

Steeple Talk

Volume 3, No. 10

November 22, 2009

News from the STA Mass communities:

7:15 Daily Mass: What better way to start your day than to attend daily Mass? A blessed day follows!

7:30 Sunday Mass: Fr. John Hester is chaplain at Stanford Hospital and trains volunteers in hospital ministry.

8:45 Sunday Mass: The Altar of Remembrance was set up by the Liturgy Committee for pictures of deceased family members from all STA congregations and will remain up until after Thanksgiving.

10:30 Sunday Mass: Dorene Kawasaki and Mark French were married on November 7 at STA. Dorene is becoming a Catholic in the parish RCIA program, and Mark is her sponsor.

12:00 Sunday Mass: The St. Ann Choir will sing Mass in Latin at 8:00 pm on December 8—Tomas Luis de Victoria, *Missa O Quam Gloriosum*.

12:15 Daily Mass: A good way to spend the lunch hour.

Next step for Thomas House rehab:

The latest report from the Facilities and Building and Maintenance Committees outlines the status of the planning for the Thomas House rehabilitation project.

On November 11, Jim McLaughlin reported to the Pastoral Stewardship Council that a preliminary outline of costs for the project was presented to the Thomas House Project Team by architects Lippert and Lippert Design late in October.

A review of the goals set by the Project Team introduced the report:

1. Make the Thomas House safe for parish, site, and rental use (2nd floor apartments) by upgrading the electrical and heating facilities for the building.
2. Make the first floor and basement handicapped accessible for use by all

parish and site members.

3. Provide secured separation of access for tenant and parish use.
4. Obtain City of Palo Alto Historical classification so that savings could be realized as construction permits were sought.
5. Obtain a clear lot line between the Thomas House and the church building.
6. Raise funds to pay for costs beyond what the parish can provide.

Jim goes on in his report to say that several of the above goals have been achieved, i.e. historical classification of the building and setting the lot line. The architect has produced working drawings, from which the architect developed estimated costs. The original budget set by the Finance Committee was \$300,000, then extended to \$400,000 as the scope of the



St. Thomas Aquinas Church project was revealed. However, the full project costs appear to be closer to \$650,000.

The Project Team and the Building and Maintenance Committee reduced the scope/costs by suggesting the removal of some pieces of the renovation: leaving the basement out of the project at this time; not includ-

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STA Site Committee plans:

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

NEXT MEETING:
December 2, 7:30—9:00 pm
Tentative agenda:

Thomas House:
Funding for rehab
Alternate hospitality site
Interior progress report.
Picking the right bike rack.

Monthly newsletter:
Sunday before 4th Wednesday

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

Thomas House tenants seek new home:

For the past 6 years the Palo Alto Zen Meditation Center has made its home in the rectory of the St. Thomas Aquinas church at the corner of Waverley and Homer in Palo Alto. Sadly for the Zen Center, and happily for the church, the parish of St. Thomas Aquinas has decided to remodel the rectory, turning it into apartments and a large space for parish meetings and fellowship. The Zen Center is look-

ing for a new home and hoping to find just the right match.

“We are fix-up, repair, and restore people,” says Cheri Huber, founder and director of the Zen Center. “We feel qualified to be excellent tenants for someone who has a big house that is in need of some loving care. We have been in this area for 25 years, have moved 3 or 4 times, and have always left the places we’ve occupied in better shape

that we found them.”

If there is someone in Palo Alto, Atherton, Mountain View, or Menlo Park with a big, rambling house who would like rental income and expert repairs at no cost from a talented group of quiet, responsible adults, please contact the Palo Alto Zen Center at information@livingcompassion.org or call (650) 289-0194.

**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	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.

**Thomas House
(continued):**

ing a separate bathroom for the bride's room; and leaving the kitchen as is for the time being.

The Finance Committee agreed to move ahead with the project as submitted, but will have to dip into the parish reserves to fund it, and supports a parish-wide fundraising campaign to cover the remaining project costs.

The architect is continuing with preparing final drawings so the project can go out to bid and building permits can be obtained. It is expected that the nine-month timeline for completion of the project is reasonable.

Jim's report concludes with a description of the advantages to the parish and the community of an up-graded and safe Thomas House, providing rental housing and income for the parish, with the main floor available for parish and site purposes, as well as for outreach to the downtown community. Financial limitations are unavoidable, but with fundraising, it is felt the costs can be met.

Jane Bahr has died:



STA Site Committee member Jane Bahr died November 16 from a recurrence of the melanoma cancer that she had beaten back

over 5 years ago. Jane's contributions to the cause of reclaiming the Thomas House for parish use are legion. She was there 5 years ago when the idea was conceived. She helped write the vision statement. She stepped in to help edit this monthly *Steeple Talk*. She attended Site Committee meetings regularly. She was the emissary from the Site Committee to the Building and Maintenance Committee when necessary. And her final bequest encouraged the Finance Committee to include a concrete ramp in the Thomas House plans. A memorial Mass will be said for Jane Monday, November 23, at 10:00 am here at St. Thomas Aquinas Church, with a reception at St. Albert's hospitality room.

From the church steps:

**Meet Catherine Wanjohi of Kenya
November 29 at 2:00 p.m.:**

A coffee hour with the founder of LifeBloom, a women's self-help cooperative in Naivasha, Kenya, will be held at the home of Margo McAuliffe, 179 E. Creek Drive, Menlo Park, at 2 pm on Sunday, November 29. Come hear the inspiring story of Catherine Wanjohi's vision for helping women sex workers reclaim their power. Please RSVP to Margo at (650) 322-0821, margomca2@sbcglobal.net.

Kenyan gifts for sale again Dec. 13:

Step down into the Thomas House basement hall after Mass on December 13 and browse the gifts brought back from Kenya this summer by Margo McAuliffe and Kay Williams. Sponsored by Kenya Help, a non-profit organization building a secondary school for girls in Naivasha, Kenya, located in the parish of Fr. Daniel Kiriti, proceeds from the sale of shopping bags, purses, jewelry, carved animals, and greeting cards will go to finish the construction of the school and provide tuition support for girls whose families cannot pay school fees.

(Alert: next Site Committee meeting is December 2)

**Spirituality Tuesday
Assemblies coming up:**

Come to the next sessions of "STAs": Spirituality Tuesday Assemblies, 7—8:30 p.m., at St. Albert the Great Hospitality Center.

November 22 and 24th: a 2-part STA: **Burning Bush** with Fr. George Aranha: 1) Movie: *The Life of Archbishop Romero of San Salvador*, Sunday, November 22, 3-5 p.m.

2) Discussion of the movie: Tuesday, November 24, 7-8:30 p.m., at SAG.

December 1: Formation, Information & Transformation:

Family Night: "Family and Catholic Parenting" with Fr. George Aranha, inviting parents with adolescents and teens (and adults of all ages).

December 8: no STA, due to feast of the Immaculate Conception. Attend evening Mass instead.

December 15: Prayer: "Liturgy of the Hours" with Jean Ramacciotti.

**STA Interior Committee
completes report:**

The final report of the STA Interior Committee will be presented to pastor Fr. George Aranha and the Building and Maintenance Committee before the Christmas holidays. Recommendations on the renovations to the interior of St. Thomas Aquinas Church include re-configuring the altar platform, improving the electrical and sound systems, carpeting, painting, enhancing the side altars, adding storage outside the bathroom, re-paving the entry steps and portico, refinishing the backs of the pews, selecting altar furniture, and cleaning up the choir loft. Once the suggestions are reviewed by the Building and Maintenance and Finance Committees, they will be presented to the community. For info: Judy Foley: judybertchfoley@yahoo.com, or call 650-322-8650.