



PARISH OF ST. MICHAEL

July 2009 Newsletter & Calendar

Dear Parishioner:

Each May our parish staff gets together to plan for “next year” (in parish lingo the “year” means the same as it does in the academic setting, from September – May). We all have our calendars and put the important dates down that we all need to know.

At this year’s meeting I asked the staff to use part of their summer time to reflect upon what things we could change or do better at in regard to serving you our parishioners. At our fiscal year combined Parish and Finance Council meeting earlier this month, I asked them the same question. What can we do to make sure we are using our parish resources, that is personnel and financial, to the best of our abilities.

On a regular basis I meet with a group of ministers in our city to pray and discuss particular issues. There are a couple of Lutherans, a Baptist, a United Church of Christ, and a Presbyterian that make up our group. We were talking about how even though our society was going through a critical time of financial distress, people seem to be ignoring God’s power in looking for answers and seeking relief. So we asked ourselves this question: “What is lacking in what we are doing as ministers that we don’t inspire people to seek the answers that can only be found in asking God?” One minister asked, “What is the real mission of our congregations, and what do we want to achieve?” Someone said, “Well that’s pretty basic, every one of our congregations has the mission of bringing the words of Christ to as many people as we possibly can.” But then we began to think about that statement. Is exposing people to the Gospel all there is? We knew the answer to that. Of course not. We hope that through teaching and preaching we develop people into true believers in Christ so that they live His words in their every day lives. We talked about how all of our congregations have that goal and through our sermons, Bible studies, outreach work and many ways of service we are doing these things, but we had to ask how ourselves are we being successful? Are we really developing disciples? How many of our people show their belief through their actions? How many make God a priority in their lives? How many read the Bible or use Devotionals and have a daily time of prayer? We all agreed that developing disciples is about actions and not words. It’s about hearing the words and living them. Our job as ministers doesn’t end with telling people how Jesus wants to live — we must also get them involved.

I want to make this a top priority for our “next year” at St. Michael. With the assistance of our parish staff, I want also for you to give your input on how we can be better disciples of the Lord. We have been looking at what other parishes have done to critically assess their mission. By fall I hope that we have some tool available so that as many of our parishioners as possible can offer their suggestions and ideas. I know that it will not be an easy task and it will take time, but I am hopeful that it will be a fruitful endeavor. This also fits in with our Diocesan Pastoral Planning Process. Bishop Swain has asked each parish to critically evaluate its mission and how it is posturing itself for the future. If you have any suggestions or been involved in other parishes where they have done something similar to this process, I would love to hear from you. The purpose of all of this is so that we can better experience the joy of trust and belief in the only thing that will never fail us—Christ Our Lord.

Our Debt – One of the concerns we have to deal with in the near future is our debt of \$425,000.00. A loan from the Diocese was taken in the year 2000 to complete the final phase of our school and also our Multi-Purpose Room. It was a 10 year loan. Your use of the **Cherry Envelope – Debt Reduction Appeal** in your monthly offering packet goes directly to our debt payment. Thank you to those of you who use them each month.

Light of the World Retreat– As you get ready for the fall and school starting, please consider attending this parish retreat scheduled for **August 7th – 9th**. You may recall that this retreat allows you to stay at home and yet spend Friday evening, Saturday and part of Sunday learning more about the Sacraments of Initiation. If you wish to sign up for the retreat please call the parish office or fill out a form before or after a weekend Mass. Those who have attended one of the retreats have found them to be a very enriching experience.

(Rev.) Charles L. Cimpl

Mass on the Grass
this Sunday, June 28th 11am
@ Sertoma Park Bob’s Chicken,
dinnerware and drinks provided.
Last names A-L bring a salad
and M-Z bring a dessert.
NO 11 AM MASS AT THE CHURCH!