

# Steeple Talk

Volume 7, No. 2

April 7, 2013

## *News from the STA Mass communities:*

**7:15 Daily Mass:** Pastor Fr. Matt Stanley arranged for a shorter Paschal candle to be used for Easter Season Masses. The flame in the tall candle originally installed at the Easter Vigil was not visible to normal-sized folks.

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

**8:45 Sunday Mass:** Thanks to the liturgy committee who decorated the Easter altar and to all who brought extra flowers.

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

**12:00 Sunday Mass:** Enjoy the sounds of Gregorian chant—and join in the chant, too.

**12:15 Daily Mass:** Residents of Channing House are frequently in attendance at this Mass.

## Update on unhoused “guests”:

For the past six months, the front porch of St. Thomas Aquinas church has been the camping place of three unhoused gentlemen. Many of you who attend Mass here have spoken with the men, welcomed them, befriended them, invited them into services, brought them food, given them money, and encouraged them—in the spirit of Christ and out of concern and compassion for them.

The Site Committee sponsored two meetings—one in December and the other in March—at which two local homeless outreach specialists, social workers with many years of experience, educated us about social services for the homeless available in Santa Clara County. At least two dozen persons attended each meeting.

Our “tribe” of three didn’t become homeless overnight, as we learned from the social workers and from the City of Palo Alto

police officers in the Special Investigative Detail. Both of these service providers have known the trio for years, have helped them find housing and then watched them lose housing, primarily due to behaviors exacerbated by drugs, alcohol and mental health issues.

It was those unrestrained behaviors that proved to be the proverbial straw in the case of “our guys.” Neighbors were complaining to the parish about loud and inappropriate behavior late at night, and then the police were called—several times. The Site Committee members decided to be very clear with the gentlemen about behaviors that would not be tolerated and hoped they could live within those parameters. Unfortunately, they could not. So the fellows were asked to move on.

We learned that enabling addicts, in this case, made it eas-



St. Thomas Aquinas Church is a safe place for them to drink and thereby lose their tenuous hold on sobriety. We learned that the Palo Alto police officers are responsive, knowledgeable and kind. We learned that good intentions are not always enough but hope that the many kind gestures extended by members of our community did make a difference in the lives of our winter visitors.

## *STA Site Committee plans:*

**Monthly Meeting:**  
2nd Thursday of the month

**Next regular Site meeting:**  
Thursday, April 11, 2013  
7:30 pm, Thomas House Library

- Agenda (tentative):**
- Homeless follow-up
  - Theater hall
  - Kitchen remodeling
  - Library

**Monthly newsletter:**  
Sunday before 2nd Thursday

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

## Thomas House spaces:

**Space for more books:**  
Stop by the Thomas House after Mass this morning and check out the shelves and mirror in the main entrance foyer. Jan Dedek has constructed a beautiful set of shelves and a frame for a large mirror donated by Helen Baumann.



The shelves will fill up quickly with books from the ever-expanding library collection. And the mirror visually expands the dimensions of

the foyer. Thank you, Jan, for contributing your craftsman’s skills once again to the Thomas House!

**Reserve space in TH:**  
If your committee or group would like to reserve meeting space in the Thomas House for a regular meeting, now is the time to ask for the space. Contact the Parish Office at 494-2496 and put your reservation in before April 15. Regular parish committees have priority but only until April 15.

**Theater space below:**  
The Thomas House basement hall is about to become the Thomas House Theater! Thanks to the determination of Helen Baumann, an overhead projector has been installed, a DVD player acquired, and a wall has been painted with special “screen” paint. The Site Committee will be holding movie nights, with donations going toward the cost of installing a chair lift down to the basement hall. Stay tuned...!

**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.

## Parish pathways:

**Spirituality Tuesday Assembly:**  
7-8:30 p.m. at St. Albert's Hospitality Center:

**April 9: Key Moments in the History of the Catholic Church: The Catholic Reformation Part II.** Fr. Matt will lead the discussion.

**April 16: The Book of Revelation** has a long history of misinterpretation by those trying to use it as a literal prediction of current and even future events. Fr. Jose Antonio Rubio of St. Patrick Seminary will explain symbols, meaning and importance of this Scripture.

**April 23: Vatican II: Our Church and Our Lives.** Susan Olsen, parish Director of Religious Education, will lead the exploration of this council which shaped the modern Catholic Church.

**April 30: So Many Faces of Mary.** Michael Gray will share the origin and history of lesser known names used in devotion to Mary.

**Parish staff update:**

A new staff member has been hired: Sarah Landers, Assistant to the Director of Youth, Alley Torres (her new married name).

**"Dinner by the Sea"**

**April 13:**

Tickets for the annual Crab Dinner Dance—"Dinner By The Sea"—are on sale after Mass.

Knights of Columbus representatives will be selling tickets to this favorite parish event. The evening starts at 6 p.m. with a silent auction and no host bar on Saturday, April 13, in Seton School Auditorium, 1095 Channing Avenue, Palo Alto. Dinner begins at 7:30, followed by festivities and dancing. Adults are \$40, children \$15.

**Contact:** crabdinnerdancetickets@yahoo.com, or Michael Lin (650.856.0186) or Jerry Lucha (650.424.9660). Call Jerry if you have auction items to offer.

## From the church steps:

**Altar flower power is needed:**

The 8:45 Mass liturgy team manages the STA altar decorations throughout the year. They are issuing *an urgent call* for one or two volunteers to take on the arrangement of altar flowers one Sunday a month right now—since two volunteers have recently "retired". It would be great to have a volunteer from one of the other Mass communities. The commitment would be for buying (reimbursable, of course) and arranging the altar flowers one Sunday per month—with Advent and Lent off. The work is actually done on Saturday morning. It is great if someone and a friend would like to do it together. It doesn't have to be a single person. If interested, please call Sally Benson at (408)972-5843 or Margie Harrington at (650)324-1793. Don't be shy—guidance is available, if you are a novice with flowers. Just call and volunteer!

**Good Friday and Easter at STA:**

The Good Friday Liturgy at STA was well attended. The reading of the Passion of Christ was solemn and holy. Seeing the community venerate the cross was very moving. The connection and love of our crucified Lord was palpable and intimate. Easter Sunday brought the annual throng of worshipers—SRO, as we say in the theater. We were so happy to see many attendees at Easter Mass and receiving Holy Communion.

"All are welcome in His name."

—Charlotte Gross

**Church interior progress:**

**Sound:** The first phase of the improved sound system was installed before Easter. Lectors quickly became aware of the sensitive nature of the new microphone. Mikes can be individualized for musicians and lectors. New speakers provide clear sound

throughout the interior space. The presider will be audible even if he turns his head. A loop system for the hearing impaired will be activated soon and those with bluetooth hearing aids will be able to hear clearly. Speakers in the Bride's Room and the vestibule will be installed. More details are forthcoming. Thanks to Bill Voorhees who has taken the lead on this part of the renovations.

**Lighting:** This is a multi-layered job, including design, instructions for implementation by a contractor, and then a lighting integrator to make it work. Before bids will be accepted, the approval of the diocesan Arts and Environment Committee and the bishop must be received. The consultants working with our Interior Committee are the same people who are working on Carmel Mission Church, so they know how to treat an historic place of worship. —Judy Foley, Chairperson