

ST. THOMAS AQUINAS PARISH

Annual Report



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LEARN FROM THE PAST

CELEBRATE THE PRESENT

PREPARE FOR THE FUTURE



A LETTER FROM OUR PASTOR...

Learn from the Past

I've learned a lot in the past eleven years I've been pastor and even more with the ongoing domestic and global events. COVID also has taught many of us to better appreciate and value our faith, family, health, and country.

I've learned that, whenever faced with challenges, it helps to develop a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ. I've learned the importance of prayer in order to be more attentive to the promptings of the Holy Spirit as I strive to serve and lead this parish.

I've learned to appreciate the history, sacredness, and beauty of the Church that is so often maligned. I've learned from my mistakes and am grateful for parishioners who cared enough about me to point them out. I've learned the importance of seeking others' help and working together to build up our parish. As we **Learn from the Past** we...

Celebrate the Present

This year's Annual Report demonstrates that, despite challenges, our parish continues to be active and engaging. All that we do is possible only because of the generosity of our parishioners and hundreds of volunteers.

Of all that we do at Mass, the Eucharist is what most strengthens our faith and unity. As you will see in this report, we celebrate that faith and unity in many ways. We distributed hundreds of gifts at Christmas and food throughout the year. We have taken advantage of opportunities to grow in the understanding of our faith. In the absence of a Faith Formation Director this past

year, many parents/mentors stepped up to develop a new and engaging program with increased parental involvement.

Because of your financial support, we have not only developed social, educational, service and outreach programs, but were also able to make significant and much needed improvements/upgrades in our facilities.

We celebrated Fr. Giombetti's five years as a priest serving our parish and prayed for him as he begins his new assignment in Burlington. We also welcomed our newly ordained priest, Fr. Steven Restrepo, as he begins his priesthood serving here at St. Thomas Aquinas. As we **Celebrate the Present**, we...

Plan for the Future

Over the past year, a number of our parishioners have been working together to plan for the future of our parish. They are presently developing a Disciples in Mission (DIM) plan that focuses on our parish mission, identifies our priorities, and plans our way forward. The goal of this plan is to implement Jesus' command to "Go and make disciples of all nations." It's not enough to attend Mass and to pray privately. We are also called to reach out and share our faith, and the love of Jesus Christ with those around us. The DIM plan focuses on five areas: Worship, Service, Education, Evangelization and Family. We hope to develop and find ways to implement them in the upcoming years.

We also plan to celebrate our parish's 175th anniversary in 2023. Our parish has been built on the faith, work and commitment of those priests and parishioners (parents, grandparents, friends) who've gone before us.

I hope you will find this Annual Report informative and encouraging, as **we learn from the past, celebrate the present and plan for the future.**

Fr. Bill Devine



First Communion 2022



Volunteer Appreciation Social



Catholic Heart Work Camp Mission Trip to Nashville, TN - July 2022



A NOTE FROM FR. STEVEN...

My name is Father Steven Restrepo, but you can call me Father Steven or Padre. I began my assignment here at Saint Thomas Aquinas on June 1st.

I was ordained to the priesthood of Jesus Christ on May 21, 2022. Since many of you do not know me or my vocation story, the following is the introduction to it.

I was born and raised in East Boston. Both of my parents are immigrants from Colombia. I have three older brothers who were born in Colombia, making me the First Generation American in my family. I grew up in a Spanish speaking home, which is my native language. My family and I attended Most Holy Redeemer Parish in East Boston when now-Bishop Robert Hennessey was the pastor there. Looking back, I realize that there were signs of a possible vocation to the priesthood very early in my life because I would often repeat the words of consecration underneath my breath as now-Bishop Hennessey celebrated the Mass. I remember my father telling me to pay attention at the consecration, unaware I was already paying close attention to the words the priest said...

*To read the rest of my vocation story please visit:
<http://cardinaleansblog.org/2022/07/15/>*

One of highlights so far for me here was the Mission Trip to Nashville, TN in July. The trip was an amazing experience for the chaperones and the students. The total group had thirty-three members: twenty-two teens and eleven chaperones. The transformation of all of us with our Catholic faith, even if for a week, was a gift that only

Christ could give. His grace and love was experienced on that trip in more ways than any of us could count. I went to this trip only knowing by name a few of the teens and one adult. I came back feeling like we all became a family - a bus ride to and from Tennessee can do that! I honestly would not change a moment from the trip! I would go back tomorrow if I could. I am a big believer in service mission trips that bring the next generation of Catholics to experience something that is life-giving. It is important for today's generation to see the Church in action. Service lends itself for this mission. Surely, this trip also helped the parents to see a different side of the Church and of their child's faith life.

Looking ahead, I am thinking about how we can we grow this Mission Trip for next summer. It is critical that the youth get together multiple times before the trip so they can begin to build relationships. I have encouraged the teens that went on this year's mission to bring another friend to next year's trip. I hope and pray we can get thirty teens plus chaperones to join us next summer in order to evangelize the next generation of Catholics.

Our faith is to be put into service with love, not something to be kept inside or persevered for no one else to see. Jesus Christ came to bring His love into the world and love is demonstrated by how we look to serve others. If you have teenagers who would like to join next year's mission trip, contact me via email.

May the Lord Bless you, and may you always feel welcomed here at St. Thomas Aquinas Parish. By the way, if you see me walking around town, feel free to say "Hello Padre!"



A VIEW FROM THE CHOIR LOFT

This past year really allowed me to see how active and vibrant our parish is as we transitioned out of pandemic restrictions and into an event-filled calendar. I'm pleased to report that our music ministry program has grown throughout this year. Our newly formed adult choir, which debuted at the Christmas Eve midnight Mass, continued to sing regularly at the noon Mass through Pentecost and will continue this fall! In February we held our first "choir sampler." This program gives parishioners an opportunity to have a fun, one-time choir experience. The response was overwhelmingly positive!

Paul Hoffman, Music Director



Choir Sampler



Our choir at Christmas Mass

FAITH FORMATION: FAMILY FOCUSED, PARISH SUPPORTED



Families felt the adversities of the past two years in a particular way. Suddenly parents became teachers and kitchens became classrooms. Last year, volunteers ran the Faith Formation program. The volunteer mentors organized themselves into a cohesive, joy-filled group that got the job done. The new curriculum for Grades 1-8 published by Loyola Press helped families learn remotely. This year, we will build on last year's efforts to provide more in-person learning. I look forward to working with the families of the parish!

Debbie Hill, Director, Faith Formation



Confirmation 2022



A PERSONAL REFLECTION

As I reflected on this year's theme, the Lord immediately turned those statements into questions for me to ponder. Here is what was revealed to me:

What have I learned from the past?

During my time at St. Thomas Aquinas, I've seen many parishioners pass from this life. Death is never easy, but it taught me something extremely important in relation to my faith. It reminded me that it's important to turn to our Lord throughout our life, especially when our time nears its end. I saw many parishioners turn to our priests to receive an anointing of the sick and a final confession during this past year. Regardless of their schedules, Fr. Devine, Fr. Giombetti, and Fr. Steven would drop what they were doing and attend to those in need. We even have a bereavement ministry that assists those dealing with grief. ***What I learned from the past is that our parish is there for our parishioners, especially in the challenging moments.***

How should we celebrate the present?

Despite the many attacks against the church, the Lord reminded me that there are always things to celebrate!

The birth of Jesus Christ at Christmas, His resurrection at Easter, the overturning of Roe v. Wade, the marriage of a faith-filled man and woman in the Church, a baby getting baptized into the faith, our wonderful pastor, our amazing new parochial vicar, and all our fantastic volunteers... It's important that we make sure to always celebrate our Lord working in our parish. ***Presently, I celebrate the bedrock that our parish is during these challenging times.***

How should I plan for the future?

There is no better time to plan for the future than the present moment. Can I pray more? Can I give more? Should I attend more Masses? Can I spend more time reading the Bible? There are areas that I need to improve in, and I plan to amend my life now while I still have time. What areas do you need to improve in? Regardless of the area, we can help. Want to read the bible more? Join one of our bible studies! Want to pray the rosary more? Attend one of our monthly rosary processions! Want to attend Mass more? Mass is offered here every day! ***My plan for the future is to turn to the church to grow in my faith.***

May God bless you, your family, and St. Thomas Aquinas Parish!

Aaron Durocher, Pastoral Assistant



Saint Vincent de Paul Food Pantry



Christmas Bazaar



Senior Citizen Thanksgiving Dinner



Rummage Sale

A NOTE FROM THE FINANCE COUNCIL...

As your Finance Council, we can unequivocally say that we have learned from the past, especially in the tremendous way that our Parish came together during the COVID pandemic to support each other and our community, not only financially, but in faith and friendship. Financially, our Parish continues to thrive due to the generosity of our parishioners who have supported our initiatives to further grow our ministries and maintain our physical properties. We ended the year in a positive financial position, due to the generosity of our parishioners and the fiscal responsibility carried out by all involved in financial decision making.

From a financial perspective, we celebrate the present as net income increased by over \$140,000 in comparison to the prior year and to budgeted amounts as explained below. Overall revenue remained consistent with the prior year with an increase of 2% to actual revenue as of June 30, 2022 as compared to June 30, 2021. Total revenue increased to budgeted amounts by 18%, primarily due to the forgiveness of our paycheck protection program loan (PPP Loan) issued by the Small Business Association under the Federal CARES act established in 2020 which was forgiven in fiscal year 2022. Total expenses declined in comparison to both prior year and budgeted amounts due to salaried positions that were not filled during fiscal year 2022 but were fully budgeted, as well as declined costs for religious education due to both unfilled positions and reduced costs as the program was switched to virtual as a result of the pandemic crisis. These expense declines were offset by increases in utilities and insurance costs due to rising vendor costs over the prior year which were not anticipated in the budget formulation. Overall operating income increased over the prior year by approximately \$111,000 due to the PPP Loan forgiveness of \$97,500 and reduced salary and benefit costs for unfilled staff positions and reduced costs as noted above. From a cash balance perspective, our operating accounts have remained nearly consistent with June 30, 2021 balances with some reductions due to the capital improvements noted above which were offset by the amounts collected from the grand annual appeal. As of June 30, 2022, our operating cash on a consolidated basis is \$520,903 which has declined from \$522,289 as of June 30, 2021. Our capital improvement fund balance is \$60,078 as of June 30, 2022 which has increased by \$26,276 due to contributions received from the generosity of parishioners, but is encumbered due to projects currently in process during fiscal year 2023.

From a capital improvement perspective, significant expenses were incurred to replace the church elevator, improve chapel lighting, repair equipment and perform other maintenance that had been previously deferred. This was not contemplated in the original fiscal year budget due to the uncertainty of funding given the pandemic, which materialized due to the generosity of our parishioners.

As your Finance Council, we continue to plan for the future and are diligent in our stewardship responsibilities as we navigate our journey in the fellowship of our faith. We are grateful to all who have given their time, talent and treasure, thus allowing us to further our momentum in fulfilling our parish mission of growing in our faith and love of Jesus Christ through worship, education and service within our local and broader community.

ST. THOMAS AQUINAS PARISH SUMMARY	2021 (LY)	2022 (TY)	FY '22	FY '23
	ACTUAL	ACTUAL	BUDGET (\$)	BUDGET (\$)
INCOME				
OFFERTORY (WEEKLY)	\$ 462,579	\$ 439,675	\$ 400,000	\$ 450,000
GRAND ANNUAL	\$ 172,203	\$ 186,102	\$ 125,000	\$ 160,000
SACRAMENTAL/FLOWERS	\$ 38,477	\$ 43,682	\$ 33,500	\$ 36,200
GIFTS/BEQUESTS/DONATIONS	\$ 38,330	\$ 27,741	\$ 15,000	\$ 20,000
CATHOLIC APPEAL REBATE	\$ 5,295	\$ 7,883	\$ -	\$ 3,000
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION	\$ 47,071	\$ 43,985	\$ 45,000	\$ 45,000
RENTAL/LEASE	\$ 54,714	\$ 42,764	\$ 32,360	\$ 45,500
INT/DIV/MKT GAIN(LOSS)	\$ 25,641	\$ (23,086)	\$ 10,000	\$ -
MINISTRY FUNDRAISING/OTHER	\$ 46,935	\$ 44,708	\$ 10,650	\$ 32,000
PPP FORGIVENESS LOAN	\$ -	\$ 97,500	\$ 97,500	\$ -
INCOME TOTAL	\$ 891,245	\$ 910,954	\$ 769,010	\$ 791,700
EXPENSES				
SALARIES/BENEFITS	\$ 543,889	\$ 443,451	\$ 578,541	\$ 482,991
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION EXP.	\$ 19,124	\$ 23,811	\$ 35,000	\$ 35,000
PASTORAL/LITURGICAL	\$ 52,687	\$ 37,172	\$ 51,900	\$ 62,200
OFFICE/ADMIN/HOUSEHOLD	\$ 58,428	\$ 48,947	\$ 50,250	\$ 62,500
UTILITIES/HEAT/ELEC/W&S	\$ 51,020	\$ 61,832	\$ 51,500	\$ 81,200
PROPERTY/LIABILITY INSURANCE	\$ 40,120	\$ 46,372	\$ 37,000	\$ 45,500
MAINTENANCE	\$ 41,114	\$ 43,843	\$ 34,350	\$ 43,500
MINISTRY CENTRAL TITHE	\$ 61,657	\$ 62,220	\$ 62,000	\$ 63,000
OTHER	\$ 8,403	\$ 17,655	\$ 21,570	\$ 18,500
EXPENSES TOTAL	\$ 876,442	\$ 785,203	\$ 922,111	\$ 894,391
NET OPERATING INCOME(LOSS)	\$ 14,803	\$ 125,651	\$ (153,101)	\$ (102,691)
NON-OPERATING INC./EXP.				
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT INCOME	\$ 30,032	\$ 33,337	\$ 20,000	\$ 32,000
CAP ACQ/IMPROVEMENT EXP.	\$ 77,371	\$ 51,320	\$ -	\$ 150,000
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT NET	\$ (47,339)	\$ (17,983)	\$ 20,000	\$ (118,000)
NET INCOME(LOSS)	\$ (32,536)	\$ 107,668	\$ (133,101)	\$ (220,691)

Parish Finance Council Members:

Michael Berolini, Maryteresa Crealese (Chair), James Gale, Mark Papasodoro, Susie Rindini, Scott Smith & Bill Suneson



A LOOK BACK FROM FINANCE & OPERATIONS

Each year brings a new and unique set of challenges to the parish. As much as we try to prepare for different circumstances, there always seem to be unexpected challenges and needs that arise. As we continually stay vigilant and try to be the best stewards we can, our focus has been and will always be supporting parish needs and making it a safe and welcoming place to gather and worship. We will always work on the ministerial aspects of stewardship through expanding our ministries and outreach, while at the same time striving to keep the parish updated, safe and secure. Remembering this past year, we have made many necessary and needed changes such as upgrading our network capabilities for better streaming, adding a new first floor bathroom to St. Basil Chapel, upgrading lighting in the parish, and making many repairs and upgrades to our maintenance equipment to keep the parish operating safely and efficiently. As we emerge from the impact of COVID and return to a more regular parish life, the generosity you have shown will be more on display for all to see and appreciate as we prepare for the future....together.



Our new lift elevator in the Church

CEMETERY UPDATE...

As we look back, the status of cemeteries has been very consistent. Operationally, the year-to-year income and expenses are relatively close. This past year, however, there were three major changes that impacted the cemetery: the start of the installation of the columbarium in the cemetery to address the need for ash cemetery plots as space is becoming more condensed, the weak market performance of the cemetery investments accounts and the addition of staff to the cemetery. Presently, our maintenance team is doing a fantastic job of maintaining the grounds and keeping our cemeteries beautiful. As we prepare for the future, we look forward to the completion of the columbarium and how it will help us better serve the parish's needs. As always, if you have any cemetery needs, please contact the parish office for assistance at 508-697-9528.



Our new columbarium being installed

Peter Vitagliano, Finance and Operations Officer



The Grotto

ST. THOMAS AQUINAS CEMETERY SUMMARY	2021 (LY)	2022 (TY)	FY '22	FY '23
	ACTUAL	ACTUAL	BUDGET (\$)	BUDGET (\$)
INCOME				
INCOME TOTAL	\$213,232	\$73,244	\$106,100	\$110,000
EXPENSES				
EXPENSES TOTAL	\$67,204	\$86,609	\$70,842	\$101,892
NET OPERATING INCOME	\$146,028	\$(13,365)	\$35,258	\$8,108
NON-OPERATING INCOME & EXPENSES				
GAIN (LOSS) ON INVESTMENTS	\$ 0	\$(38,276)	\$ 0	\$ 0
RECEIPTS FOR PERPETUAL CARE	\$5,960	\$3,550	\$5,000	\$5,000
CAP ACQ/IMPROVEMENT EXPENSE	\$14,727	\$29,453	\$ 0	\$60,000
NET INCOME (LOSS)	\$137,261	\$(77,544)	\$40,258	\$(46,892)
CEMETERY OPERATING FUNDS AS OF JUNE 30, 2022	\$ 244,229.92			

The Year in Review



Fr. Steven's first Baptism here at St. Thomas Aquinas



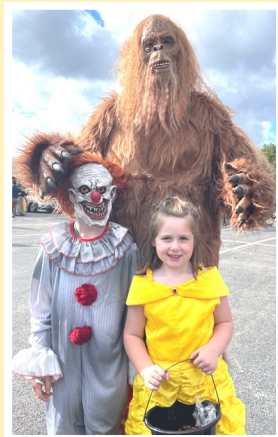
Second Grade Faith Formation Retreat



Valentine's Social



BSU Campus Ministry



Trunk or Treat



Giving Tree Wrap Night



Blessing of the Animals



Our beautifully decorated Easter Altar at the church and Christmas Altar at the chapel thanks to Donna Kelly and her team!