



Saint Thomas Aquinas Church

A UNIVERSITY PARISH SERVING THE UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA

401 Alderman Road

Charlottesville, Virginia 22903

434.293.8081

<http://www.stauva.org>

October 18, 2020

Dear Parishioners,

I write to you to introduce the parish's COVID RESCUE APPEAL which we are conducting this fall. I am grateful to so many of you who have helped us financially during these difficult times so that we can keep our parish open and continue to serve our people. Despite this outpouring of generosity, we continue to struggle to meet our weekly financial obligations. The good news is that we continue to "open up" with our essential ministries and services. I want to share with you some of the good things that are happening at St. Thomas Aquinas that beg for your increased financial support.

CAMPUS MINISTRY: Our campus ministry programs are fully operational with our campus ministers and FOCUS missionaries working hard to provide both remote and in person programs for students. Our small group and bible study groups have almost doubled this year, and students have taken charge of all of the ministries for our 5:15 weekday Masses and the 9:00 Sunday night student Mass in the parish church. The popular Tuesday night suppers are now prepared by students, safely packaged, and delivered to individual student households.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION: RE classes have resumed with students participating remotely. The large number of children in RE makes it impossible to have in person classes at this time, but our DRE and teachers continue to provide an excellent program in creative ways.

EDGE AND LIFE TEEN: These programs continue with remote learning and now with some in person safe gatherings of students. The return of our parish hall for general use makes these in person gatherings possible, and our young people are excited to be together again!

MOVIE KNIGHTS: This Knights of Columbus initiative provides family friendly movies on Friday nights, and a much needed social opportunity during these trying times, when so many people feel isolated and deprived of normal social contact.

STUDY HALL: This new youth program allows eight teens per weekday to come together to do their remote school work while they are not able to attend school in person. This program is under the supervision of the youth minister, and follows the schedule of a normal school day, with breaks, lunch, snacks, and social time.

THURSDAY ORGAN CONCERTS: Every Thursday at 1:00 PM there is an organ concert in the church which is live streamed to the parish and beyond. Parishioners are invited to attend these concerts in person, and we hope that the concerts will become part of our permanent music program at STA.

These are just a few of the ministries that we are asking you to help "rescue" through this COVID appeal. Along with weekday and Sunday Masses, we are striving to respond to the needs of parishioners with an array of ministerial programs and activities that can be safely carried out during this challenging time. Thank you for your generous support of the mission of our parish. May God bless you and keep you safe in His care.

Yours in Christ,

Fr. Joseph