

**A vision for the future of  
St. Thomas More Catholic School  
Chapel Hill, North Carolina**

In his homily for the 2016 Graduation Liturgy, Fr. Scott said “The whole reason we exist is because of Jesus Christ. He is the reason for this school. Forming a relationship with Christ is the most important thing to a St. Thomas More Catholic School education. Teaching is the vehicle we use to offer students and parents the chance for that relationship. St. Thomas More Catholic School is primarily a school of discipleship. And what do Disciples do? They bring the good news of Jesus Christ to others through the witness of their lives. All of what we do as a school is done because of our desire to help students, teachers, parents and administrators grow in their relationship with Christ.”

Our Vision (listed below) is not a new one, just a re-emphasis and clarification of our charge. The Code of Canon Law, further explains why we exist. The text of Title III is posted at [http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG1104/\\_P2N.HTM](http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG1104/_P2N.HTM)

Every family who chooses St. Thomas More Catholic School is invited to join with us in embodying this vision for Catholic education. Below our existing mission and beliefs statements, you will see statements we hope will clarify some specifics, and affirm why you chose STM. Our self-study and evaluative processes we have engaged in recently have revealed that deeper conversations on these points has been lacking, and we need to be more explicit and receptive in our future dialogue with all stakeholders.

**STM Catholic School Mission Statement**

Our mission is to provide an education for each child in a God centered environment

**BELIEFS:**

- The principles of Catholic Christianity are the basis of our existence.
- The parents are the primary educators of their children.
- Students should be respected as individuals who learn differently.
- Teachers’ reasonable expectations guide students toward developing responsibility, self-discipline, creativity, and compassion.
- Students learn to value the ministry of community service.
- Education encourages teachers, parents, and students to be life-long learners.

At St. Thomas More Catholic School we provide 400+ individual, excellent, educational and catechetical experiences every day because we endeavor to understand where each child is, and propel them over our highest goals for them. We endeavor to serve EVERY child.

Our instructional resources are prioritized toward developing and supporting those instructional skills that are proven, varied, broad, creative and inclusive. Excellent instruction is every year's most important professional development for our teachers.

Our professional development and staffing resources will always be focused on meeting or exceeding any learning goal, no matter what level. This is not to shift resources to one specific type of need, which can turn into “robbing Peter to pay Paul,” but rather including in our strategic planning the continued examination of alternative funding models and new resource partnerships as we continue to stretch our educational model to an ever-broadening range of necessary, educational services.

A God centered environment includes every word and action of its members – students and adults. Every stakeholder must accept the challenge to be a model of Christ to others. All members hold themselves and each other accountable to this high standard. Manners and considerate actions are important parts of expressing love for others, not just a cultural tradition. All of this requires instruction, modelling by example, and reinforcement.

The school has a function in providing and promoting deep and impactful resources for stakeholders for their personal and spiritual development.

Parents are the primary educators of our children, and the school provides them with a comprehensive team of professionals who are experts on education, health, counselling, and specific content areas. The partnership between parents and these experts is the most powerful dynamic to make the best decisions for every child.

Educational and child development expertise, as well as our Church's established ministries to support families, is an integral part of the services that benefit families who enroll at STM.

Disagreement and conflict is a normal part of the educational environment. We must manage these conflicts in a Christian way. Cooperative support, dialogue, honesty, trust, transparency, conflict resolution, forgiveness, and love are all the things that make this school community special.

Our recruitment and hiring of faculty and staff prioritize not just skills and expertise, but dedication to the mission of Catholic Education and our Church. Mentoring programs for new members to our faculty/staff is a resource priority.

Excellence is not a measure of who we let in the door, it's marked by the effect we have once they are here. Every family who joins us must accept that we will strive always for excellence in all things, and that includes very hard work and dedication on the part of all stakeholders.

We are counter-cultural in a secular world. Families enroll here because of our commitment to our Faith, and our commitment to excellence. Everything we do must start and end from those two points.

Very Rev. Scott E. McCue, V.F., Pastor  
Dr. Michael Ashton, Principal  
Mrs. Kathy Sullivan, Asst. Principal

June 10, 2016