

Dear Parents,

'Encounter God's Call' is the theme of Vocations Week which is next week! As you know, our goals are to reinforce the fact that God has a special plan for each person!

This year we are focusing on how to practice the virtue of listening. A child's call to their vocation in life comes from within, right? Yet they are constantly bombarded with technology: radio, computer, TV, cell phones and I-pods, not to mention hand-held gaming devices!! God speaks in whispers and in the silence of our hearts. In order to 'tune in to God', we want to practice 'tuning out' the noise of the world. Here are the daily challenges that Mr. Faber will give to the children over the PA:

Monday-Have a silent car/bus ride to/from school! Just think, no radio, DVD, I-pod, DS, etc.

Tuesday-Say a (family) rosary in the car/bus. . .(You may think you don't have a rosary with you, but you do! Hold up your 10 fingers!)

Wednesday- Find 5 things in creation that you never noticed before on the ride to/from school.

Thursday- Establish that 'constant connection' with Jesus throughout the day by incorporating prayer with daily work. For example, pray a certain prayer each morning when brushing teeth or washing hands.

Friday- Repeat your favorite challenge or one that you missed.

Tape this to the dashboard/backpack as a reminder!

More on what's going on this week: Look for an article in the Pieces of the youtube.com clips that the kids will see in class. There are some amazing testimonies of how people heard and acted upon God's call. Prepare to be inspired!

There will be some beautiful new books available in the library and read during class for the lower grades.

"Lunch with the Sisters" is scheduled for this Spring, where a few sisters will come and have hot lunch and talk informally with the kids. This has so many possibilities for developing relationships with a religious order and/or hearing a sister's testimony to the Faith. Depending on weather and their availability, this will be an ongoing event.

The Home-to-Home vocations discernment novena is being revived and updated. Look for sign-up opportunities in the Pieces!

Lastly, there will be a special prayer and testimony given by a religious order, married couple, and single person over the next three weeks, coinciding with Fr. Jim's Friday homilies on these vocations.

Parents, we all know our children watch and imitate what we do! Please be mindful of this and remember how great of a calling you are living out as their parents!! Perhaps your family will pray this prayer together:

Eternal God, from my mother's womb you loved me more than I can ever know.

I ask for the courage to live a holy life, that your hand guide my decisions and that your mercy be extended when I seek my own glory instead of yours.

I ask for the wisdom to know your will for me, and like our Blessed Mother, I ask for the strength to say yes.

May I find you in every person I meet, and may my life so shine for your goodness and love that each person may be led to you through Jesus, your Son, who is Lord, forever and ever.

Amen.

God bless you!

The Vocations Committee

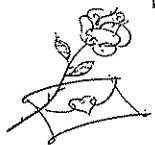
Catholic Schools Week 2009

Encounter the Living God: Jan. 25th -30th

Sunday Jan 25 School Open House following 7:30, 9:00 and 11:00 Masses

Students show your school pride, by wearing your school uniform to Sunday Mass and invite your families for a tour of the school.

Monday Jan. 26 Appreciation & Diocesan Prayer Day /Non-Uniform Day



Students take time to recognize and pray for a person who has been significant in your life as Catholic School Students. We will take time to pray a rosary in solidarity with other schools in the Diocese. As it is the last Monday of the month, it is a non-uniform day. We encourage all to wear clothing that represents Catholic School Education.

Tuesday Jan. 27 Mass with Bishop Hurley & Student Service Drive

Student Council Members will be attending 11:00 a.m. Mass at St. Andrews Cathedral with other Diocesan students. (Bus pick-up @ 10:20) Student Service Drive: items will be delivered to Catholic Charities of West Michigan and a Grand Total of student service hours will be posted.



Wednesday Jan. 28 Volleyball Game: 8th vs. Faculty



The 8th grade class will challenge the Faculty & Staff to a game of volleyball in the St. Thomas Gym at 1:45 p.m. Please join us to cheer on your favorite team! Popcorn will be provided for the students by the Boosters.

Thursday Jan. 29 Ice Skating Field Trip/Non-Uniform "Spirit" Day

All School Skate @ Patterson Ice Arena: buses will leave @ 11:20 a.m. and return to school at approx. 1:30 pm. Skates will be provided at the arena with no cost to students. Permission slips will be required for your child to attend this event. Hot lunch (sack lunch) will be available that day and served in the classrooms at 11:00. There will be NO PM Kindergarten or Pre-school. However, Kindergarten students are welcome to join us with their parents at the rink. Wear St. Thomas colors for SPIRIT DAY!



Friday, Jan. 30 School Mass & Hot Lunch with Special Guest



Students and faculty are encouraged to invite a special person in their life - grandparent, godparent, Confirmation sponsor, aunt/uncle, etc. - to celebrate Mass with them at 9:55 a.m. and join them for lunch. Order forms were sent home last week. Adult lunch cost is \$2.50. This may be deducted from your family account or paid with check or cash. Please report to the school and sign-in by 9:30 am if you plan on attending mass with your student. After Mass, the Student Council will award the 7th annual *St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Award*.

Elementary students will have lunch at 11:20 a.m. and Jr. High lunch will be at 11:42 a.m.



Catholic Schools Week 2009

Special Guest Hot Lunch Order



Your Special Guest is invited to have lunch with you on Friday January 30th.
Elem. students will have lunch at 11:20 a.m. and Jr. High will be at 11:42 a.m.

Menu: Delicious Spaghetti & Sauce, Garlic bread salad bar and milk.

The cost for lunch is \$2.50. This may be paid in the following ways:

- Check: payable to St. Thomas Food Service
- Hot lunch account
- Cash

Orders Due: No later than Wednesday January 28th to the school office.

Please place your order ahead of time as we will NOT be able accommodate any "walk-in" orders that day. Thank you.

This order form is ONLY for guests, students will order in the usual way.

Guest Name: _____	cost: _____
Guest Name: _____	cost: _____
Guest Name: _____	cost: _____
Guest Name: _____	cost: _____
Guest Name: _____	cost: _____

Total due: _____

Please indicate method of payment:

- Please charge my hot lunch account
- Check enclosed: payable to St. Thomas Food Service
- Cash enclosed

Parent signature: _____

Office Use only:

_____ Initials of processor	_____ Paid in full	_____ Date rec'd
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You are cordially invited to the
St. Thomas the Apostle Auction 2009

Saturday February 14, 2009 6:30pm
~ Eberhard Center ~
(GVSU Downtown Campus)

Food, Fellowship and Fun at our **ONLY** fundraiser of the year to fund our
St. Thomas Home and School budget, Tuition Angel Fund
& many parish projects, silent and live auction and lots of raffles!

Tickets are \$35.00 per person which includes
amazing food stations throughout the evening,
soda and coffee. Cash bar will be available.

Table sponsorship available which includes full page advertising
and 10 tickets to the event.
(Contact Jennifer Clemens (974-0015) or Michelle Rohn (451-3266)
for more details and pricing)

Number of Auction Tickets: _____ x \$35 = \$_____

Number of Raffle Tickets: _____ x \$5 = \$_____

Sponsor a special guest: _____ x \$35 = \$_____

Total enclosed: \$_____

Name/Address/Phone of ALL ticket holders you are purchasing for:

One bid number will be assigned per couple. Please check here if you want two
numbers_____

Please return forms to the school or parish office with **payment attached**.

Raffle tickets will be delivered to you by mail or by hand. Thank you!!!

***Questions, email Jennifer Clemens at jmclemens@comcast.net or 974-0015 or Michelle
Rohn at michellerohn@att.net or 451-3266

St. Thomas the Apostle Auction 2009

Three SIMPLE ways to Help

- 1) **attend the auction on February 14, 2009**
- 2) **have an auction gift gathering in FIVE simple steps**
 - Go get your calendar and look at the next 4 weeks
 - Seriously, go get your calendar and open it
 - Find one St. Thomas function you are attending for a “meeting” or activity. For Example: hospitality meeting, basketball, bible study, mom’s group, MDI, liturgy, choir, ROC, liturgy, Sunday school, YACHT, religious education, stewardship, team sport, finance council...any kin of gather at St. Thomas that you participate in on a regular basis.
 - Pick a theme. For Example: men’s basketball could do sports, hospitality – cooking things, mom’s group baby/toddler, bible study-spiritual theme, choir-music items, finance council-money, ROC teen items, etc.
 - Pick a meeting for everyone to bring a “themed item”. No item too big or too small. Throw them in a box and bring them to the school office at your convenience.

It’s that SIMPLE! Everyone involved in any kind of ministry, activity or group at St. Thomas has an opportunity to be involved. Have fun with your already established groups and support the auction at that same time!

3) **Donate an item or service to the auction**

Ideas are listed below, but feel free to be creative:

Airline tickets	arts or antiques	jewelry	Disney tickets
Electronics	golf outings	Wii package	Tools
Sports memorabilia	day trips	Spa packages	sports tickets
Theater/Concert tickets	dinners	hotels/travel	cottages

Can you cook? Provide a dessert or bread of the month. Cater a meal, provide cooking lessons for children or a group, cater a birthday party.

Are you artistic? Donate one of your pieces. Provide art lessons for children. Faux paint a room.

Do you sew or knit? Make a dress-up trunk, a quilt, donate custom window treatments.

Do you or a relative own a vacation home or cottage? Donate its use for a week.

Are you a good host? Have a pool party. Offer a baking party or gingerbread house making party or a birthday party fully catered for a child!

Do you have a green thumb? Provide flowers of the month, landscaping services, plants, etc.

Are you creative? Provide scrapbooking, stamping or crafty advice and projects.

Do you possess great wisdom or expertise? Offer consultation: tax services, architectural design, financial planning, interior design, legal advice, nutritional counseling, personal training, wardrobe consulting, room make over, organization of closets.