

# Steeple Talk

Volume 4, No. 1

February 21, 2010

## *News from the STA Mass communities:*

**7:15 Daily Mass:** Following this daily Mass, the church sanctuary is left open for private meditation until after the 12:15 Mass.

**7:30 Sunday Mass:** Fr. John Hester presides every Sunday. He works as a chaplain at Stanford Hospital during the week.

**8:45 Sunday Mass:** The liturgy team for this Mass transformed the altar with the spare desert Lenten themes of rocks, cactus, and bare branches.

**10:30 Sunday Mass:** Dismissal of the Catechumens takes place every Sunday during Lent.

**12:00 Sunday Mass:** The Thomas House basement hall is the site of a delicious potluck of light lunch goodies after this Mass each week.

**12:15 Daily Mass:** A good way to spend the lunch hour. The open church welcomes early birds.

## Thomas House awaits the saw...

The Thomas House was vacated on February 1 by the most recent tenants, the Living Compassion group. On February 2, several contractors sent representatives to walk through the building and learn about the parameters of the proposed renovations from architect Lee Lipfert and parish business manager Chuck Tully. Bids from the contractors are expected by the end of February.

In the meantime, on February 5, inspectors from EnviroScience, Inc., an independent industrial hygiene consulting firm representing the Diocese of San Jose, sampled all suspect building materials at the Thomas House for asbestos-

containing materials and peeling lead-based paint and laid out procedures for dealing with these substances during construction.

On Sunday, February 14, the STA Site Committee brought up tables and chairs from the basement hall and hosted hospitality hours after each Mass. Coffee from Peet's and fruit and muffins were served. The architectural drawings for the renovations were available for perusal and comment. People walked through the house, becoming acquainted with this building that will become the center for hospitality, meetings and classes, choir practices, wedding preparations, etc.

The Thomas House will be closed for parish use as of



St. Thomas Aquinas Church

March 1. Next Sunday, February 28, the house will be open after all Masses, and everyone is encouraged to stop by and take a look. Seeing the space on the main floor will prompt ideas on the myriad uses the rooms will support. Please come over and share your ideas on those uses!

Ideas to: Kay Williams, 650-328-2781, kaywill@pacbell.net.

## *STA Site Committee plans:*

**Monthly Meeting:**  
4th Wednesday in Thomas House basement hall.

**NEXT MEETING:**  
Wednesday, February 24, 2010  
7:30—9:00 p.m.

**Tentative agenda:**

- Progress report-TH
- Garden project
- Interior decisions

**Monthly newsletter:**  
Sunday before 4th Wednesday

**Editor:** Kay Williams, 650-328-2781, kaywill@pacbell.net;

## Bishop McGrath at 8:45 Sunday Mass on February 7:

Bishop Patrick J. McGrath joined the 8:45 a.m. Mass community on February 7, concelebrating the Eucharist with Msgr. Gene Boyle and pastor Fr. George Aranha. After Mass, the bishop

joined the community in the Thomas House basement hall, where he addressed issues of interest and concern to the Thomas Merton Center members who had invited him to come—the bishops'

response to the health care crisis, to politicians who are pro-choice, discussion of women priests among faithful Catholics, among other topics, followed by Q&A.



Riley & Samantha Fisher approach Bishop McGrath during his remarks.

**NEWSLETTER OF THE ST. THOMAS  
AQUINAS CHURCH SITE COMMITTEE**

751 Waverley Street  
Palo Alto, CA 94301

**St. Thomas Aquinas Site Committee:**

|                 |              |                       |
|-----------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| Helen Baumann   | Phil Coates  | Anna Jaklitsch        |
| Lorraine Dabney | Bill Mahrt   | Bob March             |
| Kieran McCarty  | Mike McMahon | Patti Robison         |
| Mario Veloro    | Kay Williams | and occasional others |

**Mission Statement:** The Site Committee for St. Thomas Aquinas Church works to encourage community-building within our six individual Mass communities, among our Mass communities, and within the larger parish community. We do this by enhancing our liturgies, exercising responsible stewardship of our facilities, and working to improve communications at all levels of our parish community.

Site committee meetings are held the 4th Wednesday of the month in the basement hall of the Thomas House. All are welcome, but if you cannot attend, send questions or suggestions to Kay Williams, 328-2781, kaywill@pacbell.net.

**Follow the permit trail:**

It is possible to track the status of the building permit application for the Thomas House renovations at the City of Palo Alto website.

On the city website, go to the Development Center ([http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/depts/pln/development\\_center/default.asp](http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/depts/pln/development_center/default.asp)) and click on "Check Permit Status." Then click on "Check/Research Permits" and select "By address." The Thomas House address is 745 Waverley Street; the parcel number is 120-16-057; and the description of the project is "rehabilitate and remodel of historic home."

The architectural plans were submitted on January 13. As reported on the City website, the plans are processing through the various overseers. On February 11, the Building Review report asked for clarification on the "architectural life safety design, details, and exiting analysis..."—for starters! Stay tuned...

**STA Interior update:**

Re-doing the altar platform is the first priority as identified by the STA Interior Committee, including building in access tubes to carry electrical wiring. The diocesan Art & Environment Committee has reviewed the altar drawings and will take them to Bishop McGrath for review. New carpeting will then be needed. Samples from a commercial carpet showroom that was recommended by the diocese are coming, so the Interior Committee team can actually see what they look like in the church. Timing is everything--with a nearly year-round wedding season at STA, we have to schedule our projects to minimize interference with weddings. The next meeting of the Interior Committee is Wednesday, February 24, at 7:30 pm at the SAG Hospitality Center.

Contact Judy Foley, 322-8650, judybertchfoley@yahoo.com.

**From the church steps:**

**What to do during Lent?**

**Attend the Spirituality Tuesday Assemblies,** 7:00—8:30 p.m., at SAG Hospitality Center:

**February 23:** "Emotions and Spirituality," with Veronica Schneider.

**March 2:** "Rediscovering Baptism" with Deacon Carl Bunje and Gerard McGuire

**March 9:** "The Passion of Jesus" with Fr. George Aranha

**March 16:** "Sacred Healing and Hands-on Healing Prayer" with Sister Joan Prohaska, OP

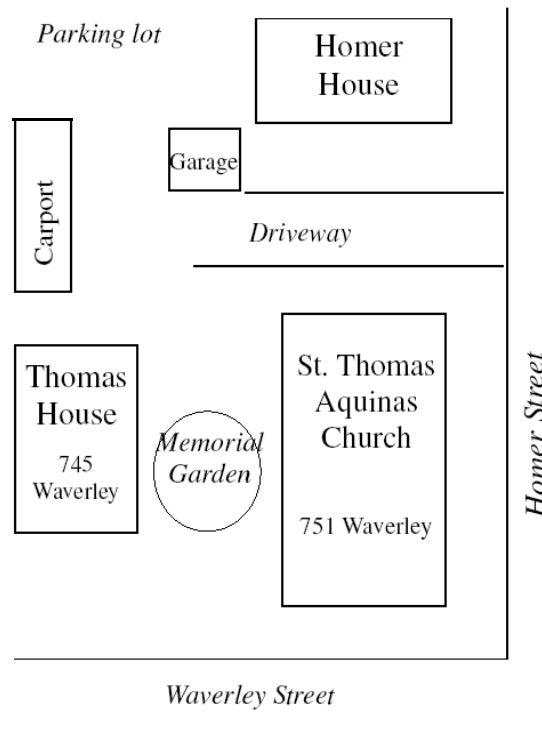
**March 23:** no session

**Attend Stations of the Cross:** Fridays during Lent, following the 12:15 p.m. Mass at St. Thomas Aquinas Church.

**Newcomers Reception:** Please join Father George, Father Thierry and Community Life (our social event coordinators) for an informal get-together with lively conversation and tasty refreshments, families welcome.

Sunday, February 28th from 2:30- 4 pm. Our Lady of the Rosary Church Hall. Call Jeanne Ramos (324-8788) or Beverly Wade (856-9339)

**STA site map:**



Are you aware of all the buildings at our St. Thomas Aquinas church site? Don't confuse the Thomas House with the Homer House (which is a 2-unit apartment building, currently rented, on Homer St. next to the church). Parish storage space is found in the old garage and adjacent to the three-car carport. Take a walk around the grounds—you'll get the correct scale that is missing from the map.