

Our Journey TOGETHER

ST. MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

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Parish Long Range Plan Update

In February, we began developing a parish long-range plan as part of our journey From Gratitude to Greatness! Nearly 1,100 parishioners completed our online survey designed to provide insights on how well St. Michael is meeting the spiritual needs of our parishioners. More than 200 parishioners, of all ages and both English and Spanish-speaking, then participated in one of 23 listening sessions. During these sessions, parishioners answered the same four broad questions about their likes, dislikes, needs and recommendations.

We are about to analyze the data and begin to develop a parish plan that reflects the input that you, our parishioners, so generously provided through your participation in this important process. Soon, we will share specifics of the feedback we collected as well as the goals, objectives, metrics and key initiatives that will make up our parish plan.

But, here are a couple samples to pique your interest in the interim. When asked, "What attracts you the most to St. Michael?", the most popular response references the diversity of our parish. We "like the diversity of people, the

different cultures, range of ages and lots of young families." Close behind was your appreciation of the many ministries and service opportunities at St. Michael as well as the "upbeat, positive music selection" at our celebrations.

When asked, "What's our greatest need?", you asked that we "alleviate the parking issues with better parking lot flow and/or more parking." You said you wanted "more social opportunities to build community" for our youth, adults and families. You asked for continued focus on "improved communications" for better parishioner awareness and involvement.

We're looking forward to providing you with more details soon. Thank you for your interest, your participation and your willingness to make our journey a rousing success for our community!

Plan 
FOR THE Future

St. Michael the Archangel Roman Catholic Parish Community is committed to serving God and welcoming him in one another through a firm belief in God's love. Our mission includes: strengthening the presence of God through Word and Sacraments; dedication to stewardship and social justice; and ministry to our members and the greater community through acts of Faith, Hope, and Charity. All of this is achieved through complete union with the Holy Father and our Bishop of Raleigh.

JUNE 2017 NEWSLETTER



Relax, Reflect, Recommit

Summer is such a wonderful season. School is closed,

children attend camps or spend time with family and neighborhood friends, and many people

are able to take a summer vacation from work. It's time to enjoy travel to the beach, the mountains, or even other countries.



Numerous studies over the past few years show that time away from our work routine is beneficial to health. I think it is also beneficial to spiritual health and growth. A break in one's normal routine usually allows for time to exercise or play sports, time to

read a good summer book, time to have unhurried conversations with others, and time to reflect on how we are living our lives, how we interact with others, and how we pray and spend time with God. Pope Francis, like many great leaders in the world,

commits to immerse himself in the day-to-day world, yet also withdraw from the world to find balance, serenity and perspective.

With that time for reflection comes an opportunity to adjust our course. Once we can see our own good and bad habits, we can plan to make changes. Perhaps that new course means taking better care of our health, healing relationships, or committing to more frequent attendance at Mass.

As a pastor, I also hope to find time this summer to relax and spend time with family and friends. We are so fortunate at St. Michael to have enough priests to allow me to take time away. I'm grateful for that.

Although I will spend some time this summer reviewing our parish long range planning process, I will also get away to Toronto, Canada. While there, I will present at a Deeper Marriage Encounter weekend for priests and married couples – one of my passions. Additionally, I hope to visit some Franciscan Friar friends in the area.



I pray that all our parishioners make time to truly take a work-free vacation and spend that time relaxing, reflecting, and recommitting to a life lived in praise of our God. May God bless your summer with much peace, joy and happiness.

Monsignor Douglas P. Reed



Our Parish School Graduates 60

St. Michael Catholic School proudly presented diplomas to 60 graduating students on Thursday evening, May 25. At a Mass celebrated by Msgr. Doug Reed, Fr. Ryan Elder, and Fr. Dan Oschwald, faculty, administration and clergy applauded the academic success and spiritual growth of the graduates.

In his homily, Fr. Ryan told students that this day was the feast day of St. Bede the Venerable, and encouraged the graduates to “pray, study, and teach” as did St. Bede.

Student Council President Maggie Curtis gave the commencement address, thanking teachers for their daily inspiration, their long hours, and their willingness to listen at any time. She also thanked the parents for their role as first teachers, and her classmates for their continued care and support.



Mrs. Tara Navarro, principal, recognized all parents whose last child was graduating from the school, thanking them for their commitment to Catholic education. Mrs. Navarro also thanked our graduates for showing our school's core values of Reverence, Service, and Leadership, in addition to tasking the students with continuing to demonstrate these values in the future.

Please keep our graduates and all St. Michael Catholic School alumni and families in your prayers this summer.

In Science, our **St. Francis of Assisi Award for Excellence in Science** goes to Nicholas Danchulis.

For Social Studies, our **St. Thomas More Award for Excellence in Social Studies** goes to Craig William Lawson.

We have two award winners for our **St. Thomas Aquinas Award for Excellence in Math**. The first recipient is Carolina Guzman. Our second recipient of the St. Thomas Aquinas Award for Excellence in Math is Augustine Lund.

In Language Arts, the **St. Paul Award for Excellence in Language Arts** goes to Callah Preti.

For Spanish, the **Our Lady of Guadalupe Award for Excellence in Spanish** goes to Logan Wood.

We have two awards given for Excellence in Physical Education. The first recipient of the **St. Sebastian Award for Excellence in Physical Education** is Joseph Wayand. The second recipient of the St. Sebastian Award for Excellence in Physical Education goes to Caroline Mullahy.

For Media, the **St. Jerome Award for Excellence in Media** goes to Liam Ward.

For Music, our **St. Cecelia Award for Excellence in Music** goes to Kyra Dalbo.

In Art, our new **St. Catherine of Bologna Award for Excellence in Art** goes to Sydney Kwiatek. In addition, Sydney is the winner of our traditional Guardian Angel Contest. Her original art piece will be displayed in our school halls along with previous winners that interpret the spirit of St. Michael the Archangel.

For Drama, the **St. Genesius Award for Excellence in Theater** goes to Joshua Pollaci. Congratulations Joshua for also being the recipient of a new award, the **Michelle Giannini Legacy Award**.

In honor of your name, \$100 will go back to improve the Arts at St. Michael School. Ms. Giannini and your Arts teachers look forward to learning more about the legacy you would like to leave at St. Michael through a special lunch in upcoming months. The **Spirit of St. Michael Award** is our final award.



livestream Technology

Brings Mass to Remote Family Members, Sick, Homebound



Joining fellow St. Michael parishioners at one of our many weekend Masses, brings a sense of community. By habit, most sit in the same pew every Saturday or Sunday and get to know parishioners who sit nearby. Now, however, when parishioners are out of town, ill, homebound or living in an assisted living facility, they can watch Mass at St. Michael via computer.

“One of my dreams has always been to find a way to include the sick and homebound in our celebration of the Eucharist,” explained Msgr. Doug Reed, pastor. “Thanks to the generosity of our parishioners during the recent increased offertory campaign, we were able to purchase and install cameras and subscribe to the Livestream service. Now, anyone can watch not only our 10:30 a.m. Sunday Mass, but also special Masses and events such as the Parish choir’s periodic concerts, the school student’s Living Stations of the Cross and Grade 8 graduation, campus training sessions and more.” Actually, we are just beginning to realize the extent of the ways we can utilize this service to serve our parish community!”

The response to this new service has been very positive. Parishioners living at nearby retirement community, Preston Pointe meet regularly in their facilities to watch Sunday Mass. Many grandparents unable to travel were grateful for the opportunity to be a part of the recent Grade 8 graduation Mass and over 120 family members and friends from across the US tuned in to the school’s annual Living Stations of the Cross during Holy Week.

In addition, parishioners may view Mass on the newly installed digital screens in the church gathering space when the church may reach capacity on Holy Days. When there is not a Livestream event in progress, these screens also display the parish calendar and important information about upcoming events. Stay tuned for more exciting developments on our campus!

Growing in God

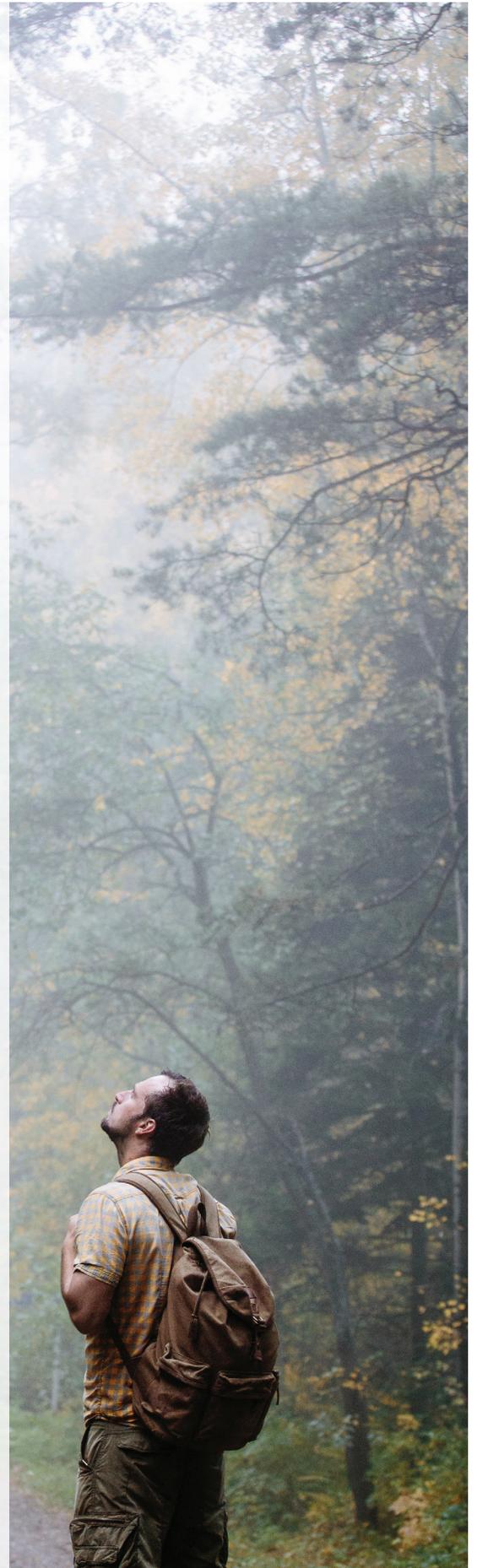
STEWARDSHIP FOR THE YOUNG ADULT

Think of a person whom you know and would consider a good steward. What stands out for you as you think of the way he or she lives life? When I think of the good stewards I know, one thing that sets them apart in my mind is that they live through a perspective of abundance rather than scarcity. This does not mean that their lives are always easy, but rather than focusing on difficulties at work or in relationships, they are mindful of their blessings. And this mindfulness shapes the way they live their lives. My friend Cindy captures this attitude when she responds, "It's all good." Even though all is not always "good," her approach to life is to find the blessing and live accordingly.

Maybe you already live with an "attitude of gratitude." Perhaps you do not. What would change in your life if you reminded yourself every day that you are blessed? If a class or situation at work is getting you down, recognizing your blessings helps to put such situations in perspective. The reality is, the more we look for the good, the more we find it. The more we remind ourselves that we are blessed, the more likely we are to live as people who have been given many wonderful gifts.

Here is a challenge for each of us: make a promise to begin each day by thanking God for the many gifts we have been given: a new day, time, resources, friends, talents, opportunities. Look for blessings throughout the day, especially when things are challenging. Say a prayer of thanksgiving each night. My friends the stewards have told me this is what has made a difference in their lives. My life has greater meaning as a result. For this, I am very grateful! "It's all good."

— *Leisa Anslinger*





How to Make Cheerful Giving Even More Rewarding!

In 2 Corinthians 9:6-7, St. Paul reminds us the God loves a cheerful giver. At St. Michael the Archangel, we are blessed to have lots of cheerful givers as evidenced by our beautiful campus facilities, our energetic liturgical celebrations and our vibrant ministries. At the heart of this is a spirit of everyday stewardship that we enjoy in our parish community with parishioners who are generous with their time, talent and treasure.

But more parishioners are learning that there are many creative ways to make their treasure contributions even more impactful and rewarding. There is a growing trend toward **online giving** that simplifies life for many. By setting up an automatic contribution from a bank account or from a credit card, many have come to enjoy the freedom of online giving. No longer are they frustrated to find they left their offertory envelope and/or checkbook at home!

If you have accumulated **stock that has appreciated** over time, charitable giving by donating stock has tremendous advantages! By donating stock through the Raleigh Diocese, parishioners don't have to pay capital

gains taxes on appreciated stock – particularly valuable when the stock has appreciated over a long period of time. Additionally, the charitable organization is able to realize the entire value of the stock that is donated.

Recently Congress passed a law allowing you to give to qualifying charitable organizations directly from your individual retirement account (IRA) when you are over 70 ½ years old without counting the distribution as taxable income. These **Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCDs)** count as IRA distributions and can be used to satisfy all or part of the required minimum distribution (RMD) you are required to start taking from your IRA accounts. Whether you itemize your deductions or not, this law allows you to make contributions to St. Michael, the Bishop's Annual Appeal, and other charitable organizations directly from you qualified plan and not be taxed. As with any complicated tax saving strategy you should check with your tax advisor before making a QCD. If you would like to learn more about any of these giving alternatives, please contact Joanne White, Business Manager at 919-468-6128 or jwhite@stmccary.org.

STEWARDSHIP BASICS FOR EVERYDAY STEWARDS



Tracy Earl Welliver, MTS

A Really Happy Meal

So whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God. Avoid giving offense, whether to Jews or Greeks or the church of God, just as I try to please everyone in every way, not seeking my own benefit but that of the many, that they may be saved.

1 Corinthians:31-33

Being everyday stewards means to be mindful of the gifts God has given us in all aspects of life and to act in ways that give glory to Him. This is easy when we look at the more profound actions in our lives, such as participating in a parish service project or raising money for the poor. But God is just as present to us in the ordinary and *everyday* aspects of our daily lives.

Paul wrote to the Corinthians, "Whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God." Of course, Paul never visited a McDonald's! But even though it may seem like a stretch to the common man, by being mindful of where we are, whom we are with, and what we are doing, a McDonald's experience can give glory to God.

I have a photo of my oldest child, decked out with his cowboy hat and sitting in a booster, having his first Happy Meal at McDonald's. That was over 15 years ago and on that day I probably wasn't thinking much about giving God the glory. However, I reflect on that event and realize how much it was a celebration of life and the good gifts God had given me. If I were to be there today, I would focus more and take in the surroundings, and really accept God into that moment. I would be mindful of each bite we both took and the expressions on his face. I would take note of the others around us and wonder if the joy we were experiencing at the time was noticeable and if that joy brought God into their lives just a little on that day. After all, even though it is a clever marketing scheme that gave that meal its name, that meal really was *happy*.





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St. Michael 'Livestream' Goes Global!



In little more than a month and a half, our new Livestream service has reached 1,941 viewers in 50 cities in the United States and an additional 64 viewers in 20 different countries. In all, our broadcasts have reached people in 21 countries on 6 continents! All of this is due to the generosity of our parishioners!

SAVE THE DATE



TACKLING *Life WITH Joy*
SUNDAY, JULY 30TH @7:30PM

"ISN'T THAT AWESOME - I GET TO PRAY & BE A FOOTBALL COACH. THAT'S PRETTY COOL." **SISTER LISA MAURER, OSB**