

St. Thomas Aquinas

2022 Annual Report



A MESSAGE FROM FATHER MATTHEW



The Epiphany of the Lord

My Dear Flock:

In this newsletter the staff and I would like to highlight – by revisiting with you many of the wonderful things that have happened this year as well as some sorrows – the rich parish life we have here at St. Thomas. I hope that as you see all that goes on here that you will be inspired to participate more in all that we have to offer and to grow ever closer to God. As we prepare to welcome a new year, we reflect on the things that we have to be thankful for. Thank you for all your prayers and support. I am continually grateful to be here as your pastor!

I truly look forward to all of the good things the Lord has in store for us in 2023!

Fr Matthew Codd

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Liturgical & Aquinas Hall Fellowship Events in 2022

1. **January** - St. Thomas Aquinas Patronal Feast Day Mass & Reception
2. **January** - 50 hours Devotion in honor of the 50th Anniversary of the Diocese
3. **February** - Knights of Columbus Chili Cook Off
4. **Monthly** - Holy Hour of Reparation & Blessing of Objects
5. **March** - Diocesan Men's Conference
6. **March** - Annual Lenten Dinners, Lenten Reflections, & Stations of the Cross
7. **March/October** - Red Cross Blood Drives
8. **March** - Lenten Parish Mission preached by Fr. Joseph Matlak
9. **March** - 50th Anniversary of Pilgrimage Statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary Event
10. **April** - CCM Car Wash
11. **Weekly** - Holy Face of Jesus Devotion
12. **April/May** - Holy Hour for Peace to end war in Ukraine
13. **Monthly** - Divine Mercy Holy Hour
14. **April** - Easter Egg Hunt
15. **May/October** - Fatima Processions
16. **June** - Back to Summer Food Drive
17. **June** - Baccalaureate Mass for Graduates
18. **June** - Quo Vadis Days Event
19. **June** - Totus Tuus - Summer Camp
20. **July** - Domestic Church Couples Retreat
21. **July** - Mission Priest
22. **August** - Farmers Market
23. **August** - Mary Days
24. **August** - Diocesan Polish Mass & Reception
25. **October** - Clothing Drive
26. **October** - Divino Nino (Divine Child) Mass
27. **October** - World Feast Festival
28. **October with Religious Education Classes** - Holy Hour of Reparation - Bilingual
29. **November** - All Saints Trick or Treat
30. **November** - All Saints City Wide Pilgrimage of Relics
31. **November** - Mass of Remembrance
32. **November** - Thanksgiving Food Basket Collection
33. **December** - Sim Bang Gabi Mass & Reception
34. **December** - Our Lady of Guadalupe Mass & Reception
35. **December** - Rorate Mass
36. **December** - Cookie Walk
37. **December** - Holy Angels Christmas Collection
38. **December** - Advent Parish Mission preached by the Fraternity of St. Peter
39. **2022 Year** - 16 Private Functions

Special Guest Speakers in 2022

1. **January 13th** - 'Purified' Event with Jason Evert
2. **January 26-28th** - 50 Hours Devotion with the Franciscan Friars of Primitive Observance
3. **February 19th** - Dr. Scott Hahn Conference
4. **August 15th-22nd** - 'Mary Days' Preachers from the Assumption of Mary to the Queenship of Mary
5. **September 2nd** - 'The Primacy of Tradition & Obedience to the Truth' with Dr. Peter Kwasniewski
6. **September 3rd** - 'Let Us Fall Down & Weep; Rethinking How We Approach The Holy Eucharist' with Dr. Peter Kwasniewski
7. **September 9th** - 'The Catholic Church & the Crisis of Meaning' with Professor Elisa Torres Neff
8. **September 12th** - 'Crossing the Tiber' Catholic conversion story with former Methodist Pastor Shane Page
9. **September 24th** - The Four Temperaments Conference with Art & Laraine Bennett
10. **October 19th** - Conference & Eucharistic Holy Hour - 'Beauty, the Language of the Soul' with Deacon Matthew Newsome
11. **October 24th** - 'Crossing the Tiber' Catholic conversion story with pro soccer player Clay Dimick & his wife Kat Dimick
12. **November 7th** - 'The Role of the Angels & Saints in our Spiritual Journey' with Benedictine Fr. Robert Nixon, OSB
13. **November 14th** - 'Crossing the Tiber' Catholic conversion story with Fr. John Putnam & Fr. Timothy Reid
14. **December 13th - 15th** - Advent Parish Mission preached by the Fraternity of St. Peter

Special Guest Speakers in 2023 – *Subject to change*

1. **January 9th** - 'Crossing the Tiber' conversion story with Alecia Acquaviva
2. **January 26th - 28th** - 40 Hours Devotion preached by Fr. Ken Geraci from the Fathers of Mercy
3. **February 4th** - 'The Catholic Church Saved My Marriage' with Dr. David Anders
4. **February 13th** - 'Crossing the Tiber' conversion stories with Southern Evangelical Seminary Converts
5. **February 26th - March 1st** - Parish Lenten Mission preached by the Fraternity of St. Peter
6. **March 10th/11th** - Fr. Chad Ripperger Conference (*pre-registered event – already full*)
7. **March 13th** - 'Crossing the Tiber' conversion story with former Episcopalian Minister, Jane Brock
8. **August 15th-22nd** - 'Mary Days' Preachers from the Assumption of Mary to the Queenship of Mary
9. **September 29-30th** - "The Catholic Doctrine of Creation: The Only Firm Foundation for a Culture of Life" with guest speakers from the Kolbe Center for the Study of Creation

Parish News and Happenings – 2022

Fr. Matthew is attempting to get approval for an Adoration Chapel. Thanks for all of the advance contributions. We will update everyone as we know more and get closer to that happening, God willing.

We have added more security to our campus, both with additional security cameras and also by stationing a police officer at most of the masses, for a little extra protection.

As our longtime administrative assistant Maria Aymar-Watkinson retired, we welcomed Rosa Jimenez into that position. Rosa has brought a lot to her role, as she volunteered to run the Hispanic Ministry, on top of all that position already requires! We also welcomed Sister Regina, who has taken over the duties of Director of Religious Education from Sister Donabel, who returned home to the Philippines.

This brings us to mention those we lost at our small but very close parish office:

Suzi Melgar, wife of our longtime employee Jose Melgar, lost her battle with cancer late this past year. She is truly missed by all of us. She was such a kind, generous, giving and loving soul. We thank all of you from the parish, as well as friends in the community, who helped raise over \$10,000 through Give Send Go and a 50/50 raffle at World Feast to help pay for medical and final expenses.

Tom Savoy, our longtime Music Director, also passed late last year. This was a shock to all of us, on top of the sorrow we all felt. We are all still in direct contact with Tom's family to assist them as needed. Our sadness has been immeasurable.

We are very blessed to have such wonderful parishioners at St. Thomas Aquinas. We have held up together with the help and grace of God and through the guidance and leadership of our Pastor, Fr. Matthew Codd. We were blessed to have 86 new families join our parish in 2022, which brings us to 2,814 families.

We have also continued to have family and group hall rentals this year and combined there have been 75 events and private functions including the Diocesan Men's Conference, our semi-annual Red Cross Blood Drive and our wonderful Cookie Walk, among many others.

Our wonderful priests and deacons performed 43 baptisms, 40 First Communions, 13 weddings & 15 funerals in 2022.

Our UNCC students are back this year, and we currently have 70 students that park here on our campus and we are truly grateful to have them. Our Catholic Campus Ministry here at STA, run by Fr. Innocent, reaches out and serves the Catholic students who attend the university. They have a very active and growing group, and meet regularly on Wednesday nights, as well as various other times where they make use of the Campus Ministry Center off of our courtyard.

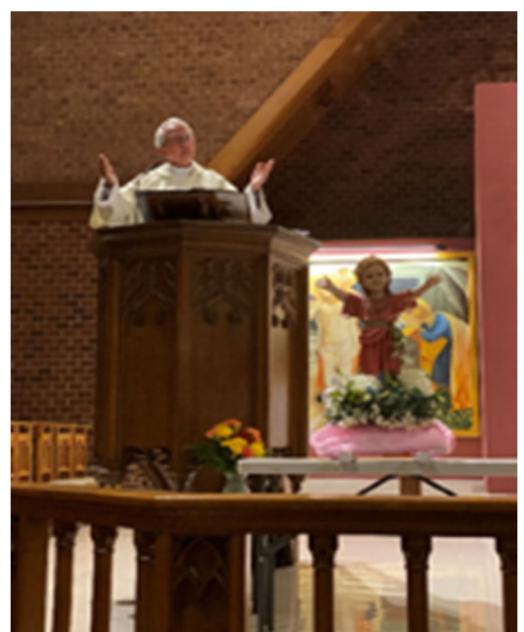
Hispanic Ministry

One of the desires of Fr. Codd was to formally establish a Hispanic Ministry to assist the members of the Latino Community in their sacramental needs as well as to help them integrate even more into our already diverse parish family. Since July, the Hispanic Ministry has been under the coordination of Rosa Jimenez who is also the Administrative Assistant to the Priests.

Our focus is the sacramental life, which is the reason why we have ensured that all the information related to the Sacraments is also available in Spanish. We are now offering Baptism Preparation Classes in Spanish and have started a Spanish RCIA Program. We have noticed an increase in the participation of the community in some of the activities we have had and in which the language was not a barrier for them at all, like our World Feast where we had more countries selling their authentic dishes and performing traditional dances. As many of the members of the Latino Community have expressed the desire to learn English, we have put together an ESL program, which will be taught by very generous retired parishioners and college graduate students who want to be part of this endeavor. The classes started the second week in January, and will be offered once a week in the morning and in the evening.

Lastly, below are pictures of some of the activities they have had. Remember that all of you are always welcome to participate in the activities they plan like the Bilingual Holy Hour of Reparation on Wednesdays from 6-7 p.m., while the Religious Education Program is happening. Their activities are promoted in the bulletin, on the website, on Facebook, and through Flocknote, our new method for sending email newsletters and text updates to our parishioners. For any suggestions or comments, please contact Rosa Jimenez by either calling the office or via email: rjimenez@stacharlotte.com.





Religious Education 2022-2023

The Religious Education classes of St. Thomas Aquinas Parish officially started last September 11, 2022. There are 207 registered students (in person, Catholic School/Catholic HomeSchool/Online/Independent Study).

At present, there are 40 active volunteer catechists and two Dominican Sisters who assist the Religious Education of our young here at St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church. They teach and assist the students in their sacramental preparation years for the following sacraments:

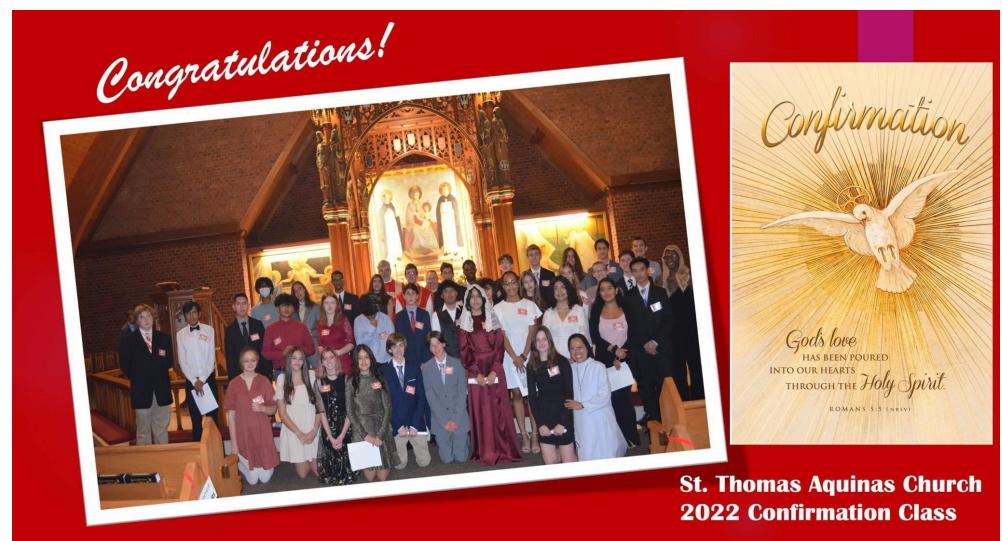
- Baptism
- First Penance
- First Holy Communion and
- Confirmation

There are two schedules for classes in person every week: Wednesday Schedule and Sunday Schedule. Parents may choose either Wednesday or Sunday schedule.

Grade:	In Person:	Independent Study:	Catholic Home School:	Total Students:
First	19		2	21
Second	20		5	25
Third	9	3	9	21
Fourth	8	3	4	15
Fifth	10	4	2	16
Sixth	6	2	3	11
Seventh	34		2	36
Eight	25		1	26
Ninth	36			36
Total	167	12	28	207

Total Volunteer Catechists: **42**

Summary of enrollment for Religious Education Classes:



Snapshots of events and presentations from the Religious Education programs this year!



Liturgical Music



Sacred music is an important part of the liturgy at St Thomas Aquinas. The choral program consists of three choirs. The Latin choir sings for our weekly Extraordinary Form Mass on Sundays at 11:30 am and Thursday at 7pm. We currently have about 10-12 dedicated members who give of their time and talent to contribute to the beauty of these Latin Masses. They also sing at our first Saturday Extraordinary Form Mass. A special highlight this year was the annual December Rorate Mass on December 2nd. Celebrated by Fr. Kauth and with the participation of the St. Joseph seminarians, this candlelit Mass is always a beautiful and special part of Advent this year. The English choir is another offering at St Thomas. We began singing together in September, and we welcome new members to join at any time. We have been singing on Sundays at the 9:30 a.m. Mass. We sing hymns and other music for Mass. We also work on choir pieces to sing once or twice a month as an additional musical offering. Finally, the children's choir is a wonderful group of about 21 children. They sing once a month for the 9:30 a.m. Mass. A highlight of the fall semester was joining the adult choir on December 8 for an Extraordinary Form Mass for the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception. All three choirs contributed music for the Christmas Eve and Christmas Day Masses at St Thomas.

Mara Deluca

Youth Ministry

Number of middle school youth - 11

Number of high school youth - 28

The middle school youth group meets every Wednesday evening, and the high school group meets every Sunday. There are confirmation classes from September through November. We had 36 confirmations last year.

Activities in 2022:

June - Duc in Altum

July - Totus Tuus, Pilgrimage & Annual Youth Trip

August - Ceili Dance, Mission trip & Eucharistic Conference

November - Leadership Training

December - Christmas Pageant & Youth Christmas Party

Enjoy these pictures of our various youth group activities throughout the year:







A Note from the Finance Council

Dear Parishioners,

In last year's update, the Finance Council set forth the plan for this past year to focus on repair, or as needed replacement, of the HVAC systems. During this past year we replaced three of our twelve units. During the upcoming year we will continue to assess the remaining nine units and maintain and repair until replacement is necessary. We greatly appreciate those who contributed to the HVAC repair and replacement reserves. We ask you to please continue with your generosity as we continue to assess the remaining nine units.

Moving forward into this next year, at the suggestion of our diocesan offices, we will look to increase our property holdings. In an early December homily Father Codd discussed this property initiative and specifically mentioned one specific property that is currently available just a few doors from the current rectory. As Father mentioned in his homily, The Finance Council met shortly afterwards, and we determined to move forward with the purchase of this property.

The Finance Council thanks all of our parishioners for their generosity in supporting our parish and we ask that you please continue to do so. May God bless you and your families.

Ron Sanders

Finance Council Members:

Ron Sanders
Michael Bailey
Michael Boykin
Nennette Costes
Richard Costes

We are truly blessed to have such an outstanding and dedicated Finance Council.

Financial Highlights

Note: This report covers calendar year 2022

- Total revenues of \$1,157,382 exceeded expenses by \$155,722
- Offertory made up 74% of all revenue
- Religious Education enrollment was down slightly, but picking up
- DSA - our parish and fulfilled our assessment and parish obligation. A check in the amount of \$12,689 was returned to the parish! We are on track to meet this year's obligation as well!
- Due to the parish paying off the construction loans in 2021, we were able to finally establish a parish savings account. These funds will only be used for urgent matters, where normal offertory will not cover specific needs.

Revenue:

Offertory	\$932,119
Liturgical/special events/rents	\$220,263
Cemetery/Columbarium	\$5,000

Expenses:

Payroll & Benefits	\$ 463,906
Liturgical/Formation	\$ 169,683
MACS	\$ 104,524
Facilities/Utilities	\$ 265,285
Diocesan Assessments	\$ 98,262

Net Revenue: \$55,722

Expense notes:

- Diocesan assessments were lower 2nd half of the year
- MACS subsidy increased

Restricted Accounts Recap

The following are balances of the extra contributions from the parish, which will be used for either future or ongoing projects on our campus:

HVAC	\$29,217
Courtyard Updates	\$ 719
Church Security	\$23,584
Aquinas Hall Renovations	\$23,694
Choir Loft Rebuild	\$24,492
Guest Speaker Fund	\$5,971
Adoration Chapel	\$22,590

Online Giving

We added another 48 online givers in 2022. Total users are now 1,462

**remember to visit our website for the direct donate link to Our Sunday Visitor to give online*

Offertory Counting

The offertory count team meets every Monday morning. They are very dedicated to their accuracy, and altogether they count over \$1 million annually. The team members are:

Vicky Goudy
Jane Hanna
John Cowie
Arlene Keys
Lynn Hammers

