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SAINTS CONNECTION

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF SAINT THOMAS AQUINAS

GIVING DAY

A day where generosity becomes a ripple that touches every corner of our community.

When you give to the Saints Community Fund, you are helping our students experience a truly well rounded Catholic faith education that shapes their minds, strengthens their character, and deepens their relationship with Christ.

We invite you to watch this video from one of our students, Harper Wright.

Harper is part of our Performing Arts department and she has also explored track and field, show choir, and dance. She is a student who understands that the opportunities she has been given have opened doors for her to discover her God given talents and pursue her dreams. Her journey is a beautiful reminder that one donation can change the path of a student here at Saint Thomas Aquinas. Your generosity helps make stories like Harper's possible.

Every gift, no matter the size, makes a difference. Every gift reminds our students that they are surrounded by a community that believes in them.



SAINTS COMMUNITY FUND

The Saint Thomas Aquinas community is where we see the love of God in action. Our community is a place where our students feel a connection that is bigger than themselves. Your gift ensures our students are provided opportunities in the classroom, through campus ministry, on the stage, and on the court/field to discover their God-given gifts.

[MAKE A DIFFERENCE HERE!](#)



Alumni Spotlight: Mike Zingg, 2020, Faith outside the comfort zone

KANSAS CITY, Kan. — When Hurricane Melissa struck Jamaica this fall, leaving widespread flooding and damage in its wake, one local Catholic school graduate knew he needed to help.

Guided by his faith and moved by the stories of families in need, Mike Zingg, a 2020 alumnus of St. Thomas Aquinas High School (STA) in Overland Park, quickly volunteered to partner with Heart to Heart International, a nonprofit providing medical aid and relief supplies in disaster-stricken regions.

“I just remember what we were taught at STA — to see what’s in front of you and to take the next step,” he said. “This was one way I could live that out.”

Zingg works alongside the HHI team and fills in where needed. For him, the trip is more than an act of service — it’s a way of living out the Gospel call to love one’s neighbor. He credits his years at STA for shaping that outlook.

“It started with participation in the Catholic Charities food drives,” he said. And it wasn’t just something done to earn service hours. Rather, it was woven into everything — retreats, classes, even how students treated each other.

“That is what made me want to take my faith out into the world,” he said.

[Read Full Article Here](#)

AVA MARTIN ‘22, IS DRAFTED AS THE #2 OVERALL PICK!



Ava Martin — standout outside hitter from Creighton University — has officially been selected as the No. 2 overall pick in the 2025 Major League Volleyball Draft! Watch the full moment she hears her name called and becomes the newest member of the Atlanta Vibe. Known for her explosive offense, consistency, and impact at Creighton, Ava enters Major League Volleyball as one of the top prospects in the 2025 draft class. This video captures her full draft moment, reaction, and everything that makes her such a major pick for the Vibe.

[Watch the story here!](#)

Serving, Teaching, and Thriving: Daniel Petracek, '16, in Kenya with the Peace Corps



Alumni Daniel Petracek has spent a full year in Kenya serving with the Peace Corps. When you hear about his journey, it is clear how much he has grown since those first days of training, which now feel like a blur. Just a few days after arriving in Kenya, with only a couple of hours of language training, Daniel was placed with his host family. He navigated the anxiety of a new environment, relying on Google Translate to communicate, and slowly began to find his footing. Looking back, the transformation is striking.

As you follow his experience, it becomes clear how quickly time passes. Daniel chose the Peace Corps because its twenty seven month program provides a truly immersive opportunity, one that short term programs cannot match. He says the first year is largely about learning the ropes, while the second year offers a chance to use that knowledge and make a greater impact. For Daniel, the second year holds the promise of applying lessons learned and becoming even more effective in his work.



Teaching has been a major change from his previous career as an engineer in heavy civil construction. Daniel has discovered that it takes experimentation to find the most effective teaching strategies and classroom management approaches. Some early attempts now make him laugh, but they were all part of the learning process. As the school year concludes in October, he looks forward to his second year of teaching with more consistency and confidence.



His respect for educators has grown immensely. Teaching in Kenya comes with unique challenges not found in the United States, but the experience has been deeply rewarding. Daniel is eager to continue improving so that his students can benefit even more from their time in his classes.

Overall, Daniel's first year in the Peace Corps has been full of challenges, learning, and unforgettable experiences. While he misses many things from home, the trade has been worth it. His time in Kenya has been a once in a lifetime opportunity, one he embraces without regret.

Follow his journey [here!](#)

January 24th, 2026



[REGISTER HERE](#)

Event Details

- We will have the KU vs K-State game live
 - We will have \$5.00 squares for purchase!
 - 1st half winner and 2nd half winner
- We will have extra credit opportunity for \$10.00 Cash
- Mulligans are sold PRE-EVENT!
- **SIGN UP IN DECEMBER for a substantial price reduction!**
- **All January signups are \$100 more!**

SAINT THOMAS AQUINAS
**CHRISTMAS
MARKET**

Friday, December 5
5:00pm - 8:00pm

Saturday, December 6
10:00am - 2:00pm

#stasaints

Christmas Market

Join us for some Christmas cheer and good times at our Saint Thomas Aquinas Christmas Market! This year we will have a variety of items to fit any need or want! Bring your friends, some hot cocoa and some money! Buy ALL your gifts for Christmas in ONE stop!

If you are interested in hosting a table with your crafts please contact:

[Chelsie Kane](#)