



Financial support for the school comes, not from tax funds, but from the parish and from the parents whose principal concern is obtaining a quality education for their children. Annual tuition depends on whether a family is registered in the parish and whether it contributes regularly to the Sunday collections. A coupon system spreads payments over nine monthly installments, after registration. Full details may be obtained from the principal of St. Thomas More School at 101 N. Thomas St., Arlington, Va. 22203.

Emphasizing the many benefits enjoyed by St. Thomas More pupils, Msgr. Burke notes that national test scores "for a long time" have shown STM pupils to be "far above the norm." But there is more to it, even, than academic achievement.

"We are greatly concerned," says Msgr. Burke, "that our children be exposed to the official teachings of the church in the matters of faith and morals. There is a very real atmosphere of Catholic faith in the education of our children."

## SAINT THOMAS MORE SCHOOL



Education at St. Thomas More School is a very personal process. It involves teachers who take seriously indeed the responsibility of developing the intellectual and spiritual vigor of young Catholics and preparing them for the challenges of the society which they will help mold. At STM, education is more than classrooms and curricula; it is assuring that each child receives individual attention as needed.

Monsignor Richard J. Burke, pastor of St. Thomas More and former supervisor of schools in the Diocese of Richmond, puts it this way:

"The Catholic school is one of the agencies, along with the home and the church, that molds and shapes the minds and hearts of children in education, both academic and religious. One purpose of our school is to create harmony in the lives of young people. Our home, school and church should offer our young ones a pleasant atmosphere in which to grow as persons, an atmosphere conducive to the creation of basic foundation on which our children can build useful and productive lives."

The STM faculty, combining experience and enthusiasm, consists of a full complement of religious and lay teachers, along with a director of religious education, a full-time librarian, physical education instructors, and music and art teachers. The parish priests, too, contribute tone and teaching, both in formal classroom settings and in the more casual schoolyard encounters. Naturally, each teacher is certified by the Virginia State Department of Education. Each has at least a bachelor's degree, and several are pursuing or have completed courses leading to advanced degrees.

"St. Thomas More," says one Sister, "is equipped with all of the teaching aids demanded by modern education."

In fact, there is no lack of electronic teaching aids, which she is happy enough to utilize while adding her personal touch. For example, in the social studies and reading programs, each teacher makes his or her own tape recording instead of relying on mass-produced material. On call for every classroom are television sets, record players, projectors for films and slides, tape recorders and cassettes. "Listening centers" make it possible for teachers to work with eight pupils at a time in specialized treatment of any subject.

The "televiewer" is used extensively. First and second graders, to mention just these groups, are shown scenes from the Bible on a screen while teacher's familiar voice, on tape, tells them about the parables being depicted.





To make even better use of electronic teaching aids, a new learning center—concentrating the various items of viewing and listening equipment—is being developed in the Audio-Visual Room.

STM's physical plant provides ample space to divide the eight grades into two classes each. This permits relatively small classes, averaging 30 to a room. Taking the favorable student-teacher ratio even further, classes frequently are broken down into smaller groups in the basic subjects of reading and mathematics. Special attention is given to the all-important task of imparting instruction in reading, with programs for gifted readers and for those who are slower to grasp fundamentals.

STM maintains a well-stocked library, used as a supplement to Arlington County's excellent public library system under careful supervision. A separate library for the faculty concentrates on educational periodicals which help the staff keep up with developments in the teaching profession.

In addition, the two-level school building contains a cafeteria and health clinic, as well as faculty lounges and administrative offices. Plans are afoot to make more effective use of the auditorium, including a proposal to make it a combination recreation center-meeting hall.

Supplementing the active athletic program—separate programs for boys and girls in varsity and junior varsity baseball, softball, basketball and track—the faculty is attempting to schedule a weekly period of extracurricular activities. Through field trips, STM also takes increasing advantage of the numerous cultural and historical attractions of the Washington area.

