



ST. THOMAS MORE

Growing the Next Generation



Allentown, Pennsylvania



The Church Story

From the very beginning, St. Thomas More was destined to be an inspirational beacon of faith and community. In 1966, a small but determined group of 350 families with strong support from the Diocese of Allentown, came together with one shared vision—to establish a new parish that would not only serve, but inspire.

From the striking hexagonal architecture of the church, adorned with over 4,500 feet of stained glass artistry, to the emphasis on lay involvement and the academic excellence of its parish and school programs, St. Thomas More quickly became an enduring model of innovation and involvement.

Parish families made a bold promise to turn their faith into action by investing their time, talent, and treasures to build this parish from the ground up. That spirit of dedication has never wavered. Our Catholic values and academic distinction have produced thousands of young men and women who are changing our world for the better. Today, St. Thomas More is a vibrant, thriving community of over 3,000 households, united in Catholic faith through our church and our school.

As we embark on the next chapter of our journey—an ambitious expansion and capital campaign—we are called once again to rise together. This is our opportunity to participate in the same spirit of our traditions that has shaped St. Thomas More for nearly six decades. Our community is one of the greatest gifts we have to offer our children and grandchildren. St. Thomas More is living proof of the power of unity, love, and shared purpose. Together, we are not just building structures; we are **Growing the Next Generation.**



“For such a time as this...”

A Pastor’s Purpose

MONSIGNOR ROBERT J. COLL: A Church Like No Other



Monsignor Robert J. Coll began his remarkable journey with St. Thomas More Parish in the Diocese of Allentown in 1966, where he served as the church’s visionary founding Pastor. Monsignor Coll was at the helm for 14 years overseeing the construction of its original facilities (an exciting Church, an excellent School, Gymnasium, Rectory and Convent). His dedication and leadership helped establish a vibrant STM faith community, rooted in the ideals of unity, service, and innovation—a “church like no other.”

Monsignor Coll’s impact extended far beyond the parish walls. Under his guidance, St. Thomas More became a beacon of service, fostering a spirit of total Christianity that reached the local community, the nation, and even the world. His commitment to addressing global hunger was exemplified through his role as a Founder of Operation Rice Bowl. This initiative became a powerful force for change, raising over \$250 million to combat hunger worldwide.

A defining moment of his ministry occurred in 1976, when Mother Teresa (now Saint) visited St. Thomas More Parish in Allentown. The trip highlighted the parish’s role in supporting charitable efforts like Operation Rice Bowl and underscored Monsignor Coll’s ability to inspire meaningful action within his congregation and far beyond. At 93 years old, the legacy of his compassionate leadership continues to shape the mission and spirit of the Allentown Diocese.

MONSIGNOR JOHN P. MURPHY: A Champion of the Children

Monsignor John P. Murphy became the second Pastor of St. Thomas More Parish in 1980, following 16 years of service at Immaculate Conception Church. Of all the roles he undertook, Monsignor Murphy was proudest of his leadership as Diocesan Director of the Catholic Youth Organization (CYO).

Monsignor Murphy’s 42-year tenure as pastor of STM was marked by a deep love and passion for the children of the parish. Murphy’s leadership brought about numerous enhancements to the school and campus, reflecting his unwavering commitment to providing a high-quality, Catholic education.

Throughout his priesthood, Monsignor Murphy was celebrated for his selfless service, his devotion to his parish family, and his ecumenical vision. His passion for



evangelizing through education was evident to all who knew him. He worked tirelessly to expand and improve St. Thomas More School, ensuring it reached its highest potential. One of his final endeavors, the expansion of the STM Preschool, exemplified his enduring dedication to the parish's youngest members. As he fervently stated, "Please, just get it done—the children are our future."

Monsignor Murphy passed away on December 22, 2023, leaving behind a legacy of faith, love, and education. His spirit continues to live on in the halls of St. Thomas More School and in the hearts of all those whose lives he touched.

FATHER JOHN S. PENDZICK



Fr. John S. Pendzick became the third Pastor of St. Thomas More Church in 2021, during a time of transition marked by the pandemic and Msgr. Murphy's retirement. A proud STM alum, he joined the school in 1974 and celebrated his first Mass here after his ordination in 1997.

Born on Long Island and raised in this community, Fr. Pendzick studied at St. Charles Seminary, earning degrees in Philosophy and Moral Theology. He previously served as Pastor at Our Lady Help of Christians in Allentown and St. Elizabeth of Hungary in Whitehall, where he learned Spanish to better serve parishioners.

After completing his time as Pastor of St. Thomas More, Fr. Pendzick was assigned as Parochial Vicar at St. Ignatius Parish in Reading. We remain deeply grateful for his leadership and the care he brought to our parish community during his time here.



MEET MSGR. BAKER — A Shepherd of Faith, Scholarship, and Service

A familiar face to many, Monsignor Baker began his priestly ministry as Parochial Vicar at Saint Thomas More Parish in Allentown (1991–1994), a community that would one day welcome him back as its beloved Pastor. His early promise as a spiritual leader and theologian led him to further studies in Moral Theology at the University of Navarre in Pamplona, Spain, where he earned his licentiate in 1996. He then completed his doctorate at the Pontifical University of the Holy Cross in Rome, Italy, defending his dissertation entitled *On Contraception: Two Diverse Approaches*—a testament to his deep commitment to the intellectual and moral life of the Church.

Upon returning to the Diocese of Allentown, Msgr. Baker continued to form minds and hearts in Christ. He served as Catholic Chaplain at Lehigh University (1997–2000), taught at both Bethlehem Catholic and Notre Dame High Schools, and later served on the faculty at Saint Charles Borromeo Seminary, where he taught Moral Theology and mentored seminarians.



In 2001, Msgr. Baker was called to Rome once again—this time to serve as an official at the Congregation for Bishops, contributing to the universal Church in one of its most vital offices. While in Rome, he also taught at the Pontifical University of Saint Thomas Aquinas (Angelicum), served as a visiting professor for Christendom College’s Rome program, and provided pastoral care to students from Notre Dame University’s architecture and study abroad programs. In recognition of his exemplary service, he was named Chaplain of His Holiness with the title “Monsignor” in 2006.

Returning stateside in 2009, Msgr. Baker became Pastor of the Cathedral Parish of St. Catharine of Siena. There, he served faithfully for six years, ministering to a vibrant community and contributing to various diocesan initiatives. In 2015, he was appointed Rector of Mount St. Mary’s Seminary in Emmitsburg, Maryland—one of the nation’s leading seminaries—where he guided the spiritual and pastoral formation of future priests.

In June 2025, we joyfully welcomed Msgr. Baker back to Saint Thomas More Parish as our Pastor. With deep theological insight, pastoral compassion, and visionary leadership, he now shepherds our faith community into a new era.

A prolific writer and speaker, Msgr. Baker has delivered numerous conferences on moral theology and contributed articles to *Catholic Dossier*, *America*, *Homiletic & Pastoral Review*, and *Lay Witness*. He is also a regular contributor to *The AD Times*, the official newspaper of the Diocese of Allentown.



As we embark on this transformative capital campaign, we are blessed to be guided by a Pastor whose life and ministry reflect the very heart of our mission: to form disciples, strengthen families, and build a future rooted in Christ.

Case Statement

“Building for the Future of Faith and Community”: At St. Thomas More, our mission is to foster a vibrant community centered on faith, education, and service. To meet the evolving needs of our parish and broader community, we are embarking on a transformative journey to enhance our facilities and ensure their sustainability for future generations.

We invite you to join us in this mission. Together, we can build a stronger, more vibrant St. Thomas More.

ST. THOMAS MORE EDUCATION CENTER ENHANCEMENTS

The Center will become a cornerstone of our educational and recreational programs, and its continued development is vital to accommodate our growing needs. We propose the following enhancements:

Phase I

1. Early Education Building

- Classrooms equipped with individual bathrooms, a chapel, a multi-purpose room, and administrative offices.
- This building will provide a safe, convenient, and comprehensive learning environment for our youngest members, facilitating their educational and spiritual development.
- **Estimated Cost: \$6.5 Million**

2. Playground

- Fencing, turf, and modern playground equipment.
- A well-designed playground enhances physical activity and social interaction among children, supporting their overall development in a secure and engaging setting.
- **Estimated Cost: \$500,000**

Phase II

3. Additional Gymnasium & Equipment

- The addition of a new gymnasium and state-of-the-art equipment will support our expanding athletic and extracurricular programs, providing space for both organized sports and community events.
- **Estimated Cost: \$5.5 Million**

PARISH PROJECT

Investing in our parish facilities is essential for maintaining a welcoming and functional environment for worship and community activities. The following projects are crucial for the continued vitality of our parish:

1. Church Renovations

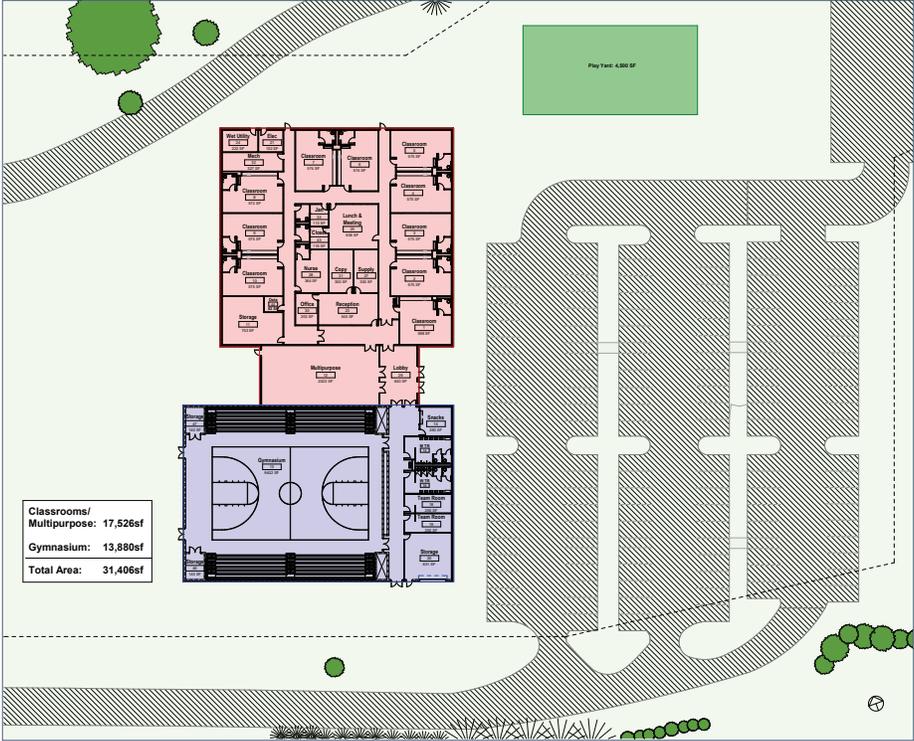
- Indoor and outdoor lighting
- Replacement of the air conditioning system
- Reconditioning of the roof
- New fire system
- Concrete and curb repairs
- Pews (replacing or refinishing)
- These renovations will ensure our church is equipped to meet contemporary needs while preserving the historical and spiritual significance of our facilities.

2. Endowment Fund – Building Maintenance

- An adequately funded endowment for building maintenance will provide long-term financial stability, ensuring our facilities remain in excellent condition and continue to serve our community effectively.
- **Estimated Cost: \$2.3 Million**

Total Project & Enhancements: \$15 Million

St. Thomas More Education Center



Giving Opportunities

God knows and promises to reward all those who support the Church to the best of their means. All those who make a sacrificial gift to our “**Growing the Next Generation**” campaign will be recognized in a special manner.

ST. THOMAS MORE STEWARDS

For those families or individuals who wish to make a gift to the campaign of \$100,000, their names would gratefully be displayed as *St. Thomas More Stewards* for our “**Growing the Next Generation**” campaign.

ST. THOMAS MORE BENEFACTORS

For those families or individuals who wish to make a gift to the campaign of \$50,000 – \$99,999, their names would gratefully be displayed as *St. Thomas More Benefactors* for our “**Growing the Next Generation**” campaign.

ST. THOMAS MORE PATRONS

For those families or individuals who wish to make a gift to the campaign of \$25,000 – \$49,999, their names would gratefully be displayed as *St. Thomas More Patrons* for our “**Growing the Next Generation**” campaign.

SPONSORS OF ST. THOMAS MORE

For those families or individuals who wish to make a gift to the campaign of \$15,000 – \$24,999, their names would gratefully be displayed as *Sponsors of St. Thomas More* for our “**Growing the Next Generation**” campaign.

FRIENDS OF ST. THOMAS MORE

For those families or individuals who wish to make a gift to the campaign of \$10,000 – \$14,999, their names would gratefully be displayed as *Friends of St. Thomas More* for our “**Growing the Next Generation**” campaign.

SUPPORTERS OF ST. THOMAS MORE

For those families or individuals who wish to make a gift to the campaign of \$5,000 – \$9,999, their names would be gratefully displayed as *Supporters of St. Thomas More* for our “**Growing the Next Generation**” campaign.

CONTRIBUTORS OF ST. THOMAS MORE

For those families or individuals who wish to make a gift to the campaign of \$1,000 – \$4,999, their names would be gratefully displayed as *Contributors of St. Thomas More* for our “**Growing the Next Generation**” campaign.

Our Family of Faith Looks to Grow the Next Generation

As members of St. Thomas More Parish family, we are faced with a challenge that can only be met by our working together as a family. It is only by our generosity and reflection for a sacrificial commitment that we will be able to accomplish our objectives.

SUGGESTED GIFT PLANS

In order to assist you in your consideration of a commitment to our appeal, we have proposed a suggested gift plan. We understand each individual or family has different financial obligations and abilities. Please consider which plan best fits your monthly budget, and can be used as a guideline for your commitment.

Remember, this campaign is based on equal sacrifice, not equal giving.

GIVING PLANS TO CONSIDER

Total Pledge	10% Down Payment	5 Annual Payments	20 Quarterly Payments	Suggested 60 Month Payments
\$250,000	\$25,000	\$45,000	\$11,250	\$3,750
\$100,000	\$10,000	\$18,000	\$4,500	\$1,500
\$50,000	\$5,000	\$9,000	\$2,250	\$750
\$35,000	\$3,500	\$6,300	\$1,575	\$525
\$25,000	\$2,500	\$4,500	\$1,125	\$375
\$20,000	\$2,000	\$3,600	\$900	\$300
\$15,000	\$1,500	\$2,700	\$675	\$225
\$10,000	\$1,000	\$1,800	\$450	\$150
\$7,500	\$750	\$1,350	\$337.50	\$112.50
\$5,000	\$500	\$900	\$225	\$75

PLEASE CONSIDER A SPECIAL COMMITMENT

Some of us have been especially blessed by the Lord with material means. A heartfelt appeal is made to those parishioners to reflect on their ability to make a very generous pledge to the campaign. We ask that those who are capable of making pledges of \$10,000, \$25,000, \$50,000 or more lay the foundation of success for this appeal.

PLEASE KNOW

- Your pledge commitment contribution payments are made over a three-to-five-year (36–60 month) period.
- **Your commitment to the St. Thomas More campaign is in addition to your weekly stewardship offering to the church.**
- Your financial commitment to this appeal will help ensure a strong future for the parish.
- While all gifts will support the overall success of the campaign, donors may choose to designate their contributions to a specific project that is most meaningful to them.
- As of January 2026, payment reminders and envelopes will be mailed according to your payment preference.

PLANNED GIVING, WILLS, ESTATE PLANNING, LIFE INSURANCE

There are numerous planned giving opportunities that provide donors alternative methods of making their gifts to the campaign. These include but are not restricted to:

- Gifts of assets including real estate, stocks, bonds, coins, etc.
- Making the Church a beneficiary of your will.
- Life Insurance: Naming the Church as beneficiary.

IRA CHARITABLE ROLLOVER (QUALIFIED CHARITABLE DISTRIBUTION)

A Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) allows individuals aged 70½ or older to make tax-free transfers directly from their traditional IRA to eligible charities, such as St. Thomas More Church. This method offers a tax-efficient way to support charitable causes while satisfying required minimum distributions (RMDs).

To qualify:

- **Age Requirement:** You must be 70½ or older at the time of the gift.
- **Direct Transfer:** Transfers must be made directly from a traditional IRA account by your IRA administrator to St. Thomas More Church.
- **Eligible Accounts:** Gifts from 401(k), 403(b), SEP, and other plans do not qualify.

Tax benefits:

- **Annual Limit:** For 2025, you can donate up to \$108,000 annually through QCDs.
- **Tax Exclusion:** QCDs are excluded from gross income for federal income tax purposes on your IRS Form 1040. This means you won't owe income tax on the amount transferred, and while no charitable deduction is available, the tax-free treatment equates to a 100% deduction.
- **RMD Satisfaction:** QCDs count toward your required minimum distribution for the year in which you made the gift and the year in which the transaction cleared your account.

By utilizing a QCD, you can support St. Thomas More Church in a tax-efficient manner, potentially lowering your taxable income while fulfilling your charitable intentions.

DONOR ADVISED FUNDS (DAFS)

A Donor Advised Fund (DAF) is a flexible and tax-efficient way to support St. Thomas More Church. If you have a DAF, you can recommend a grant to benefit our parish while maximizing your charitable impact.

Benefits of giving through a DAF:

- Receive an immediate tax deduction when you contribute to your fund.
- Recommend grants at any time to support the mission of St. Thomas More Church.
- Potentially grow your charitable contributions tax-free before distribution.

To make a gift through your Donor Advised Fund, please contact your fund administrator and recommend a grant to St. Thomas More Church. If you need assistance, our Development Office is happy to help.

MATCHING GIFT OPPORTUNITIES

Many employers have matching gift programs that provide employees the opportunity to multiply your gifts to educational institutions, social organizations, and health institutions. We encourage you to contact your Human Resources Department regarding the Matching Gift opportunities available to you.

TAX ADVANTAGES OF THOUGHTFUL GIVING

If you choose to contribute appreciated securities, you will receive double the tax benefit through:

- Avoiding capital gains which would be paid if the stock were sold.
- Receiving a charitable deduction equal to the fair market value at the time of the gift as opposed to the purchase.

PROCEDURE TO TRANSFER STOCK

Please contact our Director of Development to transfer securities gifts.

Maggi Fink

610-433-7413

- Indicate on your pledge card the number of shares and the name of the company.

The parish will confirm that the securities were received, authorize the sale by our broker, and send you the appropriate acknowledgement letter.





Campaign Prayer

Most loving Father, we trust in you for all things. You are the source of all blessings and gifts. We thank you for the many graces you have bestowed and continue to bestow on St. Thomas More Church and School.

We know that you have given us a share in your care of the world. We are stewards of the many gifts that you have given us. Our parish and school are now in need of help to rebuild and grow our mission as a parish.

We humbly ask for the spirit of gratitude and generosity in order to assist our church and school at this time.

We pray for a successful campaign. We know that you will bless generous hearts and hands, especially when it will help further the Kingdom of God here on earth.

We ask all this through the intercession of our patron, St. Thomas More, and in Jesus' name.

Amen



ST. THOMAS MORE

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