



The Spartan Connection

St. Thomas School

St. Thomas Alumni Association Newsletter

Summer 2009 Issue 4

Letter from the Principal

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Dear St. Thomas Alumnus:

One of the many goals of St. Thomas School is to graduate engaged, life-long learners. Our teachers emphasize to students, beginning in kindergarten, that learning is a life-long activity. During their elementary experience, students are equipped with necessary skills for independent learning and organization. Students are met with challenges placed upon them to learn critical thinking through writing experiences; involving mathematics problem solving, and critical reading practice.

Once students leave St. Thomas, we've discovered they are able to function independently in the high school environment. Mastering high school as engaged learners, we believe that our students carry the eagerness to pursue learning throughout their lives.

Sincerely,

Fred M. Stump, Principal

Alum living out school mission: Ben Tricker, STS '91

Ben Tricker graduated from St. Thomas in 1991. He then went on to graduate from Marian High School and Purdue University. He is currently in his sixth year teaching Honors World History and Civilization and Advanced College Project (ACP) Honors U.S. History at Marian High. He is the founder and moderator of the Marian Chapter of the Junior Statesmen of America, the moderator of the freshman class and the sound director in charge of the sound systems at Marian.



Ben's tireless efforts have recently earned him the Light of Learning Award which is an honor given to one outstanding teacher per Catholic school in the Fort Wayne-South Bend Diocese.

School parents wrote on the award nomination form: "My son is motivated to do well in the classroom" and "this young teacher teaches students to think for themselves." Colleagues wrote of Ben being a positive role model, his deep spirituality, and his strong commitment to the Catholic identity.

Ben credits former STS Principal, Sister Catherine Dolores Dietzen, as the person who had the greatest impact in his life. Ben was grateful to be able to attend Sister Catherine's funeral in May 2006. He states, "I was reminded of her enthusiastic love of consecrated life and encountered a renewed inspiration to live my life according to the

manner personified in her daily life; a life of prayer, duty, and the love of God. Sister Catherine helped me establish a means of self-accountability, a responsibility to live life well in loving respect of myself, others, and God."

This year Ben celebrated another highlight, he married Leigh (Radigan) Tricker in April. Many STS alumni may remember Ben's mom, Janet, as the secretary at STS. Our congratulations to the Tricker family and gratitude to Ben for his enduring commitment to the education of the next generation of students.

Remembering Our Past

Sister M. Catherine Dolores Dietzen, CSC

August 6, 1932 — May 12, 2006

Teacher at St. Thomas 1980 – 1981
Principal at St. Thomas 1982 – 1990



May the souls of the faithful departed, rest in peace....Amen

Letter from Father Bill



TO THE SAINT THOMAS THE APOSTLE ALUMS:

Where has your journey taken you since you've left the hallowed halls of St. Thomas the Apostle School? The reason for STS has always been Jesus Christ and the Good News of the Gospel. I pray the moral values and ethical principles that were instilled in your hearts and minds have led you to make decisions pleasing to God.

You know from your own experience how important it is to stay close to the Lord. Without that daily contact with God, our lives can go in a direction that leads us away from the truth. How fortunate we are to have provided a firm foundation in the faith for all who have been, and are now, enrolled here.

I have been blessed to serve the parish and school communities for the past 10 years as pastor. It is such a joy to see second and third generations enrolling in school so that young minds can be formed in a way that leads them to become faithful citizens of two worlds.

May the Lord, in His goodness, bless you and your loved ones with His gift of peace. Until our paths cross, may God hold you in the palm of His hands.

Sincerely,

Father Bill Sullivan

P.S. If you haven't visited St. Thomas School lately, you might be surprised! Consider joining us for the dedication of our renovated school building this Fall.

Family groups build a strong community

Family groups at St. Thomas are comprised of one student per grade level. At the onset of the school year, school families are assigned and immediately work to create their own "identity" with a family name, crest and flag. The students meet regularly to discuss a variety of topics including the holy seasons, Stations of the Cross, the rosary, self-discipline, citizenship and bullying prevention. Ms. Beth Camp, middle school religious education teacher, notes that "family groups are an ideal opportunity for eighth graders to take on a leadership role and guide younger students. These relationships build a sense of belonging within the school community that last for years."

The family group, "Rachel's Running Rabbits" put the finishing touches on their family identity, crest and flag.



Ms. Christine Fox, a beloved teacher at St. Thomas School for the past 23 years, is the STS 2009 Light of Learning Award recipient for teaching excellence. Ms. Fox is humbled by receiving the award, and appreciates the acknowledgement that teaching is an extremely important profession in our world. She also appreciates the support of both the teaching staff and the STS families in her mission to educate children. Ms. Fox has taught first, second, third, and fifth grades during her tenure at STS and says she would be most remembered by alumni for her "friends"—Mr. Nibbles the mouse and Tommy T. the turtle, who help with her classroom needs. Ms. Fox considers her love of reading and travel as key to life-long learning, and shares their ideas as adventures in the classroom.

IN OUR PRAYERS
St. Thomas students remember the STS alumni in their monthly Mass intentions



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STS Alums Celebrate with this year's First Communicants



The Lucchese cousins: Leah, Savario, Grant and Keely.

On April 26th our 2nd graders received their First Holy Communion. Joining the celebration were a number of St. Thomas alumni with their children.

- Pat Lucchese '79, father of Saverio Lucchese
- Frank Lucchese '79, father of Grant Lucchese
- Gina (Lucchese) Duehmig '85, mother of Leah and Keely Duehmig
- Tom Berger '86, father of Kalyn Berger
- John Sadaway '77, father of Surf Sadaway
- Kevin Bobay '86 & Kim (Thomson) Bobay '87, parents of Carson Bobay

Alumni Updates

1983 Spartan Basketball Photo



Gina Lucchese-Duehmig is a graduate of Purdue University and is living in Elkhart with Scott, her husband of 13 years, and their 3 daughters. Gina is a freelance writer.

Diane Griffin is widowed with 2 children. She has 2 Master's degrees and is presently completing work on her Ph.D. Diane and her children returned to Indiana to live 3 years ago.

Lisa Mann-Ward graduated from Purdue University and works as a Speech Therapist at Hawthorne Elementary. She lives in Elkhart with her husband, Chad, and 3 daughters, who attend STS.

Anne Scalise-Wolfe is a graduate of Indiana University and is living in Westfield, IN, with her husband of 9 years and 2 sons. Anne is a pharmaceutical sales rep for Schering-Plough.

Rob Letherman graduated from the University of Notre Dame. He's a bachelor living in Elkhart, as well as the vice president of the Northland Corporation, a parishioner at St. Thomas and an adventure traveler.

Todd Nunemaker is a graduate of Ball State University. He's married with 2 children living in Nappanee, IN. Todd is a self-employed architect at Agape Designs specializing in residential architecture and involved in local government for the city of Nappanee.



FACEBOOK

We have established an official St. Thomas the Apostle School page on Facebook! Become a fan of [StThomasTheApostleSchoolElkhart](#) and friend of [StThomasElkhart](#). Be a Facebook champion for your STS graduating class, post your own updates and reconnect with old friends.

Did you graduate from St. Thomas in the year 1979?

Some of your classmates are trying to organize a reunion! If interested, please contact Frank Lucchese at Knarf65@aol.com

Jason Phillips graduated from Purdue University in 1994 and then received his MBA from Notre Dame. He married Jeana Grunzel and has a one year old daughter. They live in the Lincoln Square neighborhood on the north side of Chicago.

David Helman is a graduate of Indiana University and has worked in the snowboard business for 12 years. He now lives in Steamboat Springs, CO, and is working for a resort in sales and marketing.

Congratulations to STS 8th Grade Graduates



Row 1: Justin Milnamow, Jennifer Stahl, Rachel Borrelli, Madelyn Boyer, Brannon Buck, Ted Himes, Kylie Hill, Fatima Delgado, Nicholas Mantel, McKenzie Kelm, Dora Wisolek

Row 2: Zachary Sailor, Megan Earley, Emma Finch, Taylor Milnamow, Hannah Whisler, Jane Santerre, Vanessa Rivas, Jessica Healey, Erin Dobson, Dylan Miller

Row 3: Danny Wooley, Cody Daub, Evan Knight, Beth Corpe, Kaitlin Barnard, Brandon Hyndman, Jorge Amezcuita, Derek Mills, Frank Iavagnilio, Andrew Schafer, Peter Murphy

Row 4: Elliott Miller, William Blue, Benjamin Jondle, Fernando Valdez, Francesca Turco, Marina Slaven, Alexis Peterson, Cassie Dibley, Rebecca Yeakey, Rebecca Hasler, Kelsey Paul, Justin Ramsey

Prayer for STS Alumni

As your life's journey continues from this place, may you always keep the memory of St. Thomas School alive in your heart.

For the lessons learned from books and from life have helped create who you are today.

So live, love and laugh each moment of every day, letting go and letting God.

Amen

Don't Miss Out! Join the STS community at the unveiling of the renovation and dedication of the school this August. Watch Facebook for details!



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