

SUMMER 2024  
**CONNECTIONS**  
Official Publication of Sister Thea Bowman Catholic School

## A NOTE FROM OUR PRINCIPAL

"I was taught to do my best, try my hardest  
and keep striving up the ladder. But at each rung  
I was to reach back and help a brother, sister,  
or stranger receive the gift and pass it on and thus help  
to create a more caring, sharing world."

*-Sister Thea Bowman*

### Greetings Friends of Sister Thea Bowman,

As the only remaining Catholic school in East St. Louis, we continue to put faith formation at the forefront of our holistic learning. We will continue to reach out to our partners to deliver a quality education in a safe environment with our three-year strategic plan guiding us along the way.

We enjoyed such a great year filled with so many joyful school celebrations. Our time together was especially wonderful when we gathered in the chapel as a school community to honor Sister Thea Bowman and her blessed life and to celebrate the graduation of our eighth grade class.

Leaders...dreamers...peacemakers...loyal friends...grateful hearts...giving back to the community...growing in faith... knowing God is always there.

Our students, and especially our eighth graders have learned well and they are ready for all their great futures hold.

To our parents, guardians, teachers, staff, donors, friends, and neighbors; to our community partners including, Allsup Charitable Services, Access Academy and St. Louis University, St. Louis Black Authors of Children's Literature - Believe Literacy Lab, SLU Clavius Project, and everyone who attended and supported our Heat of Thea Foundation - Each One Teach One -Community, **YOU** have each helped make Catholic education possible. **YOU** are an essential part of our mission to deepen faith in Jesus Christ and to inspire, prepare, and empower students to become the next generation of responsible and dedicated leaders of their community and of our world.

This mission has taken root in all of our students. Still, we send prayers especially to our eighth graders who will continue to share their talents with the world and do their part in sharing the glory of God.

May each member of the Sister Thea Bowman Catholic School family be filled with a future full of grace.

**Many Blessings,  
Michelle Ruppel, Principal**



# I Am...



## A 2024 Sister Thea Bowman Graduate



**Congratulations**  
**2024 Eighth Grade Graduates!**

**Graduation**  
**2024**



# Graduation Day



# Graduation 2024



# I am... M.C.

## I plan to attend Althoff Catholic High School

Sister Thea Bowman Catholic School has taught me the qualities of a peacemaker are: to always be respectful, think positive, always have hope, try your best, and always have faith. I thank Sister Thea Bowman for helping me become a peaceful person and teaching me new things, such as teaching me how to play violin and piano.

I believe God is calling me to be a Criminal Lawyer and to help people in need. I want to make a difference in the world by defending others that are innocent. I want to help my people who others thought weren't worth defending. I believe that everyone deserves a second chance. I am willing to help my clients give them that second chance that they deserve. I will make a change one case at a time.

Awards: Honor Roll 4th Quarter; Peacemaker 4th Quarter; Choir; Ambassador; Community Service Project



I am from going camping every summer and nosiness  
From playing cards every New Year's and humorous  
An "extra" family is where I am from

I am from "What part of NO do you not understand?"  
And "YOU SO ANNOYING"  
From M.I., S.D

I am from East St. Louis  
From crickets chirping to potholes  
I am from a busy community

I am a Criminal Lawyer  
Defending others in need  
My dream is Brown, powerful. It tastes like a moist, chunky, delicious brownie

I am M.C.  
I am Funny, Happy, and Stubborn  
I am M. A. C.



# Graduation 2024



# I am... T.H.

## I plan to attend High School in San Antonio

STBCS has helped me grow in my faith by really deepening my relationship with God. In each grade I was struck with many obstacles, some harder than others, but I learned to push through when I put it in God's hands.

I'm starting to uplift myself more, and push away negative thoughts and emotions with the help of (including Ms. Mary) strong and phenomenal women, my homeroom teacher, Rev. Tracy, Ms. Spencer, Ms. Anna, Ms. Crystal, my classmates and so many more.

There's many things I don't know about myself yet, because I'm still young. But it's never too late to start learning about yourself, especially when you know there is still so much hidden inside you that is waiting to be discovered with God and Jesus by my side holding my hands.

Awards: Honor Roll 4th Quarter; Peacemaker All Year; Perfect Attendance 4th Quarter; Robotics Team; Ambassador; 100% Illinois Constitution; Community Service Project



I am from Sunday Mass and black hair  
From holidays at Grandma's house to thick thighs  
An empowered family is where I'm from

I am from "Do I look like booboo the fool?"  
And "Keep playing and see what happens"  
From T.H.

I am from East St. Louis  
From dogs barking if you even look at them to cars blasting RnB music  
To people's mamas calling for somebody naked Keisha  
I am from a wild community

I am a psychologist  
Analyzing emotional behavior, diagnosing, and helping individuals  
My dream is crimson red, supporting, and it tastes like warm cocoa on a cold day

I am T.H.  
I am an advocate, listener and a learner  
I am T.R.H.



# Graduation 2024

# I am... T.W.

## I plan to attend Rosati-Kain Academy

At Sister Thea Bowman Catholic School, I've learned the qualities of a peacemaker are to try your best, take advantage of opportunities, go above and beyond, and whatever you do, keep God in your mind while you do it. Don't ever doubt yourself or your abilities, because only you know what you're capable of and what you want to do. Always push yourself, but never too hard to where you can't do your best, and if you have faith in God, things will go so much smoother.

I thank my school for teaching me how to grow stronger and deepen my relationship with God. I can spread His word through praise dancing, singing, playing the violin and being a peacemaker. Thank you for giving me opportunities and giving me the advantage to go to an all girls high school. I thank Sister Thea as a person for giving me the courage to continue with my dreams and push forward during hard times.

Awards: Honor Roll 4th Quarter; Peacemaker All Year; Robotics Team; Ambassador; Community Service Project



I am from family meetings and cooking  
From cake baking and chaoticity  
A loving family is where I'm from

I am from "Hey Buttercup"  
And "She gives you that look when she likes you"  
By R.W. and I.D.

I am from East St. Louis  
From trains booming to dogs running wild  
I am from an alright community

I am a Marine Biologist  
Studying marine life and sea animals  
It's blue with greenish hues and it's amazing  
It tastes like a raspberry blueberry Faygo

I am T.W.  
I am creative, courageous, and loving  
I am T.T.W.



# Graduation 2024



# I am... R.B.

## I plan to attend Althoff Catholic High School

STBCS has helped me to grow in my faith by introducing me to Rev. Tracy. Meeting her led me to join Liturgical Dance and Genesis Arts Ministry. My school helped me grow my faith by having religion class everyday, Mass every Friday, having the chance to be a part of choir, and worshiping God through violin. All of these things have grown my faith by showing me ways to praise and show love to God besides just praying.

I believe God is calling me to save children's lives and to help them strive just as God created them to do. I want to make a difference in the world by becoming a young African American woman pediatrician. This will give girls of my skin color the inspiration that I have and show them that they can strive to be anything they want to be even in the society we live in.

Thank you from the bottom of my heart - not only to Sister Thea Bowman for all the support - but to my mom who made this possible and stayed with me even through hard times.

Awards: Honor Roll 4th Quarter; Peacemaker All Year; Choir; Liturgical Dance Small Group; Violin Small Group; Spelling Bee; Ballroom Dance Salsa 1st Place; Ballroom Dance Foxy 2nd Place; Citizenship; Ambassador; Community Service Project



I am from reunions in the park and bright smiles  
From game nights and long hair  
A supportive family is where I am from.

I am from "Don't take everything personal"  
And "Do you have Qdoba money?"  
From R.C.

I am from Collinsville  
Deers passing to stillness  
I am from a peaceful community

I am a future pediatrician  
Saving kids' lives, giving kids a second chance at life, and showing hope is possible in every situation  
My dream is pink with a sky full of stars, and it is very helpful. It tastes very sweet like cotton candy.

I am R.B.  
I am affectionate, dedicated, and ambitious.  
I am R.R.J.B.



# Graduation 2024

# I am... J.M.

I plan to attend Nerinx Hall High School

Before I went to Sister Thea Bowman I wasn't really, I guess, connected to God but I still believed that God existed. Sister Thea Bowman has helped me grow in my faith by connecting me to God more, by going to Mass every Friday, having religion class and praying more.

I believe that God is calling me to be a children's welfare social worker because I'm really good with kids. I want to make a difference in the world by helping kids who don't have a say in a bad situation. Whether they don't have a decision in things or if their homes are abusive or if their parents can't provide for them and need help: kids who want better for themselves but can't do that. I would like to thank Sister Thea Bowman for bringing me out of my shell so I can go out and meet new people, and for teaching me that I have a voice and to use it proudly to proclaim God's word.

Awards: Robotics Team; Spelling Bee; Ambassador; Community Service Project



I am from Cat in the Hat (2003 version only) and curiosity

From cooking together and creativity

A loving family is where I'm from.

I am from "When we get in this store don't touch nothing."

And "Stop crying before I come up there and give you something to cry about."

From J.M., E.W. and R.P.

I am from Church Lane

From nosy neighbors to litter

I am from a community that needs a clean up

I am from a social worker

It's beige and dark

White, warm, and it tastes like chicken alfredo

I am J.M.

I am Loud, nice, and realistic.

I am J.J.M.



# Graduation 2024



# I am... J.S.

## I plan to attend Rosati-Kain Academy

When I was younger, I sang praises, but I didn't know what they meant. But now, I'm grateful that I came to a Catholic school. Sister Thea Bowman has helped me grow in my faith by going to Mass and having morning prayer. STBCS also taught me to be a peacemaker - a person who combats hatred and chaos with love and peace.

I believe that God is calling me to become a Computer Scientist and to be a friend that is reliable, to be someone that others can rely on. I know that this journey will be tough to continue on, but I know that God will be with me each step of the way.

Awards: High Honor Roll All Year; Peacemaker All Year; Liturgical Dance Small Group; Robotics Team; Spelling Bee; Ballroom Dance Salsa 3rd Place; Ambassador; Community Service Project; National Junior Honor Society



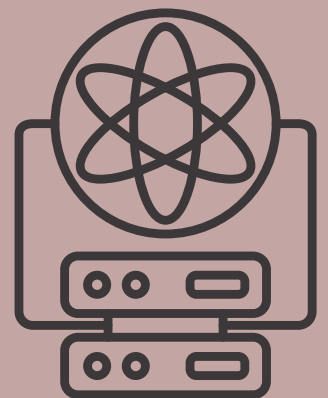
I am from playing cards and a large family  
From hugs and family gatherings  
A strong family is where I Am From

I am from "you need to smile more"  
And "don't be doing nothing you ain't got no business doing"  
From B.G.

I am from East St. Louis  
From stray pets  
I am from a shining community

I am a Computer Scientist  
A dream that has a blue sky with moving clouds.  
A dream that taste like an ice blueberry smoothie

I am J.S.  
I am joyful, honest, and tall.  
I am J.N.S.S.G.



# Graduation 2024

# I am... M.A.

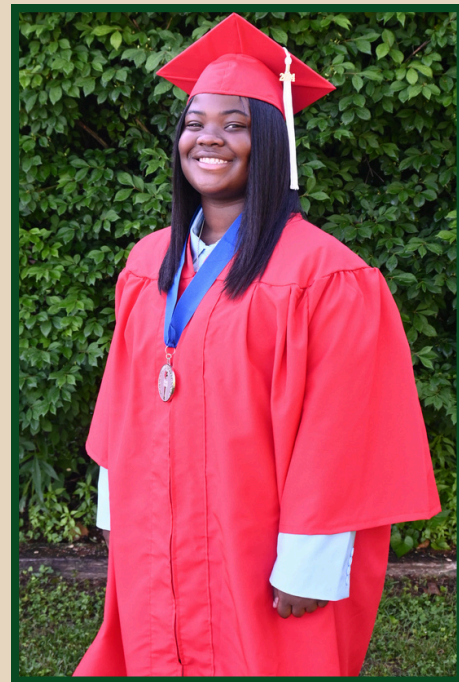
## I plan to attend Rosati-Kain Academy

My first time walking into Sister Thea Bowman Catholic School I was a tiny kindergartener with two pigtails and colorful bows. There was nothing this five year old girl could not do.

After I graduate, I plan on a rigorous academic experience. This will be a new start for me. I will once again be that little kindergartner saying to herself how long the hallways are and how mature the older kids are compared to me. I will be that five year old again, excited to meet new people and for the experiences of a new school.

For the rest of my life, I believe God is calling me to write books that relate to all people and to speak for those who can't. In Sister Thea Bowman's likeness I want to bring light and love to all people because if you are nice to everyone, everyone will be nice to the world.

Awards: High Honor Roll All Year; Peacemaker All Year; Liturgical Dance Small Group; Spelling Bee; Ballroom Dance Salsa 2nd Place; Ambassador; 100% Illinois Constitution; Community Service Project; National Junior Honor Society



I am from intense domino games and deep dimples  
From barbeque and bright smiles  
A comical family is where I'm from

I am from "I remember when you was this big, now you this big"  
And "If you can huh, you can hear"  
From C.J.

I am from East St. Louis  
From freshly cut green grass  
To seeing children in the neighborhood but never playing with them  
I am from a silently loud community

I am a poetic author  
Writing books for children who look just like me  
My dream is yellow, bold, it tastes like chicken wings and lobster tails

I am M.A.  
I am rhythmic, energetic, and goofy  
I am M.J.A.



# Graduation 2024



# I am... A.W.

## I plan to attend Incarnate Word Academy

Little things at STBCS grew my faith at a young age. From praying every morning and evening, to joining the liturgical dance ministry, and now Genesis Arts Ministry, year after year, my faith becomes stronger. With faith, comes peace, and a peacemaker is what we all strive to be - someone who learns from their mistakes. I had to realize that no one in this world is perfect, and everybody makes mistakes. The biggest part is learning from those mistakes. With faith, and peace, there is love...and with faith, peace, and love, lastly there is hope.

This upcoming fall I plan to attend Incarnate Word Academy because it is diverse, supportive, and I will be one of the first violinists there! I believe the school will lead me to finding my future career. I thank STBCS and Access Academy for always preparing me for what comes next and made this possible. Lastly, I thank every student and staff member that has been on my side.

Awards: High Honor Roll 4th Quarter; Peacemaker 4th Quarter; Choir; Violin Small Group; Spelling Bee; Ballroom Dance Salsa 1st Place; Ballroom Dance Quick Step 2nd Place; Liturgical Dance Small Group; Community Service Project; National Junior Honor Society; Ambassador



I am from potlucks on Sundays and thick 4c hair.  
From movie nights and joaning each other.  
An entertaining family is where I'm from.

I am from "Don't let nobody touch your hair."  
And "Don't say lie, say they told a story."  
I am from W.S. and K.J.

I am from East St. Louis.  
From the loud train waking me up in the morning to stray dogs and cats walking the streets  
I am from an unpredictable community where great people come out of.

I am a forensic psychologist.  
Helping, working in civil law understanding the mind of a criminal,  
My dream is gray, like the sweet simplicity of success, it tastes like Oreo ice cream.

I am A.W.  
I am hardworking, artistic, and independent.  
I am A.R.W.



# Graduation 2024



# I Am...

## A 2024 Kindergarten Graduate



Congratulations  
2024 Kindergarten Graduates!

Graduation  
2024



# Our School Family



# Graduation 2024



# Our School Family



# Graduation 2024



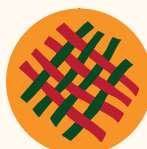
# Heart of Thea FOUNDATION

*Each One Teach One*

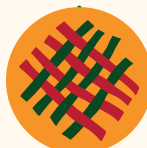
## COMMUNITY

Thank you for your  
support.  
We exceeded  
our fundraising  
goal!

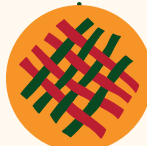
Donations of \$100  
or more  
become part  
of our  
giving community  
and published  
in giving book.



TUITION ASSISTANCE  
MAKING CATHOLIC EDUCATION AFFORDABLE.



FUNDING THE FUTURE  
EVOLVING OUR FUND RAISING INTO AN  
ANNUAL SUSTAINABLE GIVING COMMUNITY.



COMMUNITY IMPACT  
INVITING YOU TO EXPERIENCE HOW YOUR  
HELP CHANGES STUDENT LIVES.

# Graduation 2024

# FEATURE SPOTLIGHT: STBCS STRATEGIC PLANNING

## MISSION

Sister Thea Bowman Catholic School prepares grades K-8 students through holistic learning, academic excellence, personal empowerment, and a deepening faith in Jesus Christ within the Catholic tradition.

## VISION

Graduates are ethical, responsible, and dedicated leaders inspiring good in their community and the world.



Sister Thea Bowman Catholic School leadership, staff, and stakeholders have been diligently enacting our three-year strategic plan to help support our mission and achieve our vision.

We are ready to grow for our students and our community!



# Graduation 2024



# GETTING THINGS DONE AROUND OUR SCHOOL

HELPING OUR STUDENTS ACHIEVE  
THE HEALTHY FITNESS ZONE



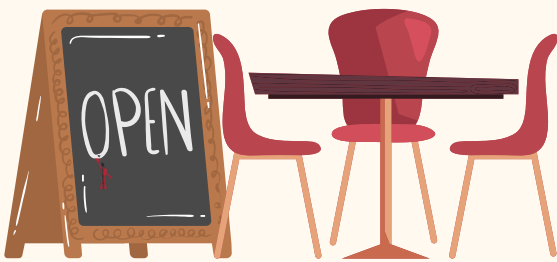
## NEW PLAYGROUND!

## NEW FLOORING!

## NEW CURRICULUM



ENSURING VERTICAL ALIGNMENT  
AND STUDENT PROFICIENCY



## CAFETERIA KITCHEN RENOVATION



# Graduation 2024

# We're Growing!

8213 CHURCH LANE  
EAST ST. LOUIS, IL 62203



**Sister Thea Bowman**  
CATHOLIC SCHOOL

*Inspire. Prepare. Empower.*

- ✓ Faith-Based: All Faith Traditions Welcome!
- ✓ All-day Kindergarten
- ✓ Small Class Sizes
- ✓ Education through Music & the Arts
- ✓ STEM Robotics and Computer Technology
- ✓ Tuition: Income Based
- ✓ Fully Accredited by the State of Illinois and Diocese of Belleville
- ✓ Promote Academic Success and Believe Literacy Lab



Help us spread the word to our neighbors and friends!

With many new updates such as all new flooring throughout the school, a new cafeteria, a new playground, and more, we are excited to welcome our beloved students to our 2024-2025 school year!

Like Us  
on  
Facebook!

**ENROLL TODAY!**  
**KINDERGARTEN-8TH GRADES OPEN**

+ AWARD WINNING ACCESS ACADEMY FOR GRADES 6 - 8  
OFFERING PRIVATE HIGH SCHOOL SCHOLARSHIPS & MORE



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**Graduation**  
**2024**