Answering the Call
enriching the wider body of Christ

Using Our God
Given Gifts
good stewards of our time and talent

Building a Foundation
stm youth trip to Peru

Celebrating October’s Saints
meet these wonderful heavenly friends

Pray and Play in the Likeness of God
eighth grade retreat

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Whenever a priest gets a call from the Archbishop’s offices, he usually figures there is some change coming. Not always in the sense of a change of assignment or location, but often in one’s role and expectations. That was the case the end of August when I received such a call.

At the middle of the month, Fr. Andrew Kemberling, who has been the Dean of the Southeast Deanery for several years, stepped down from his assignment at St. Vincent de Paul. That also set in motion the need to appoint a new Dean for the Deanery.

Thus the call.

I was informed that Archbishop Aquila was naming me Dean of this Deanery. I thought I would take time in this issue of More Informed to explain a little about the nature of that position and what some of the surrounding affects you might see mean.

First of all, as I have shared in various settings, it is always important that you are aware of the fact of who your pastor is. When I ask that of the children, they often say me. That answer is somewhat correct, but actually wrong.

Your pastor, and the pastor of all the faithful in the Archdiocese of Denver, also called the Church of Denver, is Archbishop Samuel Aquila. That means that he is responsible for the spiritual welfare and the Gospel proclamation for roughly the northern third of the state of Colorado.

There are two other dioceses in our state, Colorado Springs and Pueblo, and their bishops are the pastors of those two Churches.

Now as you can imagine, with the size, both in territory and number of individuals, of Archbishop Aquila’s Church, it is impossible for him be present to all at any given time. To assist him in the pastoral responsibilities

parishes are established in the archdiocese, and different priests are appointed as pastors of those parishes. Thus, I have been pastor of St. Thomas More parish for the past five years, carrying out my role here in the name of your ultimate pastor, Archbishop Aquila.

As you are aware, many parishes are of such a size and nature that they have other priests appointed there to assist in the work of the community.

Here we have three men assigned by the Archbishop. You sometimes hear them referred to as “Assistants” but that is more of a layman’s term. In official Church terminology they are “parochial vicars”, as you see in our parish’s weekly bulletin.

A vicar is one appointed to act in the name and on behalf of another. The Pope is the Vicar of Christ.

Before coming to the parish one of the titles I had was Vicar General. That meant that I was able to speak and act in the name of the Archbishop in matters within the Church of Denver. A parochial vicar is one who acts in the name of the appointed pastor of the parish, working alongside that priest in the daily life of the parish.

I might inject that we have three wonderful parochial vicars here at St. Thomas More that I count on a lot and are a true blessing to the work of the Lord here in our parish family.

The reason for mentioning the term vicar is to help explain what you might see my name being printed as in

" Be a vicar that takes seriously the call to act on behalf of the Lord. "$
some archdiocesan settings in the future. You see as the Dean, I am designated as the Vicar Forane and that is often shown by the initials V.F. following my name. So when you see Msgr. Thomas Fryar, V.F., you now know that stands for Vicar Forane (and not Very Funny.)

The term forane means in the field, or an outlying area. Just as the Archbishop is not able to be at all the parishes at any given time, he similarly is not able to always be present to the priests of his Church and asks certain men, appointed deans or vicars forane, to be present to the local churches in a given area or deanery in his name.

In our case, the Southeast Deanery is composed of several parishes in the southeast region of the metro area and north of the Colorado Springs diocese.

Now what does all that mean for you in your daily life and spiritual journey. Probably very little actually.

I will need to be away from the parish occasionally for meetings and responsibilities, but you will most likely not be affected by that.

And as we are a stewardship parish, I will mention here that I have always seen the call of the priest to take on extra responsibilities outside the norm, as a sign of our being able to give of our time and talent for the work of the Lord. I wouldn’t ask you to do anything that I would not be willing to similarly model in my own stewardship as a disciple.

And although you may not use Latin terms in your home and family, you might look at how you nonetheless have vicars that you ask to take on responsibilities or carry out yourself. A parent might ask an older child to look after and help form the younger children in proper ways of faith and virtue. One might take on the role of helping pass the faith on to others in the name of the community as a catechist or aide in a religious education setting.

We have a group of parishioners who monthly receive a letter asking them in their prayer time to remember and pray on behalf of the wider parish and the Church as a whole (Contact Deacon George Morin if you wish more information on that ministry). And the list can go on and on.

We are all called to recognize how we can live our lives and share our faith in ways that enrich the larger body of Christ. When you speak, pray, or act this coming week, try to be mindful that you are doing it in the name of the Lord. Be a vicar that takes seriously the call to act on behalf of the Lord, for the good of others.

And may God bless you in that response. ◆

—Msgr. Tom
STM Catholic School is turning 25! And our annual fundraiser, the Mane Event, is a great way to celebrate! The Mane Event is a fun and festive evening out, open to all members of our St. Thomas More Catholic School and Parish community! With the name derived from our school mascot, the STM Lions, the Mane Event is the school’s primary fundraiser and includes a live and silent auction, raffles, gifts, live entertainment and more! This year’s exciting Mane Event: A Starry Night, will be on Saturday, November 9 at Palazzo Verdi. Save the date!

Proceeds from the Mane Event are used to fund important school programs, teacher salaries, and much-needed equipment that will directly benefit the students of STM Catholic. In past years, specific purchases from Mane Event proceeds have included security system improvements such as bollards by the entrance, security cameras and monitors, a new Lego Robotics lab, Mimeo boards, mobile Mac and iPad carts, baseball field improvements, textbooks and sound equipment for the gym and stage area. The school tithes 10% of the Mane Event proceeds to the Children’s Charity fund, and STM students choose charities to receive donations from this fund. This evening of fellowship supports Catholic education and serves as an excellent example of faithful stewardship in our community and beyond.

In addition to the big night out for adults, other activities that are part of the Mane Event lineup include a pep rally support for STM Catholic students for students, a Bingo party for families, the calendar raffle with tickets available before and after Masses on two weekends, and “Mane Event Minute,” in which the winning class earns an ice cream party! Another way the students get involved is by creating unique artwork and mementos to be sold at the auction.

We would love for you to join us at the event, but if you cannot attend, there are other ways to support our parish school. First, you can sponsor the Mane Event. There are many sponsorship levels, from $25 for Friends of STM up to $10,000 for our Signature Sponsor. For more information about sponsorships, please contact Lauren Atchity at stmmaneeventsponsorship@gmail.com or visit the sponsorship page on our website: aesbid.org/elp/stm19/Sponsors. In addition, you can bid on items in our silent auction from wherever you are that night! During the weekend of October 26 and 27, there will be a preview of our silent auction items in McCallin Hall after Masses. During this preview, you can register to bid online. There will be many fantastic items, including an opportunity to have dinner with Archbishop Aquila and Msgr. Tom Fryar at the Trinity Center, mountain getaways and more!

We are so grateful to all who have attended and supported the Mane Event over the years, making possible all the wonderful things that happen at our school. Whether you are a parishioner, a parent, a relative or a friend of our parish school or preschool, please consider joining us for a joyous evening in support of Catholic education. We hope to see you there!

You’re Invited to the Mane Event!

Come support our parish school, STM Catholic

Saturday, November 9:
At the Palazzo Verdi
6363 S Fiddlers Green Cir, Greenwood Village, 80111

With an exciting theme of “Starry Night,” this fun evening includes a live band, an open bar, food and fun! All parishioners are welcome!

Buy your tickets today online at www.aesbid.org/elp/STM19
Watch upcoming bulletins and our school website at stmcatholic.org for details.
During Stewardship of Time and Talent Weekend, August 24 and 25, parishioners prayerfully contemplated the gifts, talents, skills and abilities God has generously given to each one. They discovered exciting opportunities to use their own unique talents to bring joy to others.

Parish publications, a video, cards in the pews and talking with ministry representatives at the Time and Talent Fair in McCallin Hall after all weekend Masses provided wonderful inspiration for parishioners to get involved.

To further explore and learn about our parish’s various ministries, read our weekly bulletin and our new parish guidebook, mailed to all registered parishioners in July. Explore the ministry directory on our website at stthomasmore.org (under “Get Involved” in the menu bar, click “Ministries and Programs”). Find a couple of ministries that interest you and fit your talents. Then, contact the representatives to begin your journey.
The Impact of 40 Days for Life

experience the transformation of prayer and fasting

By Margarita Nelson

40 Days for Life is an international campaign of prayer, fasting and peaceful community involvement to end abortion world-wide. Since its founding in 2007, over 16,000 babies have been saved from abortion (that we know of) due to over 1,000,000 volunteers praying in 855 cities from 61 countries.

It was recently featured in the hit movie *Unplanned*, which tells the story of Abby Johnson, a former Planned Parenthood director who witnessed an ultrasound guided abortion and has since devoted her life to ending abortion in America.

God has used the period of 40 days throughout history to bring about major transformation. Noah experienced transformation during 40 days of rain; Moses was transformed by 40 days on Mount Sinai; Jesus transformed the world following His 40 days in the desert; the disciples were transformed after spending 40 days with Jesus following His resurrection. What will God accomplish when people of faith across our community and beyond unite for 40 days of prayer and fasting, pulling out all the stops to end the violence of abortion?

Each spring and fall, our parishioners participate in a local 40 Days for Life campaign. Past 40 Days for Life Prayer Campaigns have shown us:

- 104 abortion facilities closed world-wide after a 40 Days for Life campaign.
- The movie *Unplanned* has led record-number participants to pray on the sidewalks in front of local abortion facilities.
- 191 abortion workers like Abby Johnson have left their jobs.

The abortion industry advocates partial-birth abortion and abortion up to the day of birth, including infanticide. Every mom and baby entering an abortion facility need you to be praying on the sidewalk to show them love and hope.

During the Spring 2019 40 Days for Life campaign in Denver:

- At least 2 women (that we know of) received life-affirming care at Marisol Health (across the street from Planned Parenthood) instead of at Planned Parenthood.
- Marisol Health saw 40% more walk-ins during 40 Days for Life than during the 40 days prior.
- After the release of the movie *Unplanned*, Mass attendance across the street from Planned Parenthood in Denver increased by 52% and 162 new prayer volunteers signed up online.
- A total of 940 people attended the 27 Masses held across the street from Planned Parenthood.

40 Days for Life is going on now through November 3 and provides an opportunity to pray, fast and participate in peaceful prayer vigils to end abortion. For more information visit www.40DaysforLife.com.
Near Death Awareness

Participating in hospice during the final days of a loved one's life gives profound insight into God's intentions for natural death. The knowledge and skills, shared with patients, family and friends who are assisting in the passing to new life, are a reflection on the dignity of each person's image in the likeness of God.

"Near Death Awareness" describes the experiences of people at the end of life. “NDA” takes away the mystery of dying and offers suggestions on what is needed to die peacefully in those who are facing a slow death through illness or aging.

The dying often know what he/she needs to die peacefully. Be prepared to assist in these final wishes. Give the patient frequent updates on your efforts to fulfill the request.

Family and friends who are willing and able to accompany the dying on their journey may want to avail themselves of some of the following recommendations:

- Pay attention to everything the dying person says. Share with others close to the patient to clarify the message being conveyed.
- Watch for key signs: a glassy-eyed look, appearance of staring through you, seemingly inappropriate smiles or gestures, efforts to get out of bed, reaching towards someone or something unseen. The dying may be experiencing visions of who or what will be waiting for them in the next life.
- Respond to any confusing statements with gentle inquiries. “Can you tell me what’s happening?” “You seem different today. Can you tell me why?”
- Accept and validate what the dying person tells you.
- Don’t argue or challenge, which could lead to the dying person’s frustration and isolation.
- Be aware of a dying person’s use of life experiences to talk about death.
- If you don’t know what to say, don’t say anything. Consider just being there to hold their hand, smile or stroke his/her head.

The dying may speak of their experiences to let you know they are not alone, they are preparing to go to another place and may know when they will go.

Through this process, anxiety and fear evolve into comfort and peace.

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Respect of All Life Prayer

God our Creator,

We give thanks to you, who alone has the power to impart the breath of life as you form each of us in our mother’s womb.

Grant, we pray, that we, whom you have made stewards of creation, may remain faithful to this sacred trust and constant in safeguarding the dignity of every human life.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever. Amen.

– *The Roman Missal*, 2010, ICEL
Celesteing October’s Saints

meet these wonderful heavenly friends

By STM Parish Staff

While it is still ordinary time, the month of October is full of extraordinary celebrations. In addition to it being the month of the Rosary and Respect Life month, we also celebrate some of the Church’s most dynamic and magnanimous saints and feast days.

As Catholics, we celebrate these men and women because they reveal God’s goodness and show us how to live a life of virtue.

St. Josemaría Escrivá said of saints, “They were people like us, flesh and bone, with failings and weaknesses, who managed to conquer and master themselves for the love of God. Let us consider their lives and, like bees who distill precious nectar from each flower, we shall learn from their struggles.”

St. Thomas More Catholic Parish is a custodian of many of these saint’s relics (marked with an * below). You can see all saints images whose relics we keep in the Devotional Cove across from the parish library.

* St. Thérèse of Lisieux — October 1

“Let us love, since that is what our hearts were made for.”

Marie-Francoise-Therese Martin joined the Carmelites at the age of 14. She said her purpose was to save souls and pray for priests. She did not hold any important positions, assume any weighty responsibilities or engage in mortifications. She lived a life of simplicity and deep love for God. She called her brand of spirituality “the little way.” She held to three principles: sanctity without spectacle, being as a child in relation to God with total trust in Him and devotion to the Holy Face.

When Therese was 22 she was granted permission by the prioress to consecrate herself as a victim to divine justice, taking on the punishment due to sinners. In 1896 she showed the first signs of tuberculosis. The next 18 months of her life were filled with physical distress and spiritual trials. She died at the age of 24.

Guardian Angels — October 2

“See that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you that their angels in heaven always look upon the face of my heavenly Father.” (Matthew 18:10)

The Feast of Guardian angels was added to the Roman calendar by Pope Paul V in 1615, but devotion to angels has been practiced since the founding of the Church.

Because of God’s loving providence, guardian angels have a special role in helping us avoid spiritual dangers and achieve salvation. St. Jerome said, “Great is the dignity of the human soul, since each of them has from the very outset of his life an angel to safeguard him.”

Angels are often seen in scripture providing protection and help. St. Raphael helps Tobit, St. Michael helps Daniel, an unnamed angel helped St. Peter escape prison. And of course, Jesus indicated that there are guardian angels for individuals in the gospel of Matthew. And each angel is as unique and individual as humans are from each other.
* St. Francis of Assisi — October 4

“Lord, make me and instrument of thy peace. Where there is hatred, let me sow love.”

**Patronage: State of Colorado, Animals, Ecology**

Francis, the son of a wealthy merchant, spent his youth in frivolous pursuits before a military tour. He was captured and spent a year imprisoned. Through divine intervention he experienced a profound conversion and gave away all his possessions and inheritance, living the remainder of his life in radical poverty.

Francis spent time in solitude, prayer and manual labor. He begged for food and the needs of his followers (Friars Minor and Order of Poor Clares). Francis bore the stigmata, suffered debilitating illness, blindness and great pain. He saw God in all things prompting him to compose “Canticle of the Sun.”

Francis was the first person to place a manger and baby in a church for Christmas thus beginning the tradition of the nativity set. Francis is known for his humility and awe for God in all creation.

Our Lady of the Rosary — October 7

“The Rosary is my favorite prayer. A prayer so simple and so rich.” —Pope St. John Paul

The Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary was established in 1573 in thanksgiving for the Christian victory at Lepanto over the Ottoman forces. Before the battle, Pope Pius V realized that the Christians had the disadvantage, so he led a rosary procession in Rome and called for all of Europe to pray the Rosary for victory. All but 13 of 300 Turkish ships were captured or sunk, saving Europe from Islamic invasion.

Pope Pius V declared the day as feast Our Lady of Victory. In 1716, Pope Clement XI extended the feast throughout the Universal Church and renamed it “Our Lady of the Rosary.”

Pope Pius XII called the rosary a compendium of the gospel. Through it, we are able to share in the joys and sorrows of the Life of Christ. In her apparitions, the Blessed Mother repeatedly emphasized the importance of praying the rosary daily.

Pope St. John XXIII — October 11

“Every believer must be a spark of light and center of love.”

**Patronage: Christian Unity, Second Vatican Council**

Pope John XXIII was a northern Italian born in 1881. He grew up in a humble farming family which helped form his down-to-earth nature. He was ordained in 1904. During World War I he worked as a medic and chaplain for the Italian army. He was appointed bishop and eventually cardinal of Venice. He was made Pope in 1953. He was the oldest pope in more than 200 years at age 76.

Many of the cardinals who elected him considered him an “interim pope” because of his advanced age. But that was far from the truth. During his pontificate, Pope John XXIII enlarged the College of Cardinals for more international representation and opened the Second Vatican Council. His writings emphasized social justice, world peace and human rights.

He was canonized with Pope St. John Paul II by Pope Francis in 2014.
*St. Teresa of Avila — October 15

“Let nothing disturb you. Let nothing frighten you. Everything passes away except God.”

**Patronage: Headache Sufferers, Spanish Catholic Writers**

Teresa was vibrant; she had fire and passion. She was a ravishing young woman, stunning to look at, outgoing, cheerful, charming and a great conversationalist. She described herself as being, “strikingly shrewd when it came to mischief.” She loved to laugh and have everyone around her laughing.

Teresa brought her humor into the convent with statements such as “We do not want gloomy saints in Carmel.” She liked parties and music and played the tambourine, castanets and drum. She liked perfume and fine clothes, chivalry, romance and the color orange. Teresa was a person of great natural gifts. Her enthusiasm and lively wit were balanced by her sound judgment and psychological insight. Theresa was a woman of substance as well as charm.

After falling in love with Jesus, Teresa used all these traits to bring about the reform of Carmel and the start of the Discalced Carmelites. She is the author of “Interior Castle,” “The Way of Perfection” and an autobiography.

St. Luke — October 18

“After investigating everything...I have written it down...so that you may realize the certainty of the teachings you have received.” (Luke 1:3—4)

**Patronage: Artists, Physicians, Surgeons, Brewers**

St. Luke, St. Paul’s “beloved physician,” was a Gentile who wrote for Gentile Christians. He did not know Jesus while he was on earth, but he used investigative skills and gathered eye witness accounts of the life of Christ to write his gospel. He especially emphasized the role of the Blessed Mother. The level of detail in Luke’s gospel about Christ’s life before his public ministry has led historians to believe that Luke must have known Mary personally and heard about these events first-hand from her.

Very little is known about St. Luke’s life outside of what is in scripture. He accompanied St. Paul during many of his missionary journeys, and remained with him during his imprisonment leading to his martyrdom (2 Timothy 4:11). Christian tradition also holds that he was a painter who created some of the first icons of the Blessed Mother, Sts. Peter and Paul and Christ himself.

Pope St. John Paul II — October 22

Never ever give up hope....never tire and never become discouraged. Do not be afraid.”

**Patronage: Families, Young Catholics, World Youth Day**

Pope John Paul II’s life was shrouded in suffering and difficulties. Regardless, he was a model of hope for Catholics around the world who radiated Christ’s love. Over a half billion people saw him during his travels making him the most seen person in human history.

St. John Paul II was born in Wadowice, Poland. He lost his mother, father and older brother before he was 24 years old. He survived Nazi and Communist occupation in Poland, attended seminary in secret and rose to become auxiliary bishop of Krakow and eventually cardinal. He attended all four sessions of the second Vatican council before becoming the first non-Italian Pope in 455 years in 1978. In his 27 years as pope, he wrote 14 encyclicals and five books, canonized 482 saints, beatified 1,338 people, survived an assassination attempt and suffered from Parkinson’s disease. ♦
Building Families of Virtue

strong virtue and character strengths

By Dcn. Steve Stemper

Would you like more family peace?

We want to bring people together to seek character building for a more positive, intentional environment in our homes. Why character?

Character strengths are always good and they always will benefit us and the people around us. Habits like respect, orderliness, patience, generosity, humility, and honesty are all character strengths.

“Families of Character” is committed to providing families the best tools to make home the most loving and unified place for virtue to grow. One goal is to understand that even if family life feels off course or divided, change is always possible.

We will explore how to develop strong virtue within everyone in the family which leads to healthy relationships, more empathy and understanding, and, ultimately, more family peace.

Join the STM community as we come together in the fall of 2019 to kick off a new Character Building Program using the Small Christian Community framework (groups of 8 to 10 getting together).

We’ll meet once a month for 2 hours, utilizing Families of Character’s program to help us work together for a more positive, intentional environment in our homes. Character is what leads kids to become happy, healthy, productive, successful and faithful adults.

Families of Character

Kickoff Meeting

Monday, September 30 at 7:00–9:00 PM in McCallin Hall

Program Format

Thereafter, once a month, your small group meets together for a 2 hour small group meeting in someone’s home (don’t worry...there’s a guide and format to make hosting and participating a breeze).

Every 4 months, in lieu of the home gathering, all involved come together as a larger community, at STM for the 2 hour gathering (like we are starting off with on Sept 30th).

Between monthly small group meetings, your family will participate in a fun and guided weekly family meeting in your home using the Thrive Journal provided by Families of Character to engage your children in positive and encouraging character building conversations.

There are fun activities to engage everyone in the family to move closer to their goals for that month.

Benefits: Family Unity | A Healthy Conscience
Habitual Selflessness | Willpower

Parents, in particular, who have used this program have found incredible lasting results for their families. We’re sure every participant will benefit.

Cost

$30 for every workbook (1 needed per family), which will be utilized for 4 months (less than your daily coffee habit).

Volunteers Wanted

We are looking for people that would be willing to be small group leaders. You can form your own group or groups will be formed on Monday, September 30.

Questions?

Contact Jordan Langdon at 720.360.8065 or jordan@familiesofcharacter.com. Please visit www.familiesofcharacter.com for more information.
For centuries, the Holy Rosary has been a treasured devotion in the Catholic Church. A deeply contemplative prayer, the Rosary contains a summary of the Christian faith in language and prayers inspired by the Holy Scriptures. When praying the Rosary, Catholics recall the most important events of the lives of Jesus and His Blessed Mother Mary. These events are called “Mysteries” and are divided into four groups of five decades: the Joyful, Luminous, Sorrowful and Glorious Mysteries. Each decade consists of one Our Father, ten Hail Mary’s and one Glory Be.

### How to Say the Rosary

1. Make the Sign of the Cross
2. Begin on the Crucifix and say the Apostle’s Creed.
3. On the first bead, say one Our Father.
4. Say one Hail Mary on each of the next three beads.
5. Say one Glory Be.
6. At the beginning of each decade, announce the mystery to be contemplated. For example, the first Joyful Mystery is The Annunciation. After a short pause for reflection, say one Our Father on the large bead.
7. Recite one Hail Mary on each of the next ten smaller beads, followed by one Glory Be. An invocation such as the Fatima Prayer may be added after each decade.
8. Say the Hail Holy Queen. At the end of the Rosary, the St. Michael Prayer or another Marian prayer is recited.
9. Conclude with the Sign of the Cross.

### The Mysteries of the Rosary

#### Joyful Mysteries
The Five Joyful Mysteries are traditionally prayed on Mondays, Saturdays and, during the season of Advent, on Sundays:
1. The Annunciation
2. The Visitation
3. The Nativity
4. The Presentation in the Temple
5. The Finding in the Temple

#### Luminous Mysteries
The Five Luminous Mysteries are traditionally prayed on Thursdays:
1. The Baptism of Christ in the Jordan
2. The Wedding Feast at Cana
3. Jesus’ Proclamation of the Coming of the Kingdom of God
4. The Transfiguration
5. The Institution of the Eucharist

#### Sorrowful Mysteries
The Five Sorrowful Mysteries are traditionally prayed on Tuesdays, Fridays and, during the season of Lent, on Sundays:
1. The Agony in the Garden
2. The Scourging at the Pillar
3. The Crowning with Thorns
4. The Carrying of the Cross
5. The Crucifixion and Death

#### Glorious Mysteries
The Five Glorious Mysteries are traditionally prayed on Wednesdays and, outside the seasons of Advent and Lent, on Sundays:
1. The Resurrection
2. The Ascension
3. The Descent of the Holy Spirit
4. The Assumption
5. The Coronation of Mary
Hail Holy Queen
Hail, Holy Queen, Mother of Mercy, our life our sweetness and our hope. To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve; To thee do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this valley of tears. Turn then, most gracious advocate, thine eyes of mercy toward us and after this our exile show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus. O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary!
Pray for us, O Holy Mother of God, that we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

O God, whose only begotten Son, by His life, death, and resurrection, has purchased for us the rewards of eternal salvation. Grant, we beseech Thee, that while meditating on these mysteries of the most holy Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary, that we may imitate what they contain and obtain what they promise, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Hail Mary
Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Our Father
Our Father, who art in heaven; hallowed be thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done; on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

Glory be
Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.
As it was in the beginning is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Fatima Prayer
Oh my Jesus, forgive us our sins, save us from the fires of hell, lead all souls to heaven, especially those in most need of Thy mercy.

The Apostle’s Creed
I believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried; he descended into hell; on the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty; from there he will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

Hail Mary
Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

Our Father
Our Father, who art in heaven; hallowed be thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done; on earth as it is in heaven.

Glory be
Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Fatima Prayer
Oh my Jesus, forgive us our sins, save us from the fires of hell, lead all souls to heaven, especially those in most need of Thy mercy.

St. Michael Prayer
St. Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle. Be our protection against the wickedness and snares of the devil. May God rebuke him, we humbly pray, and do thou, O Prince of the heavenly hosts, by the power of God, thrust into hell Satan, and all the evil spirits, who prowl about the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen.
Come to the Water

finding support in the midst of struggle

“All you who are thirsty, come to the water! You who have no money, come, receive grain and eat; Come, without paying and without cost, drink wine and milk!”

–Isaiah 55:1

So often, when we are in the midst of struggle, we feel helpless and alone. But the Lord does not want us to live in that isolation. He wants us to seek help where we can find it, so we can be in union with Him again.

When we don’t know where to turn, let us remember that in the church, we find help and comfort. Check out these ministries, both Catholic and non-denominational, located at St. Thomas More and in Denver. Learn how they can help you overcome your trials and find healing, hope and peace in Jesus Christ.

No man was meant to be an island. Seek help for yourself and your loved ones.

Angel Eyes
Helping families cope with the sudden death of a child

Angel Eyes is a statewide non-profit organization that provides free bereavement counseling and support services to families who have been impacted by the sudden, unexpected loss of an infant, toddler, child, stillbirth, miscarriage or neonatal death.

They also offer educational presentations regarding SIDS, SUID, SUDC, risk reduction and safe sleep, and brings child loss awareness to Colorado communities.

Contact: info@angeleyes.org or 303.320.7771. For more information and for a full list of events, visit angeleyes.org.

Bereavement Support
A support group for those mourning the loss of a loved one

The STM Bereavement support group is a ministry at St. Thomas More that meets twice a year for 12-weeks to help parishioners cope with their losses, to encourage healing and provide support.

They use a model developed by Dr. Alan Wolfelt of The Center for Loss and his book Understanding Your Grief. In it, Dr. Wolfelt explores the physical, emotional, social and spiritual aspects of the journey through grief.

Contact: Bill Ross at billross303@gmail.com or 303.522.1092.

Drogadictos Anonimos
Support for those struggling with drug addiction

Drogadictos Anonimous’ mission is to help all individuals suffering from addiction and want help finding long-term recovery resources and support.

They use a program of twelve spiritual principles aimed to focus on the physical, mental and spiritual condition as a whole and contribute to the individual’s reintegration to a healthy, drug-free life with dignity and efficiency.

Contact: Presdenver@daamerica.org or 303.940.5696. For more information and for testimonials, visit daamerica.org.
**Courage International**

Support for individuals and families of those experiencing same-sex attractions

Courage International is a Catholic apostolate that offers support and resources for those who experience same-sex attractions who are striving to live lives of chastity following the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church. Through Courage International, they receive pastoral support, spiritual guidance, community prayer support and fellowship. Courage International has over 175 chapters world-wide, including one in Denver led by Fr. Dan Norick. It is confidential, welcoming and informative.

Contact: Fr. Dan Norick, dnorick@gmail.com or 720.434.2638. Learn more at courageerc.org.

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**Mount Tabor Counseling**

Catholic counseling and therapy for individuals, couples, families and groups

Mount Tabor Counseling serves Catholics in Colorado through facilitating healing help and practices that are faithful to the teachings of the Catholic Church. Their licensed therapists can address a wide range of emotional, behavioral and spiritual issues. They also offer a grief support group and a pornography recovery group as well as marriage counseling, online counseling and retreats.

Contact: appointments@mounttaborcounseling.com or 303.422.1567. To learn more about their services and team of Catholic therapists, visit mounttaborcounseling.com.

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**Rachel’s Vineyard**

Weekend retreats for those suffering the wounds of abortion

Rachel’s Vineyard is a post-abortive ministry that helps all who have been touched by abortion find healing, forgiveness and hope. Mothers, fathers, grandparents and siblings of aborted children have found help, as well as those who have worked in the abortion industry.

This program is rooted in Christ. Every retreat provides participants the opportunity receive Jesus and his forgiveness.

Contact: Lori at lorgreg@msn.com or 303.904.7414. For more information or testimonies of healing, visit rvrcolorado.org.

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**Stephen Ministry**

Lay caregivers who provide one-to-one support for those facing a life challenge

Stephen Ministry consists of lay caregivers who further the discipleship of Christ by confidentially serving others with care, compassion and prayer. Ministers provide one-to-one Christian care to those who are experiencing a personal crisis, to the bereaved, terminally ill, separated or divorced, unemployed and others facing a crisis or life challenge.

Often times, listening is the only thing needed to help someone.

Contact: stephenministry@stthomasmore.org, John D. at 303.304.0584 or Evelyn M. at 303.741.5458. ♦
Family Made in the Beginning

By Greg Popcak

There is nothing so offensive as the Judeo-Christian vision of the family. That was as true in antiquity as it is now.

We like to think that playing with different family forms is a brave new idea for a brave new world. But the idea that the family could be something other than one man, one woman, and the children they bear is an ancient, pre-Christian notion that’s simply reasserting itself in a post-Christian world.

The ancient world was tremendously tolerant of same-sex households, polygamous households, polyamorous households and every other kind of household you could think of. Archaeologists have the pottery records to prove it.

Yes, at the beginning of time, God created the family as Christians understand it.

He created Eve to be the perfect helper for Adam (cf. Gn 2:18) and gave them the first great commission to “be fertile and multiply” (Gn 1:28).

Before the Fall, God, man, woman and the world lived in what St. John Paul II called “original unity.”

But original sin disrupted that unity. Man and woman became estranged from each other.

The union they enjoyed with God and God’s plan for creation was destroyed (cf. Gn 3:23-24). The world was thrown into chaos (cf. Gn 6).

Little made sense anymore (cf. Gn 11).

After the Fall, men, women, children and all of creation were just shattered bits in a box of odds and ends that the ancient, pre-Judeo-Christian world played with at will.

But as salvation history played out, God not only gave us more hints about His plan for revealing Himself to us, He also gave us a clearer picture of His vision of family.

As time passed, family evolved through grace and from chaos, polygamy, monogamous relationships that could still be broken and, finally, to what it was in the beginning (cf. Mt 19:8) — a lifelong, indissoluble, monogamous relationship between one man, one woman and the children they bore.

The story of this vision of family climaxes with Christ conferring the dignity of a sacrament on a man and a woman at the wedding at Cana (cf. Jn 2:1-12).

In a sense, similar to the way Jesus consecrated bread and wine out of any other elements he could have chosen to celebrate the first Eucharist, Christ
consecrated the relationship between man and woman out of all the possible relationships He could have chosen.

Just like we can’t have a valid Eucharist without bread and wine, we can’t have a valid Christian marriage without man and woman. But why does it matter? Why would God care so much about what a family looks like?

The Church teaches that, as Christians understand it, the human family is an icon of the Trinity. An icon isn’t just a picture.

It’s a window into the world of the sacred. God, in His very nature, is family: three persons, intimately united as one.

The family — as Christianity defines it — gives us the best peek we can get at the inner life of God on this side of heaven.

The story of the Christian vision of family life runs parallel to the story of our salvation because, as God draws nearer, He empowers us to see His face more clearly in the type of family He created in his image.

It’s this unique vision of family that is most capable of communicating the free, total, faithful and fruitful love that flows from God’s own heart.

This is, as St. Paul explains, “a great mystery” that deserves our deepest reverence and respect (Eph 5:32).

When the Church asserts the dignity of this vision of family life, it’s not out of hatred for any other person or household.

Although the Christian family is honored to be an icon of the Trinity, every person is made in the image and likeness of God. Because of that, it’s certainly arguable that every household — to the degree that it attempts to approximate the blessings the Christian vision of family offers — can be used by God for some good.

But to suggest that any other family form is equivalent to the revealed, Christian vision of family is like suggesting that cookies and milk could make a valid Eucharist.

Catholics assert the dignity of the Christian vision of marriage for the simple reason that God ordained it to reveal the importance about Himself and His love for the world.

The Christian vision of marriage and family was not created by us. It was instituted by God. Our job, as disciples, is to promote and defend this vision for the sacred icon that it is. ♦

Reprinted with permission from Our Sunday Visitor. Dr. Greg Popcak is the author of many books including “For Better … FOREVER! The Catholic Guide to Lifelong Marriage.”

A family preparing to celebrate Easter at STM.
When Someone You Love Loses Faith

what can we do to reach them?

By Caroline Rock

The first half of Mass is distracting for me. I hear every foot shuffle on the slate floor and every squeak of the hinges on the heavy wooden doors behind me. I sit waiting for my children to arrive, yet once again this week, they do not come.

My children are now in their late 20’s. They are married with families of their own. For almost a decade, I have prayed that they will soon receive the grace of conversion, and I beg God to forgive me for any part I played in their falling away. While I know I am not the only Catholic to suffer the pain of watching a loved one leave the Church, I often feel very alone in my struggle.

Our Faith is true and offers the grace of the sacraments and Jesus in the Eucharist. Nevertheless, according to a Pew Research poll, for every convert to Catholicism, six Catholics leave the Church. Many just leave religion altogether instead of switching to another Church. Even if our loved ones take up with other denominations, we should long for them to return to the fullness of faith. It is not always easy to carry the torch, however

Why Do They Leave?

The reasons why young adults leave the church are legion. One may associate with friends who reject organized religion, another can’t seem to reconcile the faith with the corruption in the Church and others simply fall out of practice as they grow into new responsibilities. It may seem as if we put our best efforts into raising our children in the faith, but for what end?

My husband and I homeschooled our children and socialized with many other homeschooling families in our parish. We went to daily Mass when we could, read together the lives of the saints and celebrated the liturgical life of the church.

I don’t know what the turning point was, but along the way to young adulthood, all but one of our children heard the voice of someone else who convinced them there was something more attractive than the Eucharist, Mass, prayer and seeking the will of God for their lives. I have to hope, though, that those early years laid the foundation for their eventual return.

I have given up nagging them. For years, I sent group texts to my children in the weeks leading up to Lent, Easter, Advent, New Year’s and other liturgical and non-liturgical seasons. In these messages, I gently reminded them how much God loves them and wants them to come back, to go to confession and renew their devotion. For most of those messages, I never received a single word in response. It was a long time before I realized I had to get out of God’s way and let him do the work.

Our Participation in the Miracle

The story of the multiplication of loaves and fishes may illustrate how the Lord uses our prayers for our loved ones. The disciples express concern to Jesus that the crowd of 5,000 has nothing to eat and they are too far from town. When the Lord tells the disciples to feed the crowd themselves, they begin to count the cost.

"Are we to buy two hundred days’ wages worth of food and give it to them to eat?” (Mk 6:37).

In John’s Gospel, Philip protests, “Two hundred days’ wages worth of food would not be enough for each of them to have a little [bit]” (6:7).

Do we do this too? Are we counting the cost of the sacrifices we make for our loved ones, or do we feel as if our prayers don’t really make much difference?

Catholicism is rich and full of treasures that Our Lord provides to help us strengthen our faith and assist souls along the way.
It’s Not About the Food

It is interesting to note where the loaves and fish come from in the different Gospel accounts. In all but John’s retelling, the disciples have brought the food themselves. They seem almost reluctant to part with it, even discussing with Jesus the alternative of going off and buying other food for the people who had gathered. But in John’s Gospel, the disciples tell Jesus that a boy has brought the food. Can you picture the disciples approaching the child to ask for his bread? Do you imagine the boy’s joy that Jesus has requested his help, perhaps insisting he be the one to present the bread and fish to the teacher? He does not protest that it won’t be enough, perhaps because his childlike faith allows him to see, as we should, that it is not really about the food. The many left overs attest to this.

“Bring them here to me,” Jesus says to his disciples and to us. As we pray, we can imagine ourselves handing our prayers—tiny fish and skimpy loaves—to Jesus and allowing him to work a miracle that will satisfy us beyond our wildest imaginings. Our prayers are signs of our faithfulness. He does not need them to bring about the conversion of our children, but he knows how strong faith can grow when we surrender our prayers and other offerings to His holy will. In the face of disappointment and seeming futility, our effort to continue with these offerings may be a heavy burden. However, Jesus urges us not to give up.

Who knows how many souls in that crowd of thousands woke the next morning—their stomachs still satisfied and the sweet aftertaste of honeyed bread in their mouths—and renewed their dedication to God? In the same way, our prayers and offerings may be mysteriously moving the hearts of our children, grandchildren and others through the grace of God, though we may never see the results in this world.

Keeping it Real

However, if we are open to the Holy Spirit, we will recognize where God wants us to put our efforts, just as He did with the disciples on that hillside of hungry people. “He gave [the loaves and fishes] to the disciples, who in turn gave them to the crowds” (Mt 14:19).

Above all, we must be genuine in our faith. Our practice must be more than a show to convince our loved ones of what they should be doing. Our loved ones must notice something unaffected and sincere in our lives and recognize that our Catholic faith is something we cherish and can’t do without. Catholics have much to compete with these days, but not even the roar of scandals and the lure of temptations can overcome the attraction of a life lived well and a faith expressed through love.

One example of this is the conversion of Norma McCorvey. McCorvey was “Jane Roe” on the infamous Supreme Court decision Roe v. Wade that legalized abortion in the United States. She went to Catholic Mass as a child and periodically in her adult life. Nevertheless, her true conversion came around the age of 50, after she witnessed the sincere reverence and experienced the profound kindness of Catholics in the pro-life movement.

Fr. John Hardon wrote, “The first and most fundamental way in which parents can keep their children Catholic is for the parents themselves to be authentic—and I mean authentic—Catholics themselves.” This can apply not only to parents, but also to everyone whose goal it is to be a light in the world for others.

Our Own Gethsemane

The story of Moses holding his arms to heaven while the Israelites fought the Amalekites (Ex 17:8—16) is a perfect example of how important it is for us to remain faithful in prayer for our fallen-away loved ones. As long as Moses kept his arms raised to God, the Israelites held the upper hand in battle. When he became weary, he let his arms fall, the enemy overcame the children of God.
Catholicism is rich and full of treasures that Our Lord provides to help us strengthen our faith and assist souls along the way. In addition to having a regular prayer time each day and attending Mass on Sundays, perhaps we can commit to other devotions—other loaves and fishes we can offer—such as praying novenas to the patron saints of those for whom we pray or praying the rosary. We may reach out to others whose children have fallen away—not to gossip or commiserate, but to join in prayer, fasting and thanksgiving for our children.

The goal is for me to remain on my knees for them, perhaps for the rest of my life, in confident hope that our Lord desires their return even more desperately than I do. Like the meager loaves and fish, the success of my prayers for the conversion of my children has nothing to do with me or my efforts. Nevertheless, somehow my perseverance is crucial to this mysterious process.

Perhaps God knows I can pray better for my children in the next life. Their return to the Lord may even happen silently in their hearts at the end of their lives when no one can witness it, and that is a joyful realization. The words of the prophet Baruch can bring us comfort during the long wait: “led away on food by their enemies they left you: but God will bring them back to you, borne aloft in glory as on royal thrones” (5:6).

Reprinted with permission from St. Anthony’s Messenger. Caroline Rock is a wife, mom or three and grandmother to six. She works as a legal copy writer in Maryland, where she attends the same parish she was baptized as an infant. Her writing has appeared in several Catholic magazines.

Praying Prodigal Hearts Home

Praying Prodigal Hearts Home was created by parishioners at STM saddened by their love ones abandonment of the church seeking to support and pray with others going through the same situation.

The group meets monthly to pray for the return of adult children and other relatives and friends back to Jesus and His Church. We pray a Scriptural Rosary and support one another in persevering in prayer.

Upcoming Meetings
Thursday, October 10 at 7:00PM in the Cry Room
Thursday, November 14 at 7:00PM in the Cry Room

Meetings are usually held on the second Thursday of the month. For more information about Praying Prodigal Hearts Home please contact PPHH@stthomasmore.org.

For many parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles and others who have watched our Catholic faith become less important in the lives of our loved ones, it is a very personal battle, one we cannot let the enemy win. Praying for the conversion or reversion of a family member is often long-term with no reward in this lifetime. As such, it can be difficult—for some, impossible—to stay faithful to the essential task of remaining on our knees.

We may be hoping for a miraculous event like those of St. Paul, St. Augustine or Norma McCorvey. God, however, may require our patience for a more personal reason. It is not only the conversion of my children that God seeks. He can do that without me. It is my faith that God is working on.

The Prize I May Never See

As ironic as it may seem, the goal of my prayers and offerings is not the return of my children to the Church. The goal is my faithfulness in the battle. I often wonder if God delays the miraculous conversions of my children that I beg for because he knows how quickly I am apt to credit myself for their return. I might also decide I no longer need to pray, since I have obtained my heart’s desire. In the long days and nights of waiting for God’s answer, it is comforting to believe that his slow timetable is drawing me closer to him, to the Blessed Mother and to my brothers and sisters, the saints.

My devoutly Catholic grandmother died while only a few of her 14 adult children remained in the faith. One by one, however, they eventually came back, received holy Communion and died faithful Catholics. Like her, I may not live to see the conversion of my children.
Our Newest Staff Members

dedicated and committed to educating our youth

Ryan Ward
*Catechesis Coordinator*
*Office of Catechesis*

Ryan was born and raised in Cleveland, Ohio.

He moved to Colorado to attend CU Boulder where he finished his degree in Religious Studies after taking some time off from school to serve as a missionary in Washington DC at A Simple House of Sts. Francis and Alphonsus.

Ryan is passionate about teaching people about the faith. Before switching to religious education, he was involved in youth ministry at several different parishes such as Sacred Heart of Jesus in Boulder.

Ryan rediscovered his faith after several years while on a high school Kairos retreat.

His favorite saint is St. Faustina and he loves to teach (and learn!) about Divine Mercy.

Ryan is a Cleveland sports fan in his spare time and enjoys watching the Cavaliers most of all. Ryan is extremely excited to work with you and to get to know you!

Donna Engel
*Registrar*
*Office of Catechesis*

Donna is originally from Cincinnati, Ohio. She has been married for 29 years and has 3 adult children.

She first moved to Centennial, Colorado in 1998 and was a St. Thomas More parishioner for fifteen years.

During that time she was a catechist, a eucharistic minister of Holy Communion and involved in many other ministries.

The Lord called her to move away in 2013 and after 5 years, He brought her back to Denver where she was blessed to rejoin the St. Thomas More community.

She has an extensive history working in administrative and support functions all around the United States.

Donna is very excited to be working in the Office of Catechesis helping to educate the youth of our community in the Catholic faith.

Cecilia Pollice
*Middle/High School Confirmation Coordinator*
*Office of Catechesis*

Cecilia Pollice is the new Middle/High School Confirmation Coordinator. She received her BA in Theology from Franciscan University of Steubenville, Ohio, and most of her past experience has been in retreat ministry.

She is currently working towards an MA in Leadership for the New Evangelization at the Augustine Institute.

She loves to read, play guitar and learn more about the Lord.

She is very excited to be at St. Thomas More, and cannot wait to meet all the wonderful people in Confirmation preparation and who are part of the parish!

Judiasm to Catholicism: A Conversion Story

Roy Schoeman will be at STM on Tuesday, October 15 to give two presentations about his journey to Catholicism and the role of the Jewish faith in Salvation History.

**Salvation is from the Jews**
—9:30 AM in McCallin Hall

**Judiasm to Catholicism: A Conversion Story**
—7:00 PM in McCallin Hall

He was born to German Jewish parents who had fled Nazi Germany. While a Jewish Marketing Professor at the Harvard Business School, Roy received two supernatural experiences – one of Christ and one of the Blessed Virgin Mary. These resulted in an unanticipated and enthusiastic conversion to Catholicism. This unique event is sponsored by St. Thomas Aquinas Society.
They left as a class, but they returned as something more.

On Thursday, September 5, the STM Catholic eighth grade class left for a retreat focused on what it means to be made in the image and likeness of God and how they could live out that image and likeness in the form of service.

They may have left Centennial as a group of students, but they returned more like a family.

One of the things they reflected on and prayed about was how when they talk about God, the Trinity, they are talking about how God is a community...Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

So, when they prayed together, when they ate together, when they complained together (there was a lot of this especially in their cabins where there was no air conditioning!), and even when they played together, they looked more and more like community of the Holy Trinity.

They looked more and more like a family.

Go for a Hike!

Students got up early on Friday to hike to the top of the ridge and pray together. Students in the Virtue Playing Gaga Ball with seminarian, Ryan Kent.
Small groups wrote prayers together that they later shared as a whole class.

It was an early hike and a hard climb to the ridge, but they walked together as a community just as Jesus walks with us. The reward? Breakfast burritos!

Praying with Scripture

Students took time with seminarian Ryan Kent, learning how to pray Scripture (not simply read it) using Lectio Divina.

Sometimes just taking time to pray with Scripture reminds us that God is always talking to us in Scripture, telling us how much He Loves us and is with us in community.

Ga! Ga! Ball!

Students spent a lot of time playing Gaga Ball, which is basically dodge ball with no teams.

Maybe the idea sounds contrary to the idea of community, but playing together was a huge part of the class growing closer as a family. Whether it was tether ball, blacklight dodgeball (a lot of minor injuries and a lot of sweat!), or going for a walk, students grew closer to each other in a way that kids do best: by play.

Friends and Conversation

It can be amazing what people do when we take away the distractions of television, social media or games.

There is nothing more fulfilling than a relationship deepened by authentic conversation, and the students had plenty of time for that.

At a meal, between talks, or at 1:00AM (after the adults had told them to go to bed), students got a chance to grow closer to each other just by listening.◆
The Spark

Sharing the Gospel Through Sports

one student’s mission experience

By Ben Scelza
Middle School Student

Note from Greg Johnson: Every summer our middle school youth ministry volunteer at a Bible Sports Camp in Fraser, Colorado. The sports camp brings a mix of kids kindergarten–5 grade and our group of 7–8 grade youth from St. Thomas More help lead the camp. The sports offered this year were basketball, baseball, volleyball, martial arts and soccer. Ben Scelza is a current eighth grade student from STM youth ministry who attended the trip. He wanted to share his testimony.

There is nothing else I would rather do than go on the middle school Mission Trip at Winter Park. Filled with laughs, prayers and friendship, I would do this 1000 times!

We left for the mission early Wednesday morning from St. Thomas More and headed to Our Lady of Snow church in Winter Park. There, we met Father Michael Freihofer and went on a hike to a beautiful waterfall.

The next day we headed to camp. We spread out into groups to teach the campers different sports. I taught basketball with Greg, our youth leader. We had to be patient with the kids and treat them with respect. During the bible sessions, we told the kids how they could use bible teachings and apply them to daily life. We had a fun time helping the kids. At night, we went hot tubbing.

On the last day of camp, each sport group recited the Bible verse 1 Peter 3:15 and showed the skills they learned. Before heading back, Father Michael blessed us. The whole group then spent the night at the STM youth center.

The next day, we finished the mission trip by going to Boondocks. We had an awesome time! See you in Winter Park next year! ◆
I recently was extremely blessed to go to Peru with the best youth group I could ask for. We went and we did God’s will. On our 12 day mission trip, we grew closer to each other and closer to God. I know that going on the trip wasn’t as much life changing as it was eye opening. While on the trip, I got to get away from the drama of the world we live in. I chose to not bring my phone on the trip. Unfortunately, when I got back I was blasted in the face with news and drama. But while I was there, I had the best time of my life getting to know new people and learn new things. We worked on a foundation wall so that in the future there will be a street for the water trucks. This trip was the best thing that I could ask for.
“Astonish the people who cross your path with your generosity. There is no better way to bring Christianity to life.”

– Matthew Kelly, The Long View