



PARISH OF ST. MICHAEL

February 2019

Newsletter & Calendar

Dear Parishioners,

Have you ever felt overwhelmed? I'd be surprised if you haven't. Day by day we move so fast from one thing to another and we are buried with information that we just don't care about or don't have time for. It may seem like being overwhelmed is the only thing to feel. Every company and group has a message they want you to get. Messages get lost in translation all the time. To learn what we could do as a parish to help our parishioners, Fr. Terry and myself, along with two others from the area, ventured to a conference in Florida.

The conference, put on by Life Teen International, focused mainly on communication. In a parish like St. Michael, where there are as many as 1900 registered families, communication isn't always easy. This is where it got overwhelming for us. For as much as we desire to serve the parish and do everything we can to be the best and to do things right, there was so much information in such a short amount of time. For example, a message concerning the parish and families could be addressing as many as five different generations. Generations who communicate via different preferences - such as email, Facebook, Instagram, bulletins, speech, snapchat, text, and maybe some out there still like a phone call or smoke signal. Then, faced with that, different media are better for different types of messages, and even down to what time of day we should send the messages, as our parishioners are very busy with their lives (e.g. practices, rehearsals, competitions, games, etc.) In an instant, we went from just trying to invite you to the next pancake breakfast, to having to craft a magnificent marble statue. When you are overwhelmed, hear God step in and say, "*Be still, and know that I am God.*" Psalm 46:10

As I go through the many notes and try to remember and receive as much as I can from this conference, I do wish to share some of the points that may be useful to you.

1. **Start with why.** There may be many levels to this and very different reasons in all the areas of the parish, but it is figuring out why we do what we do, or send the messages we send. We want people to know the Good News of Jesus Christ.
2. **Everyone is in charge of marketing.** So, how you treat others reflects on the parish. And we realize you've got bigger problems when you are racing to get kids ready in the morning to go church on Sunday, just praying you make it before the second reading. My daughter is only a year and a half and I don't know how many last minute diaper changes she has needed. So, when I say everyone is in charge of marketing, I do mean it, but that brings us to...
3. **Remember, everyone's cross is twice as big as your own.** The size of St. Michael gives a certain anonymity, I can just hide among the numbers of people every week. If the parish needs a volunteer for something, there will be someone to do it. But when someone approaches you for a question as simple as "where is the restroom?" You are in charge of marketing.
4. **Humility is the answer.** Humility is, simply put, truth. I recently asked the Religious Ed class to "roast me". They probably didn't have enough time to come up with answers or maybe they did not know enough about me. But either way, when someone says something to try and offend us, we are left with, is this true? Or is this not true? If it is true, I need to have the awareness to recognize that and put my pride aside to admit it. Even if it isn't a positive thing about me. We all have had our pit falls.

We, as a parish and staff, have our own pit falls and short comings. That, I hope you can forgive and be patient with us and each other. As this year is getting underway, we look to evaluate and adjust our communications to assist you in your journey with Christ. But, we need everyone's help, please share your input so we can be a stronger family of God. One He is proud to call His own. I pray God blesses you in your life and as Christ's public relations representative.

~Riley Jorgensen