

Beacons Update: Schools

Dear Stella Maris Parishioners,

In this month's Beacons of Light update, I would like to highlight the two schools within our Family of Parishes: St. Bernadette and St. Thomas More. I have asked our Principals to share brief updates on the exciting growth taking place in each of these school communities. Their reflections offer insight into the many ways God is at work in the lives of our students throughout Stella Maris.



Fr. Tim Ralston
Pastor of Stella Maris

St. Bernadette School

Dear Stella Maris Families,

We are gearing up for another wonderful school year! St. Bernadette School is dedicated to academic excellence and fulfillment of self for the glory of God. We are dedicated to creating an environment that develops the whole child spiritually, intellectually, emotionally, physically, and socially in order to prepare students for active and mature participation in their Church, family, and society.

St. Bernadette has five grade levels that are at capacity for the upcoming 2026-2027 school year. With eight new families joining our school community, we have 190 K-8 students and 53 incoming preschoolers.

Our Catholic faith serves as the heart of our community. Students are learning about God's love for them and how to share that love with others. St. Bernadette School places an emphasis on serving others. Our students worked on many service projects this year, such as food drives and blessing bags for those in need.

This past school year, we implemented a new 'Virtues in Practice' program for students K-8. Students learned and studied a new virtue each month. At the end of each month, one student from each homeroom was given a Virtue Award from their teacher.

The Carmelite Daughters of Elias brought our 3rd graders a deeper understanding of Catholicism. This upcoming school

year, they will bring their teaching and kindness to our 2nd grade students, who will be celebrating their First Reconciliation and First Communion. We are very grateful for their partnership and the work they are doing within our school.

Thank you to everyone for your continued dedication, prayers, and blessings for our school and community.

God Bless,
Christie Halaby, Principal

St. Thomas More School

Dear Stella Maris Families,

There is an undeniable energy on our campus, and it's all thanks to the incredible growth, faith, and innovation taking place at St. Thomas More School. Since 2022, our school community has flourished, with enrollment surging by 26.8%—growing from 250 to 317 students, and projecting up to 347 scholars for the upcoming school year!

This vibrant growth is anchored first and foremost by our deep commitment to Catholic identity, which serves as the heart of our expanding community. This past year, our partnership with the Hallow app blew past expectations, with our community logging over 15,000 prayers. Most beautifully, we joyfully welcomed nine students and two parents into the Church at the Easter Vigil, with eight more already scheduled for next year.

Hand-in-hand with this spiritual vitality is our pursuit of academic excellence. We are thrilled to launch a brand-new math curriculum (HMH Into Math) next year and expand our Spanish program to include all grades from PreK through 8th grade. Our robust science curriculum continues to thrive, maintaining our 7th-grade Science Fair while introducing an exciting new engineering component for 8th graders. To foster future-ready skills, our library has transformed into a dynamic STEM Lab and Makerspace, complete with a 3D printer. Furthermore, we continue to enhance our strong intervention and gifted programming to ensure every student reaches their full potential.

Thank you for your continued partnership, prayers, and dedication. Together, we are building a remarkably bright, faithful future at St. Thomas More!

In Christ,
Michael Collins, Principal