

THE UTOPIAN

A NEWSLETTER OF
SAINT THOMAS MORE CATHOLIC SCHOOL

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Fall 2006



Spring 2007

Fr. Pat at the
Cliffs of Moher
in his native
Ireland



Father Patrick Mulhern 1939-2006

A tribute by Rebecca Rakoczy

The St. Thomas More School community lost a beloved friend and pastoral leader when Father Patrick Mulhern passed away Nov. 29, 2006.

For many alumni, Father Pat was their “first” priest; arriving at the church and school in 1987, he shepherded STM through a period of rapid growth until he left in early 2000 after becoming ill.

Although he has not served officially at STM for more than six years, memories of Father Pat include his voluminous robes engulfing his lanky frame, flapping behind him as he strode down the church aisle, with those stubborn cowlicks of white hair sticking up on his head, like a schoolboy. Extremely well-read, he loved Shakespeare and the *New York Times*, but was famous for getting off-track in his homilies. He was acutely aware of his foibles, and his humility and self-deprecating humor were endearing.

If you lived in Decatur, you also knew Father Pat as the man working in the church front lawn, watering flowers, pulling up hoses, often wearing an old sweater and sneakers, his pants a bit too short for his stature; his glasses (which he forever was famously misplacing) perched haphazardly on his craggy nose,

or pushed through his hair. Or you saw him running around town. Jogging was a favorite pastime for Father Pat, and that love led to the annual More Fest and Father Pat 5 K run, a community-wide tradition that still goes on today.

When a black puppy of indeterminate parentage was left at the rectory one day, Father Pat was “forced” to adopt it. Paddy became his constant companion, following him around and even sitting (discreetly) by when parishioners came into his office for confessions.

As a young child, my daughter Sean called Father Pat “the Godfather.” Although I’m sure it was because she saw him as the “God” figure in church, the moniker was amusingly appropriate. Never a threatening figure, Father Pat was still able to get the congregation to do his bidding with just a “look and a gentle demand couched as a question. “You will be there, won’t you?” he would say. We always obeyed his “requests.”

There was no question Father Pat loved God, and he embraced those who shared his passion for the Lord and for “Jesus work”; enlarging our community by helping those in need. He was Jesus as the common man; embodying a spirituality and love that cut through everyday clutter and pretense. He saw the Lord’s Supper as a great celebration, a way to welcome people into God’s love, and he embraced it – as he embraced us – even when he sometimes forgot your name.

During his funeral – which was a packed house – fellow Dubliner and All Hallow’s seminarian classmate Msgr. John Delaney remembered Father Pat as famously disorganized and absent-minded even as a young man; but also acutely witty. Striding across the stage the night before the group said their final ordination vows, Pat belted out the *My Fair Lady* tune, “I’m Getting Married in the Mornin’.”

It was classic “Father Pat.”

Students who walk into “Mulhern Hall” today probably never knew the man, but his welcoming spirit will forever be a part of this place.

God bless you always, Father Pat. Watch over us.



THE COW CALLS - STM RESPONDS

Chick-fil-A Downtown Decatur launched a campaign in early December with the goal of providing meals to needy people in the Decatur area during the Christmas Season. Chick-fil-A Downtown Decatur recognized what a blessed people we are and wanted to “give back” to our local community during the holidays.

They implemented the C.O.W. (Communities Offering Warmwishes) holiday program to help needy families. Their goal was to put a Chick-fil-A boxed meal into the hands of 2,000 people! They partnered with Decatur Cooperative Ministry to distribute the boxed meals. Chick-fil-A asked individuals and local businesses to “sponsor” meals. Each meal voucher cost \$5.00 and was good for one complete meal including a Chick-fil-A sandwich, potato chips, brownie and a sweet tea. The normal price on a boxed meal is \$6.45.

The STM community responded to Chick-fil-A’s request by raising a total of \$935 for this effort. STM presented the check to Cristina Crays, Marketing Director, for Chick-fil-A Downtown Decatur. She was elated and overwhelmed at our generous contribution towards their campaign. Way to go STM! To show their appreciation, Ms. Crays and the Chick-fil-A Cow made a personal visit to our school in mid-January and presented every student a coupon for a free kids meal.

STM CLASS OF 2007: ONE CLASS, ONE HEART, MANY BLESSINGS

The theme of the eighth grade class this year reflects their unity and loyalty, as well as linking to the school theme of blessings.

The eighth grade class retreat took place January 23 – 25. The eighth graders spent three days accompanied by several members of the faculty and staff, as well as Monsignor Paul, at Blessed Trinity Shrine Retreat in Alabama. During the retreat, the students used the time away from their routines to enrich their spiritual lives and strengthen their relationships with God. They lived their class motto, sharing, caring and enjoying each other’s company. They spent this time as one class, rekindling old friendships, and recalling class memories.



Class of 2007 at Blessed Trinity Shrine Retreat

ANNUAL FUND

The goal of our Annual Fund this year is to raise \$125,000. We have taken giant steps towards that goal as we have already surpassed the \$93,000 mark.

The school shares the responsibility with the church for paying the loan on the multipurpose building. The majority of the funds raised in the Annual Fund are applied to the school’s portion of this loan payment. If we reach or exceed our goal, then 20% of the total amount raised goes directly back into the school towards the purchase of flat-panel monitors for the computer lab as well as a playground for the field.

The Annual Fund is our effort to raise enough money every year to help offset the school’s expenses and keep the increase in tuition at a minimum.

Please help us reach our goal. Every single dollar helps! Thank you!

STM'S ROBOTICS TEAM WINS FIRST PLACE IN ATLANTA REGIONAL OF THE FIRST LEGO LEAGUE COMPETITION

On Saturday, December 2, the STM Robotics team competed in the Atlanta Regional of the First Lego League National Robotics Competition. The team "brought home the gold", finishing in First Place overall. In addition, the STM team earned the right to represent Greater Atlanta in the State Competition, which was held on January 20 at Georgia Tech.

The STM team is named N.E.R.D.S., an acronym for **Never Ending Robotic Destruction Systems**. The N.E.R.D.S. team competed in four categories: Robot Performance, Technical Presentation, Research

Presentation, and Teamwork. The team had eight weeks to design, build, program, test, and compete with a custom autonomous robot.

Our team is part of a Robotics Program that includes an after-school program for Intermediate Grades and an elective course for Middle School students. The programs strengthen skills in critical thinking and problem solving. Students are introduced to machine design, drivetrain design, electricity and electronics, programming logic, teamwork, and delivering deadlines.



Congrats to Mr. Beck and the
2007 STM Robotics Team!

Special thanks to Mr. Beck for introducing the Lego Robotics Competition to STM just two years ago. His sponsorship and many hours in and out of school are greatly appreciated!

Next year: Better equipment and more in-school student Robotics hours! Watch out!

STM Alumni:

The Development Office would love to hear from all STM Alumni! Whether you have won an award, have been accepted to or are graduating from college, have a new job or are getting married, we would love to hear about it! Please send all news and photos to Ansley Murphey, STM '87 at amurphey@stmga.org or complete the form below and mail it to the school office. We look forward to hearing from you soon!

SEEK AND YOU SHALL FIND...

NAME

GRADUATION YEAR

ADDRESS

EMAIL ADDRESS

PLEASE NOTE: WE WILL NOT PUBLISH YOUR EMAIL OR MAILING ADDRESS.



MY NEWS

SAINT THOMAS MORE CATHOLIC SCHOOL
WISH LISTS 2006-07

KINDERGARTEN

Ms. Merritt

1. Earphones for computers (5)
2. Cute, Fun Mouspad (1)
3. Gel Pens – metallic colors

Ms. Nicolatos

1. Earphones for computers
2. Printer cartridges HP 27 (black) and HP28 (color)
3. White non-coated dinner-size paper plates and stickers

FIRST GRADE

Ms. Moran

Videos purchased from 100% Educational Videos at 1-800-483-3383:

1. Reading Maps & Globes \$29.95 (item #9731DCG)
2. President's Day \$39.95 (item #P2040CG)
3. Tooth Wisdom \$29.95 (item #H2035CG)

Ms. Galloway

1. Kids Scissors and Crayons
2. Goodies for the Treasure Chest
3. Wipes and Paper Towels

SECOND GRADE

Ms. Chudoba

1. Kids Magazines – Calliope, Kids Discover, Clubhouse, JR., Sports Illustrated Jr.
2. Dinner-size paper plates and ziplock bags (large to small)
3. Dry Erase Markers for Math class

Ms. Thompson

1. Rock Sets from The School Box (igneous, sedimentary, metamorphic (\$14.95 per set; 2 of each set)
2. Small tip dry erase markers (black or blue) and Expo dry erase board cleaner
3. 4x6 colorful rug in purples, reds, greens (not pastel)

THIRD GRADE

Ms. Becsi

1. New Blinds – 5 panels of 3 1/2 x 5 1/2 ft. blinds (to block the sun for LCD)

Ms. Khalaf

1. Flat-screen monitor
2. Gift certificate to Immaculata Shop
3. Children's chapter books of saints by Paulist Press

FOURTH GRADE

Ms. Jonap

1. Three flat-panel monitors for student computers to conserve space in classroom
2. Heavy Duty, easy use 3-hole punch
3. 3x5 lined white index cards

Ms. Summers

1. Four flat-panel monitors for student computers to conserve needed space in classroom
2. Small inexpensive prizes
3. Various colors of whiteboard thick Expo dry erase markers

FIFTH GRADE

Ms. Lindsay

1. Goodies for prize & treat boxes
- Ms. Pettus**
1. Newberry Medal Winner novels
2. Colored construction paper
3. Goodies for the prize box

SIXTH GRADE

Ms. Kettler

1. The AirLiner(TM) wireless slate

Ms. Saunders

1. Cassette tape Player
2. African or Asian artifacts for classroom
3. Middle school sized costume pieces (Animal ears, tails, headpieces or Ethnic or Renaissance costumes)

SEVENTH GRADE

Mr. Beck

1. Lego Education Resource Set (\$59)
2. Lego Mindstorms Software (\$49)
3. Lego Mindstorms Education Base Sets (\$250 each) www.legoeducation.com

Mr. Miller

1. Better quality speakers for the computer for video presentations

EIGHTH GRADE

Ms. Glavin

1. 30 small individual white boards (8x10) and 10 packages of dry erase markers
2. 6-8 twin size inflatable mattresses for eighth grade retreat
3. 25 Scotch tape in disposable dispensers, 6 staplers, and Post-It Notes

Mr. Reich

1. Area Rug or carpet pieces for times when students want to sit on the floor
2. Wireless keyboard and/or mouse

ART

1. 96 in. curtain rod and one big curtain or 6 panels to darken the room so we can use the LCD Projector more effectively
2. Paint – any color from Home Depot, etc. - leftovers from past projects are fine too
3. Paper, Paper, Paper (any color, size, texture)

MEDIA CENTER

1. I-Pod Nano
2. Paper Cutter and Label Maker
3. Assorted books on Amazon.com wish list: www.amazon.com/gp/registry/wishlist/NE7K83SDH7Q7

SCIENCE

1. Latex or Latex-free Gloves
2. Prepared slides of different organisms or different cells to use with microscopes
3. Molecular modeling kits

COMPUTER LAB

1. Membership to Atomic Learning – www.atomiclearning.com - \$79.99/year
2. Imagination Suite – www.teen4learning.com - \$46.00/each (qty 35)
3. RAM 512MB sticks to increase lab computer performance

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

1. Big Wheel with Lid (\$124.45 plus shipping, comes as a set of two)
2. Numbered Poly Spots 1-10, 11-20, 21-30 (\$23.24 per set)
3. Mesh Scrimmage Vests 12 blue, 12 gold, 12 green (\$3.43 each)

TECHNOLOGY

1. 16 laptops for the mobile laptop cart



ALUMNI NEWS

Lauren Moran,
STM '95

Lauren Moran, STM '95, completed a masters degree in History at the University of South Carolina, and then hiked the 2175-mile Appalachian trail from Georgia to Maine from March - August 2006. The photo below shows Lauren on the summit of Mt. Katahdin, the northern terminus of the trail.

Caitlin Eley, STM '02, received the Sedes Sapientiae Award from Marist School – “the highest honor given by vote of the faculty to the senior excelling in scholarship, loyalty, and service and who epitomizes the values for which Marist School stands.” Caitlin was

also named the Star Student for the Class of 2006. The Star Student is the senior with the highest SAT score in a single sitting and who ranks in the top ten percent of the graduating class. She scored 2350 out of a possible 2400. She is attending Williams College in Williamstown, MA.

Ally Rakoczy, STM '02, made the Dean's List her first semester at Georgia Southern University this fall.

Graham Watt, STM '03, who plays the trumpet, recently passed the highly competitive audition process and is now a member of the Atlanta Symphony Youth Orchestra.

Graham is also a member of the Youth Wind Symphony and the Atlanta Trumpet Ensemble. He will be performing in at least 17 concerts throughout this year, including one in Dallas, TX. All ASYO concerts will be recorded and rebroadcast by WABE radio.

Oscar Clark, STM '03, came in 7th place in the Junior Men Elite race at the U.S. Cyclocross Nationals in mid-December in Providence, Rhode Island. His personal goal was to place 5th, but he was very proud to have come in 7th. This is only his third year racing.

SAINT THOMAS MORE CATHOLIC SCHOOL

National School of Excellence, Established in 1950

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