



# *Making a Difference Today and in the Future*

Capital Campaign for STM Church & School





*“Through our baptism, we have been called to be disciples of the Lord and stewards of his Church. Everything we have is a gift from God. As good disciples and stewards of God’s gifts, it is only right that gratitude for God’s generosity should be reflected in the gifts we return.”*

*Making a Difference - Today and in the Future*

## *A Tradition of* **EXCELLENCE**

In the mid 1940's, Father Leo Hildebrant and Father Robert Weis, both from St. Mary Church in Griffith, saw a need for the establishment of a Catholic parish in Munster. Due to the building boom in the Calumet Region, Father Weis was able to identify over 150 Catholic families in the area who were interested in forming a Catholic parish. Additionally, Father Weis was lucky enough to identify one family who was willing to sell the Catholic Church a three-acre plot of land for \$8,000.

With that information in hand, Father Weis approached Bishop John Francis Noll of Ft. Wayne in September of 1945 for a loan to purchase the land as well as his blessing to found the new parish. By February of 1946, St. Thomas More Church in Munster was born.

With the establishment of St. Thomas More School in 1949, we began to offer a rich, faith-based education to the community. The school now educates over 535 students annually, ranging from pre-school to eighth grade.

Over the past eleven years, Father Michael Yadron and our parish leaders have worked to strengthen the already close-knit community at St. Thomas More, providing new opportunities for community and spiritual growth. Fr. Mike is greatly respected in the

*“With the grace and guidance of the Holy Spirit and through Sacred Scripture and Tradition, we proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ to all, especially in loving service to those in need. All this we do to give glory and honor to God.”*

*From the St. Thomas More Church Mission Statement*

parish, and through his leadership he has established trust through financial transparency and gratitude to our generous parishioners. Since our founding, St. Thomas More Church has become a vibrant faith community of 3,150 households, all united by a

strong sense of family and a celebration of spiritual growth. We now have an opportunity to make a profound impact on our parish and return the many blessings we have received.





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# *Our Future Starts* **TODAY**

At St. Thomas More, we have been blessed to have a solid member base and growing number of program offerings over the years. Continued growth has put a strain on our physical facilities and our ability to adequately house all of our parish programs and students. Currently, 50 ministries compete for space on our campus. The gym and the parish hall are continuously booked for parish and school functions, and due to the Diocesan Safe Environment Policy, parishioners are unable to use the Solar Room for meetings or funeral luncheons during the day.

We have long realized that the Heating, Ventilation & Air Conditioning (HVAC), along with electrical and plumbing systems at St. Thomas More School need to be renovated with modern requirements and efficiency in mind. The boilers have not been replaced since the school was built and have a limited remaining life. Only parts of the school are air conditioned.

Additionally, much of the electrical system in the school is original, and those systems are not equipped to accommodate modern technology, Wi-Fi, or telephones in the classrooms. The HVAC in the church also needs to be replaced especially as it cannot be regulated for comfort. The high humidity in the summer months is warping and creating other problems with the instruments for our music ministry. The current system is neither cost effective nor is it efficient by today's standards. The benefits of improving would be felt by everyone in our community – from our parishioners, children in the

day and after school programs, faculty and parish staff. We all need comfortable facilities in which to worship, learn and continue to thrive and grow spiritually, physically and intellectually. Simply put, we must attend to this need to honor the

legacy we received from those in the past, to ensure the best for the ministry we carry out at St. Thomas More and to provide for the future.

*Over the last few years, we have been preparing the buildings for air conditioning. We have installed new windows, doors and a new roofing system. These preliminary projects are a part of making our buildings more energy efficient.*



# *Our Vision and* **OUR NEED**

With these needs in mind, our parish engaged Walsh Construction Company and North Star Engineering to conduct a study earlier this year to understand our renovation and construction needs and options to move forward.

The first phase of the updating and renovation work will utilize energy efficiency models. With the installation of new boilers the church and school will be much more energy efficient. Given the trend of school starting earlier each year and the increasingly warm fall weather, air conditioning in the school will be crucial for the health and comfort of the students and staff. This improvement will allow us to effectively compete with the other high-performing public elementary schools of Munster. Once the electrical systems are updated, the school will be able to support modern technology and ensure that teachers are “Educating the whole child in the values of Jesus and Mary” as per the mission statement. These upgrades to our HVAC systems will not only affect the school, but also our church, providing year-round comfort and lasting efficiency.

## **Some of the details of this necessary project are as follows:**

### **Heating and Air Conditioning**

*The age of our various systems and lack of available parts create constant maintenance issues and the current system controls have caused increased costs and unnecessary heating/cooling of areas in the building. Replacement and upgrades to this system will include:*

- Replacement of boilers installed in the school in 1949 and the church in 1970.
- New chillers for the AC system for the school and replace the dated chiller for the church.
- Installation of air conditioning including all needed ductwork in school classrooms, offices, cafeteria and the Solar Room.
- Drop ceilings in classrooms and offices to conceal ductwork and to increase energy efficiency
- Climate controls to ensure comfort, energy efficiency and protection of delicate assets that enhance our worship such as the piano and organ.
- Remote access to the system for warnings and easy adjustments as needed.

### **Electrical**

*New technology places new demands on electrical usage both for energy efficiency and technological needs in the school. This will include:*

- Replacing the existing power transformer
- Bringing additional electrical power to all classrooms for computer, phone and security systems
- Rewiring necessary for new boilers, air conditioning units (including chiller), computers, zone controls to ensure proper energy use, efficiencies and comfort for specific areas when occupied.

## **Images of Current Areas Requiring Updates**



*Making a Difference - Today and in the Future*

### Technology including Phone System

*In order to better serve our parishioners and our school children, upgrades will allow us to pull technology into the classrooms, meeting spaces, church and offices via:*

- Installation of fiber optic cable and WiFi access points
- Upgrade of the intercom and phone system with possible VOIP (voice over internet protocol) technology. *This is important for in-classroom communication with teachers and for safety and security.*

### Plumbing

*Improvements in the school restrooms will include:*

- New low-flow plumbing fixtures
- Installation of new distribution piping in the rooms including relocation, adjustment of some plumbing lines and replacement where necessary

In the second phase, a new parish center will be built and the preschool will be moved back to the main building. This will support our current ministries, as well as allow space for expanded program offerings in the future. We will be able to once again host funeral luncheons, senior citizens, Moms' Group and other ministries & functions during the day.

### Estimated project costs for both phases

| Phase | Project Element   | Projected Cost       |
|-------|---|----------------------|
| I     | Renovate/Update/Upgrade: Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning Systems (HVAC) School and Church Electrical, Technology/ Phone Systems and School Plumbing | <b>\$6.3 million</b> |
| II    | Construction of a new Parish Center and relocate Pre-School   | \$4.6 million        |
|       | Total Estimated Cost for Completed Project  | \$10.9 million       |

### What can we do now?

After careful analysis of the Building Study and the Campaign Feasibility Study, we have concluded that it is important to the community of St. Thomas More Parish to move forward at this time. This decision has been made through discussions with parishioners, a comprehensive review by the Parish Council, Building, Finance, and Campaign Committees, along with collaboration from church and school staff members. As a result of this considerable process of review and examination, we look to raise the minimum amount necessary to complete Phase I of this project. Plans for Phase II will be revisited in the future.

Continued analysis is currently taking place to ensure that we install the most efficient and economical system configurations, which are designed to best serve the needs of our parish and school communities for years to come.

### Phase I Proposed New Modifications



## *Our Challenge*



*We are very excited about the opportunities ahead for our community of faith. In order to address these important needs, St. Thomas More Church is now embarking on a financial initiative, titled Making A Difference – Today and in the Future. While the financial goals of this project are challenging, they are attainable.*

*The success of the Making A Difference – Today and in the Future campaign clearly will need the support from everyone in our community – our parishioners and our school families alike. Only through a strong parish-school partnership can we achieve our goals. Our need will be met and exceeded if each parishioner practices stewardship by proportionately sharing what God has given him/her.*

Every family will be approached in the upcoming months. A gift amount is suggested for each household to prayerfully consider. No judgment is made on the level of gift you or others make. The specific gift request is based on our goal and meant to provide a frame of reference for each family's participation. Our campaign seeks equal sacrifices, not equal gifts. Ultimately, the true test of any gift is whether it is planned, proportionate and sacrificial.

The Catholic Services Appeal will be suspended for the spring of 2015. The parish will cover the estimated \$130,000 goal that will be assigned to St. Thomas More for 2015. Please take that into consideration when making a pledge to the **Making a Difference-Today and in the Future** campaign.

Pledges made to the campaign are not legally binding. They may be increased, decreased or canceled at any time. The parish will send payment reminders according to your stated intentions. All contributions should be made over and above your weekly offertory giving. Weekly offerings are used for the normal operating expenses of the parish. We depend on these contributions to maintain the parish and its programs.

Giving is a deeply personal matter. It reflects your regard for your parish and your concern for its future well-being. Though all donors will be recognized in an appropriate manner, some naming opportunities are available. These represent a way you can perpetuate your name, your family or a loved one by designating a gift in their name. Please contact the parish office for further information.

*Together We Can  
**MAKE A DIFFERENCE***

*St. Thomas More Church has a rich history, and we wish to ensure our history continues and is passed on to the coming generations. This project and campaign is vital to foster proper stewardship of the gifts we have received from others through our parish buildings. From our humble beginnings in 1945, our parish has been blessed with a devoted, hard-working, faith-filled community. We now have an opportunity to make a profound impact on our parish and return the many blessings we have received.*



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