

Friends of Old Saint Thomas
Volunteer Opportunities
(A Sign Up Form appears at the end of these pages)

1. Hands-on Work

Church Cleaning

God's house has to be cleaned. Can you spare about an hour a month to help clean the 1852 Church? You can do it whenever it is convenient for you and it takes about 45 minutes to an hour. It is not intense...just dusting, dry mopping, and vacuuming. *A group effort overall; could be a solo task each week.*

Gardening

Do you like to garden? Maybe you would enjoy working in the garden areas surrounding the buildings in the historic district. Helpers typically spend about two hours each month raking leaves, trimming bushes, weeding, mulching, deadheading, or clearing steps & parking areas of leaves and debris. Any amount of time you can give will be greatly appreciated. *A group effort overall; could be a solo task each month.*

Maintenance & Restoration

The buildings within the Historic District warrant continuous maintenance and restoration where feasible. Help is always needed with painting, plastering, wood repairs and general remodeling. This is an on-going activity, has no set schedule or time commitment, and is a perfect volunteer activity for retired tradesmen. You decide your availability for any one task. *A group effort.*

Purchasing Research

When we need to purchase items (e.g. furnishings, certain supplies or unusual items) a person is needed to do the "legwork": checking stores, the internet and other related outlets for prices, styles, availability and the like for information to pass along to the M&R Committee. This is intermittent work, with no set schedule or time commitment. *A group effort.*

2. Hospitality

FOST hosts some events that require refreshments...about two or three per year. We need people to help set up and clean up, purchase supplies and food, and prepare and bring food. *A group effort; needs a Coordinator or Co-coordinators.*

3. Fundraising/Event Planning

An "event" in this context is a large, public party or special program, designed to raise funds for FOST operations. Much more than usual hospitality, the greater planning needed for such programs is special, too. If you like planning events, your help is needed.

Chairperson or Co-chairs needed. This would be an annual or biannual effort – low-key to start the year, more intense as the event date approaches. *A group effort.*

4. Writing/PR

Newsletter

A semi-annual Newsletter informs FOST members/friends and the parish about recent events and activities. Each issue also usually includes a short article about some aspect of the historical story. Writing and formatting are the tasks. Usually an individual effort to prepare. Additional help for proofing and occasional writing is in place. Time involved depends on the level of commitment.

Publicity

FOST events open to the general public need general publicity. Writing press releases and sending them out to various newspapers and other places is the task, which can be two separate components, if need be. Tour Publicity has its own annual schedule: in late May or early June, send notices to local parishes, local newspapers, our own church bulletin and other outlets about the tours, held one Sunday a month, June through October. Send reminder notices to some or all outlets, from time to time. *Group/solo effort.*

Children's Materials (Handouts/Pamphlets)

Producing materials for use in the Saint Thomas School Heritage Program has been a long-term FOST goal. Individuals with experience in producing such materials are needed. In addition, we envision forming *an advisory committee* of teachers, former teachers, interested parents or grandparents – whoever loves kids and understands how to communicate with them via print and/or other media, with a Chairperson overseeing the effort. The time involved will depend on how the work of this group develops. *A group effort.*

Historical Research (Handouts/Pamphlets)

See below, under *History*

Website

Both general publicity and historical research results are posted on the FOST website (www.friendsofoldstthomas.org). While we have a webmaster, someone else who's interested would be helpful. Depending on level of interest and competence with web matters, time is variable.

Other

Developing additional publicity materials such as a tri-part display board, redesigning the brochure and the like, would also be helpful. *Solo effort.*

5. History

Ivy Mills/Old Saint Thomas Guides

Do you like learning history and interacting with others to share what you've learned? Ivy Mills and Saint Thomas are part of the unique story of Pennsylvania's first Roman Catholic parish, founded in 1729. Men and women willing and able to learn about both of these treasured sites and who would enjoy speaking with visitors about them are prime candidates for the Guides program. Anyone interested in history, historical structures, artifacts & interior design will find ample opportunity to pursue their interest and enjoy the camaraderie of the IM/OST Guide team. Someone with an interest in

historical technology – for technical aspects of Ivy Mills, the site of PA’s third paper mill – would be welcome, but no previous experience or knowledge is necessary.

Each Guide receives his/her own “Guide Notes” book, and after training sessions, “shadows” current guides before solo assignments. Tours are held five Sundays each year, June through October. Special request tours, which Guides also staff, are occasionally held throughout the year. This activity requires a specific time commitment: sufficient time to study and train, and three hours per Tour date. Not every Guide must commit to every Tour date, but must agree to study materials provided and to attend the annual training session. *A group effort.*

Historical Research (Handouts/Pamphlets)

Do you enjoy the challenge of delving into the past? Is historical research something that would interest you? In order for the Old Saint Thomas story to remain lively and vibrant, continuing research is essential. We are developing a research plan that includes varied topics about the people, the buildings, the life of the parish and the school, interaction with neighboring churches and so on. Innumerable sources for pertinent information abound in the immediate area and in the city. Some on-line sources are also usable.

FOST has published two pamphlets, along with many, smaller specific informational sheets. Being able to publish more would greatly benefit the FOST mission. The time required will depend on individuals’ level of involvement.

6. School-related

Heritage Program for Saint Thomas School & Other Students

Since 2002, FOST’s program for Saint Thomas School 4th and 8th grade classes has been a fixture of the school year. The program requires trained tour guides (see above) who are attuned to suitable ways of communicating with young people. Expanding the program to include other Catholic schools in the region is highly desirable. The time required will depend on individual commitment. *Most activities are a group effort; some are individual.*

Fourth Grade

The 4th grade program is an introduction to parish history because 4th grade is the year for studying Pennsylvania history. It is also geared toward the Delaware County Passport to History program, shared by public, parochial and private schools throughout the County (see below). Saint Thomas 4th graders visit the parish Historic District in the Fall and Ivy Mills (109 Ivy Mills Road) in the Spring. About 2 - 2 ½ hours per visit.

Eighth Grade

The 8th grade program is geared toward our own 8th graders, who are leaving the fold to move on to far-flung public, private or Catholic high schools. They should leave with a strong reminder about their unique heritage as members of the Saint Thomas the Apostle at Ivy Mills community. Their program consists of a full morning’s activities, usually in the Fall: visiting Ivy Mills first, then the parish Historic District, and ending with Mass in the 1852 Church. The students are required to take notes during their visits. The religion teacher assigns and grades a short paper about the students’ reflections on their Heritage Day experience.

Saint Thomas P.R.E.P. Program

It is our hope to be able to provide the same tours to 4th grade parishioners who attend public schools and who come to Saint Thomas P.R.E.P. classes during the school year. These classes are held on Tuesdays or Wednesdays, and take about 2 - 2 ½ hours.

Tours for Other Local Parish Schools

St. Thomas the Apostle Parish is the oldest Roman Catholic parish in the state of Pennsylvania, the leader in religious toleration in the nation, so the unique Ivy Mills story is an important part not only of our own parish, but of all American and Catholic history. FOST would like to share that significant story with local parochial schools. Initially, inviting the children from our cluster parishes may be a good start. If successful, the program could be expanded to include more of the nearby Delaware and Chester County parish schools.

The first task will be to “sell” the program to the principals and teachers of the targeted schools. After that, it’s a matter of conducting the tours, usually 2 - 2 ½ hours (including set-up/take-down).

Delaware County Passport to History

This is a program in which 4th grade students from many schools throughout the County visit and learn about historical sites and have their “passports” stamped or stickered as evidence of their visit. Old Saint Thomas has had hundreds of student visitors, along with their parents, since the program’s start in 2000. FOST needs better hand-out materials for this program. (See “*Children’s Materials*” under “*Writing*”, above.)

Children’s Materials (Handouts/Pamphlets) See page 2.

7. Miscellaneous

Designated Response Person

For FOST events that require an RSVP, usually only two or three per year, your name and phone number would be included in publicity and/or on invitations, & you would keep a record of the responses received. RSVPs are also gathered via e-mail, which comes to the FOST e-mail address, and & are forwarded to you. *A solo task.*

Staffing Informational Tables

There are usually a few opportunities throughout the year to present the FOST story and program for the parish or for the general public, such as during parish events (Ministry Sunday, Fall Harvest Festival), Chester Heights Community Day or other such venues. Serving as the smiling face of FOST during such events is fun and helps FOST gain new friends and teaches folks who know what we do. *A group effort.* Usually 2 or 3 hours per event.

Travel Program

There are innumerable historic sites in the Middle Atlantic area that pertain specifically to the national heritage of religious freedom, and specifically to our Catholic heritage. Sites in Philadelphia and the immediate region along with farther-flung places such as Old Bohemia and Baltimore in Maryland, White Clay Creek in Delaware, and other suitable sites are within a day’s trip. Planning and carrying out such trips has also been

a long-term FOST goal. There is probably a “market” for them. Persons who like organizing such trips, which can be modest fund-raisers as well, could help a lot. *Chairperson or Co-chairs needed.* Perhaps 5 or 6 hours time commitment per trip, or less, after the initial planning has been accomplished.

For more information, call (610) 459-8392; e-mail fost@friendsofoldstthomas.org

Friends of Old Saint Thomas
Box 19
Chester Heights, PA 19017
www.friendsofoldstthomas.org

Volunteer Sign-up

I am interested in helping with _____

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ *E-mail* _____

09/18/14