

Ted Baer	Bob Barron	Helen Baumann
Philip Boudart	Lorraine Dabney	Judy Foley
Anna Jaklitsch	Bill Mahrt	Bob March
Mike McMahon	Bea Peterson	Patti Robison
Mario Veloro	Kay Williams	and occasional others

Mission Statement: The Site Committee for St. Thomas Aquinas Church works to encourage community-building within our six individual Mass communities, among our Mass communities, and within the larger parish community. We do this by enhancing our liturgies, exercising responsible stewardship of our facilities, and working to improve communications at all levels of our parish community.

Site committee meetings are (usually) held the 2nd Thursday of the month in the Library of the Thomas House. All are welcome, but if you cannot attend, send questions or suggestions to Kay Williams, 328-2781, kaywill@pacbell.net.

Priesthood Sunday Oct. 28:

In honor of Priesthood Sunday on October 28 at the 10:30 a.m. Mass here at STA, a special blessing was bestowed on Pastor Father Matt Stanley. After the announcements were read, Jean Ramacciotti invited Fr. Matt to come forward and stand in front of the altar facing the congregation. As gentle guitar music played in the background, Jean read a poem written decades ago and used throughout the world on Priesthood Sunday. Following are a few lines from the poem:

*Keep them, I pray Thee,
Dearest Lord,
Keep them, for they are Thine—
Thy priests whose lives burn out
before Thy consecrated shrine.
Keep them, and O remember Lord,
They have no one but Thee,
Yet they have only human hearts,
With human frailty.*

Those present were then asked to raise their hands and arms toward Fr. Matt to join in the prayer for

him. After the prayer and much applause, Charlotte Gross presented Fr. Matt with a bouquet of flowers in appreciation for his “representing Christ for us here on earth and for pastoring...our diverse parish.”

Priesthood Sunday is observed nationwide on the last Sunday in October. The USA Council of Serra International sponsors this event. Serra is an organization of lay men and women whose mission is to foster and affirm vocations to the priesthood and vowed religious life.

Continue to keep all priests in your prayers! Priests witness to the presence of the Holy Spirit in the Eucharist, in Baptism, in the Word, and in countless other ways big and small. These holy men bridge the spaces between the everyday and the eternal. We are grateful!

—Jean Ramacciotti

From the church steps:

Altar reconstruction:

On Sunday, November 11, members of the Church Interior Committee will be in the Thomas House after each Mass showing what the revised altar platform will look like.

Be prepared for disruption in the altar area of the church sanctuary, beginning November 19. The regular daily and Sunday Masses will be maintained.

Memorial Mass for Fr. Konkell:

The St. Patrick's Seminary monthly Mind Mass will be celebrated for Fr. Gene Konkell, S.S., who died September 14, 2012, at 81 years of age on the feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. It will be celebrated at St. Patrick's Seminary Chapel, 320 Middlefield Rd., Menlo Park, on Tuesday morning, November 6th at 7:45 a.m. All who attend are invited for the breakfast to follow in the dining hall.

Father Konkell often celebrated Mass at St. Thomas Aquinas and had many friends there who attended Mass and then accompanied him over to the Prolific Oven Coffee Shop for breakfast..

Update from Paul Prochaska:

Some of you are at least somewhat aware of my current medical maladies and knew that I was facing surgery on my right wrist in the second week of October. Thankfully, I am now past the surgery, and it appears to have been successful: the abscess is draining well. The challenge is that the full recovery and restoration time will be 6 to 8 weeks, but it seems that I can do most of this outside of the hospital, and gradually resume my “normal” life and activities! Thanks be to God! Please pray for both my ongoing physical healing and for lots of patience, as I struggle with the limitations of moving through this time of par-

tial “musical disability” and face the daunting task of re-training my hand to learn how to play the guitar, again.

— Paul Prochaska; Director & Cantor:
10:30 STA Mass Music Ministry

Fr. Hester recommends: “Faith, Courage and Human Rights,” a talk by Fr. Cedric Prakash, S.J., human rights activist who stood in defense of Muslim victims of the 2002 Ahmedabad, India, riots. The talk is Sunday, November 11, 2–4 pm, First Presbyterian Church, 1140 Cowper St., Palo Alto, and will be followed by traditional treats of Diwali, the Hindu holiday of light. The event is sponsored by IF, independent non-profit that supports grassroots community action as the key to social change and social justice. Sliding scale donation: www.integrities.org.