

CATHOLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS AND TUITION POLICIES AT SAINT THOMAS MORE PARISH

At this time of the year many of our Parish Families consider Catholic School Education for their children. This is an expensive choice that parents make prayerfully after considering the financial sacrifice it will mean for them as a family.

The Diocese of Palm Beach, of which STM is an entity, established a program of Tuition Guidelines designed to assist Catholic families that are registered, active and contributing members of any parish, like St. Thomas More Church, that does not have a school. *Registered* is defined as having membership on **STM** Parish roles for at least 6 months. *Active* means attending Mass at **STM** as a family on Sundays, Holy Days and engaged personally in ministry and volunteerism on a regular basis. *Contributing* **is defined as using the STM envelop-system of offertory and making a minimum annual family contribution of \$900.** Your contributions to other Parishes, the Annual Bishop's Appeal or other charitable institutions or ministries are not considered when evaluating your family for Tuition Assistance from **STM**. All three aspects are equally important in qualifying for tuition reduction.

Qualified families receive a reduction in their tuition costs at the school. This is often called the *in-parish rate*. STM Parish is obligated further to support that school **directly** at the level of 50% of the cost of **one-child's full, annual tuition**. This payment assists the school in operating expenses; it is not a tuition payment or subsidy for the family. **STM Pre-School is part of the Diocese of Palm Beach Catholic School System. STM does not participate in the Tuition Program for families with children in pre-schools or kindergarten's outside of STM, only grades 1 through 8th.**

Bishop Gerald Barbarito has established definitively the obligations and scope of the Tuition Program and his Diocesan Tuition Requirements are more than just. As pastor, I have set our requirements a bit lower in order to support families who must sacrifice to afford Catholic School Education for their children. My approach is fair, just and respectful of the contributions of our parishioners who are, in the main, retired.

Qualified families do not need to register in two parishes. Qualified STM families will receive my endorsement through the Pastor's Acknowledgement Form, provided by the Catholic School of your choice. My acknowledgment qualifies your family to receive the *in-parish rate*.

Qualified families from other parishes may receive *the STM in-parish rate* under these same guidelines. Unlike in the past, no scholarships are available at STM Pre-School. We are doing all we can to keep our valuable staff employed, tuition rates competitive and still offer a first-class developmental program for our students. If you have any other questions, please contact our Academy Director.

Rev. Julian P. Harris, Pastor