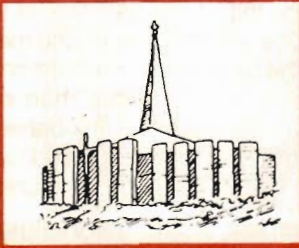


Dialogue

A Newspaper For St. Thomas More Parish, Darien, Connecticut



From the Pastor's Desk:



RCIA?? Does this ring a bell? The use of acronyms is somewhat passe but still useful. RCIA stands for The Rite Of Christian Initiation of Adults, an official rite of the Roman Catholic Church since 1972.

Some may still remember that the first part of the Mass; i.e. the readings and homily were once called the Mass of the Catechumens. In the early church, the catechumens, those who were in process of becoming Christians were dismissed just before the Offertory. The RCIA revives these ancient customs. The culmination of the Catechumenate was the dramatic service of the Holy Saturday Easter Vigil with the new fire, the blessing of the water, the procession, the litanies, etc. In the RCIA all these rites are renewed, restored, refurbished, culminating in a glorious celebration of conversion.

The RCIA follows a process of journeying through four periods of formation.

- First: Pre-Catechumenate or Inquiry — this is a time to share personal stories and questions of meaning
- Second: Catechumenate—time to deepen faith/conversion within the community through catechesis, fellowship and prayer
- Third: Purification and Enlightenment — preparation for Easter sacraments, spiritual direction
- Fourth: Mystagogia — deepening of sacramental life with emphasis on Gospel, Eucharist and works of charity

There are several celebrations during these periods with the whole community sharing in welcoming the new members.

In order to implement this Rite at St. Thomas More, we will need several people to assist in the process—director, sponsors, discussion facilitators, etc. After the first of the year, we will have a meeting of those who wish to help with this exciting program. Please call the office, if you are willing to help.

Welcomed with Love

What a Difference . . .

*What a difference,
nine years can make.*

It was on November 21, 1975 that Father Howley led a group of St. Thomas More parishioners to Kennedy Airport to greet the Pham Phan family at the end of their journey that carried them halfway around the world. It began in Saigon, Viet Nam, then to Fort Chaffee, Arkansas, and finally to our Parish and to Darien. With Mr. Pham, who was 46, were his sons, Hoang 20, and Quynh 17 and nephew, Tran Phuc 19.

Back in Saigon, Mr. Pham was a Chief of Personnel for the Saigon police department, but his baggage was all he had in his new country.

However, our Parish welcomed the Vietnamese family with love. It located housing for them, found jobs, donated furnishings, and provided transportation until the family could get on their feet.

Throughout the years, the Pham family worked hard and took advantage of the educational opportunities here.

Today, the family still lives in that original apartment at 1795 Post Road in Noroton. Mr. Pham is still working for Moore McCormack, now as assistant accounting supervisor. Both sons have graduated from Norwalk Tech and are employed by Pitney-Bowes. His nephew was also graduated from Norwalk Tech and is now working in Texas.

In all of these years, the Pham family has not forgotten the love and kindness shown by the parishioners of St. Thomas More. As thanks, they have donated Nativity figures to our church and have contributed generously to our emergency fund.

Bread cast upon the water . . .

One sad note, Mrs. Pham, another son and a daughter remain in Viet Nam.

— Nancy Grant

Father Post Becomes New Resident Priest



Father Robert Post became St. Thomas More's second resident priest this past summer.

Father Post explained that as a resident priest he will live in the rectory and say masses on weekends at St. Thomas More. At the same time, he will continue to serve as spiritual director of Stamford Catholic High School. The school has a student body of 700 pupils and a faculty of 55 teachers.

Father Post said he "was very pleased with the warm reception" he has received at St. Thomas More. "During the first few

masses, it was sort of scary looking out at a lot of people I didn't know," he said. "But every week, I'm feeling more and more at home, and I'm enjoying being in Darien."

Father Post said his special interests are travel, riding his 10-speed bike and indoor jogging. "I keep telling Father Francis, our other resident priest, he ought to try my indoor exercise machine," he said. "It's great because you can avoid cramps, don't have to run in the cold and dark, and if you collapse, you're right beside your bed," he added with a chuckle.

A native of the Bronx, Father Post's previous assignment was as associate pastor of St. Mary's Church in Bethel, Conn., for the past year and a half. That was his first assignment after being ordained in 1982.

Previously, he had been a member of the Congregation of Christian Brothers for 26 years. As a brother, he taught Latin, French and Italian. He also served as

(Continued on page 2)

Religious Education Program Stresses Service

The most far reaching and involving program in the Parish has begun another season. The Religious Education Program, under the leadership of Mrs. Zita O'Brian, Director, and Mrs. Ann O'Malley, Coordinator K-5, now has over 675 children enrolled.

Most of the attention in the program is always focused around preparation for First Communion in the Spring of the second grade and Confirmation in the Spring of the eighth grade. However, Mrs. O'Brian stresses, Religious Education is an ongoing process and St. Thomas is committed to providing this experience from kindergarten through the end of high school. The Communion Program lasts for two years while the Confirmation preparation is three years. Students who "drop out" during the remaining years lose valuable steps in the process of learning the message of Christ and putting it to practice.

Father Howley, Mrs. O'Brian, and others involved in running the Religious Education Program feel so strongly about the need for continuous involvement each year that they have stated that the students who drop out in the years when they are not preparing for Sacraments will not be eligible to re-enter the CCD Program without a personal evaluation. Another aspect of the involvement the Parish has in the Religious Education Program is the participation of volunteer teachers in the program. This year, nearly eighty individuals have volunteered as teachers and helpers in this Program. Their dedication and commitment of their time is absolutely essential for a successful Religious Education Program.

As a tangible indication of this, a Teachers' Commissioning Service was held on October 28th at the 8:45 Mass.

The photos shown indicate the empha-

sis on service that is the hallmark of this program. Gone are the days of rote memorization of the catechism. Involvement in helping others less fortunate than ourselves is really the essential link between knowledge of Christ's message and forming a loving caring Church community.

Another aspect of the total Religious Education Program is the active Youth Ministry effort. This group is headed by Ms. Andrea Musante. Her chief involvement is with high school students in providing an environment for wholesome dialogue and social activity.

The well publicized special events such as the Autumn Extravaganza, the Mystery Trip, the Halloween Masquerade Party, a Thanksgiving Service Project and the Christmas Party are examples of how the Youth Ministry Program attempts to involve all aspects of young high school students' lives.



Teachers' Commissioning Service

Letter of Thanks

St. Thomas More Eighth Grade Class
374 Middlesex Road
Darien, CT 06820

Dear St. Thomas More Eighth Graders:

Thank you all so much for your generous donation to Liberation House. I know you all must have worked hard to earn such a substantial sum (\$450), and the residents and staff of Liberation House are truly appreciative of your efforts.

The residents are very pleased that it is now possible to purchase the video equipment that they've wanted for so long. Among other uses, they are looking forward to making some terrific movies during their leisure time.

Thank you again for thinking of us.

Most sincerely,
Michael Perelson, M. Ed.
Program Director



Megan Cotter and Paula O'Neil make a sale.



Eighth graders vend their baked goods to benefit the poor.

Father Post

(Continued from page 1)

assistant principal of Bishop Gibbons High School in Schenectady, N.Y., and later as principal of Blessed Sacrament High School in New Rochelle.

Father Post has a BA degree in French from Iona College in New Rochelle, a master's degree in theology from St. John's University on Long Island, a master's degree in educational administration from Manhattan College in the Bronx, and he has done graduate studies in theology at the Christian Brothers International House of Studies in Rome.



Sr. Dorothea and Mr. & Mrs. Candee sing their hearts out at the recent luncheon for Senior citizens.

NEW PARISHIONERS

Mr. & Mrs. James T. Bechtel, 116 Adams La., New Canaan
 Josephus Bongaerts, 541 Hunting Ridge Rd., Stamford
 Mr. & Mrs. Andrew Bragg, 11 Old Field Pl., Rowayton
 Mr. & Mrs. John S. Brown, 220 Marvin Ridge Rd., New Canaan
 Mr. & Mrs. Fernando Bugallo, 36 Greenwood Dr., Darien
 Mr. & Mrs. Paul Burke, 24 Henry St., Darien
 Mr. & Mrs. Dominick G. Calve, 15 Charles St., Darien
 Mr. James L. Carroll, 28 Georgian La., Darien
 Mr. & Mrs. Robert A. Cenci, 122 Apple Valley Rd., Stamford
 Mr. & Mrs. William Cleary, 24 Briar St., Rowayton
 Mr. & Mrs. Claude M. Christiano, 16 Watering La., Darien
 Mr. & Mrs. Carl Cimino, 185 Middle Ridge, New Canaan
 Mr. & Mrs. Edward J. Dato, 1 Little Brook Rd., N. Darien
 Mr. & Mrs. Eugene Dunkin, 156 Parish Rd., So., New Canaan
 Mr. & Mrs. Richard J. Engelke, 15 Old Norwalk Rd., New Canaan
 Mr. & Mrs. Robert F. Ferraro, 146 Brushy Ridge Rd., New Canaan
 Mr. & Mrs. Michael Flaxman, 248 Noroton Ave., Darien
 Mr. & Mrs. Orlando Francesconi, 37 Ridgeley St., Darien
 Mr. & Mrs. Michael Garcia, 4 Brown St., Darien
 Mr. & Mrs. Peter Garrison, 26 Danforth Dr., New Canaan
 Mr. & Mrs. Thomas J. Gudz, 48 West Ave., Darien
 Mr. & Mrs. Bruce W. Hafemeister, 21 Rural Dr., New Canaan
 Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Heide, 421-11 Glenbrook Rd., Stamford
 Mr. Stephen Heil, 208 Hope St., Stamford
 Mr. & Mrs. Richard A. Johnston, 48 Fitch La., New Canaan
 Mr. & Mrs. Donald J. Kahrs, 48 Valley Rd., New Canaan
 Mr. & Mrs. Gaynor Kelley, 1801 Ponus Ridge Rd., New Canaan
 Mr. & Mrs. John A. Kerchoff, 47 Kelly Green, New Canaan
 Mr. & Mrs. John M. Koptiuch, 39 Fairfield Ave., Darien
 Mr. & Mrs. George J. Kops, 135 Mill Rd., New Canaan
 Mr. & Mrs. Verlyn Landuyt, 28 Lake Dr., Darien
 Mrs. Deborah H. Lonergan, 51 Leroy Ave., Darien
 Mr. & Mrs. Paul M. Lysobey, 38 Ridgeley St., Darien
 Mr. & Mrs. Brian McCarthy, 34 Myanos Rd., New Canaan

Mr. & Mrs. James McGuire, 30 Red Rose Circle, Darien
 Mr. & Mrs. William J. Manning, 12 Phillips La., Darien
 Mr. & Mrs. William F. Meehan, 5 Edmond St., Darien
 Mr. & Mrs. Michael P. Milbourn, 62 Salem Rd., New Canaan
 Mr. & Mrs. Michael L. Morris, 15 Pheasant Run, Darien
 Ms. Maureen E. Murray, 172 Colonial Rd., Stamford
 Mr. & Mrs. Ernest Mysogland, 651 Laurel Rd., New Canaan
 Susan Lynn Obernier, 123 Talmadge Hill Rd., New Canaan
 Mr. & Mrs. Francis O'Kelly, 21 Lynn Ct., Darien
 Mr. & Mrs. Steven Oldham, 11 Patton Dr., Darien
 Mr. & Mrs. Pierre Pelanne, 72 Woodway Ridge La., New Canaan
 Mr. & Mrs. William M. Pintauro, 4 Parson's Walk, Darien
 Mr. & Mrs. Enrique D. Poodts, 33 Weeburn Dr., New Canaan
 Mr. & Mrs. Michael L. Powell, 14 Pondfield La., Darien
 Mr. & Mrs. Robert Rankin, 15 Canoe Trail, Darien
 Mr. & Mrs. John J. Roberto, 78 Holmes Ave., Darien
 Mr. & Mrs. Paul M. Savage, 124 Witch La., Rowayton
 Mr. & Mrs. Robert W. Shackleton, 9 Park Pl., Darien
 Mr. & Mrs. William C. Shanley, 112 Rosebrook Rd., New Canaan
 Mr. & Mrs. David E. Snediker, 655 Carter St., New Canaan
 Mr. & Mrs. Frank Sparks, 62 Shagbark Dr., New Canaan
 Mr. & Mrs. Joseph A. Spielman, 4 Littlebrook Rd., Darien
 Mr. & Mrs. Robert W. Stickney, 18 Lake Dr., Darien
 Mr. & Mrs. Peter P. Sullivan, 125 West Ave., Darien
 Mr. & Mrs. Nicholas Tarantino, 15 Charles St., Darien
 Mr. & Mrs. Stuart Teitelbaum, 32 Melrose Pl., Stamford
 Mr. & Mrs. Bruce Thomas, 16 Half Mile Rd., Darien
 Mr. & Mrs. Joseph M. Tighe, 44 Talmadge Hill Rd., Darien
 Mr. & Mrs. Jose L. Turullols, 355 Jelliff Mill Rd., New Canaan
 Mr. & Mrs. Thomas J. Valentino, 2 Stonewall Lane, Darien
 Mr. & Mrs. Richard Vogt, 27 Hillside Ave., Darien
 Mr. & Mrs. William J. White, 735 Carter St., New Canaan
 Mr. & Mrs. William Zak, 61 St. Nicholas Rd., Darien

Fr. Howley's birthday coincided with the Great Columbus Day Bash. Here he cuts the cake assisted by Fathers Virgulak and Post.



Scenes from the Great Columbus Day Bash



Religious Education Teachers — 1984-85

Kindergarten

Kathryn Giglio
 Lisa LeGarde
 Amy vanden Broek
 Anna Withers
 Barbara Zamolsky

Grade One

Sharon Barrett
 Evelyn Davison
 Darlene Heidi
 June Kiley
 Mary Ann Knag
 Stephanie Shea
 Debbie & Bob Stickney

Grade Two

Mary Bechtel
 Christine Gregory
 Trish Hartmann
 Judy Hopkins
 Mary Ann Peglar
 Maggie Pierce
 Pam Shilling

Grade Three

MaryBeth Battenfeider
 Carole Brown
 Stephanie Dance
 Jane Moloney
 Mary Snedriker
 Heather Wendell
 Pat Zak

Grade Four

Chris Cronin
 Maureen Diehl
 Kevin Donalds
 Ed Green
 Rosemary Jeans
 Bernadette Lynch
 Kris Wray

Grade Five

Liz Angers
 Betty Giglio
 Mary Jacobson
 Angela Lane
 Pat Wendell

Grade Six

Mary Lou Ball
 Ann Cotter
 Elaine Harding
 Andrea Musante
 Zita O'Brian
 Ann O'Malley

Grade Seven

Christie Chappel
 Maria Cleary
 Paul Kimball
 Barbara Louna
 Barbara Luby
 Larry Robinson
 Sr. Teresa Agnes
 Edward Waite

Grade Eight

Jane Burns
 Ann Cotter
 Julie Green
 Sue Holland
 Ann & Pat O'Malley
 Nancy & Frank Sharp
 Joseph Suffredini
 Jane & Bill Waters

Substitutes K - 5

Anne Calve
 Susan Gregory
 Cindy Kaufmann
 Mia Mitchell
 Sara Lee Murphy
 Mary Jo Pittoni
 Lois Rinaldi
 Kathy Robinson
 Jennifer Sharpe
 Janet Taylor
 Eileen Zebroski

Baby Sitters

Erin O'Malley
 Jonathan Sharpe
 Sara Wilkins

Helper

Charles Nedder

Parish Council Hears Facilities Update

At their first Fall meeting, parish council members learned that 1984 has been a year of achievement in terms of upgrading St. Thomas More's school facilities.

Joe Papp, on the council's building and property committee, reported that the gym and library have a new roof and a new hot water tank was installed.

In addition, the hall and library have been painted and new outside doors for classrooms are in the works.

The next big project being planned — possibly for next Spring — is resurfacing of the parking lots.



FOR YOUR CONVENIENCE:

- Sick or Elderly at home
- Change of Address
- New to Parish — Would like to register.
- Cable TV involvement
- Parish Council Committees (specify)

Name

Address

..... Zip

Phone

Drop in basket or mail to
Sr. Madeline at Parish Office

St. Thomas More Welcomes New Youth Minister



St. Thomas More Parish has recently welcomed a new Youth Minister, Miss Andrea Musante. Andrea's involvement as a teenager in the St. Augustine Cathedral Youth Group spurred her interest in this field, and she enrolled in the diocesan program which led to her certification as a Youth Minister. In addition she has pursued a Religious Studies major at Sacred Heart University. Andrea also brings to her ministry musical and artistic talents.

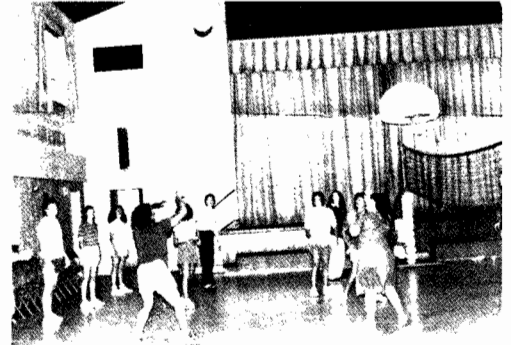
Four major social events have already taken place for high school participants: a Midsummer Bash, an Olympic Night, an Autumn Extravaganza, and most recently, on October 8th, a Mystery Trip to the Bronx Zoo. Attendance at each of these events ranged from 20 to 50 teenagers.

Recently, sixteen teenagers were selected to be members of a *Youth Board*. They serve as a sounding board for ideas concerning social activities, prayer services, liturgies and service projects. Eventually they will in turn serve as ministers to their peers.

Andrea feels that the involvement of every teenager is essential to the growth of individuals and of the total group. Together they strive to proclaim Jesus' salvific message of the kingdom, share fellowship and perform service for others.

At St. Thomas More Andrea has found a great deal of support, "far beyond any other situation in which I have found myself." She feels there is genuine caring towards the ministered and the ministers and that the parish serves its community in an exemplary fashion.

For interested high school students: 9th grade meets Wednesday evenings from 7:30-8:45; 10th, 11th and 12th grades meet Monday evenings from 7:30-8:45. Themes for the fall include: Morality, Values Clarification and Decision Making. Andrea can be reached at 655-6295.



Olympic Night in action



Teenagers enjoy themselves at Midsummer Bash

ST. THOMAS MORE CHURCH
384 MIDDLESEX ROAD
DARIEN, CONN. 06820

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Darien, Conn.
Permit No. 103