

# Saint Thomas More Collegiate Campus Ministry

VOLUME 2009 ISSUE 4

OCTOBER 2009

Service to others, especially the needy, is not optional for Christians. It is a mandate found in scripture and in Church teachings. We were each created out of love; thus we are called to respond to all we meet with a return of love. The **STMC SERVICE PROGRAM** is designed to give students an opportunity to put into practice the values of Christian charity, compassion and understanding we are presenting in Religion classes. A service board located next to the library will assist you with finding opportunities.

#### **Where to Volunteer:**

-Holy Trinity Cathedral  
Breakfast Program-  
Thursdays

-

Fish Fridays  
Salvation Army Down-  
town Eastside  
Dates TBA

-Christmas Craft Fair

-Burnaby Progressive  
Housing Committee  
Monthly

St Francis de Sales  
Youth Group Service  
Opportunities.

## OVER 3000 Pounds

OF FRESH FRUITS AND VEGETABLES COLLECTED FOR THE  
NEEDY IN NEW WESTMINSTER



Please continue reading on page 5.

## NOVEMBER 2009 UPDATE

Since the beginning of this school year our KNIGHTS continue to foster their Catholic identity and are standing in solidarity against those marginalized by poverty and injustice. Our Missions and Service programs are growing with enthusiasm and in numbers. This newsletter will share with you some examples of individual students and programs that our KNIGHTS are involved in. You will have an opportunity to read about how we are assisting the needy both locally and internationally. Learn about our new leadership class, the Mary Rice Team, BERT, the Green Team and the Human Rights club who are handing out donated clothing to the needy on the Vancouver East side. You will also have an opportunity to read about our worldwide Edmund Rice network and how both students and staff are making a difference in Africa. The spirit of Edmund Rice is alive here at St. Thomas More Collegiate.

"Be that change you want to see in the World"  
Mohandas Ghandi



**Jason Evert**

## Upcoming Events

November 4th 9am-2:30pm  
Grade 9 Retreat @ St. Mary's  
Vancouver

November 10th 10:45am  
Remembrance Day Mass/Service  
(Celebrant STMC Alumnus Fa-  
ther Lovato)

December 2nd 10am-12pm  
Sacrament of Reconciliation  
Our Lady of Mercy

December TBA  
Grade 10 Retreat

December 16th  
Jason Evert Presentations

December 18th 10:45am  
Advent Mass  
(Celebrant STMC Alumnus Fa-  
ther Gary Franken)

Weekly Masses STMC Chapel  
Wednesday/Thursday mornings

Seminary of Christ the King Live  
In Nov. 6-8, 2009  
604-826-8715 for more info.

## The Mary Rice Team

The Mary Rice Group was formed a year ago to provide an all inclusive faith-based environment where students have an opportunity to learn and develop themselves by reaching out to others.

The group was named after the daughter of Blessed Edmund Rice who had a disability and passed away as a young child. The objectives of this group is to create a fuller community experience here at STMC and to assist those that are marginalized. The group meets on a regular basis to organize a variety of events such as fundraising for missions. Already this year they have raised money for the Burnaby Housing Coalition by selling Thanksgiving Pumpkin Pies.

Throughout the year this group will be involved in a Halloween Fundraiser, the Christmas Craft Fair, Valentines Day, as well as Blessed Edmund Rice Feast Day. Above all, the Mary Rice Group recognizes that we are all God's children and with our own gifts and talents we can help make the world a better place. More details to follow. If you are interested in being part of this group please read the information board on the first floor or contact Mrs. Chester or Mr. Mattiazzo.



# Tanisha's Reflections

A few years ago, I never would have experienced the feelings of other people's happiness miles away. I was in grade 5 and had recently attended a presentation on Africa through Mr. Mattiazzo and his wife. Inspired by this trip they had taken, I realized then that there were people who had needs beyond those of mine. At that moment, I contemplated on what I could do to help these people then and there. We just finished Christmas vacation and unlike those in Africa, I had received money as just one of my many Christmas presents. Many gifts: these two words so simply sum up the opposite of what these children have. Thus, I began my journey of generosity through a \$150 donation. Via e-mail I kept in touch mainly with Mr. Mattiazzo's wife. Back and forth we communicated and confirmed upon projects in which the children of Africa would benefit. From past to present, I have had help with the organizing of Christmas packages for few of the children as well as fundraising in lieu of birthday gifts and also various donations too. Contributions to the Canadian Cystic Fibrosis Foundation have also been made through annual events and various fundraisers. I have known a thirty-six year survivor of CF who has been through a very painful journey. Forever I will continue in supporting these causes in which many individuals do not have the chance at what I do throughout their years of life. As well, I will do so with those supported by missions whom I, along with many others, help to build a healthier way to live. These acts of generosity will carry on because they're what a knight would do, and of course, I am a Knight!

**-Tanisha Garing Grade 8**

## STMC Leadership



"Leadership is the ability to get along well with others; to take personal responsibility for one's actions; and to motivate and inspire others to make positive changes in their communities."~Princeton Centre for Leadership

" Leadership is a rare class that allows students to express their independence as well as being proactive. The primary emphasis of this course is to study and reflect on the qualities and skills of leadership, which can be applied to whatever career you pursue. Leadership is set for Grade 12 students who want to have a better understanding of who they are as a leader and person within the STMC community. This is the first year St. Thomas More Collegiate has offered this course. The basis of this leadership course is to

lead by example; the students of this class take on roles within the STM community to spread the spirit and raise awareness. Students of leadership 12 are given immense responsibilities within the school and bring the message to the student body of such activities like social justice conferences, fundraisers, missions outreach, etc.

Not only do the students of this course perform service in the school and their community, leadership 12 commences the opportunity for them to get to know

themselves. Currently, we are working on our fundamentals and leadership skills; in class we have been doing exercises that help us get to know ourselves first, in order for us to help others. In this way, leadership is a class that should be greatly valued for its unique way to open doors to greater opportunities in life.

Michelle Sy  
(leadership 12 block: F)

## WHAT IS B.E.R.T.?

BERT (Blessed Edmund Rice Team), is a group of leadership students who meet weekly to discuss and help to promote the essential elements of a Christian Brother Education here at St. Thomas More Collegiate. The group will be involved in a variety of activities throughout the year. Students interested in becoming a BERT associate can attend meetings on Wednesdays (RM 211) or speak to Mr. Mattiazzo for an application form.

Upcoming Events:

- Helping with Remembrance Day Mass
- St. Francis de Sales Hamper Program/Can Food Drive
- Overnight Famine TBA



# STMC Plant a Row Grow a Row Program



STMC and Plant a Row/Grow a Row teamed up this past spring to help and encourage backyard vegetable gardeners and others to donate some of their crops or other produce to the New Westminster Food Bank and the New Westminster Union Gospel Mission. STMC took on this community outreach program as a part of their campus ministry program. Mr. Claude Le-Doux, a noted local horticulturalist, greatly assisted us in this new project. Claude has been involved in the Plant a Row/Grow a Row program since formation of the local New Westminster chapter of this North America wide organization. He organized a Gardeners' Party in the STMC gym in the spring to introduce the program to the school. This meeting was great fun and informative to local vegetable and fruit gardeners, giving them an opportunity to share growing tips with each other and to learn from some well known experts.

From mid-June to Thanksgiving, backyard vegetable gardeners collected the produce they could spare and dropped it off at the STMC parking lot every Sunday morning. STMC students and families volunteered to collect, weigh and store the produce in a locker and refrigerator provided by the school. Some families involved were the Belgraves, the Landolts, the Padrons, the Clarkes, the Woodsons, and the Rubbens, as well as one of our best staff vegetable-growing experts, Carl Polych. In addition to the STMC students who with their families helped collect the produce on Sunday mornings, Paulina Nowicki (Grade 11), has been very successful in obtaining produce for donation from both Langley Farm Market and Hop-On Farms with the help of Danica Verhoeve (grade 11).

The Plant a Row Grow a Row Program is a nation wide event and STMC's collection of over 3000 lbs was one of the higher totals in Canada. If you are interested in being involved in next years Plant a Row Grow a Row program please contact Mr. D. Mattiazzo at St. Thomas More Collegiate.

## ***STMC STAFF and Karibu 2009***

Ms. Bohemier and Ms. Lang spent three weeks immersed in the poorest areas of Nairobi, Kenya and Arusha, Tanzania. During their time there, Ms. Lang worked at the Mary Rice Day Care Centre in Kibera (the largest slum in Africa), which helps teach kids with intellectual disabilities basic reading, math, and personal hygiene. Ms. Bohemier worked at the Ruben Centre with health care workers doing home visits with people who are HIV positive and educating people about how to prevent the spread of HIV and how to properly care for those who have the virus.

Christian Brothers and Edmund Rice Associates from Australia, India, Canada, and the UK took part in the life-changing experience. Ms. B and Ms. Lang are excited to bring their experience back to the STMC community and hope to continue to help those they met along their journey.

Ms. B. Lang



## STMC Missions and St. Francis Orphanage

It has been over three years since we first stumbled upon St. Francis Orphanage in Nairobi, Kenya. An accidental visit to an orphanage while participating in the Karibu Retreat, has evolved into a mission that has changed the lives of many, including myself. I would like to share with you just a summary of this story and how our School community supports a family in Kenya.

### Background



While on break from our immersion in the slums of Kibera, my wife and I met two young boys on the side of a street and offered them our candy bars. Showing typical Kenyan hospitality and gratitude, these boys invited us to their home. Little did we know that their home was a five bedroom shack that housed over 300 orphans. A lady named Mary opened up the doors to her home for children that didn't have a home. The orphanage was in very rough shape and the children lacked basic necessities.

This place would soon become a regular visit for the next month as we brought with us medical supplies, toys, food, sporting equipment and other items purchased with funds from STMC missions. Even though the children did not have much, their day was filled with song, dance and praise to God. We especially enjoyed spending time in the nursery where forty young children resided in a small room. Two young sisters, Sonina (1 year) and Zainabo (3 years) especially touched our hearts. We even looked into the possibility of adopting these girls although because of government restrictions and St. Francis being an unofficial orphanage, this would not be in the plans.



### STMC Missions Becomes Involved

Upon returning back to Vancouver, we shared our story and the STMC community graciously helped. We began by sending to weekly fruit and vegetables for the children as well as some medical supplies. We also teamed up with Walter Ongala, a man we met in Kenya who worked for the charity AKIN (African Kids in Need). In December of 2006, STMC and my wife's school, Lord Kelvin, sent 300 Christmas gifts for the children at St. Francis. Walter informed us that for many it was the first gifts some ever received. Walter would continue to update us with emails, pictures and reports on the girls and the orphanage.

### St. Francis Orphanage Closes

In the spring of 2007 we received the sad news that St. Francis Orphanage closed. The children were relocated to either new orphanages or for a few, living relatives. Many of these children shared a common story of their parents dying of aids and grandparents being left to raise these them. When we heard this we wanted to make sure that Sonena, Zanabo and their three cousins would stay together. Miraculously Walter was able to find a lone relative.

## Walter Brings the Children back to Kinagop

Walter was able to locate Sonena's grandmother, Teresiah Muthoni, the only family breadwinner. Teresiah is a single mother taking care of twelve children: eight orphans, and four of her own. She is a casual laborer working in neighbor's gardens for a meager income, which she has to divide between paying school fees for her children and providing basic needs for the whole family. Unfortunately her children have been regularly sent home for inadequate school fees. She was forced to send some of her family to the orphanage for their survival.



In the Spring of 2007 Walter drove the five children to their grandmother's home in Kinagop, a six hour journey from Nairobi. Kinagop is a very small rural village located in West Kenya. Upon arrival, Teresiah was very happy to see the children, however she knew that she could not support them as each day was a struggle.



### Money Raised

The generosity of many have helped to make a difference. Walter informed us that the Teresiah was in a desperate situation and she needed assistance especially with shelter. Because of increasing cold winters, Teresiah did not think the children would survive in her tiny dilapidated shack. Money was then sent to build them a new home. Next, we purchased two cows (the first one passed away due to disease) and supported the family with seeds and fertilizer. We have also sent clothing, school fees and supplies over the past two years.



This year funds will be going to pay the fees for two of Teresiah's grandchildren, Martha (14) and Joseph (15). Monthly donations will cover room, board, food, school supplies and a uniform (everything they need to live and get a high school education).

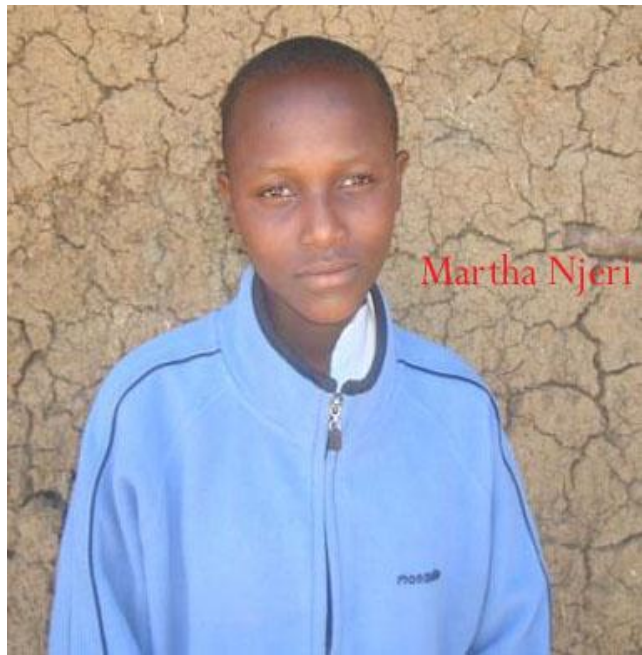
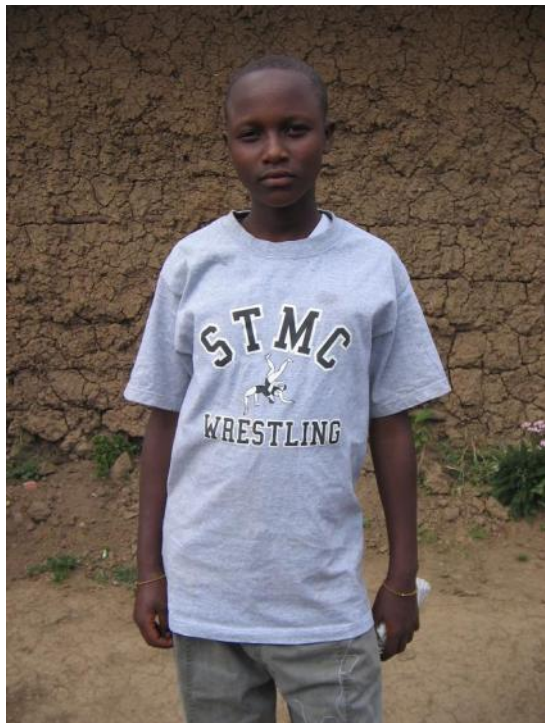
We are continuing to support the four youngest (Sonena, Zainabu, Cyrus and Simon) at an orphanage/school in Kisumu, Kenya (same city Barak Obama's family originates from).

We also support the family in Kinangop with seeds, fertilizer (each year), support for Bernard to go to elementary school in the community (Gr. 6) and for the others to live. More information will be on our STMC website in the Campus Ministry section.

Mr. D. Mattiazzo



Simon, Zainabu, Cyrus and Sonena



## Seeds of Hope Mission 2009 – With God All Things are Possible

Emily Ford, a grade 12 student at Saint Thomas More Collegiate, traveled to Uganda this past July. She went with a group of youth from her parish, St. Alban's Anglican church, to a school called "Fisher Branch Kalagala High School," where their main purpose was to build a soccer field. Emily and her team also taught typing to all of the teachers, music to a group of students, and read stories and played games with elementary students. It took a year for the team to raise the funds needed to build the soccer field. They fundraised by having car washes, collecting bottles and cans, holding a labor auction, dinners, a dance, and selling packaged coffee. On top of the money

raised for the project, each team member paid for his or her own travel expenses.

The Seeds of Hope Mission team were guests of the school director and the Anglican Archbishop of Eastern Uganda. The team was asked to visit a variety of schools by Reverend Wilberforce, where they explained how they were able to travel so far from home, because "With God, All things are possible (Mark 10:27)." This mission was huge project for the small parish of St. Alban's, which was accomplished by only eight youth.



The group stayed at the high school in Uganda. Emily became friends with many of the students at Fisher Branch, and formed strong relationships that have continued since she arrived home. Although the two cultures were vastly different from one another, their common faith brought them together. This experience was valuable for Emily in many ways. She discovered how happy someone can be with few possessions and little money. She also learned that it is possible for a small group of people to have a positive effect on a large group of people on the other side of the world. Emily and her team really did prove, that "With God, all things are possible."



Emily Ford Grade 12

## Saint Thomas More - Green Team:

Through our predecessors' start, the STMC spirit for their Green Team is still very much around and very much alive. Made up of members from grades 8 through 11, this year's team approach is fresh and innovative. As our goal this year is to encourage an overall 'Greener' school, this year's team has many great initiatives and they hope that everyone stays tuned.

Some successes from the Green Team of prior years included...

- making informational posters to raise awareness of recycling and composting
- establishing an ink cartridge/battery recycling depot in our front office
- maintaining an organic, student garden at the school
- participating in the Coin-spiracy Project, alongside the "BERT" team
- participating in a fair trade fashion show to promote ethical consumers
- celebrating Earth Day by conducting an in-school recycling contest
- holding in-school bottle-drives
- conducting an energy audit for the school

With the year's start, the 2009/2010 team has already established ...

- an email address to promote easier communication
- an informational website for the school to keep updated with the latest Green Team events
- an in-school bulletin board that is updated weekly

The Team has many new ideas to implement before the year is through and looks forward to everyone's input and comments.



Our Email: [www.green.team.stmc@hotmail.com](mailto:www.green.team.stmc@hotmail.com)

**PICS FROM BRO**



**GRADE 8 RETREAT**



**HOLY TRINITY BREAKFAST PROGRAM**



**SALVATION ARMY FISH FRIDAY**



**STMC  
OPENING  
MASS  
September  
2009**