Pastor’s Introduction

I’m so glad that you have both the opportunity to receive and the time to review our 2016-2017 *St. Thomas Aquinas Parish Annual Report*. We have had a year of grace and blessings as you can see in the summary reports provided by each of our major parish ministries. Also included is our annual financial report.

It was thirty years ago, on July 1, 1987, when the first Bishop of San Jose, Pierre DuMaine, issued a canonical document merging the four territorial parishes of Palo Alto and St. Ann’s Chapel into one Parish with one pastor. The name of the new parish was given as St. Thomas Aquinas—the mother parish of Palo Alto since 1901, from which all the other parishes were formed: St. Aloysius, Our Lady of the Rosary, and St. Albert the Great. Fr. Alexander Larkin was appointed the new parish’s first pastor.

Having now embarked upon my second-term as pastor, I continue to be both gratified and hopeful as together we work in “unity as community”. The strengths of our parish fortify and energize our mission of “working together for the glory of God.” We do this through our site committees at each church—providing a forum for ideas, communication, and leadership opportunities; our faith formation programs seek to foster and nurture a lifelong journey with our Catholic Community; our Human Concerns Committee works to respond to Jesus’ command to love our neighbor by inspiring all of us toward peace, justice and mercy. Our Parish Stewardship Council has begun the ground work of supporting our diocesan evangelization efforts of Word, Worship, and Witness.

Of course, there are concerns as we look to the future. We must continually adapt to the needs of our younger families, children and youth. We strive to make sure that our older parishioners, especially those who live alone, have someone to care for them. We seek to make our celebration of the Sunday Eucharist the highlight of our week. We reach out in compassion and joy to those who seek material assistance We take seriously our responsibility to be good stewards of all God’s many gifts.

*Through the intercession of St. Thomas Aquinas, St. Albert the Great, and Our Lady of the Rosary, may God give me the strength each day to do my best for all you the good people of our parish.*

Rev. Matthew D. Stanley, Pastor
Our Pastoral Ministries

Liturgy Board

The mission of the Liturgy Board is to ensure that every liturgy is prepared and celebrated well in order to be a source of spiritual strength, inspiration and hope.

In addition to the parishioners who participate in the Board’s planning and monthly meetings, there are many, many parish volunteers that enable the work of the Board: all our parish liturgical volunteers (sacristans, lectors, commentators, music ministers, ushers, ministers of hospitality, altar servers) and those that train them, those who maintain our church environments and altar linens.

Ongoing Activities:

- Advance planning for all liturgical celebrations.
- Working with site committees and schedulers of liturgical ministers so that all Masses have all the liturgical roles filled at each Mass.
- Training and catechesis of new liturgical ministers as they volunteer (altar servers, lectors, Eucharistic Ministers, etc.).
- Maintaining a calendar of all liturgical celebrations (thank you Fr. Matt!)
- Support the work of the parish Director of Liturgy and Music.

Major Activities This Period:

1. Continued support for all the liturgical feasts and related celebrations:
   - October 2016 Mass count
   - Advent and Advent Penance rites
   - Christmas and Christmas Season Masses
   - Lent and Triduum including RCIA (and Adapted for Children) Rites
   - Family Masses at St. Albert and OLR each 4th Sunday
   - **NEW:** “Name Tag Sundays” at Family Masses – we distributed paper name tags at each Family Mass (4th Sunday of the month: 9:00 a.m. St. Albert the Great and 10:30 a.m. at Our Lady of the Rosary, plus the 9:00 a.m. Spanish-language Mass at OLR.
   - First Communion Masses (SESS, SAG, OLR)
   - Confirmation Mass (May 13, 2017)
   - Appropriate seasonal environment changes at all churches
   - Ongoing Altar Server training at OLR and SAG
   - Ongoing Lector training at all sites
   - Scheduling of ministers: OLR: Hong Ha Frei, SAG: Nora Lundin, STA: each Mass community schedules its ministers.
   - Fr. Matt prepares annual Liturgy Calendar, from which we work each month.

2. Continuing Special Initiatives
Movement at Liturgical Celebrations: The Board has accepted several offers from Susan Olsen, Children’s Ministries Director, to incorporate movement in our parish liturgies. These continue at the monthly Family Masses at OLR.

ON HOLD DUE TO EXPENSE: Christmas environments: We have tentatively decided to try high-grade artificial Christmas trees, as several other parishes use, at St. Albert the Great. While expensive, the time, effort and expense of cutting our own trees and having them fireproofed is wearing. We’re going to try to order two trees for St. Albert the Great and see how they work.

ON HOLD: Sound at St. Albert the Great: We made some adjustments to the volume levels in the sacristy in 2016 and feel the system is now sufficient. Estimates for an entire new system were exorbitant. We still hope to get some bids to replace and maybe add to the current two speakers.

ACTIVE: Carpeting at St. Albert the Great: The existing carpet continues to need to be replaced. Ted Baer is heading a dedicated committee (Ted, Roland Quintero, Donna Pellizari, Pat Keicher, Nora Lundin and others). Funding raising has been done and updated estimates are being obtained. Current plans are to replace the carpeting as well as the flooring under the pews. The timeline is still being developed.

3. Areas of Improvement and Attention:

SAG Carpeting
Needed: Liturgical Ministers at 10:30 STA and SAG 5pm and 9am. And we are advertising for them.
Volunteer(s) to schedule SAG liturgical ministers
Volunteer(s) to be sacristan at SAG

Members: Fr. Matt, Fr. Michael, Fr. Stasys, Deacon Daniel Hernandez, Paul Prochaska, Bill Mahrt, Nora Lundin (Director of Liturgy and Music), Pat Keicher, Kay Williams (secretary), Susan Olsen, Chris Lundin (chair) and other occasional participants. The group mourns the death of Pat Briggs, an active member who worshiped at St. Albert the Great and was a faithful attendee. We thank Pat Keicher for joining the group in Pat Brigg’s place.

Hispanic Ministry

The Hispanic Community of St. Thomas Aquinas Parish continues to be a lively, hard working, and generous community. It is made up of many close knit families who come to Mass every Sunday and many times join our programs as a family. We have several families in the community whom all its members serve in one ministry or another.

The Hispanic board continues to meet on the third Tuesday of each month and works with the pastoral associate/director for Hispanic ministry and parish vicar in planning and organizing all special events, programs, training and retreats which concern, mostly, the Hispanic community. This year we welcomed our new representative to the PSC, Jose Antonio García.
Activities:

We have several activities in the Hispanic community for those parishioners who prefer Spanish-speaking activities and worship. Though many of them speak fluent English, Spanish is preferred by them for worship and faith formation.

~ Liturgical Ministries

Lectors: They meet every month to practice and to evaluate each other.

Eucharistic Ministers: They, usually have at least one retreat a year before they renew their commitment on the Feast of Corpus Christi.

Altar Servers: Presently we have ten altar servers who help out in the Spanish mass. We had one new addition this summer and we expect to have two more join the group this fall.

Ushers: As in past years, we have been blessed with having many ushers because they are mainly youth and young adults. They are always ready and enthusiastic about serving, and we like seeing the youth involved in a ministry.

Catechists: Besides being involved in their ministry on Sundays and some of them on Thursday evenings, we meet every second Monday of the month for Scriptural reflection and prayer and any business we might have.

Adoration: Every first Friday of the month we continue having adoration at the Dermody Center Chapel from 6:00pm- 9:00pm.

Prayer of the Rosary: At 7:00 pm, every Tuesday evening we meet at the Dermody Center Chapel to pray for our parish needs and the needs of the world. We usually have a group of 10 to 20 persons. Some are families who bring their children who are very good at praying the rosary. We also continue to pray the rosary every Sunday before mass.

Catechesis:

Our catechetical program remains the same as in the previous year, but happy to say that every year we have more youth under eighteen, who have already been confirmed, involved in helping our teachers. This is great because by the time they are eighteen and older, they are ready and willing to take a group and teach the children. These young people also become the Confirmation program assistants.

Confirmation: The Bilingual Confirmation program consists of a two year preparation. Plus, we also have a Pre-confirmation group which is made up of 7th graders. These teens learn about our Church’s teachings in the area of Christian values and morality, and are taught to read the bible.

First Year Confirmation students are in 8th grade or higher. Second Year Confirmation students are in 9th grade or higher. Our first and second year Confirmation students are prepared, specifically, for the Sacrament of confirmation through the use of workbooks / activities, retreats, and prayer.
Our main goal in the overall program is to bring teens closer to Jesus and to strengthen their faith and love for Him and His Church. We motivate them to participate in mass and to get involved with their community through ministries, community service. We have found that by having the students in a two year confirmation program, they bond and mature together. Several of them have become involved in a ministry and many continue coming to Mass with their family.

**Grade School & Adult catechesis:**

In our First Communion program, parents and children come to catechesis on Thursday evenings during the year. We have seen how families learn to appreciate their Catholic faith much more through these evening class. Each group of parents is different and they all present certain challenges due to their lack of openness to learn or because of their work and everyday burdens they might have, but by the end of the year we are blessed to see their appreciation for the sacraments and their faith.

**Parish Activities:**

We began our catechetical year after Labor Day weekend, much like we will do every year in September. We started, however, the catechetical year with a one day retreat for all volunteers at El Retiro in Los Altos. We had a little over 50 attendees. Fr Hector Villela, from Sacred Heart Parish, along with the help of Fr. Stasys and Fr. Matt helped in making this retreat a success.

On Vocations Sunday, Sister Gisela and Fr. Joe Kim, along with a visiting seminarian came to give a talk to our youth and parents of the Hispanic community, in an effort to help them discern their calling and to help parents understand how important their role and support is in helping their children discern their vocation.

Other activities are: Mass on the Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary with attendance of over 150 persons; Novena for Our Lady of Guadalupe; Our Lady of Guadalupe Mananitas on the 12th at 5:30am; Novena at Christmas, Christmas Posada, Stations of the Cross every Friday during Lent.

**Retreats:** We had two retreats for our Confirmandees: adult group and youth. We had our first communion retreat with children and parents in May.

**STA Kids Faith Formation**

**Faith Formation Classes**

Last year (2016-2017) was another wonderful year of faith formation for children aged 4 through 10. A total of 104 children spent a full academic year learning and growing in their relationship with God as well as in their connections with one another as a community of faith. A total of 27 classes were offered. In addition we held four family gatherings at which parents and children worked together to prepare for or celebrate the various liturgical seasons and events. We celebrated the sacraments of 1st Reconciliation with 33 of our young people during Lent. Those same children celebrated their 1st Communion the first week in May. One child was fully initiated, receiving the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and 1st
Eucharist at the Easter Vigil. The year ended with a retreat and cross-over celebration by our thirteen 5th Graders who were welcomed by our Youth Director into The Edge for the coming year.

As is our tradition, we officially began our new year (2017-2018) with a pancake breakfast on August 13 and our sessions began on Sunday, August 20 (coordinating our start date with the start of public schools in Palo Alto). The sessions began with a family gathering for prayer and introductions of catechists and then moved into the classrooms for an initial session with the children. Registration forms for the new year were made available to families before last year’s sessions ended and are still available on the website for anyone who would still like to join us. We currently have 72 registered in our regular Sunday Sessions and an additional 13 in our RCIA adapted for Children.

We are continuing to use materials from Pflaum Gospel Weeklies for our children’s faith formation. This program follows the liturgical year and also includes systematic instruction on certain theological and doctrinal principles the children need to learn. Each week the children share and reflect on the readings they have heard or will hear at the Sunday Mass. Those readings and reflections are then tied to some aspect of the subject they will discuss during their session. Hence, Mass is not an event isolated from what they are experiencing but is an integral part of what they are learning and sharing about their faith. Each week the children take home a small pamphlet with the activities done in class as well as activities they can do at home. There is also material available for the family to use together to continue their conversation about their faith at home. Overall, our catechists have found this material very easy to use and engaging for the children.

For this new year (2017-2018) the children are scheduled for 28 Sunday sessions. Our calendar is aligned with the public school calendar so as to begin and end when public school does and to be off on holiday weekends. In addition four family gatherings will be offered on Monday and Thursday evenings (September, November – to prepare for Advent, February – to prepare for Lent, and May). The evenings are offered at different sites (Monday at St. Albert the Great and Thursday at Our Lady of the Rosary) to allow more people to take part (whichever works best for the family schedule). These family gatherings are designed to have the entire family work together to grow in faith. A light supper is served at these events. We will once again offer an Easter Gathering on Easter Sunday in 2018. The children will have an opportunity for an Easter Egg hunt as well as other activities to celebrate this great Feast Day.

We currently have thirty-four children preparing to receive the sacraments in the coming year. The materials we are using for sacramental preparation are from St. Mary’s Press, a program called “Go, Seek, Find” which uses the St. Mary’s Press Children’s Bible (a complete Bible translated at a 6th grade level) at the core of the process. Each child has a backpack, a Bible, and additional support materials to carry with them on their “adventure” to learn about the Sacraments and the meaning of Eucharist. In addition to what they are doing in their regular Sunday
sessions, six evening sessions are being offered during the year (approximately once a month) specifically geared to some aspect of that preparation. These presentations include two led by our pastor. First Eucharist children will also have a three hour retreat on a Saturday just prior to the reception of 1st Eucharist. Our 1st Eucharist celebrations are currently scheduled for the last week of April, 2018.

All of the grade levels at both sites have catechists this year. Pre-K and Kindergarten remain combined at both sites, as are the 4th and 5th grades at St. Albert the Great. As always, in some classes our catechists are working in teams, which helps to accommodate weekend schedules when one or the other catechist is not available.

Having sufficient catechists for our classes is always an issue. We are always looking ahead to bring in and train new catechists so that all our classes will always be covered. We would welcome anyone who would like to be trained to work with our children.

**RCIA for Children**

RCIA for Children meets regularly on Wednesday evenings in the Dermody Center. In 2016-2017 we have had a total of 10 enrolled in this process, a process which allows children over the age of 7 who have not yet been baptized or received 1st Eucharist to prepare for these sacraments of initiation. As previously reported, one of the children was fully initiated at the Easter Vigil. The rest of these young people are counted among the 33 who received 1st Reconciliation and 1st Eucharist this year.

We began a new year for the RCIA 2017-2018 in June and met with them every other week throughout the Summer. The group has now grown to a total of fifteen (two are also registered in our Sunday sessions), eight of whom are preparing for full initiation (Baptism, Confirmation & 1st Eucharist) at the Easter Vigil on March 31. We currently plan to celebrate the Rite of Acceptance with these young people on December 3.

**Children’s Liturgy of the Word**

In the past year we have had two people at Our Lady of the Rosary who have regularly taken our children out of Mass to experience the Liturgy of the Word at their own level. One of those dedicated catechists has moved on, but we are now preparing two additional people to take on this role, giving us the potential to have three weeks each month covered for this important ministry. At St. Albert the Great, we have one young person who has come forward serve in this capacity (with the help and support of his mother). Children’s Liturgy of the Word is important for our children as it allows them to be more fully engaged by the Word they are hearing at Mass. We are constantly seeking new leaders to assist in this mission to make the Liturgy of the Word more accessible to our youngest participants.

**Altar Servers**
The ministry of Altar Servers provides assistance to our priests at Mass and allows our young people the opportunity to develop a greater understanding of our worship and take a more active role in the Mass working closely with our priests.

Altar Servers are needed for two Masses at St. Albert the Great. We are working to train more of our young people to help with this important ministry.

Altar serving at Our Lady of the Rosary is thriving, with many boys and girls stepping forward to participate in this ministry. The pool of available children at Our Lady of the Rosary is larger, and there is only one Mass available at which they may serve, so it is easier to fill the slots. There is also an individual consistently available to train and oversee the Altar Servers at OLR which helps to encourage their participation.

**Family Mass**

Family Masses are held once a month - the 4th Sunday of most months at St. Albert the Great and Our Lady of the Rosary. We have a children’s choir that assists with the music at the Family Masses at St. Albert the Great under the direction of Karen Peng. She has provided some wonderful choral work with her children this year. At Our Lady of the Rosary we now have a group of six young people who are participating in Young Sounds of Praise, providing music and movement as the occasion warrants. It is hoped that this group will continue to grow and flourish in the year ahead. In addition to dance, drama and singing, these young people have also been learning to play the recorder.

We continue to train 5th, 6th, and 7th Graders as lectors for our Family Masses at both sites. At Our Lady of the Rosary, the young lectors have done very well with their proclamation of the Word, and it is hoped that their continuing growth in this ministry will form them as youth and adult ministers of the future. The young lectors at St. Albert the Great have also done very well in learning the skills as lectors.

**Vacation Bible Camp**

For the fourth year, we offered our two week Vacation Bible Camp during the first two weeks of August, focusing on learning our faith through scripture, movement, music, drama, and art. This year the children got to know St. Paul: the story of his conversion and all that he did to spread the Gospel throughout the Mediterranean. We had eighteen participants this year and hope to continue to grow in the future as we explore Sacred Scriptures through the Arts.

**Adults at the Center of Faith Formation**

In the coming year, it is hoped that we will be able to engage our parents (and other adults) more fully in faith formation processes. The Diocese of San Jose is encouraging us to recognize and support the importance of creating opportunities for formation of our adults, especially those who are sending their children to us for
formation. They are, after all, the primary catechists in the lives of their children. Continuing formation is important to all of us, no matter the age or experience, as we strive to be ever-better disciples of Jesus Christ.

Conclusion

“Faith is born of an encounter with the living God, who calls us and reveals his love, a love which precedes us and upon which we can lean for security and for building our lives.” (Lumen Fidei 4)

These words of Pope Francis are a reminder of the importance of the gift of faith in guiding our lives on a path of love and fulfillment as the people God created each of us to be. STA-Kids Faith Formation (Pre-Kindergarten through 5th Grade) helps our children to make that “encounter with the living God” Pope Francis spoke of. It is our hope to make that faith formation experience one that brings joy and enthusiastic response from our children (and their parents) as they learn how much they are loved by God and the importance of being a part of a community of faith.

St. Thomas Aquinas Youth (STAY) Ministry

Summary
- The Parish ministry programs resume with monthly 6pm Youth Masses and Fall High School retreat.
- Efforts for this year include building up teen leadership to empower teens to lead at the parish level.
- Ongoing activities include weekly Edge, LifeTeen, and Confirmation meetings.

Core Team
The youth ministry core team returns with new and returning faces. Returning from last year are Francesco Poggesi (Life Teen), Kyle Faller (Confirmation), Joey Zarate (Confirmation), Mary Beth Lefebvre (EDGE). New to the adult team is Ennio Valleflor (Life Teen) and Teresa Budzich (Confirmation). We are in the process of building a brand-new team of leaders consisting of high school students. This high school core will be empowered to help lead EDGE meetings, help support the Youth Masses, and help organize service opportunities in the parish. We are reaching out to local young adults and parents in our parish for additional support on the core team.

Ministry Programs
In its third year since reimplementation, our STA Youth Ministry continue its programs in the Life Teen model of ministry. Life Teen is a relational ministry model that seeks to form disciples through a non-classroom approach, which pairs catechetical teaching with building Christ-centered relationships. The confirmation program will continue using Chosen, which was introduced last year. The focus this year will be on recruiting more adult leaders, offering faith-enriching events for
teens and their families, and empowering teens to take more ownership of the parish ministries.

**Summer Activities**

In June our parish sent teens to participate in the Diocesan Youth Retreat (DYR) at Zephyr Point in Zephyr Cove-Round Hill Village, Nevada. DYR is an annual event the Diocese sponsors for Youth, 8th through 12th Grade, throughout the Diocese of San Jose. We also participated in the first-ever Steubenville youth conference in Hayward. Steubenville conferences are weekend Catholic youth gatherings where high school teens can experience powerful talks about faith, bond together in small groups, and be a part of moving prayer experiences such as Mass, praise and worship and Adoration.

**Formation of the Youth Band and Fall Youth Masses**

This year, with the support of Fr. Matt, the Liturgy Committee, the Peltier Family, Susan Olsen, and Chris Lundin, we have been able to form a new musical worship team that has helped lead worship in our past 2 monthly 6pm Youth Masses at OLR Church. Currently, the music group consists of many members of the Peltier’s, Susan, Chris, and Johnny Reilly. Since its formation, there is growing interest from other teens to join the music team, including 2 teen vocalists and 2 teen guitarists. We are grateful to the Peltier’s for offering up their time, their musical talent, and their home to be able to build up this wonderful ministry.

On the fourth Sunday of September, the Liturgy Committee approved the return of the 6pm Youth Mass, on a monthly basis for three consecutive months until November. So far, we have seen roughly 50 attendees at our Masses and we hope to see more in November. Out of these Masses, we have received requests from teenagers to be trained as Lectors and Eucharistic ministers for future Masses. We are grateful to the Leonard, Rielly, and Packer families for organizing hospitality and food following the Masses. The Liturgy Committee will evaluate the success of these Masses in December. From there we will decide if the monthly Youth Masses should continue.

**Ongoing Activities**

Regular Youth ministry meetings and events began on September 24th the weekly *Edge* (middle school) and *LifeTeen* (high school) groups, and monthly *Chosen* (Confirmation) continue to meet at the following times.

- *Edge* meets Sundays 4pm-5:30pm at the OLR Hall. There are 13 youth currently enrolled in *Edge*.
- *LifeTeen* meets Sundays 6pm-8pm at the Dermody Center. There are 17 youth currently enrolled in *LifeTeen, our highest level of involvement in 3 years.*
- *Confirmation Prep* meets Saturdays 3pm-5pm at the SAG Hospitality Center. There are 25 currently enrolled in *Confirmation Prep.*

This semester our parish sent 8 teenagers down to Six Flags for *LifeTeen Inspiration*. We are partnering with two other Diocesan Parishes to host a weekend
retreat for High School youth from Nov. 17-19, 2017. We are also preparing a weekend retreat for our Confirmation students with St. Martin of Tours (San Jose), in February. In addition, we are once again partnering with St. Nicholas Parish (Los Altos) to host deanery eXaLT (XLT) praise and worship family nights, since last year’s December event attracted over 250 teens, parents and families from the area. We are tentatively looking at a January date to host the first XLT, at OLR Church.

Acknowledgements
We would like to thank the teens and families who have invested their time and efforts in continuing the momentum of our youth ministry programs.

About STAY
St. Thomas Aquinas’ Youth Ministry program is committed to love, nurture, inspire, and motivate all middle and high school youth to be faithful lifelong disciples of Jesus Christ who serve their community. We offer weekly youth group sessions of faith sharing with peers, Sunday evening youth masses, and regular social events, social justice and outreach projects, and leadership opportunities.

Adult Spiritual Development Committee

MISSION STATEMENT:
The mission of the Adult Spiritual Development Committee is to plan, organize, and implement opportunities for the Parish to deepen our Catholic faith, while bringing our community closer together through shared experience.

OBJECTIVES:
1) Prepare a calendar of presenters and events for ongoing faith formation.
2) Evaluate previous sessions to improve our planning process.
3) Provide complimentary opportunities for spiritual participation through Taize Prayer and Stations of the Cross.
4) Solicit input and suggestions for future topics relevant to adult faith formation.

Latest Adult Spirituality Development Committees projects:
- Installed a new Smart TV in the SAG Hospitality hall which has been used for presentations.
- Continue to make DVD recordings of various presentations.
- Proposed that the DVD collection will be placed at Thomas House Library.
- Planning to better share the Spirituality Tuesday topics with the Spanish community by announcing the topics at the Spanish Masses.

Attached are the Tuesday Spirituality topics for Fall 2016 to Spring 2017.

SPIRITUALITY TUESDAY ASSEMBLY
Fall 2016

September 20th: Saints and Sinners: Are the great Saints of the past good role models today? with Fr. Jose Rubio
September 27th: Women’s Lives in Early California with Professors Beebe and Senkewicz from Santa Clara University


October 11th: The Bible and the Quran: A comparison study (Video) with Fr. Matt

October 18th: “Votivos”: An evening devoted to prayers, a short story and Mexican Folk Saints with special guest Dr. Bill Dohar

October 25th: Death with Dignity? A Catholic response to California’s Assisted Suicide Law with speaker Fr. Robert McKay

November 1st: All Saints’ Day Holy Day of Obligation Saint Albert the Great Church 7:00pm

November 8th: ELECTION DAY; please VOTE

November 15th: The Bible and the Quran: A comparison study (Video) with Fr. Matt

November 22nd: THANKSGIVING BREAK

November 29th: Homelessness in the Year of Mercy. There are four presenters, each one a member of our parish.

December 6th: The Bible and the Quran: A comparison study (Video) with Fr. Matt

December 13th: Taize at Saint Albert the Great Church 7:00 pm

December 20th and December 27th CHRISTMAS BREAK

SPIRITUALITY TUESDAY ASSEMBLY

Spring 2017

January 10th: The Bible and the Qur’an-A Comparative Study Part 4 (Video) Fr. Matt

January 17th: Exploring Buddhism Reverend Dean Koyama

January 24th: The Book of Ecclesiastes Rabbi Waldenberg

January 31st: How to navigate our cultural divide Dan Baer

February 7th: The Bible and the Qur’an-A Comparative Study Part 5 (Video) Fr. Matt

February 14th: Is there Salvation outside the Church? Fr. Gladstone Stevens

February 21st: Ignatian Spirituality and the Founding of the Jesuits Fr. Robert Izzo SJ

February 28th: Catholic Trivia Night Deacon Daniel and Fr. Matt

March 7th: The Bible and the Qur’an-A Comparative Study Part 6 (Video) Fr. Matt

March 14th: Woman Doctor of the Church: Hildegard of Bingen Susan Olsen

March 21st: Fr. Michael’s Spiritual Journey; the Church in the Philippines Fr. Michael Gazzingan

March 28th: Our Lady of Fatima Deacon Dominick Peloso

April 4th: WEDNESDAY Stations of the Cross at SAG Church

April 11th: Seder Dinner

April 18th Easter Break

April 25th: The Bible and the Qur’an-A Comparative Study Part 7 (Video) Fr. Matt

May 2: Mexican Fiesta Potluck
Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults

Mission:
The mission of the RCIA Team is to share the Good News of Jesus Christ with those seeking a relationship with God, through the Holy Spirit and in union with the Catholic Church.

Team:
The RCIA Team includes Beverly Wade, Deacon Daniel, Father Matt (Pastor), Heather Kenealy, John McNeel, Mike Lepech, Neale Wade (Coordinator), Sondra Dingmann, Susan Adams, Susan Olson (Director), and Teresa Budzich. Most of us have RCIA experience from previous years and our team is well qualified.

For filing purposes, the RCIA desk at the Pastoral Center will remain our official office, although much of our working materials are kept on-hand. All documentation is stored on two portable memory devices, to ensure program availability and consistency.

Preparation:
During the summer, we updated our inventory of professional documents and handouts, and ordered replacement materials as necessary. Monthly announcements are being submitted for the paper and e-bulletins. Professional tri-fold brochures are being placed on tables for those interested in completing their Sacraments, and we have a booklet called Outlines of the Catholic Faith that is given to each new inquirer.

In addition to email communication, the RCIA Team met for planning purposes, on the last Monday of each month at the Saint Albert the Great hospitality room between May and August. We opened and closed the meetings in prayer, and a meeting agenda was prepared in advance to coordinate the discussions, questions, and suggestions.

Planning:
During our planning meetings, we discussed our impressions of the last successful Easter Vigil and we reviewed our plans for the following Mystagogy sessions. The team reviewed the results of the voluntary RCIA Evaluation Survey completed by the participants, to determine what was working and what was not working.

Although the feedback was positive, our wish to enhance personal discernment by providing time for questions caused us to explore a different approach to the group meeting agenda for this year. The team voiced support and concern through questions and discussion. Our new process better focuses the discussion on session topics and personal experiences of faith.

Prior to the break, the discussion will focus on the Catholic Updates, which are synchronized to the weekly topics and given to the participants one week early as
assigned reading. We will also ask each participant to bring at least one written question, based on this reading assignment, to the class. After the break, the discussion will be focused by something creative: like modern day parables, online video presentations, slide shows, journaling, group readings, or role-play.

We welcomed a new team member, Teresa B, who will focus on scripture. Her reflections will be consistent with the Catholic faith and coordinated with the session topics. She also provided a nice battery powered clock which was installed over the kitchen door for managing time.

Father Matt was hoping for a more organic presenter assignment process this year, and an online Google doc was created to allow team members to volunteer for topics that meet individual interests. Prior to our last team meeting I signed up those who had not taken advantage of the voluntary sign-up sheet, to complete the Facilitator assignments.

A Mission Statement for the RCIA Team was proposed, reviewed and edited. Various Team members suggested edits and the statement was read many times. The version at the top of this document seemed to be acceptable to all, and was adopted.

Process:
During our Inquiry period, Deacon Daniel and Neale Wade talked and met with four (4) new people who contacted us with an interest in becoming Catholic, encouraging their interest and welcoming them to our RCIA process.

An RCIA reunion was held for our previous participants to help us prepare for the up-coming season. We asked for their spiritual support by attending the 10:30 AM Mass with us at OLR, on Sunday, September 11, 2016.

The RCIA Group sponsored the refreshments after Mass and about 10 new Catholics and 4 previous team members attended along with Parish clergy, staff, and community. Some people RSVP’d that they were traveling, or living far away, and would be unable to attend. It was good to hear from them.

The formal RCIA process, with one (1) new inquirer, one (1) returning inquirer, two (2) sponsors, and eleven (11) team members, began in the Saint Albert the Great hospitality room on Monday September 12, 2016. These meetings will continue every Monday evening from 7:00 to 8:30 PM.

Our goal is to present the Catholic Faith clearly, but not forcefully, in cooperation with the Holy Spirit.

For more information about the RCIA process please contact Susan Olson, by email at suolsen@dsj.org or by phone at 650-494-2496 ext 25.

Neale Wade, RCIA Coordinator
Pastoral Home Ministry

Mission: St. Thomas Aquinas Pastoral Home Ministry offers spiritual and social support for the sick and the home bound parishioners of all ages by visiting, bringing communion, praying and listening. We help them connect with the parish and other available social services.

We have approximately 17 active ministers. All our ministers met the diocese requirements of fingerprinting and completing the two required Shield the Vulnerable classes.

We visit clients weekly in their homes and in several nursing and retirement homes: Lytton Gardens, Palo Alto Sub-Acute and Convalescent Home, Channing House, Vi Living, Sunrise, Palo Alto Commons and Avant.

Our ministers get to know our clients and there is good bonding and friendship. Most of our individual clients are long term but we also visit parishioners who are homebound for short periods of time in convalescent homes or recuperating in their own homes. We are always happy when they get back on their feet and can go home or attend mass by themselves. We are there for clients who are in the process of dying and in need of comfort and prayer.

In nursing and retirement homes we visit individuals in their rooms and/or lead group communion. At Vi Nursing Care and Palo Alto Sub-Acute and Convalescent Home we have mostly convalescent clients and work with the activity directors to identify the Catholics who want communion.

We help arrange priest visits for clients who request for them. We send letters to families of recently deceased parishioners to help them in their grieving process. We have information on meals, transportation and home care for those who contact us about these services.

We also have an outreach service to reach out to parishioners who may be in need. We help them identify their needs and help them get support services. We keep a data base on various agencies in our area.

We coordinate the monthly masses at Lytton Gardens. The masses are well attended, especially on Ash Wednesday. We have the support of the staff and many volunteers who help with the music, readings, set-up and transportation of clients to the mass. Recently we started a mass at Palo Alto Commons on a seasonal basis. The residents were very appreciative of this service.

We maintain the ‘pray for’ lists in the Sunday bulletin and send out weekly updates to the Prayer Circle by e-mail and bi-weekly by regular mail. The Prayer Circle has increased in membership and it is heart-warming to see the responses of the members to the weekly e-mails and their concern for our sick. We are very
fortunate to have the prayer shawl group who provide great comfort to our seriously sick by the beautiful prayers shawls they make for them.

We provide clients with At Home With the Word which have the Sunday readings and commentaries. We bring them the church bulletin so they can keep up with the parish news and events. We also provide them with the little books for the different liturgical seasons.

Our strength is in our dedicated and caring ministers and parishioners. Our individual clients are usually referred to us by our priests, caring parishioners and ministers who notice those who are unable to go to mass and by the hospice care centers.

We are supported by wonderful volunteers like our musician and Legion of Mary helpers at the masses. We also have a group of caring parishioners who make cards and Christmas ornaments for our elderly clients.

Our weakness is in the lack of awareness regarding our services even though we are on the front page of the bulletin and have regular advertisement of our services in the e-bulletin and paper bulletin. Some of our ministers are advancing in age. Many of them have resigned recently due to inability to serve. We will need to train younger ministers.

We can be contacted by phone at (650)494-2496 X22 or by e-mail to Mary at fongmt@hotmail.com.
Our Parish Site Committees

Our Lady of Rosary (OLR) Site Committee

We provide a forum for ideas, communication and leadership in matters of hospitality, environment and initiatives for the parishioners at the OLR site.

Meeting Schedule: We meet every month or two, depending on future activities. Nominally, we gather after the 10:30 Mass on a Sunday convenient for most members. Coordination occurs on a week to week basis and meetings can be rescheduled by mutual agreement.

Membership: Arnoldo Alcazar, Arto Antilla, Carole Brown, Laura Chiu, Vivienne Fong, Mary-Ann Ho, Lydia Kou (PSC rep.), Victoria Liu, Jerry Lucha, Chris (acting Chair) & Nora Lundin, William & Anne Morrison, Katia Reeves, John & Roberta Uebbing, Laurie Vavuris, Hong Ha Vuong, Neale Wade plus any other interested Mass attendees. Many hands make light work. So the OLR Site Committee is actively recruiting new members. Look for a big membership push this April.

Eternal rest to Jim McLaughlin, a member of the OLR site committee contributing greatly to ensuring our parish sites are prepared for emergencies, especially during our Masses.

We Welcome Newcomers Joining our Worship Site: Our WELCOME TABLE is set up twice a month in the hall (where coffee and donuts are served) to register newcomers, answer questions and distribute information about parish activities. Roberta Uebbing has been a stalwart at manning the Welcome Table and Hong Ha Vuong will be assist on an as needed basis.

Worship Opportunities:
The 8:30 am daily Mass Monday through Friday.
The 9 am Sunday Mass primarily serves the Hispanic Community and is very well attended. [Church is usually completely full.]
The 10:30 am Sunday Mass has a large attendance. The 4th Sunday of each month at 10:30 is Family Mass Sunday. (Most of the ministers are regularly scheduled youth.)

**OLR Activities – continuing / upcoming**

September 17th was the annual Parish Picnic held at OLR. Knights of Columbus were cooking and activities (face-painting, piñata, entertainment, Free Cycle were coordinated.

1st and 3rd Wednesdays S.O.U.P. continues @ 5:30 p.m. (every Wednesday during Lent). Bring your bowls (and perhaps some cheese and crackers to share) socialize with your fellow parishioners and donate what you would have spent on the meal. Proceeds are divided among several worthy projects, including our Fr. Jack Donald, former parishioner, who has been working in Honduras for many years. Anne Morrison reports about 20-25 attendees each time.

Name-Tag Sunday will be continued at OLR once a month at the 10:30am Mass. It has garnered positive responses from parishioners. More greeters are needed to encourage parishioners to use a name tag.

**OLR Activities - past**

Christmas Faire was on November 5 2016 at OLR. Anne Morrison reported our parishioners are very talented and donated much crafts for sale. Attendance however, was poor and the proceeds from the sales amounted to about $1,500.

Father Sev’s 25th Anniversary Mass and reception included guests from Los Angeles and Africa.

Lenten Taize each Thursday during Lent, last one was on March 30th 2016 held at OLR. Each event brought about 30-35 attendees.

April 23, 2017 Divine Mercy Chaplet (after 10:30am Mass)

June 3, 2017 “Fr” Gabriel ordained and has performed a Mass at OLR

June 18-2017 Fr. Gabriel’s Mass of Thanksgiving

July 1 The Parish’s 30th Anniversary of Founding

August 13 Pancake Breakfast. Great thanks to the Knights of Columbus for cooking.

**Other Updates:**

Parish Directory photos are completed! Thanks to all volunteers for staffing the photo intake shifts and Chris Lundin for organizing and coordinating. Final proofing is now underway and we hope to receive the photo albums by Christmas.

La Comida:

The Board of Directors of the Santa Clara County Hot Lunch program for Seniors presented to PSC about the need for a temporary location while they search for a permanent location. La Comida representatives visited STA’s three church sites’ dining rooms and kitchens. At this time, through the news media, it appears La Comida has procured a temporary site to continue its hot lunch program for seniors, especially those who are of low income. La Comida has not provided an update as to if there is still a need for extra location(s).
Emergency Preparedness/Communications:
Lydia Kou will continue the work of Jim McLaughlin in Emergency Preparedness/Communications for STA parish.

- Training of ushers and other interested members in operation and net procedures will be scheduled TBD.
- Continue the conversation on procuring AEDs for STA parish.
- Per Laurie Vavuris, the OLR site and basement was built to withstand earthquakes and wants to explore the site as a Red Cross shelter. Chris will speak to Fr. Matt and Lydia will explore with Red Cross their procedures.
- Organize a Red Cross Adult and Infant CPR and AED use class.

Maintenance:
Laurie Vavuris reported the paint on church windows on the north side of the building is flaking and should be resolved before the rainy season. Due to the height of the windows, scaffolding and professional painters may be needed. This has been sent to Building, Maintenance and Equipment Committee for review.

Prepared and submitted by Lydia Kou, OLR Site Representative to PSC 8/22/2017.

St. Albert the Great Site

The Saint Albert the Great site on Channing Avenue is the venue for four major buildings of the St. Thomas Aquinas Parish – St. Albert the Great Church, the Parish Rectory, St. Elizabeth Seton School and the former convent which houses the site’s Hospitality Center, the after-hours Child Care Center and some offices and classrooms of the school.

Saint Albert the Great Church

St. Albert the Great Church continues to be the center of liturgical celebrations at that site on Saturdays at 5 PM and Sundays at 9:00 AM. It is also the worship site for the St. Basil the Great Byzantine community on Sundays at 11:00 AM. The Sacrament of Penance is available between 4:15 and 4:45 before the Saturday evening Mass. The Easter Vigil is traditionally celebrated here and an all-night Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament occurs following the 5 PM Mass on the eve of the Feast of Corpus Christi until the 9 AM Mass on the following morning.

The Jim Chinn Library, which is located in the SAG Church vestibule, is open any time the Church is open and operates on the honor system. It was created in memory of Jim, who served for so many years as our SAG Sacristan. Books are shelved under the following categories: Biography, Liturgy, Meditations, Parish Life, Prayers, Scripture, Self-Help, Spiritual Life, Theology, and Miscellaneous. Donations of appropriate books are accepted.
The Rectory
The Parish Rectory, which is on the site, currently houses Pastor Matthew Stanley, our two Parochial Vicars, Fathers Stasys Mikalonis, and Michael Gazzingan. Due to its size, the rectory occasionally hosts visiting clergy, as well.

Hospitality Center
The Hospitality Center, which is across the driveway from the church building, continues to be a welcoming gathering place following the 9 AM Mass thanks to the organization and efforts of 8 site families. The Byzantine community holds a Sunday luncheon there after the 11AM Mass. It is the venue for Adult Faith Formation opportunities such as the Spirituality Tuesday Assemblies and Thursday Morning Scripture and Faith Sharing, both of which are parish-wide activities, RCIA meetings, and various committee meetings. It is also used for funeral receptions when requested by decedents families and various committee meetings. St. Elizabeth Seton School uses the room during school hours for tutoring and homework supervision.

Beginning September 2016 and lasting through May 2017, Confirmation sessions were held on certain Sundays, at the St. Albert the Great Hospitality Center, from 3:00PM to 5:00PM.

St. Elizabeth Seton School
The principal, Evelyn Rosa, provides the Saint Elizabeth Seton School reports. The parish for various social events uses the school’s hall.

Faith Formation
Religious Education classes for pre-school through 5th grade children are held in St. Elizabeth Seton School after the 9:00 AM Mass each Sunday and are taught by committed parents. Held at the same time is a new parents’ program titled Parents.Jesus, which is a forum for adult discussion. It is moderated by Thibaut de Bretagne and Carole Barrett and is enjoying much success. It is moderated by Thibaut de Bretagne and Carole Barrett and is enjoying much success.

Liturgical Ministry
The site enjoys the participation of many community members as liturgical ministers. Ministries that are experiencing a need for more participation are altar serving, although those young people who currently serve are faithful and committed, and sacristans, needed at both Masses.

“The Great News”
The SAG site newsletter, “The Great News,” is issued three times a year. The last issue was the Summer/Fall 2016 edition. It focuses on site concerns, events, and activities, and on individuals and families who worship at the site. The committee welcomes and encourages readers to suggest or write about topics. Editor, Pat Keicher, has asked to step away from producing the newsletter due to her husband’s illness. The committee agreed to continue producing the newsletter and would work together to write the sections. The next publication date has not been set.
**Events**

The Sacrament of Confirmation for our High School Students was celebrated at the 5pm Mass, Saturday, May 14, 2016. Vicar General, Msgr. Francis Cilia, conferred upon forty-three of our High School Youth the gift of the Holy Spirit.

On May 21, 2016, Fr. Matt’s Silver Anniversary of Ordination Mass was celebrated at St. Albert the Great Church. Bishop Patrick McGrath concelebrated Mass, along with Vicar General Msgr. Fran Cilia. A reception followed in the auditorium at St. Elizabeth Seton School. The auditorium’s new projection system was used throughout the evening.

“I thank God, my family and friends, colleagues in ministry, my bishop, priests and religious, and all the people whom I have been called to serve over these past 25 years.”

An excerpt from Father Matt’s 25th Anniversary Homily

On Saturday, December 10, 2016 The Christmas Story II: The Animal’s First Christmas (a ballet set to Tchaikovsky’s Nutcracker Suite) and Songs to Prepare Us for Christmas was presented by Young Sounds of Praise (from St. Thomas Aquinas Parish) and Holy Family’s Ministry of Movement: Dance for Joy & Soaring Spirit Dance Ensemble. All proceeds were donated to the Carpet/Floor Fund for St. Albert the Great.

The Catholic Young Adult Community (20’s, 30’s, single or married) of Deanery 2 of the Diocese of San Jose, California held their Annual Christmas Party, Saturday, December 10, 2016 at St. Albert’s Church Meeting Hall. Participating parishes include Palo Alto: St. Thomas Aquinas, Stanford: Stanford University (St. Dominic), Mountain View: St. Athanasius, St. Joseph, and Los Altos: St. Nicholas, St. William, St. Simon.

Our Knights of Columbus Council held the Annual ‘All-you-can-eat’ Crab Dinner-Dance & Silent Auction on Saturday, February 25, 2017. Parishioners were asked for donations of enticing, new or gently used items or services or fun events such as a wine tasting or progressive dinner etc. for the auction tables. Auction sales traditionally benefit St. Elizabeth Seton School.

Once-a-month Name Tag Sunday was expanded to St. Albert the Great Church at the 9:00 a.m. Family Mass on Sunday, February 26, 2017. Nametags were set out and Mass attendees were encouraged to fill them out and introduce themselves to their fellow Mass-goers. This was repeated on May 28 and as it worked out quite well more occasions are planned.

This wonderful family event, St. Patrick’s Day Dinner, was held this year on Saturday, March 18, 2017. Live Irish music and the Irish dancers from Greene Academy of Dance performed. As always, great food was served and pizza for vegetarians and those not caring for the corned beef and cabbage dinner was offered. The event raised $1,400.

Each Triduum, St. Albert Church is the venue for the Easter Vigil Mass, starting with the lighting of the Easter fire and culminating in the reception of the Easter sacraments by those seeking full communion with the Catholic Church. This year one candidate was baptized and joined two others in receiving First Eucharist and Confirmation.

The Celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation was conferred on forty-eight of our parish youth on Saturday, May 13, 2017 at the 5:00 p.m. Mass at St. Albert The Great
Church. Vicar General, Msgr. Francis Cilia, conferred the gift of the Holy Spirit. We congratulate the Catechumen, their parents, sponsors, and catechists.

**SAG Site Committee Business**

Working together to refine the SAG vision and mission, the Site Committee constructed a NEW mission statement: *The Saint Albert the Great Site Committee provides a forum for ideas, communication, and leadership in matters of hospitality, environment, and initiatives for the parishioners at the St. Albert the Great Site.*

An on-going focus of the council is to provide welcome and hospitality to newcomers who register after Mass. The Site Committee meets in the Hospitality Center on the 2nd Sunday of the month after the 9 AM Mass and welcomes new members.

**Update on St. Albert The Great Church Flooring Upgrade**

**Update: November 2016**

Under the leadership of Ted Baer, Roland Quintero and Donna Pellizzari the replacement of the 30 year old carpeting in the church and the necessary drive to raise the money to finance commenced the weekend of October 23, 2016. Fundraising objectives included: replacing the carpeting, improving the flooring under the pews, restoring the marble floor in the sanctuary through removal of the carpet and repair of the marble where damaged, and various other improvements. Publicizing the St. Albert the Great Flooring Fundraising Campaign concluded on Sunday, December 4, 2016. Donations enough to replace all the carpeting and accomplish other improvements in the church and its flooring were gratefully received.

**Budgeted Costs:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Cost</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Replace carpet</td>
<td>$33,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nave floor restoration</td>
<td>$40,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanctuary marble</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous expenses &amp; various improvements</td>
<td>$6,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtotal</td>
<td>$84,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contingency (12%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project cash in hand</td>
<td>-$8,925</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Funds Required</td>
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**Flooring Update:**

<table>
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<th>Amount</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Deposits, December 5</td>
<td>$43,993</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donation, December 8</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beginning balance</td>
<td>$8,925</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Donations</td>
<td>$53,918</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The committee will continue to accept tax-deductible contributions. The goal remains to replace the old linoleum flooring under the pews, not just the carpet.

**Update: May 2017**

The first phase of the project itself addressed the enhancement of the sanctuary, and it is mostly complete. Whereas for 30+ years the sanctuary contained a large, carpeted deck, that addition has all been removed to expose the original pink marble, hidden (undisturbed) for all these years. The marble has been polished and sealed and a large, lovely carpet was donated for under the altar.
We have in hand three bids to install hardwood flooring under the pews and replace all the carpeting in the church with high quality, commercial-grade carpeting. All three bids require some special attention, which the committee is addressing, but all three bids are within our budget.

The committee’s objective is to obtain candidate carpet samples as quickly as possible so that everyone who wishes can comment upon the choices.

**New Topics And Proposals Open To Discussion**

- **Parish Art Exhibit:** It was decided to solicit art from parishioners and have a continuing show in the SAG Center. We hope to launch this in the Fall.

- **Our Lady of Guadalupe:** It was proposed that a suitable image of Our Lady of Guadalupe be placed in the SAG church. It provides an especially warm welcome to Hispanic visitors and is well suited to St. Elizabeth Seton school. One of the two facing walls at the rear of the church are proposed. The proposal remains under consideration.

- **Oils:** A discussion was opened about the storage and exhibition of sacred oils. One of the two facing walls at the rear of the church are proposed. The proposal remains under consideration.

- **Sacristan:** SAG needs a Sacristan. Although a full-time volunteer would be ideal, a rotation based on a pool and then coordination was suggested. Only a select group will be afforded training. Committee member, Julie Sanford, has completed training and filled in for Nora on Saturday, May 27. A second opportunity to assist Nora is scheduled for Saturday, June 24. We are hopeful that others will join the pool of volunteers.

- **Children’s Liturgy of the Word Volunteer:** A full time volunteer, to gather the children attending 9 AM Mass into the Chinn Library, is desired. Although a full time volunteer would be ideal, a rotation based on a pool and then coordination was suggested.

- **Strengthen Community:** Bingo was mentioned as a possible SAG community building activity. The committee is of the opinion that the game should reinforce the basics of the Catholic faith. This could be accomplish using such calling categories such as The Bible, Saints, Parts of the Mass, and Fruits of the Holy Spirit, to name a few. The focus is to provide a fun game that is easy to play for all ages. Discussion included possible dates; after 9 AM Mass on Sunday’s when PAUSD is not in session or as an evening celebration on February, 28th. Fat Tuesday. The proposal remains under consideration.

- **Committee members Ted Baer and Neil Barrett underwent training in the emergency response reaction method. In the event of an earthquake, fire, or someone taking ill during liturgical services, personnel is now equipped to respond using this system of procedures.

Finally, let us all remember and pray for Pat Briggs, the longtime SAG site committee chair, who passed away June 8, 2017. Pat was a faithful servant for several years.
SAG Site Committee Members

Neil Barrett, Chairperson, Julie Sanford, Site Representative to the Pastoral Stewardship Council, Pat Keicher, Roland Quintero (Publication), Ted Baer, Jerry Buday, Nora Lundin, Parish Representative, Art and Environment: Susan Adams, Donna Pellizzari, Rosemary Finnerty, and Terry Holzemer.

St. Thomas Aquinas Site

(751 Waverley Street, Palo Alto)

Not available.

Our Other Parish Ministries

St. Thomas Aquinas Parish Green Committee

Members: Ann Akey, Paul Chestnut, Laura Chiu, Ann Fillin, Laisz Lam, Walt Lundin, and Katia Reeves

Membership: New members please contact Katia Reeves at katia.reeves@sbcglobal.net

Mission Statement: The Green Committee of St. Thomas Aquinas Parish, on behalf of the parish community, works to advocate for Catholic principles and priorities in environmental issues and decisions, especially as they impact those who are poor and vulnerable. The committee works to inspire the parish community to discern and act in ways that reflect our duty to care for God’s Creation.

Pope Francis writes in Laudato Si,

#25: “Climate change is a global problem with grave implications: environmental, social, economic, political and for the distribution of goods.”

#13: “The urgent challenge to protect our common home includes a concern to bring the whole human family together to seek a sustainable and integral development, for we know that things can change.”

Response to Laudato Si:

1. Walt Lundin’s eNewsletter: Completed Volume II with 100 postings as of Sep. 5, 2017. This is an informative current environmental news digest written in Walt’s unique pithy style that goes to about thirty-four recipients in our parish, the Diocese, PA Commons and other concerned citizens. If you would like to subscribe, please let us know. It is a quick way to be informed about the great challenges our Earth is facing. The letters are placed on the web site: http://www.paloaltocatholic.net/documents/2017/8/Environmental Newsletters 82 - 92 vol. 2 -1.pdf

2. We are grateful to the Director of Liturgy for the care for creation prayers of the faithful that are included regularly at the Masses.

Faithful Citizens - Advocacy and Education:

3. On October 4, 2016, Feast of St. Francis, for Spirituality Tuesday we hosted Ballot
Measures: Aligning Environmental Values with Action. It was a conversation with Melissa Hippard, of the Loma Prieta Chapter of the Sierra Club. A little over 20 people attended.

This was in response to: “Society, through non-governmental organizations and intermediate groups, must put pressure on governments to develop more rigorous regulations, procedures and controls. Unless citizens control political power – national, regional, and municipal – it will not be possible to control damage to the environment.”

*Laudato Si* #179

After elections update: We celebrated the ban on single use plastic bags was upheld.

4. On November 28, attended the City Council meeting where the Sustainability/Climate Action Plan was discussed and unanimously approved. By the way, Pope Francis was quoted again. The goal of the framework is for Palo Alto to reduce greenhouse gas emissions 80% below 1990 levels by 2030 (less than 15 years from now).

5. On December 13th, along with the Citizens’ Climate Lobby, we held a screening at OLR Hall of an episode of the National Geographic series “Years of Living Dangerously” which illustrated the difficulty of dealing with Congress on trying to put a price on carbon. We invited the interfaith community to join us. About 50 people attended.

6. Walt Lundin and Committee wrote an article published in *The Valley Catholic* on Jan. 17, 2017 titled “Declutter, De-Donate, Decelerate = Delightful”. It was inspired by Pope Francis’ encyclical and an article by Susan Eishen in the *Our Sunday Visitor*.

7. On January 26th held a screening at the OLR Hall of the movie *Before the Flood* which presents an account of the dramatic changes now occurring around the world due to climate change. We invited the interfaith community to join us. The presentation was well received by the 65 people who attended. We offered to lend the DVD to those attending for them to show the movie to their groups. Several signed up for this and showed the film at classes at Notre Dame Du Namur University among other places.

We also had petitions for the Disclose Act AB14 circulating for signatures. We collected 37 signatures. The bill requires ballot measure ads and candidate ads to clearly display their 3 largest funders on the ads themselves. It has rules to identify the original donors so ads display their true names instead of misleading political committee names.

8. Wrote a letter published on Jan 26, 2017 in the San Jose Mercury News about the CDC (Centers for the Disease Control) abruptly canceling their climate talks. This generated more letters published in the paper. Fortunately, a few days later, there was an article informing that Al Gore was sponsoring the convention of scientists to address preparation for the impacts of climate change on human health.

9. On February 7 attended the Bay Area Air Quality Management District Open House on updates to draft regulations dealing with petroleum refining emission limits and reduction of risk from air toxic emissions. These are long-term regulations that have significant environmental justice implications. Provided feedback and concerns to what they presented.

10. Teamed with the STA Site and the Thomas Merton Center Spiritual Education Committees to screen on April 8 *Before the Flood* followed by a discussion about climate change, its impacts and what can we do about it.
11. On April 18th, at the OLR Hall, co-sponsored with the Peninsula Interfaith Climate Action group, a presentation by Dr. Andrew Gunther titled: “Climate Disruption: A Scientific Call to Action.” Dr. Gunther serves on the Board of Directors of the Union of Concerned Scientists and addressed about 70 people. An inspiring discussion followed. The Valley Catholic published on May 23rd an article we submitted about this event.

12. Collaborated with Ruth Chippendale and the WILPF* Peninsula Palo Alto, to show Before the Flood on Earth Day (April 22) at the Mitchell Park Library. The room was filled to capacity with 65 people attending. An active discussion followed the screening and obtained more signatures to the Disclose Act Petition. *Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom.

**Energy Conservation:**

13. In the 2016 summer, the proposed Nest thermostat was installed at the SAG Hospitality Center to help control the temperature and natural gas use in that multi-user location.

14. Ted Baer, Chuck Tully, and I met with Evelyn Rosa, SESS Principal, in September and one of the topics was energy conservation and specifically, the thermostats management. Evelyn thought the school gym would be a good candidate for a Nest thermostat. She has one at her apartment and really likes it.

We also talked about the Zero Waste training that Palo Alto offers to staff and children at schools. Evelyn had been wanting to refresh the training done a few years earlier. Provided her the contact information for the utilities representative that handles that program.

15. We continue to implement the Zero Waste Is Possible program by reducing plastic and eliminating styrofoam at parish events by using compostable utensils. The recyclables, compostables, and landfill waste bins at all the sites are now the norm.

16. We learned about a new rebate incentive. It is a program to install EV (Electrical Vehicle) charging stations at locations such as our church sites. In summary, the rebate is up to $3,000 per charger with up to $10,000 per site. The cost of installation is $500 to $2,000 depending on location. We discussed at the Green and the B&EM Committees the pros and cons and decided that at this time we would not pursue this project.

17. The first graph shows the results of our parish’s natural gas conservation efforts. It shows the need to focus on the SAG/SESS site. With the natural gas rate going up by 8% in fiscal year 2017 (started Jul 1, 2016) and the projected increase by 9% in FY2018, the stewardship of the environment is also good stewardship of the treasure. A big THANK YOU to everyone who has helped keeping the doors closed and the thermostats down or off when not needed throughout the parish.

A 2017 semiannual survey of the parish natural gas usage indicates the SAG/SESS site is still a challenge. A second graph, focusing on SAG/SESS is shown below with the monthly breakdowns.

The second graph table has the actual number of therms used each month for easy comparison for each year since 2012. For example, January 2017 had the most natural gas consumption than any month since 2012.
18. Held the annual and popular free-cycle event at the parish picnic. This fits the "re-use" side of the “reduce, re-use, recycle” triangle. Also, we continue advocating for veggie burgers at the parish picnic with a poster showing the environmental impacts of meat.
19. We continue receiving eyeglasses at the three sites thanks to our compassionate parishioners. The head of the local Lions International is our new contact for picking up the eyeglasses for their Sight Program to help people in developing countries.

Recognition:
20. The California Interfaith Power & Light held its tenth annual awards ceremony on November 15, 2016. St. Thomas Aquinas won an award for Green Building from among competitors throughout California. We especially thank all the donors and helpers for the two solar projects for this recognition.

The story in The Valley Catholic (page 9, December 13, 2016) can be found here:

“Saint Thomas Aquinas especially was noted for its leadership within the Diocese of San Jose. In the tradition of Catholic Social Teaching and Creation protection, this parish has implemented many energy- and water-saving measures, including installing two solar systems totaling 62 kilowatts of clean power; and employing energy-efficient lighting and drought-tolerant landscaping. Saint Thomas Aquinas has an active Green Committee, which has hosted presentations on Pope Francis’ encyclical on ecology, advocated for clean air policies to local regulatory agencies, and held Earth Day celebrations that provide resources on actions their parishioners can take.”

We would like to thank and acknowledge the support from the Building and Equipment Maintenance Committee in reducing our parish carbon footprint. Additionally, a heartfelt “Thank you” to all the parishioners who care for creation and our common home.

Katia Reeves and the Green Committee
STA Building and Equipment Maintenance Ministry

MISSION: The Building & Equipment Maintenance Committee is responsible for the building maintenance of the 11 facilities of the Parish, the use of these facilities and the safety of people using these facilities. With the help of each site committee, we complete regular inspections of all facilities and we receive input from the Parish that determine the need for upkeep, repairs, replacements and all other projects. These are prioritized by the committee.

COMMITTEE: Charles Guenzer, Chair; Larry Reeves, Vice Chair; Ted Bear, Secretary; Lydia Kuo, Jerry Lucha, Katia Reeves, Chuck Tully, Helen Bauman, and Bill Morrison.

WORK: Meetings are held at the PC at 0930 the 4th Wednesday of the month (except for August and December). Average attendance is eight people. Detailed minutes are prepared, approved and retained as the official record of our work. The work of the committee is “behind the scene,” but very straightforward.

The committee has worked on the following key projects during the year:

1. AED (Defib.): We continue to read about more installations in public areas. Lydia wrote a very complete white paper, including these key points:
   a. “All 50 states have good Samaritan laws .. no lawsuits have been filed against anyone for the use of a defibrillator.”
   b. “several cases have gone to court alleging liability because a company did NOT provide a defibrillator.”
   c. “under current state law, which went into effect on January 1, 2016, a person or entity that acquires an AED for emergency use is not liable for any civil damages resulting from the use of an AED to provide emergency care if that person or entity does the following” (basically maintain and test their AED).
   d. “Approximately 84 million people in this country suffer from some form of cardiovascular disease.
   e. “When an AED is not available conveniently, chance of survival lesson to 5%.

2. STA church front steps: Still being investigated. Several ideas have been reviewed and discarded. Currently Judy Foley is obtaining sample of pre-cast concrete step tile from Napa Stone, which will be considered by the site committee or improve. Several contractors have been contacted for ideas. No TBF date.

3. Parish wide Usher’s Manual: Updated in Jan 2016, being reviewed. This is a very comprehensive document that is a real asset to the Parish

4. Three year inspections for 2017 completed.

5. STA paint project, Chuck unsuccessful in obtaining quotes or advice on repairs. To completely repaint could cost $300K or more,

6. SAG floor. Only one bid received. New more specific specs to be reviewed by the committee in May and project will be rebid. Because of construction at SESS this Summer, there is no competition date at this time. Diocese has added a new requirement, workers must be paid prevailing wage. According to Ted, this will add “a lot” more cost.

7. Five-year capital plan being developed.

8. An Eagle Scout project to build a new sign at the PC, on schedule.

Submitted by William F. Morrison
Communications Board

The mission of the Communications Board is to build an information-rich environment to connect and inform all members of the parish, and sometimes members of the surrounding community. The bulk of the Board’s efforts surround a few key communications activities which are produced and delivered on a recurring basis.

The four main communications vehicles our parish employs are:

- the weekly paper bulletin and the eBulletin
- imaging literature (posters, flyers)
- the parish website (http://www.paloaltocatholic.org)

What’s Working

Parish Web Site: Maintaining excellence! The new site went live July 2011. Nora Lundin, Liturgy Director, is responsible for the maintenance of the parish Website, assisted by Fr. Matt. Both are prolific posters. The site is kept very current.

eBulletin: First issue: May 25, 2007. It has been published weekly ever since. It remains a useful parish tool for timely dissemination of information. We currently have 430 members subscribed. The eBulletin goes out every Friday morning. We gain new subscribers and others fall off due to moving out of the parish, death, etc.

Site-Based Newsletters. While not the direct work of the Communications Board, two site-based newsletters certainly contribute to parish information flow. Steeple Talk is the work of the STA Site Committee (Editor Kay Williams). This monthly publication began in May 2007 along with the eBulletin and is a very useful tool for that worship site. The St. Albert the Great News debuted in January 2013. It is a site-specific newsletter and is the effort of Pat Keicher and with the help of Roland Quintero and other contributors.

Event Posters: Roland also photographs and chronicles major parish events and liturgies and made composite posters available in our vestibules. Posters for the Pastoral Stewardship Council were updated in August and parish picnic posters were also prepared.

Space Constraints in the Paper Bulletin: We pretty regularly do not have enough room in the Sunday Bulletin for all the information requested to be put into it. The eBulletin, since it has no size/space limits, is always available.

Size/Energy of Group: The Communications Board is really just a handful of people. To be effective, you really have to be immersed in the parish schedule, information flow, etc. It is not easy to drop in occasionally. Increasing the size of the group has been a challenge. We always welcome new members to the committee.

Membership

The members of our Communications Board are Chris Lundin (who is our Chair and ebulletin editor), Kay Williams, and Roland Quintero (parish photographer and our PSC rep). Nora Lundin is our parish staff liaison and works closely with the small team.

Respectfully submitted: Roland Quintero, PSC rep
Community Life

Mission Statement: Community Life works to build community within the St. Thomas Aquinas Parish.

MEMBERS: Carole Brown, Teddie Guenzer, Laisz Lam, Natalie Lucha, Joan Meyn, Jeanne Ramos, Helen Short, Roberta Uebbing, Mario Veloro, Susan Veloro, Beverly Wade, Chair: Anne Morrison

We have continued strong support from: Ted Baer, Jerry Lucha and our “auxiliary”. There is a large group of parishioners who when called upon join us with overwhelming enthusiasm and enable us to fulfill our mission. Even thought they don’t regularly attend meetings.

Fr. Gazzingan’s Welcome Reception August 7, 2016
The reception was held at OLR Hall after 10:30 Mass. Fr. Michael was introduced to many parishioners. Fr. thanked us for the reception.

PICNIC September 20, 2016
Approximately 475 people attended. The Knights of Columbus cooked hamburgers, hot dogs etc. Attendees brought potluck dishes. There were dancers, drums and a performance by young people of the parish.

MASS of REMEMBRANCE November 2, 2016
We provided cookies, fruit and beverages. There were only 4 attendees for the reception. We will be discussing how to handle the reception next year

HOLIDAY FAIRE, November 5, 2016
There is a lot of talent in this parish. Many people contributed to the Faire. They came to craft sessions and worked at home. The Faire made about $1,500. The attendance was poor. The parishioners who came were generous. The committee will rethink this project.
SEDER DINNER April 11, 2017
The dinner was held in Rosary Hall. Eighty-nine People were served the traditional Seder Meal. This is an important event during Holy Week for our parish. It was cooked by Ted Baer and Jerry Lucha. Several young people with Chris Mardesich helped to set up the meal and graciously served it.

With respect,
Anne Morrison, Chair

Human Concerns Committee

The HCC continues its work of parish education and participation in a variety of social justice activities.

St. Vincent de Paul Society
The two chapters of the St. Vincent de Paul Society, one at St. Francis Church in East Palo Alto, and one at St. Thomas Aquinas, continue to provide weekly food and emergency help to those in need. George Chippendale, now mostly retired, and Terry Atkinson continue to work with the St. Francis Church Conference, which is connected with the funding network of the San Mateo County Council. George reports that Mike Veuve, John Arnold, Vincent Lefebvre and Jim Lalonde are also doing valuable work with St. Francis SVdP.

Our St. Thomas Aquinas parish funds the work of our parish conference, which continues to visit people in their Palo Alto homes to help with emergency rental assistance and to learn what other needs the families have. In teams of two, we made 20 home visits to talk with people and arrange to help with rents. We ask for and receive assistance from other parish conferences and from the Santa Clara County Council with copays for our larger
We also have teams that meet people at our parish office door to listen to them, pray with them, give them a bag with nutritious daily food, and talk about how we can help them or refer them to other agencies such as the LifeMoves at the Opportunity Center. In addition to the day’s bag of food people are prayed with, given a grocery card, a day’s transportation and a little laundry money. In addition we help people with other car expenses. We have been able to help approximately 160 people who can come once a month.

Our parish volunteers provide help in various ways. Some of us meet people at the door and go on home visits in teams of two. Some of us faithfully prepare the daily food bags, working quietly each weekend at the Dermody Center.

All of the parishioners help with regular donations to second collections and help with food donations, especially during our November Food Drive. The Christmas Giving Tree donations of blankets and toys are very welcome to needy Palo Alto families. Before Christmas Day, the rest of the items donated are taken by volunteers to the Ecumenical Hunger Program, which provides Christmas assistance to families in East Palo Alto.

**Death penalty abolition**

Our group, with Terry McCaffrey in the lead, supports events that strive to educate the people about Catholic teaching with regard to the death penalty. We campaigned strongly for The Justice That Works Act of 2016, which would have re-sentenced the nearly 750 people currently on death row in our state to life in prison without the possibility of parole. It was defeated by 53.6% to 46.4%. Terry submitted a “Report on the PROP 62 Campaign,” dated May 24, 2017. The report contains a summary of the events during the campaign, and a discussion of several outcomes.

**A Proposal for a Synod on the Death Penalty**

A parishioner, Henry Organ, joined the HCC to introduce his idea of a synod on the death penalty. The summary of his proposal: “A statewide synod on the death penalty could be an effective platform to examine and resolve the disparities and inconsistencies on the subject among Catholics in California as ‘Faithful Citizens.’” Henry’s point is: a synod could result in: a better understanding of the history of the church’s teaching, a greater insight into why recent Popes have called for the end of the death penalty, and a more rigorous examination of personal judgment on the issue.

The proposal for a synod on the death penalty was discussed at the PSC meeting on March 8. There was a motion to write a letter to Bishop McGrath asking him to request the California Catholic Conference of Bishops to convene a conference consisting of bishops, clergy, and lay experts in order to study the issue of the death penalty in California. The motion passed 15 to 1. Chris and Henry volunteered to prepare the letter. At the April PSC meeting, the letter was presented and discussed at length. This time, the support for the concept was much less enthusiastic. A vote on the motion to send the letter to the Bishop was 6 in favor and 5 against. Father Matt then said “I don’t accept the PSC’s proposal” and
canceled it as pastor. After a long discussion, we decided not to proceed with plans for the synod.

**Hotel De Zink**
As in past years, our parishioners provided food for the homeless during two weeks in April at the Church of Christ and during two weeks in August at the Christian Reform Church. In April, our parishioners served about 15 people on each of 15 days. In August, we served an average of 20 people on each of 15 days.

**Books for SESS**
Each year, the HCC collects books for the second graders at SESS, so that they can try out their newly acquired reading skills during the summer. This year, in addition to many books contributed, over $1400 was contributed, and the money was used to buy books. About five books were provided to each second grader.

**Palo Alto Peace Walk**
Our parish participated in the Palo Alto Multifaith Peace Walk and Picnic on Sunday afternoon, September 11, 2016. The goal was to say “no” to division, violence, and fear, and “yes” to friendship and peace by walking together in south Palo Alto to show the way to community and peace. The walk began at Congregation Etyz Chaim at 4161 Alma Street with a brief service at 2:00 p.m., and then proceeded down Alma, then Charleston, then Middlefield, stopping at University AME Zion Church and Our Lady of the Rosary Church for brief services. After the walk we gathered at Mitchell Park for the annual 9/11 Peace Picnic hosted by American Muslim Voice. Fr. Matt walked with us, as did the City of Palo Alto police chief Dennis Burns.

**Spirituality Tuesday Event**
The HCC organized a presentation for the Spirituality Tuesday series; the date was November 29. The plan included four presentations by four parishioners: George Chippendale, Virginia Duluk, Mike Veuve, and Anne Fillin. Veronica started off with a discussion of showing mercy to people all over the world. George described a history of East Palo Alto. He discussed how the community changed over the years, how African Americans settled there in large numbers in the post-war period, and later how the real estate industry stampeded white people to sell their homes out of fear. George then explained the concept of the “Safety Net” established by United Way over 30 years ago. Anne Fillin then described how, when a family is really devastated and needs mercy, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul and other helping agencies do not give up on them. Finally, Mike Veuve talked about the community plan to end homelessness in Santa Clara County.

**Gently-Used Sturdy Shoes**
On November 2, the following notice appeared in the ebulletin:
“GENTLY USED STURDY SHOES NEEDED for the Opportunity Center.
If you have any gently used sturdy shoes in your closet that need a new home, the Opportunity Center really needs them! Comfortable sturdy walking shoes are most appreciated. Every day clients ask for shoes but there are none to give...” This drive provided 127 pairs of shoes in new or good condition to the Opportunity Center.
**CROP Hunger Walk**  
The CROP Hunger Walk is a “walk for charity” that raises money to help eradicate hunger throughout the world. This year, our parish joined teams sponsored by many churches throughout the Mid Peninsula. The walk took place on Sunday, October 2, 2016 starting at Burgess Park in Menlo Park. We created a team, the St. Thomas Aquinas Team, that participated in the event and raised funds to enhance food security. Our team raised $1140 for alleviating hunger. The St. Thomas Aquinas Team participated in the 2017 walk which took place on October 8, 2017.

**Women’s Shelter**  
The Heart and Home Collaborative, a women's night shelter at University Lutheran church in Palo Alto, was open for the month of February. The HCC purchased some food on February 3 and provided a dinner that night at the shelter. Donations of $135 from various friends had been collected for the purpose. Left over cash will be used at a subsequent dinner.

**Torture Awareness**  
The HCC marks June of each year as Torture Awareness Month. The “Torture Is Wrong” banners are put up on each church.

**Refugee Resettlement**  
The HCC considers support of immigrants and refugees an important activity. In May, Terry McCaffrey submitted a resolution regarding Refugee Resettlement for consideration by the Palo Alto City Council: “Whereas the world is facing the largest refugee crisis since World War II, with over 21 million refugees, . . . therefore be it resolved that the Palo Alto City Council declares its support for the resettlement of refugees in Santa Clara County and calls upon other communities in Santa Clara County to join in supporting the effort to resettle the most vulnerable refugees.”

**CYO Summer Camp**  
The HCC supports the CYO Summer Camp to help send 30 kids from East Palo Alto and surrounding underserved areas to CYO Summer Camp 2017 (a program of Catholic Charities, SF) in Occidental, CA. [https://www.sendakidtoocyocamp.com](https://www.sendakidtoocyocamp.com)

Members of the Human Concerns Committee are Paul Chestnut (acting convener), Anne Fillin (Pastoral Stewardship Council representative), Terry McCaffrey, George and Ruth Chippendale, Mary Fong, Susan Olsen (our staff liaison), Terry Atkinson, Chris Lundin, and occasional others as topics are germane.

For more information regarding our activities, please visit our parish’s website: PaloAltoCatholic.net > Ministries & Organizations > Human Concerns Committee. You can find our Mission Statement, monthly meeting minutes, and various news items.

**Seton School**

The 2016-17 school year was full of activities and opportunities for our students. The children enjoyed learning in a positive, faith-filled environment, participated in monthly
liturgies and weekly prayer services, and attended field trips that provided opportunities for them to learn and grow.

We made some changes to our school plant and began the process of moving our school library to the extended care facility. The purpose of this project was to remodel the library to create additional offices and a conference room. Our Vice Principal, Mrs. Maguire now has an office of her own, as does our Food Program Coordinator, Mr. Rios. The conference room will now afford us space to hold conferences during and after school. This is a welcome addition, as we had no meeting space for larger groups outside the classrooms. We are grateful to Mr. Juan Ortega, a Seton grandparent for helping to repurpose this space for us. I’d also like to acknowledge Mrs. Mary Ratner, who, along with some volunteers, sorted the books by grade level and boxed them to be moved out of the original library. This was an incredible amount of work!! Thank you Mary!!

During the third trimester of last year, the school administration made the decision to join the Drexel School System in the Diocese of San Jose for the 2017-18 school year. This system began a few years ago with seven Catholic schools in the diocese, and three more schools including Seton have joined this Fall.

As you know, we have been actively utilizing technology for the past five years and have been fortunate to have a 1:1 iPad program. By joining Drexel, the implementation of the Blended Learning Model will augment our current use of technology to enhance instruction and help to improve student achievement. In transitioning to the Drexel System, our school has also benefitted from major school improvements this summer, as well as gaining additional tuition assistance for our school families for the coming year. Our teachers will now be meeting twice per month with teachers from the other Drexel schools to collaborate. We welcome this change and are excited to implement this program in the coming weeks. I am very grateful to the teachers for their enthusiastic participation in the Blended Learning Academy at Santa Clara University this summer.

I would also like to applaud the entire staff for their hard work in packing up the contents of their classrooms, offices, the kitchen, etc. so we could prepare the school for the upgrades to our school plant this summer. In returning to school in August, we had to unpack all the boxes and put everything back in place. This process was completed with a positive spirit of teamwork, and everyone is excited about the new appearance of our building!

On Wednesday, October 11th we will welcome authors Ron Hansen and Tobias Wolff to Seton School. Please mark your calendars for this special event to raise funds for our tuition assistance program. The evening will begin with a reception at 6:30 p.m. followed by the authors presentation at 7:30 p.m., and book signing at 8:30 p.m. Tickets may be purchased through our Development Office at the school or brownpapertickets.com. For more information please call Carmel Caligaris at 650-326-1258. We look forward to seeing you at our event!

Blessings to you all this fall!
Evelyn M. Rosa
Principal
Financial Report for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2017

The Mission of the Finance Committee, which is mandated by Canon Law, is to oversee the parish finances in a responsible manner and advise the pastor in all temporal matters.

The financial information contained in this report has been prepared in accordance with both accrual accounting procedures and guidelines provided by the Diocese of San Jose. Use of these procedures presents the most accurate picture of our parish resources. In the information provided you can see the major sources of income and expenses for fiscal year 2016-2017 (July 1st to June 30th) and the budget for fiscal year 2017-2018 with respect to revenue and expenses. Descriptions of each of the major income and expense accounts are highlighted at the bottom of the report.

The parish account is in an interest bearing Deposit and Loan Fund at the Diocese of San Jose. The funds are available for repairs and emergency maintenance of the many facilities of the parish: three worship sites, two schools, two rental properties, the pastoral center, rectory and the Dermody Center. On June 30, 2016, the balance was $505,577. The amount of the fund allocated to reserves for capital building and repair was $94,423 under the $600,000 target balance set by the Finance Committee. The restricted bequest to fund renovation and maintenance of St. Thomas Aquinas Church on June 30, 2016 was $577,629. Future maintenance projects are scheduled as a part of the parish’s 5 year plan. Additional building repair and maintenance projects are also under review by the Facilities Committee.

The fiscal year ended on June 30, 2017, with $1,570,763 in income and $1,513,229 in expenses, with a net of $57,534 (excluding depreciation).

Earnings category (primarily rental income) was at 42.5% of the total budget. Income from collections was 49% of the total. Stipends, gifts, and income from parish programs made up the balance of income. The parish is still very dependent on earnings from rental income to fund parish operations but, as is evident, a major portion of our total income to support the parish is still derived from collections.

The budget for 2017-2018 projects a zero net or break even budget excluding the impact of non-cash depreciation expense of $186,670. Total income for the 2017-2018 year is projected to be $1,500,000 and is offset by the same amount of expected expenditures.

Finally and most importantly, the finance committee would like to sincerely thank all the parishioners for their donations of time, talent, and treasure during the past fiscal year and earnestly seek your continued active support as we journey through our new fiscal year.
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<tr>
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<td>$23,000</td>
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<td>Other/Festivals</td>
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<td>Diocesan Appeal Rebates</td>
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<table>
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<th>Expenses</th>
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<td><strong>Subtotal</strong></td>
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Income & Expense Budget Definitions:

**Collections** include Sunday and Holy Days; **Stipends** are from sacramental gifts (i.e., Weddings, Baptisms, and Funerals); **Earnings** are primarily from rental properties but also include interest on deposits; **Gifts and Donations** include donations that are (specified) directed toward a special purpose or parish related activity or non-specific donation; **Bequests** are donations left in a will or legacy.

**Pastoral** includes all salary and benefits for the parish priests and other clergy related expenses;

**Administration** is made up of the office staff, office supplies, postage, printing, bank fees, telephone/fax/internet services; **Cathedralium** is support to the Diocese and the Bishop; **Catechetical Ministry** incl. staff salary and benefits and all program expenses; **Catechetical Hispanic Ministry** includes all staff salary and benefits and all program expenses; **Liturgy** includes salary and benefits as well as liturgy office supplies, music, sacramental celebrations, and weekly environmental expenses;

**Youth/Young Adult** includes salary and benefits, youth supplies, printing, and postage, and all youth activity expenses including confirmation retreats; **Parish Programs** include Annual Diocesan Appeal expenses, Valley Catholic, Community Life, Social Justice, Parish Stewardship; **Rectory** includes housekeeping, cleaning supplies, groceries; **Plant** includes salaries and benefits for the maintenance personnel, building and grounds supplies, utilities, repair of buildings, insurance, and property taxes;

**Depreciation** is an accounting book entry reflecting building additions (capital improvements), and the writing off of these costs as a yearly expense.

Members this past year: Fr. Matt Stanley, Ted Baer (Chair), Neal Wade, Bill Morrison, Carol Brown, Steve Carter, Mary Seabury, Larry Reeves, Robert Franklin and Chuck Tully (Business Manager)