

MINISTRY OF THE WORD

ADULT EDUCATION: CCL (CENTER FOR CELEBRATING LIFE) Provides opportunities that enrich mind, body and spirit. We call upon members of the STM Parish, as well as guests outside the Parish, to share their knowledge, skills and talent with the larger STM community. CCL provides opportunities for adults to experience all aspects of growth and development and leads them to appreciate the many gifts God has given them. Events are held on several evenings throughout the year. Additional information on these events can be found in our Sunday bulletin. New members are welcome.

Contact: Rosemary Horkay- 973-227-0719
Sr. Agnes Bernard-973-226-4948

MARRIAGE PREPARATION/PRE-CANA: Pre-Cana is a ministry to engaged couples who are preparing to celebrate the Sacrament of Marriage. Members of the Pre-Cana Team are usually (but not exclusively) married couples who are living joyful married lives. This team sponsors two Pre-Cana Marriage Sessions which take place at Saint Thomas More Church, usually in November and March. The responsibilities of the Team include: welcome, hospitality, sharing of experiences and insights, and being a supportive presence to the younger couples. The Team has several planning sessions a year.

Contact: Fr. John Gabriel- 973-227-0055

BAPTISMAL TEAM: The Baptismal Team helps to welcome young parents and prepare them for the baptism of their children through support, presence and continued outreach. The Team takes part in the preparation class required of all parents before the baptism of their children. This class, which takes place monthly, helps parents to learn more about the Sacrament of Baptism as well as exploring how the addition of children to a family changes a marriage relationship. The Baptismal Team is also present during the celebration of baptisms (usually once a month except during Lent) to welcome new families, assist with hospitality and represent the parish community. The Team also helps with follow-up after baptisms by continued outreach and support of new parents in their job of Christian parenting.

Contact: Adian King- 973-227-5786
Greg Quinn-973-228-3270

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION/CCD: Our program is for children in grades Kindergarten through Grade 9 (classes for Grade 9 will begin in the September of 2005). Catechesis is built upon proclaiming the Word, faith experience, celebration of sacraments, and service. Our goal is to have the children realize that being a Catholic Christian is a way of life. It is a spiritual journey that one walks to grow in faith through scripture and tradition, prayer, worship and to bear fruit by using his or her gifts to make a Christian difference in the world. Children meet once a week from September through May. Grades 1 through 6 meet Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday mornings from 7:45 am to 8:40 am. Buses are provided to bring the children to school after class. Grade 7 meets on Monday evening from 7:00 pm to 8:00 pm and Grade 8 meets on Tuesday evening from 7:00 pm to 8:00 pm. Sunday classes for Grades K-through 6 are held from 11:15 am to 12:15 pm for those students who are unable to attend the morning classes.

Contact: Cabrina Kinslow- 973-227-3607

CATECHIST/RELIGIOUS EDUCATION TEACHER: Dedicated, faith -filled parishioners (men, women, and members of our high school Youth Group) who volunteer their time and talent to teach Grades K through 8 our Catholic Christian faith. Catechists work together using a text provided by the CCD Center to prepare and present the lessons to the children each week. Time commitment is one and a half hours a week while CCD is in session.

Contact: Cabrina Kinslow- 973-227-3607

EVANGELIZATION COMMITTEE: is currently a function of the Pastoral Council. It is the goal of St. Thomas More parish to create a separate Evangelization Committee whose job it will be to provide opportunities for parish outreach to those members of our community who are not practicing their faith and to welcome and encourage them to take a more active role. This committee will also develop ways of encouraging all parishioners to deepen their faith lives and relationship to Jesus Christ. Those interested in learning more about this committee should contact the Pastoral Council

Contact: Rick Triano- 973-808-9686

BIBLE STUDY: Read, discuss and reflect on the books of the Bible in our Catholic tradition in a friendly, casual setting every Friday evening from 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm in the Library.

Contact: Fr. Gene Gniewyk- 973-227-0055
Joyce Cimera- 973-403-3332

PRAYER GROUP: This group meets every Thursday at 7:00 pm in church to pray the Rosary. Join us as we pray for our Church, our priests, peace in our world and for the sick and suffering.

Contact: Gail Bottone- 973-227-0677

RCIA: (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults) This process is for welcoming and preparing those who are joining the Catholic Church and for baptized Catholics who have not yet completed the Sacraments of Initiation. It is open to all parishioners as a means to grow in appreciation and knowledge of the truths and traditions of our Catholic faith. Sessions are conducted by a group of parishioners (RCIA Team) who commit themselves to share their experience of faith with catechumens and candidates by discussing faith related issues and preparing assigned topics for the instruction of those in the RCIA process. Weekly sessions are held from September through May on Thursday evenings, 7:30 pm to 9:00 pm.

Contact: Fr. Gene Gniewyk- 973-227-0055

CORNERSTONE: An annual 26 hour parish retreat for men and women, Cornerstone provides adult members of the parish time to examine their relationship with God. It is an invitation to engage in quiet reflection and to become actively involved in one's own spiritual development. There is also the opportunity to develop new relationships with fellow parishioners. Men's Cornerstone is held in the fall and Women's Cornerstone is held in the spring. The retreat begins on a Friday evening and concludes on a Saturday evening with a closing Mass. Family and friends are encouraged to attend this closing liturgy.

Contact: Joanne Gebbia- 973-882-0818
Rick Polo- 973-244-5955

THEOLOGY ON TAP: A ministry to young adults that began in the Archdiocese of Chicago and currently taking place in several locations in the Archdiocese of Newark (and in the West Essex area). Young adults (20's & 30's) meet periodically in a local restaurant or bar to discuss issues important to young Catholics, to share their faith and to support one another in friendship. Interested young adults should contact the parish office to determine time and location of St. Thomas More involvement in this important ministry.

Contact: Fr. John Gabriel- 973-227-0055

RESPECT FOR LIFE: This committee seeks to educate the parish on issues concerning **respect** for all **human life** as taught by the Catholic Church. These issues include euthanasia, abortion, AIDS, cloning, the elderly and the disabled. The responsibilities of this committee are to plan events which will foster an attitude of awareness for the respect of all life and to encourage involvement in political issues which are pertinent to the teachings of our faith.

In addition members of this committee facilitate prayer for and involvement in the Pro-Life Apostolate of the Church. The committee meets monthly to discuss issues and to plan and coordinate events with guest speakers.

Contact: Rosemary Grieco- 973-256-3471

STM STUDENT TV: Since 1984 students of STM Parish Community have been learning to produce 28 minute video productions which proclaim God's Word. This endeavor was prompted by a decline in quality TV programs. Each week two productions are aired on Comcast Cable (excluding the summer months). "Teen/Kids Talk" addresses topics of interest to young people, while "What's the Good Word" addresses topics of interest to adults. Those who do the show are given the directive that it must be God-centered and value oriented. The crew meets on Saturdays from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm to film productions. Anyone who is interested in learning how to film, edit or to be part of these productions in any capacity is welcome.

Contact: Catherine Magia- 973-882-8352

CURSILLO: Cursillo (pronounced cur-see-yo) means "Little Course in Christian living." It originated on the Spanish island of Majorca in 1947, and came to the United States in 1957. The Cursillo has one purpose: To give those who participate a deeper understanding of basic Christian truths. This is done in two ways: First, through a three day course in the fundamentals of spiritual life conducted by both priests and lay people; Secondly, through a voluntary follow-up program to sustain a person in his or her desire to live more fully as a Christian. The Cursillo is similar to Marriage encounters and other renewal programs and is an official part of the Roman Catholic Church. For more information visit the web **site:www.mycursillo.com**

Contact: Dominic Messina- 973-808-1951

CHRISTIAN FOUNDATIONS IN MINISTRY: A three-year program of spiritual formation and education conducted by the Archdiocese of Newark. Those who desire to enrich their understanding of the Catholic Church and deepen their own spiritual life may call the Ministerial Development Center of the Archdiocese for information and a brochure at 973-497-4350

MINISTRY OF WORSHIP

MUSIC MINISTRY: The music ministry enhances the worship and leads the congregation in the songs and responses during our Eucharistic Celebrations and other services throughout the year. If God has given you the gift of song or the gift to play a musical instrument join us as we play and sing joyfully to the Lord.

CANTOR/LEADER OF SONG

Welcomes the people and helps them to locate the necessary music that will be used by the congregation and encourages them to participate in the Celebration of the Eucharist by leading them in song. Rehearsals are by appointment.

ADULT CHOIR

The Adult Choir leads and inspires the congregation to join in participating at the Eucharistic Celebrations for Christmas Eve and the Easter Vigil, by singing appropriate hymns, psalms, acclamations and responses. Rehearsals are Thursdays evenings at 8:00 pm in Church for several weeks before each occasion.

CHILDREN'S CHOIR

Children grades K through 4 will learn the basics of music; will strengthen and stretch their voices, and will sing on pitch and in rhythm. They also learn about the liturgical year, special feast days and God centered songs/hymns. We meet every Monday afternoon, September through June, from 4:30 to 5:15 pm. Children participate as often as possible at the 10:00 am Mass and at the 4:30 pm Mass on Christmas Eve.

BELL CHOIR

The Bell Choir meets on Thursday evenings from 6:00 to 7:30 pm in O'Connor Hall for several weeks before the Christmas Eve Midnight Mass, the Easter Vigil Mass and several other Eucharistic Celebrations throughout the year. They also play at weddings on request. Join us as we ring out a joyful sound to the Lord.

TEEN CONTEMPORARY ENSEMBLE

This group is made up primarily of high school and junior high school students along with several adults. We invite and welcome singers and instrumentalists alike. We enjoy getting our youth involved in praising God with the wonderful gift of music. The group meets for rehearsal at 6:00 pm on Sunday before the 7:00 pm Mass. The music for this mass is more contemporary in flavor.

Contact: Rita Maggio- 973-882-4966

EUCCHARISTIC MINISTRY: Those who desire to serve in this ministry should be active practicing Catholics who have completed the Sacraments of Initiation. The ministers assist the priests with the distribution of the Body and Blood of Christ at weekend Masses, holy days, special liturgies and sacramental celebrations throughout the year. Training sessions take place twice a year. Ministers are required to assist at Mass about two times a month.

Contact: Fr. Gene Gniewyk- 973-227-0055
Jeanette Milne- 973-227-1174

USHERS: We are always in need of parishioners who can commit themselves to one Mass each Sunday in a ministry of welcome and hospitality. Ushers seat worshipers as needed, collect offerings, guide those who are bringing the gifts to the altar, assist with procession for Communion, and distribute Sunday bulletins and programs after Mass. Time commitment extends about 15 minutes before and after assigned Mass.

Contact: Fr. Gene Gniewyk- 973-227-0055

LITURGY COMMITTEE: This Committee helps in planning all of the celebrations that take place in our church including Sunday Mass, holidays feasts and special celebrations. We plan and carry out the decoration of our worship space to give full meaning to the signs and symbols of our faith in accordance with guidelines set forth by the Worship Office of the Archdiocese of Newark. We work with the parish music ministry and other liturgical ministries to insure that our community prayer together is as beautiful as possible. If you are creative, enjoy decorating, have a flair for the artistic, and desire to learn more about our church and its celebrations, we would welcome your gifts and talents. This Committee meets several times during the year for education and planning, and also to decorate the church before each liturgical season.

Contact: Claudette Murray- 973-227-3547

LECTORS: Ministers of the Word proclaim the Word of Sacred Scripture at Mass and at special liturgies. To prepare for this ministry lectors are asked to pray, read and reflect upon the readings in advance and to take time to learn the proper pronunciation of words. Mass assignments are on rotational schedule

Contact: Fr. Gene Gniewyk- 973-227-0055

LITURGY OF THE WORD FOR CHILDREN: Liturgy of the Word for children Pr-K through Grade 5, takes place during the 10:00 am Sunday Mass. This program enables the children to hear the Sunday readings and the Gospel interpreted at their level of understanding. Before the Rite of the Liturgy of the Word the children are invited to process to a separate area of the building to hear the readings from the Children's Lectionary and to participate in group discussions, directed activities and music. The children return to join the congregation after the Homily.

Contact: Cabrina Kinslow- 973-227-3607

ALTAR SERVERS: Boys and girls from Grade 4 and up are invited to train as Altar servers for Sunday, Holy Day Masses and other rites. Group and individual training take place the fall of each year.

Contact: Fr. Gene Gniewyk- 973-227-0055

YOUTH MINISTRY CORE: The Core Team continually works to create an enriching environment and menu of events for the young people in our community. As mature Christian adults we know the heart's longing is for God and Truth. Teenagers are the casualties in today's cultural war and we need to bring them to a deeper love of God and Truth. Our commitment is to build a strong Youth Group that can help provide young people with the tools needed to deal with the pressures that face them. We encourage teens to be more actively involved in their relationship with God. We all have a need to belong, especially our young people; they are the future of our church and have a significant part in the building up of the Kingdom. The goal of the Core Team is to provide a community of love and acceptance for our teenagers leading them towards their future roles as active members in our church and our world. Meetings are held several times throughout the year.

Contact: Dana Bartello-973-808-0789

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL: Children's Vacation Bible School is held for one week during the summer for children Pre-K (age 4) through Grade 4. Many moms, dads, grandparents and young people (Grades 5 through 8) are needed to volunteer each year to help with various activities based on the theme for the year. If you enjoy working with children and would like to help them grow spiritually while having fun, consider volunteering your time and talents in this ministry.

Contact: Cabrina Kinslow- 973-227-3607

YOUTH MINISTRY: In the first letter to Timothy Paul writes, " Let no one look down on you because of your youth, but be a continuing example of love, faith and purity to believers." The St. Thomas More Youth Group continues to grow and offer fellowship to teenagers in our parish. Each year our Core Team plans an exciting calendar of events such as Youth Retreats, Living Stations of the Cross, and the Homeless Box village. Our primary focus is Jesus and to have the teenagers experience His presence in the Church and in one another, through faith, friendship, and fun. Jesus cherished intimate moments and good times with friends. He invites all of us to have those same kinds of experiences. All high school students grades 9 through 12 are welcome to attend our Sunday evening meetings. We have recently begun a middle school ministry for students in grades 7 & 8 called "Faith Nights" held in the evening on alternate Tuesdays after CCD. Check the Church bulletin for information about all Youth Group events. Hope to see you there!

Contact: Dana Bartello- 973-808-0789

MINISTRY OF COMMUNITY BUILDING

MINISTRY OF HOSPITALITY: Hospitality is vital to our parish community. From welcoming parishioners at Mass, to a reception for new parishioners, Scramble Sunday breakfasts, Lenten lunches and other parish celebrations, the Hospitality Committee reaches out beyond our Church to touch and enrich other lives. In answering the call of Jesus Christ this committee fosters a spirit of togetherness and community building. New members are always welcome.

Contact: Sr. Catherine Reilly- 973-227-1687

ECUMENICAL WELCOME WAGON: The Committee members are parishioners of St. Thomas More, members of the Fairfield Reformed Church and the Fairfield Methodist Church. They have put together packets of information about our town and our places of worship as well as coupons from local businesses. Several times during the year the Committee visit the new homeowners to welcome them to our community and deliver these information packets with a friendly "Hello".

Contact: Gail Bottone- 973-227-0677

RENEW/SFSG: Small Faith Sharing Groups are a continuation of Renew. It consists of small groups who meet to read, reflect upon and discuss the upcoming Sunday readings. If you have a desire for a deeper understanding and appreciation of Sacred Scripture please consider joining one of the SFSG groups. Each group has a designated time and place to meet decided by the members of that group. The Renew Committee meets on Monday evenings 6:15 pm to 6:55 pm just prior to the weekly Holy Hour.

Contact: JoAnn Del Russo- 973-575-1749

VOLLEYBALL: Monday evenings at 8:00 pm in the Gym. All are welcome.

Contact: Ted Kossup- 973-227-5695

LINE DANCING: Tuesday nights at 7:00 pm to 8:00 pm (except for the 2nd Tuesday of the Month) in the Gym. Come join us for some exercise, fun and fellowship.

Contact: Joyce Cimera- 973-403-3332

MOMS AND TOTS: Meets every Friday, September through June, from 10:00 am to 12:00 noon in the Library. This is an informal playgroup for toddlers through age 5. Moms, dads, grandparents, and caregivers are welcome. There is no registration or fee required, you may come as often as you like. Fairfield residents and non-residents are welcome.

Contact: Ann Kattermann- 973-276-0376

ROSARY SOCIETY: The St. Thomas More Rosary Society has been an active organization for almost 40 years. They have and continue to run several parish fundraisers throughout the year and serve the church in various ways. They have monthly meetings which begin with recitation of the Rosary in church followed by a business meeting and refreshments. Membership is open to any Catholic women.

Contact: Bonnie Fritz- 973-256-0407

LEGION OF MARY: The Roman Legion, from which the Legion of Mary takes its name, has come down through the centuries illustrious for loyalty, courage, discipline, endurance, and success. Mary's Legion must put on the whole armor of God. Its members strive to live the Gospel. Loyalty to God's commandments and His Church; Courage to stand up for one's faith; Discipline to battle the forces of evil; Endurance to stand up to the pressures of the world; Success in works which encompass daily recitation of the rosary, and visitation to the Nursing Homes to bring God's Word and comfort. The Legion also brings the Fatima Statue to families in the parish and encourages auxiliary members to also pray the Rosary daily

Contact: Sandy McNally- 973-227-8517.

CARNIVAL: Held annually in the spring, the Carnival has rides for the children, plenty of food, entertainment, and lots of prizes. The Carnival is a fun way for families to spend time together while helping to support their parish. Many volunteers are needed to make this event a success.

Contact: Paul O'Brien- 973-227-0398
Ted Zoppo- 973-575-9674
John Anastasia- 973-227-9026

55 PLUS CLUB: The 55+Club is a social club which promotes and renews friendship. The group meets September through June on the second Tuesday of the month at 7:30 pm. Planned socials take place throughout the year. Members help build community by collecting food, clothing and items needed for unwed mothers and battered women. They also donate to organizations such as Feed the Children and send financial support to the Missions.

Contact: Joyce Cimera- 973-403-3332

SEPARATED AND DIVORCED: A support group for those in separation and divorce. The Committee provides information and insight to help during this difficult time. We also establish an atmosphere of confidentiality and compassion for those on the journey towards healing.

Contact: Sr. Catherine Reilly- 973-227-1687

BINGO: Bingo is held each week in O'Connor Hall (smoking) and in the gym (non-smoking). Admissions on Friday begin with the sale of pull tabs at 5:45 pm and on Saturday evening after the 5:30 pm Mass. The first game each night is an Early Bird Special at 7:15 pm. Food and refreshment are available.

Contact: Lou De Smet- 973-227-3488

MINISTRY OF SERVICE

MINISTRY OF CONSOLATION: We are a support group who gives comfort and encouragement to those who have lost a loved one. Meeting with others who have experienced a similar journey provides support and the means to sustain one through this difficult time. We meet monthly to discuss pertinent topics and share various materials

Contact: Sr. Catherine Reilly- 973-227-1687

GIVING TREE: The Giving Tree is one way our parish can share with those less fortunate at Christmas. After Thanksgiving, gift tags are put on a tree in the vestibule of the Church. Parishioners select a tag, purchase and wrap the gift requested and return it by a specified date. Members of the committee help to identify needy individuals and coordinate this outreach. The committee meets several times before the holidays and to deliver the gifts the week before Christmas. Volunteers are needed to help with the collecting, sorting and delivery of the gifts.

Contact: Rosemary Grieco- 973-256-2471

FOOD PANTRY: Thanks to the generosity of the parishioners of St. Thomas More, our parish food pantry is a registered pantry in Essex County. Those who are served by the pantry are from Fairfield and surrounding areas. Non-perishable items are left in the vestibule of the church and are collected daily. Monetary gifts used to purchase perishables such as milk, eggs and meat, can be left at the Rectory. All those being served by the food pantry appreciate your generosity and the privacy of this pantry.

Contact: Eleanor Culnen- 972-227-0055

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS: This committee deals with issues regarding the maintenance and improvement of the Church, school and rectory buildings at St. Thomas More. They also deal with the beautification and upkeep of parish grounds. With the Pastor and the Finance Committee it seeks to set priorities for needed repairs and improvements. Members of this committee also put their own gifts and talents at the service of the parish community (e.g., electricians, plumbers, landscapers, carpenters, etc.). The committee meets quarterly unless certain projects require more frequent meeting.

Contact: Joe Kocinsky-973-227-4268

HOMEBOUND MINISTRY: If you are lonely, elderly, confined to home or just unable to go to church, the St. Thomas More parish family offers you someone who cares. Volunteers will visit you in your home. They will pray with you and bring you Holy Communion. If you would like to be part of this Ministry or if you are in need of service of this ministry please contact the Rectory.

Contact: Fr. Gene Gniewyk- 973-227-0055

INTERFAITH HOSPITALITY: STM parish family has been involved with the Interfaith Hospitality Network for several years. It is a program that provides a temporary home for families who are in difficult situations and find themselves without housing. For one week during the summer our classrooms turn into bedrooms and our gym into a dining room. A gathering room is provided for our guests to relax, watch TV and socialize. We provide food, cook and serve our guests, organize games and activities for the children and help in any way we can. Many volunteers are needed to help with this program.

Contact: Sandy McNally- 973-227-8517

LAZARUS GROUP: This is a group of parishioners who assist the clergy at Funeral Masses as readers, servers, and Eucharistic Ministers. These devoted volunteers serve the bereaved and give compassionate Christian witness in this ministry.

Contact: Rose Crane- 973-227-6033

SOUP KITCHEN: This ministry conducts an outreach program to serve the needs through Our Lady's Soup Kitchen at Our Lady of the Valley Church in Orange, N.J. The Soup Kitchen takes place on the third Saturday of the month from September through June. A full meal is served at 11:15 am. The volunteer sign up sheet is posted each month in the vestibule of the Church for those who want to help in obtaining, preparing and serving the food. All parishioners age 10 and older are welcome to participate.

Contact: John Heveran- 973-227-7877

SOCIAL CONCERNS: This committee serves as an umbrella designed to support the leaders of ministries dedicated to serving people in need. Each quarter, representatives from the various service ministries assemble to discuss ways to improve on existing efforts to reach out to the community and study attempts to welcome more parishioners who have a desire to serve the hungry, thirsty, stranger, ill and imprisoned.

Contact: Greg Quinn- 973-228-3270

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE: This Committee helps to keep the community aware of events and opportunities in our parish. We publish the parish newsletter "The Tower" several times a year, as well as administering the parish website (www.stmchurch.net). The committee also coordinates publicity for parish events. If you enjoy writing, are good with computers, or have other pertinent gifts and interests, we encourage you to join the Communications Committee.

Contact: Donna Macon-973-882-8247

FINANCE COMMITTEE: The committee is appointed by the Pastor and is responsible for assisting and advising the Pastor concerning the administration of the parish, especially as it pertains to financial matters. The Finance Committee helps to oversee the parish budget, prepares a yearly report on finance given to the parishioners, and works within the framework of the Archdiocese of Newark policies regarding church finance and administration. This Committee consists of those skilled in financial and business matters and meets quarterly (and other times as needed).

ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE: Organized in the fall of 2003, this committee summarizes its reason for existence in the following quote from the Earth Charter: "It seeks to inspire in all people a sense of global interdependence and shared responsibility for the well-being of the human family and the larger living world". The committee does this by alerting people of ways we are destroying God's creation and how we are causing damage to people in other parts of our world. They also research ways we can improve our environment right here in Fairfield, and they share this information in our Sunday bulletin. We welcome those who would join us in this ethical endeavor. Meetings are held three times a year.

PUBLIC DISCIPLESHIP: Public Discipleship is a social justice group. It is an opportunity to deepen appreciation for Catholic social teaching. We engage in social analysis and support taking action that brings faith to life in the world.

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS: The Knights of Columbus are a Catholic men's fraternal benefit society. Here at St. Thomas More Parish the Knights of Columbus, council # 6380, are visibly involved in the life of the parish. They sponsor many spiritual, social, charitable and community programs. The Parish Picnic, St. Patrick's Day Corned Beef Dinner, Parish Dinner Dances, clothing drives, blood drives, collecting for the disabled, the unborn, and supporting individuals in our community in need of assistance are some of the areas where the Knights can be seen. We work closely with our Pastor and priests to support them, our parish and community. The Fairfield council is open to new members. Any gentleman over 18 years of age interested please give us a call. We meet the second Tuesday of every month in the KOC Hall located in the STM school building.