



Saint Thomas the Apostle Catholic School

“School of Distinction”

*Dynamic Education
Centered in Christ*

THE PEACEMAKER...

PIECES

Vol. 15 Issue 13

February 23, 2011

School Registration 2011/2012

Saint Thomas School registration packets for the 2011/2012 school year have gone home with current school families. **Please return your registration materials to reserve a spot for your child. We will begin enrolling new families on a first-come, first-served basis on Monday, February 28. We anticipate being at or near capacity in the following grades: 1,4, 5, 7 & 8. We already have a waiting list for several of these classes.**

The deadline for *priority consideration of financial aid* is March 1, 2011. Families applying for financial aid must complete the PSAS form in order to be considered for any scholarship opportunities. New families, who would like to receive information or a registration packet, please contact Sue in the school office at 458-4228.

MAP™ Test Results

We apologize for the delay of our test score reports for families, but the Diocese has asked us to send them after ALL of our teachers have had their training sessions. Our new mail date is March 1. Thank you for your patience.

Teachers Say “Thanks!”

The faculty and staff of Saint Thomas School would like to thank the Home & School Association and all of the parents who brought in food for Thursday’s teacher lunch. The teachers and staff really appreciate the warm meal. Thank you!!! If you brought in a crock pot or a dish for the lunch, please pick it up in the Faculty Conference Room. Thanks again!

WHAT IS A NOVENA?


The word novena comes from the Latin word meaning nine. A novena, then, is a cycle of prayers spanning nine days. This type of prayer is commemorative of the “Novena of the Apostles”, that is, the days they spent in prayer between the Ascension and Pentecost in the Upper Room.

You are invited to pray with your family the Home-to-Home Vocations Novena, which is given out each Friday at the school Mass. Please call Maureen Jones at 454-2107 to sign up!



America & Me Essay Contest

Three students from Saint Thomas the Apostle School in Grand Rapids have been named local winners in the 42nd annual America & Me Essay Contest, sponsored by Farm Bureau Insurance. The three students, who earned the first, second, and third place awards for their school, are Lizzy VanderZee, first, Keegan Barth, second, Jessica Herold, third. All three received an award certificate for their achievement. As the school’s first place winner, Lizzy’s name will also be engraved on a plaque for permanent display in the school. Lizzy VanderZee’s first place essay now advances to the state level competition, from which the top ten essays in Michigan will be selected. Several thousand eighth grade students from nearly 500 Michigan schools participated in the 2010-2011 America & Me Essay Contest, which was conducted with the help of Farm Bureau Insurance agents across the state. The topic of the 2010-2011 contest was “My Personal Michigan Hero.”



ATTACHMENTS

- March Calendar
- Carnival Flyer
- Technology Club Flyer
- Saint Thomas Water Bottle Flyer

With Love from Our Principal

I am so grateful to all of our returning families who have already turned in their 2011/12 registration forms! We are beginning to envision the open spaces yet within our school for next year. Jeanne Walch and I have been increasingly busy taking prospective families through the school, and next week will be able to determine whether we can embrace their children into our school, or whether the class they are seeking is full. If you have not yet turned in your registration forms, please do so! A question was raised by an inquisitive student as to why we still tour families when a particular class has been filled, and we have a waiting list. The answer is simple. We believe in Catholic education as the best option for a family seeking a Christ filled educational setting. My hope is that after their tour of our school, they have seen, heard and experienced the gift that is Catholic education, and adamantly want this for their child. If I need to add a family to our waiting list, I also send a fax to our partner Catholic schools indicating that I cannot place this family, but that they want a Catholic education for their children. Believe me, a tour through our school, interaction with our middle school student leaders, evidence of dynamic classrooms filled with happy children thriving in a successful and rigorous environment sells itself. Christ speaks through our children!

We have formed a Space and Enrollment committee to look at next year's enrollment possibilities and perhaps a more effective use of the spaces within our building. Our front office has become a very busy place! I am hoping to find a way to move some of that excitement away from the business hub of our school (and poor Sue Ysasi!). I also would like to determine if we can negotiate enough space for another classroom. Our next year's 4-year old preschool is predicted to be a large one...not a problem at all in preschool and kindergarten since they can be split into morning and afternoon classes. When they enter first grade, it looks as though this class may swell into two first grade classrooms. The committee is looking at how this will affect our class configurations, and whether to constrict the growth of this class. If we decide to allow this class to grow naturally, we want to have a space that can become a classroom should we need it. We hope to publish our options and solicit your input in the very near future. There is immense excitement in this group. I have asked members from each of the ministries and committees in our school and parish, faculty, parents, parishioners, parish staff and Father Jim to be a part of this Space and Enrollment committee. We are looking at our building and programs with a fresh set of eyes. What is possible? What is wise? How can the most people benefit from what we might consider? How do we maintain the essence of Saint Thomas, yet offer more? As the discussions ensue, I am also looking at our budget and seeing where we might support our growth with additional services. This year, I added an aide to our sixth grade. This has been wonderful! It is not common to see an aide in middle school, yet we continue to dream of ways that this can enable our teachers to do more, for more children. I am looking to see if there is a way to increase this benefit to our middle school for next year.

God continues to bless our happy community with an abundance of children. I pray daily for wisdom in decision making, and in gratefulness for the incredible talent that is present in our faculty. Nearly two thirds of the way through the school year, I am filled with excitement over the wonderful things that are happening in our school, and in anticipation for what will come!

~ Suzi Furtwangler, Principal

Email Database Request

Please see the request box on page 7 (the Library page) of this Pieces and fill it out.

Thank you! ~ Suzi Furtwangler

Holy Father's Prayer Intention for February 2011

That the riches of creation be preserved, valued and made available to all, as a precious gifts from God to mankind.

The Church Speaks

"The Catholic school loses its purpose without constant reference to the Gospel and a frequent encounter with Christ."

THE CATHOLIC SCHOOL 1977
~ Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education

Healthy Snack Policy Revisited

At the beginning of the year, we presented a policy that protects children with allergies in our classrooms, and promotes a healthy choice lifestyle here in our school. We have asked that birthday treats and classroom snacks be of a healthy nature, staying away from candy, cookies, cakes and other sugar-laden treats that contain no nutritive value, and are potentially dangerous to some children. We have successfully moved to a healthier lunch program that utilizes local produce and meats, has eliminated all processed food, and has increased the healthy food options on the salad bar. We are dedicated to teaching children the value of making good nutritional decisions.

Please keep this school policy in mind when choosing your child's snack and birthday treats to share. Cheese platters, fruit and dip, hummus and pita, veggies and dip, yogurt, smoothies, fruit kabobs and other nutrient rich foods send a powerful message to children, and support our resolve to protect those who are sensitive to peanuts, tree nuts, wheat and coloring.

VOCATIONS NEWS

Sisters' Visit

Ask your child(ren) about our school's visit from Sister Rita, (Most Sacred Heart of Jesus), Sister Kinga, and Sister Bozena (Christ the King) who visited our classrooms and had lunch with the kids on January 21, 2011. They gave beautiful personal testimonies of how God gave them the desire to become religious Sisters. They also talked about their day to day work. For example; Sister Rita teaches children in Jamaica! It was an amazing opportunity for the kids to spend time with these selfless women who so joyfully serve Jesus Christ.

Thank you, Lucyna Dieleman, for making this happen!

“In the Silence of the heart, God speaks”

— Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta

*SAVE THE DATE

All parents of Saint Thomas the Apostle School and Parish are invited to our annual Vocations Awareness luncheon. This year it will be held Friday, March 18th from 12:15 – 1:30 p.m. Please join us in the Ministry Center Community Room to hear the faith journey of the Consecrated Women of Regnum Christi, and Father John Yep, L.C.

The luncheon is sponsored by the Vocations Awareness Committee of Saint Thomas the Apostle School and is free of charge. RSVP to the school office at 458-4228 by Friday, March 11. Please note that childcare will not be provided.

Preschool and Kindergarten Round-Up and Information Session

Do you have questions about the development of your 3, 4, or 5 year old? Are you wondering about the best time for your child to enter school – Preschool or Kindergarten? Do you wonder what you can do to prepare your child for the most positive school experience? Are you interested to know what a normal day in the life of a kindergartner or preschooler looks like? Are you seeking a dynamic education... In a supportive Catholic community... Where a Christ-centered mission is central to all that we do?



If you find yourself nodding, “Yes” to any or all of these questions, I would like to invite you to our Preschool and Kindergarten Round-Up and Information Session on Wednesday, March 2 from 9:00-10:30 a.m. or 6:30-8:00 p.m. in the Ministry Center (Courtyard Entrance). This is a chance for you to meet other interested parents and our faculty. Investigate what our program offers. Children will visit the classrooms and share a story and discovery time. Parents will learn how to help prepare their child and interact with a panel of professionals. Call the school office today at 458-4228 to let us know which session you plan to attend.

~ Suzi Furtwangler, Principal

Preschool Sock Hop a Success

Many thanks to all those who attended, donated to, or helped out at our first annual Preschool Sock Hop. It was a tremendous success and a lot of fun. Our littlest ones were asking us to hold it again the next week!



A special thanks to our many 8th grade leaders who worked so hard to make the event a success. They baked cookies, made certificates, ran the games, staffed the registration and the food tables, helped with the crafts, set up and cleaned up, babysat, and just plain had fun with the kids. You are AWESOME and we love you! Thanks for representing Saint Thomas so well.

Thanks, also, to our amazing Preschool and Kindergarten teachers. Your love and dedication for our Mission and our children are a shining example of why we are so blessed to have our children here at Saint Thomas.

~ Kathy Barth



Saint Thomas Carnival is Saturday, March 5

from 6 – 9 p.m.

It's going to be a fun
family event!

Come for great deals on
dinner for the family!
and tons of fun entertainment!



As with any great Saint Thomas event we'll need your help to make it a success.

- We will be collecting 2 liter bottles of soda starting now.. leave them in the hall outside the office or look for us in the drop off lines!
- Cakes, brownies, cookies, and pies can be brought to school starting Thursday before the event or the night of!
- We are also looking for a Wii, Karoke machine and disco ball.

Volunteers always needed so please consider offering up an hour (or 3) of your night!

- Set up (Friday afterschool), run a game or tear down - we'd appreciate any time you can give!
 - Remember your 8 - 12th grade students need volunteer hours and we could use them!
- Keep an eye out via "Kid mail" for vounteer requests!

If you have question or can volunteer, please contact:
Sue Kuzee at slkuz@hotmail.com (co-chair),
Heidi Schliem at rhschliem@yahoo.com (co-chair)
or Carla VanDokkenburg (volunteer coordinator)
at jvandokk@yahoo.com if you can help!

Spiritual Adoption

The next meeting for Jr. High students who have chosen to spiritually adopt a baby in danger of abortion is Monday, February 28th. The meeting will be held during the Religion classes. Looking forward to praying with you! Keep up those powerful prayers! ~ Mrs. Valente

An Invitation To Pray The Rosary in Church

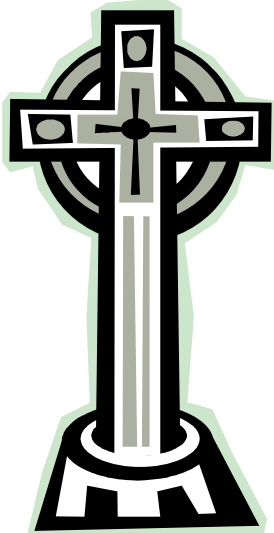
Every day at Saint Thomas School you can pray the Rosary with other parents and friends.



3:00 pm every **Monday**,
Wednesday, **Friday** (right before school ends)
8:00 am every **Tuesday**, **Thursday** (right after school starts)

Multicultural Cross Collection

It is unbelievable to me that we are nearly two thirds of the way through the school year! At the beginning of this, my first year as Principal, I wanted to create over



time a multicultural cross collection on the wall outside the office...this collection has swelled over the year! Thank you to all of the families who have remembered in their travels to other countries to bring back a cultural cross! Come see this collection...it greets visitors as they enter our school and screams of our Catholic identity. If you know that you or a family member is going to be traveling, please remember our multicultural cross collection.
~Suzi Furtwangler, Principal

Protecting God's Children Awareness Sessions

If you are new to our school or still need to attend Virtus training, (required for all school volunteers), please note the upcoming sessions:

Saint Pius X (Grandville)
3937 Wilson Ave. SW
Monday, February 28, 2011 @ 6:30 p.m.

Our Lady of Consolation (Rockford)
4865 Eleven Mile Road
Monday, March 7, 2011 @ 6:30 p.m.

Cathedral Square (Grand Rapids)
360 Division S.
Wednesday, April 13, 2011 @ 9:00 a.m.

Immaculate Heart of Mary (Grand Rapids)
1935 Plymouth Ave., SE
Saturday, April 30, 2011 @ 9:00 a.m.

If you plan to attend one of these sessions, and have not already registered, please register online as follows:

Go to www.virtus.org

- Click "Registration"
- Click "Begin the Registration Process"
- Select Diocese of Grand Rapids as the organization.
- You will be required to enter a UserID and password (of your choice)
- Fill out registration form
- Choose a location



**First Annual Saint Thomas
Preschool Sock Hop**

Another STAR visits Saint Thomas The Apostle School Reading with the STARS welcomes Juliet Dragos!

Juliet Dragos, WZZM TV weeknight co-anchor at 5:30, 6:00, and 11:00, read with Saint Thomas students on Wednesday, February 16. She read Cloudy With a Chance of Meatballs to grades 1 through 5. For grades 6 through 8, she read a story from Chicken Soup for the Teen Soul about being friends and not always doing the popular thing, but doing the right thing.

Juliet emphasized that reading is a big part of her job and that she could not do her job if she did not love to read. She does her own writing, editing, and interviewing. She said it is very stressful getting ready for air time, but that is her favorite part of the job!

Juliet told us when she was younger, she wanted to become an archeologist, but her 4th grade teacher asked her to read one of her papers in front of the class and told her she should be a writer! It was that positive comment from her teacher that gave her the idea of journalism and a broadcasting career. She said she would even follow her friends around with a tape recorder, trying to interview them!

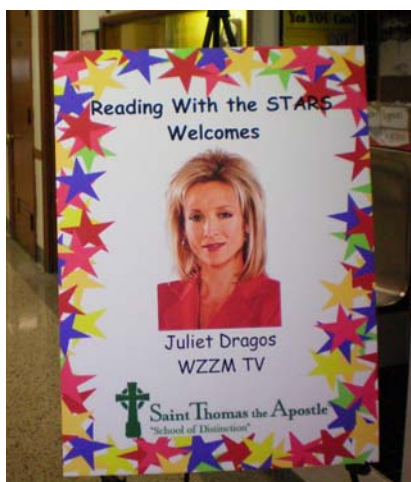
Juliet has hosted the Grand Rapids "Race for the Cure" for ten years and has also served as Honorary Race Chair. She volunteers for many community causes and events including: Special Olympics Michigan, Brain Injury Association of Michigan, American Cancer Society's Relay For Life, the American Red Cross, Grand Rapids Symphony Youth Education Program, and numerous other fundraisers.

She has been in West Michigan working for WZZM TV for almost 20 years! Juliet thought she might stay two years but fell in love with the West Michigan community. We are glad she decided to make our community her home! We are privileged that she recognizes the importance of reading, community involvement, and the impact she has as a role model to children and education.



To find out more about Juliet, please go to the WZZM website: www.wzzm.com

~ Liz Aschwege



SAVE THE DATE!!!!



Annual Dinner Dance

April 16, 2011

Egypt Valley Country Club

Sponsored by Challenge

**We Are CC-The Heart of the City
Celebration and Auction ~ March 12, 2011**

For more information check www.wearcc.org for more information!

CLC SuperBOWL 2011

CLC Network would love to have you join us for SuperBOWL 2011. The event will be held at Spectrum Lanes in Wyoming or Hudsonville Lanes. We will be bowling from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. on Saturday, March 12th, to raise funds for kids with special needs.

Registration and Pledge forms are available in your schools' Welcome and Information area. For more information, please call Bev or Cathy at CLC Network – 616-245-8388.

Saint Thomas Library News



Birthday Book Bash

Here in the library we love books, quotes, lessons, and ideas! Recently, Ella Rosloniec had a great idea. She had a Mercy Watson birthday party. Mercy Watson is a favorite book character for many children and adults. Mercy is one crazy pig! At Ella's birthday party, instead of bringing presents, Ella invited guests to join her in donating a new book to benefit the Saint Thomas School Library. Well, weren't we surprised and overwhelmed! Thank you so much for thinking of the library Ella. It was very kind of you and all your party guests to donate so many different and intriguing new books. Many children will benefit from such a creative idea! Keep your eyes open for 38 new books that were donated from Ella's birthday party to be added to the Saint Thomas Library shelves soon!



March Is Reading Month!

"Pop Open A Good Book" is our "March is reading month" theme in the library. Read books to earn popcorn kernels for your class's popcorn bucket. Please watch for "kernels" to come home with your child. As stories are read, write the name of the book on the kernel, cut out the kernel and send back to school. At the end of the month, the class (1st - 4th grade) with the most popcorn kernels will get to have popcorn the next time they come to the library for stories!

THANK YOU!

Thank you to our book fair volunteers: Marnie White, Denise Deveau, Becky Shiel, Ellen Kieras, Claudia Liang, Tanya Molotky and Michelle Kane. Thank you to all of the parents and students who purchased books. The books will be sent home on Friday. ~ *Kate Dykema*

Please Return Library Books Promptly Each Week!

Remember, all books are due one week from check-out and students will not be allowed to check out future books until their accounts are cleared.

Email Database

We are trying to build an email database so that we can communicate vital or relevant information to families in a fast and efficient manner. If you have not already done so, please fill in the information below and drop it off in the school office. Email addresses will ONLY be used for school communication purposes. Thank you for your help.
~ *Suzi Furtwangler*

Email Address: _____
Student/Family Name: _____
Signature: _____

Saint Thomas Library Info



Coordinator:
Marnie White
Denise Deveau
Contact Info:
libadm@stthomasgr.org

Please have students return their books *on or before* the listed due date. No new books may be checked out until all past books have been returned.

THE GIFTS YOU HAVE RECEIVED, GIVE AS A GIFT

PICTURES HAVE BEEN REMOVED FOR INTERNET
SAFETY PURPOSES

Front Row: Mary Grace Doyle, Avery LaVoie,
Dani Dull, Erin Mangan
Back Row: Jim O'Neil, Cory Skinner, Finn Perdue

Front Row: Mary Kate Alfaro, Sophia Jepsen,
Michael Redmond, Solomon Metzger
Middle Row: Ella Rosloniec, Mary Wheeler, Noah Dent,
Gabe Daylrymple
Back Row: Owen LaVoie, Renee Langlois,
Henry Dykema, Sydney Rodgers

PICTURES HAVE BEEN REMOVED FOR INTERNET
SAFETY PURPOSES

Front Row: Becca Dull, Alex Figueroa, John Lown
Back Row: Joe Ens, Montse Gonzalez-Guiterrez,
Rachel Syrba

Front Row: Rainey Kolenda, Lynch Eden,
Sam Dieleman
Middle Row: Marie Kieras, Zach Near, Lucas Horrigan,
Colin Walch
Back Row: Kendal Duimstra, Emma DenBraber,
Julia Caruso



Saint Thomas the Apostle School March 2011



| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|---|--|---|--|--|--|----------------------------------|
| | | 1 PSAS DUE DATE! | 2 9:00 & 6:30 P.M. Preschool & Kindergarten Information Session No AM Preschool & Kindergarten | 3 4-7 p.m. You Be The Chemist | 4 9:55 a.m. Mass | 5 6—9 p.m. School Carnival |
| 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 ASH WEDNESDAY 12:30 p.m. All School Mass Pieces Home | 10 2:00 p.m. Reading with the Stars: Gerry Barnaby visits | 11 NO SCHOOL Teacher Inservice | 12 |
| 13 6:00 p.m. Confirmation Candidate/ Sponsor Meeting | 14 JEAN PASS DAY | 15 Peaceful People/Place Assembly 10 a.m. Grs. K-4 12:30 p.m. Grs. 5-8 | 16 9:00 a.m. Gr.4 Songst Practice 7:00 pm. Gr. 4 Songfest 7:00 p.m. Education Commission Mtg | 17 | 18 9:55 a.m. Mass Vocation's Luncheon | 19 |
| <div style="display: flex; justify-content: center; align-items: center;"> <div style="border-left: 1px solid black; border-right: 1px solid black; width: 100px; height: 10px; margin-right: 5px;"></div> <div style="border-left: 1px solid black; border-right: 1px solid black; width: 100px; height: 10px; margin-right: 5px;"></div> <div style="border-left: 1px solid black; border-right: 1px solid black; width: 100px; height: 10px; margin-right: 5px;"></div> <div style="border-left: 1px solid black; border-right: 1px solid black; width: 100px; height: 10px; margin-right: 5px;"></div> <div style="border-left: 1px solid black; border-right: 1px solid black; width: 100px; height: 10px; margin-right: 5px;"></div> <div style="border-left: 1px solid black; border-right: 1px solid black; width: 100px; height: 10px; margin-right: 5px;"></div> <div style="border-left: 1px solid black; border-right: 1px solid black; width: 100px; height: 10px; margin-right: 5px;"></div> </div> <p style="text-align: center; margin-top: 5px;">VOCATIONS WEEK</p> | | | | | | |
| 20 | 21 4th Gr. Retreat 7p.m. 4th Gr. Sacrament of Reconciliation | 22 9:15-11:30 a.m. Gr.2 Create 1rs Eucharist Plates | 23 Gr. 4 Market Day Pieces Home 11:40 a.m. Student Council Officers Mtg | 24 | 25 9:55 a.m. Mass End of 3rd Quarter | 26 |
| 27 | 28 NON UNIFORM DAY | 29 8Th Gr. Retreat 7:00 p.m. 8th Grade Sacrament of | 30 11:30 a.m. Student Council Mtg Daytime Bandtastic Practice 7 pm Bandtastic Concert | 31 10:30 a.m. & 1 p.m. Kindergarten Piggy Opera | April 1 9:55 a.m. Mass Report Cards Home | |



Small Bounce House

Cake Walk

Bucket Bonanza

Blow Up Twister

WII Dance Off

Pop Toss

And much more!

CARNIVAL

St. Thomas School Carnival 2011

Saturday March 5 • 6 pm to 9 pm



MAKE IT YOUR GOAL TO VOLUNTEER TODAY!

CONTACT CARLA KLIMP @ CARLAJIM@SBCGLOBAL.NET **SIGN UP! WORK! PLAY! WIN!**

THE SUCCESS OF THE CARNIVAL DEPENDS ON YOU!

STUDENTS FROM GRADES 8-12 WILL EARN VOLUNTEER CREDIT HOURS!



Saint Thomas the Apostle Catholic School

“School of Distinction”

March 2011— May 2011

After School Enrichment Opportunities

Technology Club

Grade Levels: 5th-8th Grade Students

Class Dates: Wednesdays (March 16, 23, 30 April 13, 20, 27 and May 4, 11, 18 and 25th, 2011) from 3:15-4:45* pm

Location: Media Center/Library

Instructor: Mrs. Kathy Barth

Fee: \$82 semester—10 sessions/15 hours (scholarships available)



An opportunity for all 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th graders to expand their knowledge of technology. Students will have a chance to write, film, produce, and edit their own videos using both still images and video footage in order to create their own projects as well as to participate in the creation of a “commercial” for Saint Thomas to be put on YouTube. Eighth grade students will also have the opportunity to work on their own graduation “slide show” incorporating video and stills to be shown after their graduation.

Green screen technology, stop gap photography, and other techniques will be taught and incorporated into the video production. We will also explore other areas that are of interest to the students.

If time and interest allows, we will do some basic photography, photo editing, and learn how to make updates to our website.

To enroll, please fill out the registration form below and check all appropriate boxes including those pertaining to scholarships/financial need.

Saint Thomas Registration Form for Technology Club

Student Name: _____

Address: _____ **Phone #:** _____

_____ **Cell #:** _____

*Please note: The class is dismissed at 4:45. Any student not picked up by 4:55 will be charged our customary late fee of \$1.00 per minute.

Saint Thomas Payment:

_____ Check enclosed for Saint Thomas Program Fee - **\$82**

_____ Partial Scholarship Needed - Check Enclosed For - **\$41** _____

_____ Maximum Scholarship Needed - Amount Enclosed - _____

(any amount is encouraged, including a student allowance or money earned) _____

Make checks payable to Saint Thomas School

In exchange for services, the parent/guardian agrees to fulfill obligations of support: financial, spiritual, educational and emotional.

Offered as an Extension of the **DISCOVER Program**

A Spectrum of Services

Meeting Needs.....Reaching Out.....Challenging Potential

Because we believe ALL Students are Gifted & Talented and ALL Students have Special Needs

Saint Thomas Hornets Water Bottle

**Support the Saint Thomas Sports Boosters by
purchasing a water bottle (or two)
and show your SPIRIT!**

**Available at the Concession Stand,
School Office, or
By calling Marc Wadaga at 616-458-7966**

**\$8 FOR ONE
\$15 FOR TWO
\$20 FOR THREE**

