

June 29, 2026

Dear Friend of St. Thomas Aquinas Parish,

Greetings to you on this Solemnity of Sts. Peter and Paul!

As we celebrate the two founders of the church in Rome, and meditate on what the Holy Spirit accomplished through those two in the early church, I'd like to invite you to join me in celebrating our amazing parish and the work God has done in us!

I've included in this letter a list of upcoming events, and a report on how we've grown the last year. I also include a vision for our next year together.

Enjoy!

Fr. Adam

700ish celebration

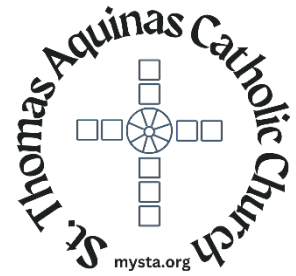
First, I'd like to invite you to celebrate our parish and our patron saint. St. Thomas Aquinas was canonized in July of 1323, and each year we commemorate the 700ish anniversary of his sainthood.

We'll be celebrating this year on Sunday, July 19.

Everyone is invited to gather at 5ish for fellowship, and dinner will be at 6ish. We'll have games and entertainment, and the evening usually wraps up around 8ish.

We'll provide pork chops and hot dogs, root beer floats, and lemonade and water. We'd ask you bring a side or dessert to share.

If you'd like to come, **PLEASE RSVP by going to mysta.org/700ish**. This will allow us to know how much food to prepare.



Christmas Mass Times

Thursday, Dec 24: 4 p.m. and 6:30 p.m.

Friday, Dec 25: 9:30 a.m.

Easter Mass Times

Saturday, March 27: 8 p.m.

Sunday, March 28: 8 a.m., 10:15 a.m., Noon.

Groups: Our community in action

At St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church, we are blessed with a vibrant community of groups and ministries designed to nurture faith, fellowship, and service. From faith formation for children and teens to parish outreach, social action, and spiritual enrichment, there are opportunities for everyone to grow in their relationship with God, serve others, and connect with fellow parishioners. Whether you are drawn to prayer, education, service, or social connection, we invite you to explore our parish groups and find your place in the life of our community. Please go to **mysta.org/groups** for more information on our wonderful ministries.

Also, please see the calendar at the end of this letter to participate in this upcoming year in our amazing ministries.

While maintaining all of the wonderful groups we currently have, I'd like to highlight a few changes in our ministries for this upcoming year.

Music Ministry

I'd like to invite you to come and see... or rather "hear"... our new music program in action. We've recently expanded the program by bringing Emma Lynch onto our team as our Director of Music Ministry, and she has hit the ground running!

Emma is a recent University of Mary graduate, and she interned with us for the last two summers. She is amazing to listen to, and she is working on building up our music program.



A note from Emma: My name is Emma Lynch, and I am the new Director of Music Ministry here at St. Thomas Aquinas. I graduated with a degree in Sacred Music this past spring from the University of Mary, and I'm very excited to be working at St. Thomas Aquinas! I grew up in Des Moines and now live in Norwalk with my husband Matthew. Even if you're not a musician, I would love to meet you, so come talk to me anytime! - Emma

Emma has made an appearance in the Catholic Mirror (in June) and the Des Moines Register (on July 12)! If you'd like to read these articles please go to mysta.org/links. If you'd like to come and lend your voice (or your instrument) to our choir, please go to **mysta.org/music** to sign up.

ChristLife



The Holy Spirit is moving at St. Thomas Aquinas! I'd like to invite you to become a part of a growing ChristLife community here at our parish, and now throughout our Diocese. Every few months we invite people to go deeper in their relationship with Jesus Christ and with each other. Our next run of ChristLife begins in September, and we are going to be inviting other parishes to join us.

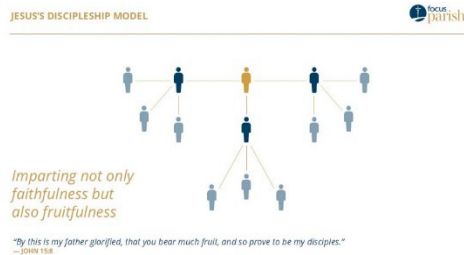
You can learn more about ChristLife by going to [**msyta.org/CL**](https://msyta.org/CL).

That Man Is You (TMIY)

We are starting a new initiative for fathers with young children in our parish. That Man Is You will be starting in September. Our goal is to form a community of fathers working together for the good of their family as they navigate the challenges of our world. We have a dedicated core team of 8 fathers excited to launch this new outreach. Stay tuned- it is starting in September.



FOCUS Parish



Beginning August 1, we will partner with the Fellowship of Catholic University Students (FOCUS), which is now expanding to parish outreach! We join a small band of roughly 30 parishes nationwide that have FOCUS Parish Missionaries. We will welcome Thomas Horlander as our Parish Missionary this summer. A note from Thomas:

My name is Thomas Horlander and I am super excited to join you and your parish! My wife Kristen, our son Matthew and I just moved to Indianola from Philadelphia a month ago and are thrilled to be on mission alongside you. I am starting my seventh year as a FOCUS missionary (four on campus and now three at the parish level). I am looking forward to learning about hot air balloons and going to a county fair again (they don't have county fairs in Philly)! Know of our family's prayers for you all and we look forward to getting to know you! -Thomas



BAILEY PETERSEN UPDATE



We will be hosting a meet and greet with Bailey Petersen, a recent Simpson graduate who just finished her first year serving as a FOCUS missionary.

It will be at 11:30 a.m. on July 12. Please come by to hear how Bailey is doing in her first year of mission!



Farewell, Deacon Dave!

After many years of service to St. Thomas Aquinas, Deacon Dave is retiring! His retirement reception will be August 1 after Mass.

Over his 11-year tenure at St. Thomas Aquinas, Deacon Dave has led countless bible studies, small groups, OCIA (RCIA) formation sessions, rosaries, holy hours, and wake services. He's had an open door for people seeking spiritual guidance, he's taught RE for years, he's preached, and he's inspired many to holiness.

Thank you, Deacon Dave, for many years of dedicated ministry. Blessings on your next steps!

Growth Update

I'd like to thank you all for your gracious support over the last 4 years. I've sent out a handful of letters the last few years, asking you to consider supporting St. Thomas Aquinas in various ways. You've responded! Many people have gotten involved, supported our initiatives, and made sure that St. Thomas Aquinas remains an amazing place of encounter. Your prayers and support have allowed us to grow. Below is St. Thomas Aquinas by the numbers.

	REGISTERED HOUSEHOLDS
2022	526
2023	544
2024	573
2025	593
2026	661

Current Cash on Hand:

Building Fund	\$ 303,044.90
Operating Fund	4 month reserve
Mission Trip	\$ 35,550.79

Annual Diocesan Appeal (ADA) INFO

Year	Households participating	GOAL	OVER(UNDER)
2023	150	\$ 73,908.00	\$ 2,256.00
2024	156	\$ 76,413.00	\$ 7,408.39
2025	181	\$ 80,084.00	\$ 21,329.00
2026	197 (so far)*	\$ 82,385.00	*ENDS 02/2027

Operating Fund				
	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY26
Total Operating Revenue	\$ 436,642.21	\$ 454,039.44	\$ 518,320.51	\$ 566,392.15
Total Operating Expense	\$ 447,179.92	\$ 488,477.18	\$ 482,451.45	\$ 472,319.99
Operating Revenue over Expense (cash)	\$ (10,537.71)	\$ (34,437.74)	\$ 35,869.06	\$ 94,072.16
Building Fund				
	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY26
Total Building Fund and Capital Campaign Revenue	\$ 300,847.26	\$ 185,826.62	\$ 153,796.68	\$ 106,555.74
Total Building Fund and Capital Campaign Expense	\$ 94,479.74	\$ 250,859.20	\$ 155,446.24	\$ 118,192.55
Building Fund Revenue over Expense (cash)	\$ 206,367.52	\$ (65,032.58)	\$ (1,649.56)	\$ (11,636.81)
	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY26
Registered Families	553	562	593	661
Sunday Collection	\$ 288,538.00	\$ 316,675.00	\$ 368,581.00	\$ 377,011.00
Households TITHING*				
\$0 - \$99	187	148	153	71
\$100 - \$999	117	121	126	129
\$1,000 - \$2,499	11	19	23	85
\$2,500 +	3	7	9	43
Sacraments and Participation				
Baptism	15	25	23	16
First Communion	19	22	15	18
Confirmation	23	31	27	26
Holy Matrimony	7	3	6	4
Christian Burial	11	15	10	11
Ministry Volunteers				
Ushers/Greeters	33	22	21	25
Lectors	19	13	13	17
EMHC's	48	35	71	72
Musicians	32	20	28	31
Altar Servers	14	20	20	21
Money Counters	9	7	8	8
*Does not include anonymous contributions				

An explanation of the numbers:

Registrations

We've seen phenomenal growth this year. Families are asking to join our parish every week, and we are working hard to make sure that everyone feels connected as they enter our community. Thank you to all of our deacons, staff, and volunteers who put in countless hours to make this place great.

I'm humbled by our growth together.

Operating Fund

When I first started here, we had some very real financial hurdles to overcome. I've asked a lot of you all the last 4 years, and I'm grateful for your response. We've seen our operating revenue grow substantially the last two years, and we are investing this growth in new ministries.

Over this past year, our Operating Fund Revenue has greatly exceeded our expenses. This was planned; we want to expand ministry in FY27. The cost of these new ministries is substantial, and because of our multi-year planning, we can confidently start these new initiatives.

Building Fund

As you can see from our numbers, we spent more from the building fund than we received in FY26. This is planned; currently we have \$303,044 in the building fund, and we are looking for projects to help improve our facilities while still keeping enough in reserve in case of emergency.

Fiscal Year 2027 needs

For fiscal year 2027, we'd like to hold our Building Fund income steady, increase the number of households participating in the ADA to 215, and raise \$400,000 in tithing (Sunday Collection). Right now, only about half of our registered households give financially to support our parish. If your household does not participate in either the ADA or Tithing, would you consider giving a recurring gift of at least \$15/mo to the ADA and 1% of your income to tithing? Every gift is valuable, no matter the amount. Thank you for your generosity!

To give to the Annual Diocesan Appeal, please go to **mysta.org/ADA** and choose **Indianola-St. Thomas Aquinas from the drop-down menu.**

To setup tithing, please go to **mysta.org/give.**

Thanks to your generosity, I'm excited to announce that we will soon be wrapping up the 3-year Ignite! Capital Campaign! We had a few generous donors step forward the last six months and push us across the finish line. We're working on identifying the final projects for that campaign, one of which will be fixing the St. Thomas Aquinas statue.

Thank you all for your self-sacrificing generosity, which allows St. Thomas Aquinas to flourish.

Below please find a calendar of upcoming events.

2026

July

July 7- 4th Degree Assembly KC
July 11- ChristLife retreat weekend
July 12- Meet and Greet with Bailey Petersen, 11:30
July 18- Wine and Cheese after 4:30 Mass
July 19- 700ish celebration 5 p.m. gather, 6 p.m. dinner.
RSVP at mysta.org/700ish
July 26- STAT Mission Trip- DULUTH

August

Aug 1- Thomas Horlander (FOCUS) begins
Aug 1- Wine and Cheese after 4:30 Mass- Farewell to Deacon Dave
Aug 2- Welcome Thomas Horlander
Aug 15- Welcome new members to the Church- Wine and Cheese after Mass
Aug 29/30- Simpson Ministry Kickoff (Sunday Evening Masses resume)
Aug 30- Confirmation Mass @ 8 AM

September

Sep 1- 4th Degree Assembly KC
Sep 2- CGS/RE Kickoff and potluck
Sep 2- STAT fall start
Sep 3- Simpson Ministry- 1st Thursday
Sep 3- CGS parent meeting for first time attendees
Sep 8- CHRISTLIFE START (ALL 3 PARTS) mysta.org/CL
Sep 9- CGS/RE fall start
Sep 11- That Man Is You Kickoff (6 a.m.)
Sep 13- Knights of Columbus Breakfast between Masses
Sep 12- Wine and Cheese after Mass
Sep 14- STARS Rosary member kick off
Sep 23- Mass at 7pm for RE/STAT

October

Oct 1- Simpson Ministry- 1st Thursday
Oct 10- ChristLife RETREAT DAY
Oct 11- Knights of Columbus Breakfast between Masses
Oct 19- STARS Rosary & Featured Speaker
Oct 23- Fall Fish and Chicken Dinner- Knights of Columbus
Oct 30- Fall Fish and Chicken Dinner- Knights of Columbus

November

Nov 3- 4th Degree Assembly KC
Nov 5- Simpson Ministry- 1st Thursday
Nov 6- Fall Fish and Chicken Dinner- Knights of Columbus
Nov 13- Fall Fish and Chicken Dinner- Knights of Columbus

Fiscal Year 2027

For Fiscal Year 2027 (July 1, 2026- June 30, 2027), we need \$400,000 in tithing revenue to sustain our ministries.

To make a gift, please go to mysta.org/give.

Or, scan the QR code below. Thank you!



Women's Breakfast Club
4th Tuesdays at FIRESIDE BISTRO
9:00 – 11:00 a.m.



Knights of Columbus
2nd Thursday of the month
6:30 – 8:00 p.m.

Nov 16- STARS Rosary & Cookie Workshop
Nov 18 - Reconciliation for RE/STAT/PARISH
Nov 29- Knights of Columbus Breakfast between Masses

December

Dec 3- Simpson Ministry- 1st Thursday
Dec 5 - STARS Cookie Walk
Dec 8 - Immaculate Conception Holy Day of Obligation
Masses 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. at St. Thomas Aquinas,
Noon at Simpson
Dec 13- Last Simpson Mass until January 10
Dec 13- Knights of Columbus Breakfast between Masses
Dec 25- Christmas Masses- Dec 24, 4 p.m. and 6:30 p.m.
Dec 25, 9:30 a.m.
Dec 31- 7 p.m. Mass for the Holy Day (January 1)

2027

January

Jan 1- Holy day of obligation- Mass will be at 7 p.m.
Jan 1-5 SEEK CONFERENCE
Jan 5- 4th Degree Assembly KC
Jan 10- Simpson Mass Resumes
Jan 10- Knights of Columbus Breakfast between Masses
Jan 13- CHRISTLIFE STARTS (ALL 3 PARTS)
Jan 18- STARS Rosary & Christmas Party/Secret Prayer
Warrior

February

Feb 4- Simpson Ministry- 1st Thursday
Feb 7- Knights of Columbus Breakfast between Masses
Feb 10- Ash Wednesday.
Masses are 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. at St. Thomas
Aquinas, Noon at Simpson
Feb 12- Lenten Fish Fry- 5:30 - 7 p.m. Parish Hall
Feb 13- ChristLife Retreat Day
Feb 15- STARS Rosary & Featured Speaker
Feb 19- Lenten Fish Fry- 5:30 - 7 p.m. Parish Hall
Feb 26- Lenten Fish Fry- 5:30 - 7 p.m. Parish Hall

March

March 2 and 3- Bishop Joensen asked us to block this for a
Holy Spirit discernment retreat
March 2- 4th Degree Assembly KC
March 4- Simpson Ministry- 1st Thursday
March 5- Lenten Fish Fry- 5:30 - 7 p.m. Parish Hall
March 12- Lenten Fish Fry- 5:30 - 7 p.m. Parish Hall
March 19- Lenten Fish Fry- 5:30 - 7 p.m. Parish Hall

Annual Diocesan Appeal

March is our kickoff for the
Annual Diocesan Appeal.

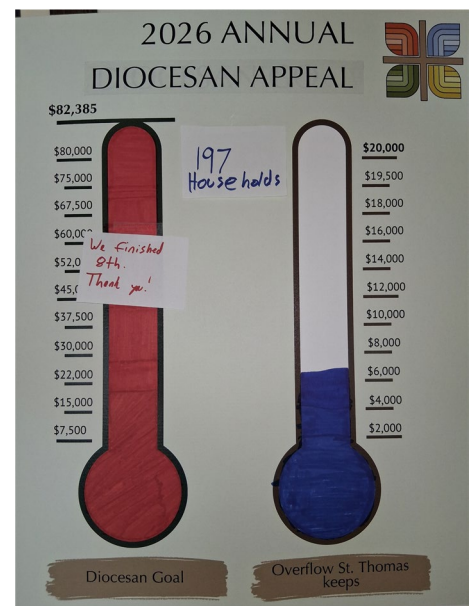
To support the ADA, please go to
mysta.org/ADA and choose
Indianola-St. Thomas Aquinas
from the drop-down menu.



Any amount over our goal that we
collect, St. Thomas Aquinas gets to
keep!

The Diocese covers all fees
associated with your gift.

Thank you!



March 21 and 22- Palm Sunday Bake Sale- Knights of Columbus

March 27- Holy Saturday 8:00 p.m.

March 28- Easter Sunday 8am, 10:15am, Noon

April

April 1- Simpson Ministry- 1st Thursday

Apr 11- Knights of Columbus Breakfast between Masses

Apr 19- Rosary Before Mass STARS

Apr 30- First Communion Retreat day 1 of 2

May

May 1- First Communion Retreat day 2 of 2

May 1- First Reconciliation Service

May 2- First Communion during 10:15 am Mass

May 4- 4th Degree Assembly KC

May 5 - May Crowning. RE/CGS/STAT END

May 6- Simpson Ministry- 1st Thursday

May 17- STARS Rosary Walk & Hosting Summer Wine and Cheese

June

June 3- CHRISTLIFE STARTS (All 3 Parts). Retreat day JULY 10

June 10- Knights of Columbus Meeting, 6:30 - 8 p.m.

July 18- Annual Celebration of St. Thomas Aquinas



Coffee With Jesus Women's Group
1st Saturday of the month
9:00 – 10:30 a.m.

More Information at mysta.org