



SAINT THOMAS
— EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION —

ROOTED *in* FAITH



QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

September 2026



CREATED FOR GOOD

"For we are his handiwork, created in Christ Jesus for good works..."

EPHESIANS 2:10

There is nothing quite like the start of a new year at Saint Thomas. Familiar faces return, new friendships begin, and our halls come alive again. This year, our students are being reminded that each of them has been Created for Good, with gifts meant to be discovered, nurtured and shared. Through the generosity of our community, the Foundation helps create opportunities for those gifts to flourish.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE



A NOTE FROM BETSY



WHAT'S HAPPENING THIS FALL



MEET OUR THREE AMIGOS



SAINT THOMAS

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Happy start to the Autumn season!

We begin the school year with much to celebrate, including the exciting news that Saint Thomas has received accreditation from the Michigan Non-public School Accrediting Association (MNSAA) Leadership Council. Following a rigorous process of self-study, a site visit, and extensive review, this achievement reflects our school's continued commitment to growth and educational excellence. We take great pride in providing our students with an exceptional faith-based education!

At Saint Thomas the Apostle Catholic School, 340 students are returning to classrooms filled with familiar faces, new friendships, and the excitement of a new school year. This year's school theme, Created for Good, is inspired by Ephesians 2:10 and reflects what we hope for every child – that their unique gifts will be recognized, nurtured, and ultimately put to good use.

Our middle school students will bring that theme to life through new volunteer groups, choosing opportunities to serve throughout the school. Students will discover what it means to use their gifts in service to others. Through these experiences, they'll learn to look beyond themselves, recognize the needs around them, and experience the joy that comes from doing good.

This is the kind of formation your support makes possible.

This spring, we introduced the Excellence in Learning Society, an initiative dedicated to supporting the academic and spiritual formation of every student by providing high-quality curriculum resources that help teachers meet diverse learning needs and deliver exceptional, faith-filled instruction. "Equipping Every Student to Learn, Grow, and Thrive" is at the heart of this effort. We are especially grateful to the Steve and Amy Van Andel Foundation for their lead gift, which demonstrates a steadfast commitment to Christ-centered learning and helps ensure that no teacher has to compromise the quality of instruction because of limited resources.

As this new school year begins, we give thanks for the students, families, faculty, and staff who make our school such a special community – and for you, whose generosity makes so much of this possible.

Becky Edgerton

What's new and upcoming this year!

- **A little more sleep!** Starting with this school year, families will welcome a new 8:15 a.m. start time, offering a little more breathing room while supporting student well-being and readiness to learn.
- **CC Tailgate!** Join us Friday, September 11 from 5:30 to game time for some Foundation/Boosters Tailgate fun!
- **Calling all Grand Friends!** We have a new Grand Friends Club that will give grandparents and grand friends more opportunities for fellowship, volunteering, and time together. We look forward to Grand Friends Day on October 23 and the connection and joy these gatherings bring!
- **Save the Date for the Emerald Auction!** Please support and attend our school's biennial auction on Saturday, October 3! This not-to-miss event with dinner, cocktails and dancing is open to all community members and is sure to be a grand time! The Foundation is not a beneficiary of the auction – all funds directly benefit the school! Scan the QR code below to learn more and purchase tickets!



— CREATED FOR GOOD — THE THREE AMIGOS

The men behind the work that keeps Saint Thomas ready for what comes next.



Have you ever wondered what happens at Saint Thomas after the last student walks out the door for summer? While the rest of us are thinking about vacations and sunshine, these three amigos – Ted Coon, Don Serba and Drew Edgerton – are just getting started. They are the official keepers of the keys, kings of the John Deere, and the men who can look at a 101-year-old building and know exactly what needs to be done.

Ted has been at Saint Thomas since he was 18 and knows the building inside and out. Don, a retired firefighter whose children attended Saint Thomas and whose grandchildren attend today, knows it just as well. Drew joined the team in 2013 and has learned nearly everything he knows from Ted and Don. They have mentored him, treating him some days like a trusted co-worker and others like a son. Together, they are a team as engaging as they are hardworking.

Saint Thomas is known for its beautiful grounds, and these three work tirelessly to keep them that way. This summer, through the heat and humidity, they tore out the sod in front of school and replaced it with flowering Gold Drop bushes.

Every Monday, Don drives the John Deere, Drew tackles the hard-to-reach places with the push mower, and Ted follows with the edger. For Ted, who is allergic to grass, it is quite literally a labor of love. They prune, trim and bushwhack, with Drew bringing up the rear clearing the sidewalks.

Inside, they work their way through 21 classrooms, repairing, patching and painting. This year alone, they replaced rotted flooring, boxed in a former doorway, painted doors throughout both buildings, wet-sanded and polished the gym floor, and climbed a scissor lift to dust lights and ceiling fans.

As the school year approaches, the pace only picks up. Carpets are cleaned, furniture moved, and desks repaired. Then comes the dreaded paper delivery, hundreds of pounds of paper to unload and send down a makeshift slide into the basement.

Their summer fuel? It starts with coffee. Every morning, Drew gets Don's because even "Jaja" (slang for grandpa) has his priorities. From there, they make do with school-lunch leftovers, PB&J, the occasional gifted pizza, and, in Drew's words, plenty of "pink meat" – otherwise known as bologna.

Most of what these three do will never make the morning announcements. No one applauds a repaired floor, a freshly painted door, or a perfectly trimmed lawn. Yet year after year, Ted, Don and Drew do the work that keeps Saint Thomas beautiful, safe, and ready to welcome students back each fall – saving the parish and school thousands of dollars along the way. They tackle the jobs no one sees, solve problems before most of us know they exist, and care for this campus as if it were their own home.

**And maybe that is the real story: They aren't simply maintaining a school.
They are caring for a place and a community they love.**

Behind every polished floor, freshly painted door, trimmed tree and classroom ready for a new year are three remarkable men who give Saint Thomas their time, their talent, their humor, and a whole lot of heart. ♥



HELP GOOD THINGS GROW

Every gift helps Saint Thomas students discover their talents, deepen their faith, and become all they were created for.

A tax-deductible gift to the Saint Thomas Educational Foundation helps provide a quality Catholic education and ensures our students, teachers, and school have the resources they need to succeed. There are many ways to donate:



Join the Excellence in Learning Society. Helping to ensure our students have what they need to learn, grow, and thrive.



Include the Education Foundation in your estate plans, creating a lasting legacy of faith, learning, and opportunity.



Use this QR code to make your donation today!



Become a 1925 donor honoring over a century of a Christ centered education.



Donate to the Friendship Fund & continue the spirit of generosity making a lasting impact on our students and school.



Prefer to donate by mail? Please use the enclosed donation card and envelope.

Whether your family has been part of Saint Thomas for generations or is just beginning its story here, your support makes a meaningful difference. Thank you for helping to make Saint Thomas a place where good things happen every day.