



**St. Thomas More Society  
of the Diocese of Dallas, Texas  
Catholic Lawyers' Guild**

**THE SOCIETY**

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The Society is a charitable organization exempt from federal income tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. It is led by a Board of Directors appointed by the Bishop of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Dallas. Its purpose is to encourage Catholic lawyers within the Diocese of Dallas to live a Christian vocation by sanctifying their daily work.

The goals of the Society are:

- to promote and foster high ethical principals in the legal profession generally and, in particular, in the community of Catholic lawyers, as exemplified by the life of St. Thomas More;
- to promote the study of the Natural Law and its application to the legal profession;
- to sponsor the annual Red Mass;
- to encourage the study of the life and writings of St. Thomas More;
- to stimulate the practice of Christian precepts in the formulation and administration of the law;
- to encourage interfaith understanding and brotherhood; and
- to be a source of fellowship for our members and other lawyers in the diocese.

Together, we ask God to bless, strengthen, and enlighten all servants of the law, and all people of faith, so that in solidarity and mutual trust we may achieve justice and freedom for society.

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**ST. THOMAS MORE**

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The Society is named for the 16<sup>th</sup> century lawyer, judge, and diplomat who became the first layman to serve as Lord Chancellor of England, the crown's chief minister as well as its highest judicial officer.

St. Thomas More (1478-1535) is the ideal of the Catholic lawyer. He was a man of scholarship and action; contemplative prayer and public life; dedication to family; and service to his country in the highest offices of the land. But most important of all, he was a witness to God and the Catholic faith. After a celebrated career, the most distinguished lawyer in England was martyred under Henry VIII for a matter of conscience. In 1935 he was canonized on the 400th anniversary of his martyrdom and declared the patron saint of lawyers.

“The King’s good servant—and God’s first.” These last words of St. Thomas More have inspired Catholic lawyers for generations to persistently affirm this high calling through faithful instruction and example.

**MEMBERSHIP**

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St. Thomas More prayed that in his practice of law he would always be able, accurate, and honest—never risking the loss of his soul for the winning of his point. The Society invites Catholic lawyers, judges, public servants, officials, and individuals interested in the relationship between the Catholic faith and the law to join us in the pursuit of true legal service.

The Society offers the following memberships:

- Life Member (Catholic attorneys, no annual dues thereafter)...\$500
- Member (Catholic attorneys).....\$45/year
- Associate (non-Catholic attorneys and other individuals)...\$45/year
- Law Student (law students).....\$10/year
- Honorary (Catholic priests who request membership).....\$0

New members can join online or download a membership application at [www.stmsdallas.org](http://www.stmsdallas.org)

The Society sponsors the annual Red Mass on the Sunday preceeding the September 1 opening of our Texas courts. The Red Mass is offered to invoke divine guidance and strength during the coming term of the Court. It is celebrated in honor of the Holy Spirit as the source of wisdom, understanding, counsel, and fortitude, gifts that shine forth preeminently in the dispensing of justice in the courtroom as well as in the individual lawyer's office. It also offers prayers for all men and women in the legal profession, judiciary, and public life, asking that they be blessed with wisdom and understanding.

The first recorded Red Mass was celebrated in Paris in 1245. In France, the inauguration of the judicial year was celebrated annually at the famous Sainte-Chapelle. Although the chapel was desecrated during the French Revolution, it was restored by Louis Phillipe and dedicated exclusively to the use of the "Messe Rouge." In 1906, the Parliament secularized the chapel, and the French celebration transferred to Saint-Germain-l'Auzerrois.

In England, the tradition of the Red Mass began around 1310, during the reign of Edward I. The Mass was offered at Westminster Abbey at the opening of the Michaelmas term (September 29th). It received its name from the fact that the celebrant was vested in red and the Lord High justices were robed in scarlet. They were joined by the university professors who displayed red in their academic gowns. Today, the Catholic judges assemble at the Westminster Cathedral for the celebration of the Red Mass, and a short distance away in ancient Westminster Abbey, the non-Catholic jurists attend religious worship.

The Red Mass has also been traditionally identified with the opening of the Sacred Roman Rota, the supreme judicial body of the Catholic Church.

The inauguration of the Red Mass in the United States occurred in New York City on October 6, 1928 at Old St. Andrew's. Now, several cities celebrate the Mass each year. In Washington, D.C., members of the Supreme Court, the President, and members of Congress often attend the Red Mass at the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. In the United States, not only Catholic, but also Protestant and Jewish members of the judiciary and legal profession, attend the Mass.

- 2012 Analeslie Muncy, Esq.
- 2011 The Hon. Jane Boyle, U.S. District Court, Northern District of Texas
- 2010 Hon. Leslie Southwick, 5<sup>th</sup> Cir. Court of Appeals
- 2009 Gerard Wegemer, Ph.D., University of Dallas, and Director, Center for Thomas More Studies
- 2008 Most Rev. José H. Gomez, S.T.D., Archbishop of San Antonio
- 2007 Greg Abbott, Texas Attorney General
- 2006 Judge Edith Brown Clement, 5th Cir.
- 2005 Bowie Kuhn, Esq.<sup>†</sup>
- 2004 Rev. Paul Weinberger, KHS, Diocese of Dallas
- 2003 Henry Hyde<sup>†</sup>, U.S. House of Rep., 6th Dist. Ill.
- 2002 Avery Cardinal Dulles,<sup>†</sup> S.J., Fordham Univ.
- 2001 Judge Robert C. McGuire, Chief Bankruptcy Judge (retired), N. Dist. of Texas
- 2000 Hal F. Tehan, Esq.
- 1999 Prof. Robert P. George, J.D., D.Phil., Dept. Philosophy, Princeton University
- 1998 Rev. Mitch Pacwa, S.J.
- 1997 Archbishop Charles J. Chaput, OFM Cap., Archdiocese of Denver
- 1995 Justice Joseph R. Nolan, Mass. Supreme Court
- 1993 Judge Reynaldo Garza<sup>†</sup>, 5th Cir.
- 1991 Justice Raul Gonzales, Texas Supreme Court
- 1990 Justice Antonin Scalia, U.S. Supreme Court
- 1989 Tom Unis, Esq.<sup>†</sup>

**ACTIVITIES**

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Society members benefit from educational and inspirational events. In furtherance of St. Thomas More's heritage, The Society offers monthly luncheon speakers who inform and guide the legal practitioner on ethical and moral issues, legal issues, Church history, world religions, the lives of the saints, and more.

Also, the Society offers continuing legal education (CLE). Occasionally, CLE credit is offered for the STMS meetings. Approximately once a year, the Society offers an all-day CLE conference.

In addition, Society members meet at annually in downtown Dallas to celebrate mass and commemorate St. Thomas More's feast day (June 22nd) and the day of his martyrdom (July 6th).