

SAINT THOMAS THE APOSTLE CATHOLIC SCHOOL

MAKE AN IMPACT & CHANGE THE WORLD



**WE'RE IN THIS
TOGETHER!**

"Tonight before falling asleep, think about
when we will return to the street.

When we hug again, when all the shopping
together will seem like a party.

Let's think about when the coffees
will return to the bar, the small talk,
the photos close to each other.

We'll think about when it will all be a memory but
normalcy will seem like an unexpected
and beautiful gift.

We will love everything that has so far seemed futile to us.
Every second will be precious.
Swims at the sea, the sun until late,
sunsets, toasts, laughter.

We will go back to laughing together.
Strength and courage."

~Pope Francis, March 2020

IMPACT REPORT 2020





LETTER FROM OUR PRINCIPAL

Our school doors closed on Friday, March 13th and teachers were virtually instructing that following Monday. It was amazing to see how quickly our teachers mobilized and were able to pick up instruction without missing a single day!

That being said, there was a learning curve for all of us. Initially, we believed school would resume in two weeks, so we began the surreal process of loving children virtually with great zeal. Parents celebrated having their children home and not having to pack lunches and backpacks. Teachers realized their dreams of teaching in their pajamas while sipping still-hot coffee.

However, reality set in after spring break and the novelty of home schooling had definitely worn off. Teachers realized that creating lesson videos, uploading information, setting up whole group, small group and individual Google Meets (video conferences) on a daily basis was a lot of work! Email inboxes were overloaded, and the teachers who previously never got to sit down were beginning to take the shape of their chair, because they were sitting in front of a computer all day! In addition to virtually educating their students, the teachers participated in virtual Diocesan grade level meetings, where they could discuss problems, get solutions and find comfort in talking with other teachers. I made it a point to join all of those calls, if nothing else, to provide support for really tired teachers. All of that said, they continued to innovate, educate and probably celebrate Fridays a bit more than before.

You, our parent counterparts also realized after Spring Break that there was a reason that you didn't go into teaching. Multiple children on devices, all needing to schedule video conferences, and all needing help became ALL consuming. Prior to COVID-19, you lived competent, highly accomplished lives. Here you were trying to run your own business meetings by phone in the bathroom, teach math to your first grader in the kitchen, and avoid eye contact with your middle school child who had math questions. Top that with feeding children three meals a day, running out of ideas for lunches, emotional breakdowns, and children simply refusing to work. Homeschooling lost its luster.

Yet, despite these difficulties, beautiful things have happened. Teachers have become technologically-savvy, creative problem solvers. We did not lose one day of teaching and finished the year on time. All standards were taught and the year wrapped up as it should. All, because of our partnership with you, our very important parents who helped us deliver each lesson and message. **YOU** have demonstrated your love for your children a thousand-fold in your willingness to learn beside them and partner with us.

Christ has walked beside all of us, to be sure. He has been the rock we have leaned on and the comforter of many a frazzled mind. With His presence came truly beautiful Religion lessons and wonderfully special group meetings of teachers, students and even Father Jim! I have realized the dedication that both teachers and our parents have for this school, as we did not lose one family during our virtual educational process.

We are readying for all possibilities, knowing that Saint Thomas the Apostle Catholic School will start on time next year and will continue to deliver a dynamic education centered in Christ no matter what that may look like.

Susan H. Hartwright

***WEARESAINTTHOMAS!**
***YOUBELONGHERE!**

YOU BELONG HERE!



fearless faith

Our faith is living, vibrant and permeates all we are and all we do.

rigorous academics

Through research and best practices, we strive to ensure that each student succeeds.

peaceful climate

Students are provided a supportive and respectful environment inclusive and accessible for all.

empowered community

Parents are the primary educators of their children. We partner with them to ensure a dynamic Christ-centered education.



intentional technology

Empowering students to become responsible citizens in our digital world.

servant leadership

Educating the whole person while nurturing students in developing strong character.





MISSION

Dynamic Education
Centered in Christ



VISION

A leading innovative Catholic school that invites students to love and serve Christ and engage culture.



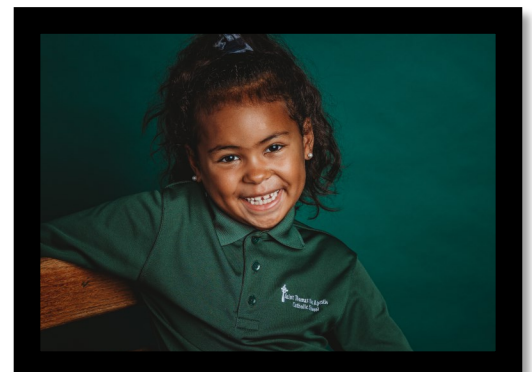
THEME

Love in action
is love in deed!



FEARLESS FAITH

- 120 in person Virtues chapel talks
- 40 virtual Virtues chapel talks
- 10 hours virtual student messages from Fr. Jim
- 30 school Masses
- 4 all school Masses
- 2,000 hours of weekly all-day Adorations
- 51 regular adorers
- 6,903 hours of Theology of the Body taught K-8th grade
- 36 hours of in-person middle school conversations with Fr. Jim
- 192 Advent by Candlelight guests
- 4 Traveling Rosary participating families
- 13 priest, deacons, seminarians, and 1 sister prayed for
- 30 days of specific celebrations for ALL life
- 8,945 technology prayers recited prior to technology class
- 120 days of the 3rd grade Angelus prayer over the PA
- 120 days of Examination of Conscience Prayer over the PA
- 2,561 in-person lessons of Catechesis of the Good Shepherd
- 22 newly created Catechesis of the Good Shepherd and Rosary videos during Covid19
- 36 First Eucharists rescheduled for summer
- 29 First Reconciliation candidates rescheduled
- 21 Confirmation candidates rescheduled
- 18th annual 7th grade Leadership Retreat rescheduled for September
- 1 first place diocesan award *Creating in the Margins*
- 2 honorable mention diocesan awards *Creating in the Margins*
- 24 teachers and staff prayer partners
- 42 7th/8th grade sacristans
- 6 dedicated prayer partner, kindness, and friendship student retreats
- 5 Spiritual adoption middle school presentations



CHILDREN OF THE LIGHT

RIGOROUS ACADEMICS



- 3 8th grade CCNEXT Scholar Award recipients
- MAP scores higher than the national average
- 648 hours of Friday Focus middle school classes
- 72+ students served through enrichment
- 60+ students served through Educational Support
- 35 classroom hours Grand Rapids Public Museum Immerse (grades 4 and 5)
- 72 in-person/virtual hours of strategy groups (grades K-2)
- 4,945 meets and daily videos by teachers during Covid19
- 52,210 Covid19 emails on how to get it done right
- 148,000 hours of library time
- 119 reading buddies Grades 1st/5th and 3rd/8th
- 1 first place diocesan award *Creating in the Margins*
- 2 honorable mentions *Creating in the Margins*
- 25 participants in annual *Spelling Bee*
- 78 hours of preschool music and movement
- 45 classroom hours preparing for 4th grade Songfest
- 42 classroom/virtual hours preparing for Famous Michiganders presentations (grade 3)
- 45 classroom/virtual hours preparing 4th grade Market Day
- 57 hours of middle school choir with 1 concert
- 57 hours of middle school band with 1 concert
- 10 Home & School sponsored field trips
- 210 hours Enrichment critical thinking skill instruction
- 6 students from China enrolled at Saint Thomas for 14 days
- 1 delightful hour of tea with Fr. Jim hosting our Chinese friends
- 50 hours of "Break Out of the Box" strategizing
- 1 gazillion hours of collaboration, and hands-on learning

A DYNAMIC EDUCATION CENTERED IN CHRIST

SERVANT LEADERSHIP

- 34,528 all-school service hours
- 21 8th grade leaders
- 9,840 additional Kindergarten service hours to neighbors in need
- 60 hours of 8th grade office help
- 50 virtual Chapel prayers led by Claire, an 8th grade leader
- 200 gifts to Family Promise
- 2 adopted Christmas families
- 2,000 hours of adoration
- 51 weekly adorers
- 1 Diaper drive
- 45 Aquinas Project Unite partners
- 7 Red Glasses award recipients for living boldly, loving big, and passing it on
- 30 hours student participation in 3D pen national giving day
- 2 books 3D illustrated for the visually impaired
- 14 students served at Advent by Candlelight
- 5,694 hours on Rosaries for Good Samaritan and Operation Christmas boxes
- 119 reading buddies, grades 1st/5th and 3rd/8th
- \$650 raised for Children's Healing Center on Giving Tuesday 2019
- \$650 raised for Special Olympics Area 11 basketball at 5th annual Rumble game
- \$350 raised for Boosters at 5th annual Rumble game
- \$469 raised by Student Council for Special Olympics Area 11 basketball
- \$1,200 raised for families in need
- 26 hours of intergenerational early literacy fun with our 0-5ers and Holland Home seniors
- 50 virtual morning messages by Principal Furtwangler during Covid19
- 10 virtual student messages live by Fr. Jim during Covid19
- 30 virtual Chapel talks by Mrs. Edgerton during Covid19
- 1 gazillion prayers lifted up throughout the year and especially during Covid19



ENGAGING CULTURE WITH A SAINTLY PASSION



PEACEFUL CLIMATE

- 150 in-person Virtue's programming chapel talks
- 30 virtual Virtues programming Chapel talks
- 45 Aquinas College Project Unite volunteer partners
- 6 dedicated prayer partner, kindness, and friendship retreats
- 7 Red Glasses award recipients for living boldly, loving big, and passing it on
- 200 viewers of Screenagers -- growing up in a digital age
- 192 Advent by Candlelight guests
- 1 largest enrollment in the Grand Rapids Diocese
- Partnership with GRPD officers Allison Koldan
- 14% identified learning differences
- 1,500 subsidized lunches served
- 40% awarded tuition assistance
- 34% Parish offertory support



WE ARE ALL MADE IN THE IMAGE AND LIKENESS OF GOD

EMPOWERED COMMUNITY

- 8 monthly in-person school board meetings
- 2 virtual school board meetings
- 2 bi-monthly Home & School meetings
- 95% parents are active VIPs
- 5th year record high kindergarten enrollment
- 1 Annual State of the School (via email during Covid19)
- 1 Home & School sponsored Sunshine Swirl Dance
- 100's of hours rehearsing Lion King
- 28 Weekly 0-5ers gym time
- 28 in-person Play School sessions
- 10 virtual Play School sessions
- 2 Home & School sponsored roller skating parties
- 40 students participated in Bandtastic
- 335 students and families participated in Hello Hornet Night
- 62 current and prospective families participated in Preschool/Kindergarten Round UP!
- 95% retention rate



A CARING AND TIGHT KNIT COMMUNITY

INTENTIONAL TECHNOLOGY

- 335 online safe and responsible digital citizens
- 1 newly created Saint Thomas YouTube channel
- 29,200 teacher and staff hours on google chat, google live, google meets, class time check ins, assignments, recorded videos, and one on ones
- 36 in-person and virtual weekly faculty meetings
- 4,945 meets and daily videos by teachers during Covid19
- 11 Catechesis of the Good Shepherd videos sent during Covid19
- 52,210 Covid19 emails
- 10 Facebook live story times
- Google Sketchup creating living spaces
- 7 Multi-touch interactive display systems
- 50 virtual morning messages with Mrs. Furtwangler
- 10 virtual student messages from Fr. Jim
- 50 virtual Chapel prayers with Claire, an 8th grade leader
- 30 virtual Chapel talks with Mrs. Edgerton
- Lego Robotics
- Drones
- 3D printing
- Google Office Suite
- Coding using coding.org and tynker.com
- Computer identification and construction
- Animation
- Human centered design projects
- 1 gazillion Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter posts



RESPONSIBLE TECHNOLOGY IN A FAITH-FILLED LIFE

WE ARE SAINT THOMAS!

YOU BELONG HERE!

21 AMAZING 8TH GRADE GRADUATES!

