

Saint Thomas More Society, Sacramento

Seeking the Spirit in the Law

June 2023



ADVOCATUS

Occasional Newsletter of the Saint Thomas More Society, Sacramento

ABOUT THE SOCIETY

Founded in 1987, the St. Thomas More Society, Sacramento (STMS) is an independent board-governed organization, sponsored by Catholic lawyers, with its membership open to attorneys and other legal professionals and legislative advocates of any religious persuasion who subscribe to its purposes.

The purposes of STMS are to serve as a mutual support group, to foster individual spiritual growth, to further interfaith understanding, to promote the teachings of the Second Vatican Council, and to advocate, encourage, and model respect, civility, and ethics in the practice of law.

STMS does not engage in advocacy or take stands on controversial political questions; nor does it engage in fundraising.

The official first meeting of the current "St. Thomas More Society of Sacramento County" took place on May 10, 1988, in the basement of the Cathedral, after Bishop Francis A. Quinn galvanized a group to put together a local Red Mass -- a tradition (from the 13th century) of requesting that the Holy Spirit bless public officials and members of the legal community with guidance and understanding in their work.

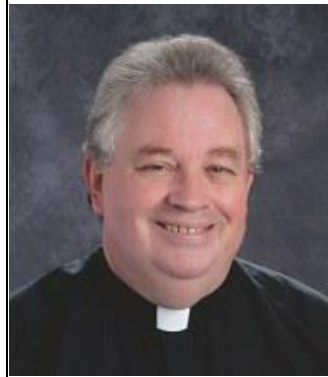
STMS became an affiliate of the Sacramento County Bar Association (SCBA) in 2005 and has been a frequent sponsor of SCBA events, including the Bench Bar Reception.

STMS has, since 2006, co-sponsored an annual Ethics luncheon with the J. Reuben Clark Law Society (JRCLS) and the Brigham Young University Management Society (BYUMS) – See Page 2 for a discussion of this year's event.

UPCOMING EVENT

June 22, 2023 Feast Day Event

STMS is pleased to present our 12th annual *Fr. McDermott Award for Integrity* to **Fr. Tom O'Neill, S.J.**, at an in-person event at Cristo Rey High School on June 22, 2023.



Fr. Tom O'Neill, S.J., is currently an Associate Pastor at St. Ignatius Parish in Sacramento and Superior of the Sacramento Jesuit Community. He entered the Society of Jesus in 1976 and was ordained in 1990. He has an M.F.A in painting from the Pratt Institute in

New York and worked in the Fine Arts Department at the University of San Francisco. Fr. Tom has taught art in a number of schools. For the past nine years, Fr. Tom has been involved in Recovery work, and he will continue this work in his next assignment in Los Angeles. STMS members are grateful for all the in-person and virtual STMS events that Fr. Tom has participated in, assisted with, or presided over through the years. STMS members are inspired by his creative talents and his ability to infuse the sublime into the secular.

The event will cost \$20 to STMS members, \$25 to non-members, \$10 for law students, and is free for priests and religious (deacons, sisters, brothers).

RSVP to mhbressi@comcast.net.

For advance tickets, send checks to Mary Bressi, 1431 Teneighth Way, Sacramento CA 95815.

For Sponsorship information, contact Plauché Villeré, ploshay@aol.com.

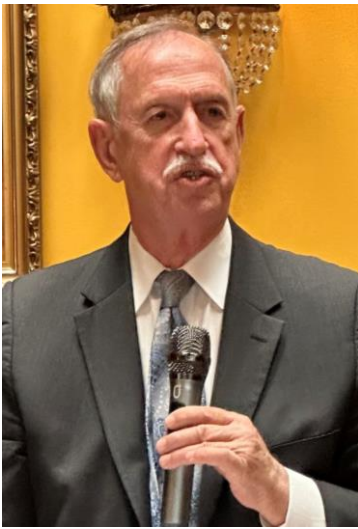
More Info, see page 3.

RECENT ACTIVITIES

Annual Joint Meeting Another Success!

Judge Culhane Presents Ethics, Civility, and Professionalism in the Practice of Law

Legal professionals from around the Sacramento area gathered at The Old Spaghetti Factory in Roseville on Wednesday, April 12 to hear from Hon. **Kevin Culhane** (Ret) on Ethics, Civility, and Professionalism in the Practice of Law. The event was jointly sponsored by the Sacramento St. Thomas More Society (STMS), the Sacramento J. Reuben Clark Law Society, and the Sacramento BYU Management Society.



During the event, Judge Culhane shared his thoughts on professionalism and ethics, drawing from his extensive experience practicing law and serving as a judge. He highlighted the fact that the rules of professional conduct prescribe what a lawyer must not do but don't offer much guidance on

what they should do. He emphasized the importance of lawyers getting involved in their communities, finding objectives to aspire to, and contributing to society in meaningful ways.

"If you want to develop the clientele and work on cases you want to, you don't belong [in the office] on a Saturday. Go teach a class, write a book, get elected to the Board of Governors, become the president of Women in Law. Find something that will keep you from becoming a legal technician... You do that, you'll get the clients you want," Judge Culhane said.

He also discussed the importance of emotional intelligence and being accountable for mistakes. Judge Culhane stated that professionals who display



emotional intelligence can moderate their responses to challenges and that accountability is key in the legal profession.

The judge emphasized that lawyers should have a vision of what the legal system can be, what is important, and what is not. Even if they disagree with someone on a case, they need to have a sense of proportion about what is truly important. Culhane went on to address the current state of the legal system and the attacks it faces in the media, stating that the judiciary and legal system are under attack. He discussed how judges and courts are being discussed in public as political and that many believe the outcomes of cases are predictable based on who appointed the judge.

"The major disciplinary cases around the country for attorney discipline have been around elections. That is what the students are seeing," Judge Culhane stated.

The event was well attended, with legal professionals from various firms and organizations in attendance. Attendees found the judge's insights and experiences valuable and informative, offering a timely perspective on the practice of law and the legal system.



"Taking the time to gather and contemplate ethics is a core value of STMS, and Judge Culhane's experiences and focus on keeping things in proportion provided a fantastic grounding," STMS Recording Secretary **Heather Hoganson**.

The joint sponsorship of the STMS, the Sacramento J. Reuben Clark Law Society, and the Sacramento BYU Management Society has been a great collaboration through the 15 years of events they have co-hosted. This annual event brings together legal professionals from different organizations to learn from one another and gain a deeper understanding of the legal system.

The challenges facing the legal profession today are significant, and events like this one are essential in addressing those challenges. As Judge Culhane

highlighted, the legal profession needs to find solutions to these issues to ensure that young people continue to consider and aspire to the law. Events like this provide a platform for legal professionals to come together, share their experiences, and work towards building a better legal system for all.

Judge Culhane is a well-respected mediator, arbitrator, and referee at JAMS, a leading provider of alternative dispute resolution services. Before joining JAMS, he served as a judge in the Sacramento Superior Court for 13 years, handling civil trials, civil law and motion, family law, and probate. He was the Sacramento Superior Court Presiding Judge for 2016-2017 and SCBA Judge of the Year in 2017.

Thanks to Audrey Perry Martin for these photos and write-up. Audrey is a partner at Vantage Legal. She is a political law attorney and has worked on several presidential campaigns, for Congress, at the Federal Election Commission, and at private law firms in Washington, D.C. and California. Ms. Perry Martin has taught election law at Brigham Young University law school and is the founder of Project Elect, a nonprofit focused on getting women involved in public service. Information about upcoming JRCLS and BYU Management Society events can be found at <https://byums.byu.edu/us-sacramento/>.

St. Thomas More Society (STMS)

Annual Feast Day Celebration Reception

Recognizing the feast of St. Thomas More,
Patron Saint of Lawyers, and 37 years of STMS

**Honoring Fr. Tom O'Neill, S.J.,
with the twelfth annual Integrity Award**

Date: Thursday, June 22, 2023

Time: 5:30-7:30 pm

Place: Cristo Rey High School

8475 Jackson Road (corner of Florin-Perkins)

Cost: \$20 Members; \$25 Non-Members; \$10 Students

(No cost for priests or religious / sisters / brothers)

St. Thomas More Society, Sacramento, is an affiliate of the Sacramento County Bar Association which focuses on civility and ethics, in addition to mutual support, personal spiritual growth, and interfaith understanding.

Advance Tickets: Send checks to Mary Bressi,
1431 Teneighth Way, Sacramento CA 95818

Make checks payable to "STMS"

Info: www.sacstms.org or Facebook



More Feast Day Info....

The Fr. McDermott Award for Integrity is named for the late Rev. Charles Sylvester McDermott, former Vicar for Theological and Canonical Affairs for the Diocese of Sacramento, and a founding member of STMS. Father Sylvester served as the group's unofficial chaplain and advisor for many years. (See: <https://www.scd.org/sites/default/files/2017-06/Vol5No1McDermottFatherCharlesSylvester.pdf>)

The Father McDermott Award for Integrity recognizes persons of high integrity who can often go unnoticed in this hustle and bustle world.

Past Fr. McDermott Integrity Award Recipients:

- 2011 Bishop Francis A. Quinn
- 2012 Attorney Ronald Blubaugh
- 2013 Sister Jeanne Felion
- 2014 Attorney Vicki Jacobs
- 2015 Judge James Mize
- 2016 Sr. Libby Fernandez
- 2017 Attorney Paul Starkey
- 2018 Father Tom Piquado
- 2019 Attorney and Deacon Sergio Diaz
- 2020-21 Judge Jaime René Román (ret.)
- 2022 Bishop Jaime Soto

STMS Thanks Cristo Rey High School for again allowing us use of their venue!

Cristo Rey High School Sacramento (CRHSS), which opened in August 2006, is rooted in the traditions of the Sisters of Mercy and the Society of Jesus (Jesuits). CRHSS is one of 37 schools in the Cristo Rey Network nationwide; CRHSS transforms lives by providing a Catholic, college preparatory education and professional work experience to high school students with limited financial resources.

Each student works five days per month in companies and organizations throughout the Sacramento region gaining real-world work experiences. These sponsoring companies allow students to earn 60% of the cost of their education. A number of law firms in Sacramento have benefited from the hard work of these students.

For more information, visit www.crhss.org or contact Debbie Woodsford at 916-400- 3386 or dwoodsford@crhss.org.

January MCLE Available to Watch

STMS thanks **Judge Lawrence Brown** for his insightful presentation on January 11, 2023, *Bringing Justice To Those Suffering From Mental Illness*.

Judge Brown's presentation was recorded by the Sacramento Public Library, with whom STMS partnered for this event, and a video can be watched for MCLE credit (.5 Implicit Bias subcategory of Elimination of Bias plus .5 General)

<https://saclaw.org/product/instructor/hon-lawrence-brown/video-bringing-justice-to-those-suffering-from-mental-illness/>

STMS Web Site

To visit our web page, please go to
<http://www.sacstms.org>

Find our **Facebook Group** under
Saint Thomas More Society, Sacramento
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1033969703325108/>

STMS is an affiliate of the
Sacramento County Bar Association
and encourages joint membership.
<http://www.sacbar.org>

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: Is STMS membership open to non-Catholics?

A: Yes. One of our mission principles is to be open to all persons who subscribe to the purposes of STMS.

Q: Are all St. Thomas More Societies Connected?

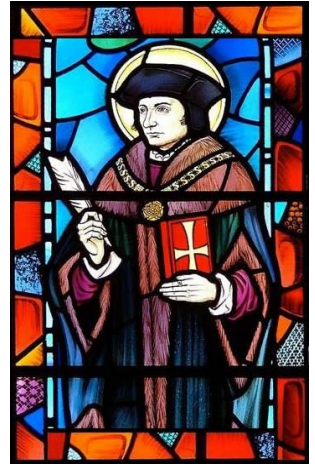
A: No. There is no national group and each group named after St. Thomas More has its own mission and/or purpose.

Q: Is this group just for attorneys?

A: No. Our membership is open to the legal profession, broadly defined: attorneys, paralegals, law office secretaries and administrators, judges and clerks, lobbyists, legislative advocates, government workers, students, retired legal professionals, and all who subscribe to the purposes of STMS.

THOMAS WHO?

Sir Thomas More was an English lawyer, writer, and statesman. He was at one time one of Henry VIII's most trusted civil servants, becoming Chancellor of England in 1529. However, More was also a passionate defender of Catholic orthodoxy, and was ultimately executed by beheading on July 6, 1535. In 2000, Pope John Paul II declared St. Thomas More "the heavenly Patron of Statesmen and Politicians."



Although Pope Pius XI canonized Thomas More and John Fisher on 19 May 1935, and More's feast day was established as **July 9th**, the General Roman Calendar celebrates More with Fisher on **June 22** (the date of Fisher's execution).



(Nora, Christine, Heather, Plo, and Mary)

For more information about the STMS and/or our upcoming events, or to inquire about joining our Board, please contact one of our Officers:

President **Plauché (Plo) Villeré**

Vice-President **Nora Quartuccio** (Programs)

Treasurer **Mary Bressi**

Recording Secretary **Heather Cline Hoganson**

or one of our At-Large Directors:

Angela Lai, Bruce Timm,

Christine Bologna, or Christopher Bakes.



St. Thomas More Society (STMS) Sacramento, California

www.sacstms.org

Membership Application or Renewal / Dues Transmittal Form

TO: St. Thomas More Society Treasurer Mary Bressi, 1431 Teneighth Way, Sacramento CA 95818.

I subscribe to the following statement of purpose of the STMS:

The STMS is an independent organization sponsored by Catholic lawyers, governed by a Board, with its membership open to attorneys, other legal professionals, and legislative advocates of any religious persuasion who subscribe to its purposes.

The purposes of STMS are:

- ❖ to serve as a mutual support group,
- ❖ to foster individual spiritual growth,
- ❖ to further interfaith understanding,
- ❖ to promote the teachings of the Second Vatican Council, and
- ❖ to advocate, encourage, and model respect, civility, and ethics in the practice of law.

The group does not engage in advocacy or take stands on controversial political questions; it does not engage in fundraising.

Annual dues are \$30, and \$5 for law students. Lifetime Dues are a one-time \$250.

Here is my check (made out to STMS) for calendar year 2023 in the amount of \$_____.

NOTE: Membership applications received after September 1 in any given year count as membership for current and following year.

Printed Name _____ (Optional) State Bar # _____

My mailing address is:

Phone _____ (day) (Optional) FAX _____

E-Mail _____

Signature _____ Date _____

I am... I am not... ...a member of the Sacramento County Bar Association.
(Optional) I belong to _____ Parish.

(Optional) Area of Practice: _____

Feel free to include any speakers or topics that you would like to see on this page!

Follow our FACEBOOK group: *Saint Thomas More Society, Sacramento* (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1033969703325108/>)
The Saint Thomas More Society of the Sacramento Area is an affiliate of the Sacramento County Bar Association (www.sacbar.org).