

# Our Journey TOGETHER

ST. MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

VOL. 2

ISSUE 1

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## Prepare the Way of the Lord

As we journey together through the Lenten season toward the glory of our Lord's resurrection on Easter Sunday, I encourage all parishioners to participate more fully than ever before. Fortify your personal Lenten journey by praying for others, providing for those in need, examining and enriching your spiritual life, and participating in the many beautiful Masses and special programs offered at our parish.

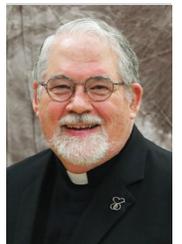


We began our Lenten journey on **Ash Wednesday**, a day when we acknowledged that we are not perfect – yes, we are sinners – and we began the 40-day commitment for renewal and deeper communion with God.

**Palm Sunday** is an important day when Catholics receive blessed palm fronds to reenact the celebratory reception Christ received when He first entered Jerusalem. His followers cut branches from palm trees and not only waved them in the air, but laid them across His path. This type of welcome is very different from the climate when Jesus carried the Cross to the Hill of Calvary where he was crucified.

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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.

MARCH 2017 NEWSLETTER

## From page 1

We will celebrate the **Chrism Mass** for the Diocese of Raleigh on **Tuesday, April 11 at 2 p.m.** Representatives from all parishes and Newman centers in our Diocese gather for this beautiful Mass in which the Holy Oils used throughout the year are blessed and provided to them for their parishes.

**Holy Thursday** commemorates the Last Supper of Jesus Christ, the sacrament of Holy Communion, and the institution of the priesthood which is reenacted at Mass by the washing of the feet.

On **Good Friday** we pause our busy lives to remember the sacrifice Jesus willingly made on the Cross so that we might be free – let us remember the type of forgiveness He offers even at His moment of death.

The most solemn Mass of the liturgical year takes place on Holy Saturday. At the **Easter Vigil Mass**, our Catechumens will receive the first of three Sacraments of Christian Initiation: Baptism. We will also welcome all Candidates from RCIA to enter fully into the life of the Church through the additional Sacraments of Confirmation and Eucharist. Together, we will welcome all **29** new members from RCIA – Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults - to share more fully in the joy of Easter!

**Easter Sunday** marks the end of Holy Week, the end of Lent, and the beginning of the Easter season. What a blessing it is to celebrate with one another Christ's resurrection from the dead, knowing He has made this possible for all of us!

I look forward to welcoming all of you to our St. Michael community often during Lent.

All are welcome!

*Monsignor Douglas P. Reed*

# Cary Pastors Unite to Provide Awareness

As a pastor at St. Anne Catholic Church in Edenton, N.C., Msgr. Doug Reed was an active member of a local alliance of ministers and pastors of all faiths. When he came to Cary as the pastor of our church six years ago, he eagerly joined the Cary Area Ministerial Alliance (CAMA).

"It is a very beneficial group. We meet monthly to discuss relevant topics. Since summer we have been looking at racism in our congregations and in society," explained Msgr. Doug. "We've read and discussed 'Divided by Faith' by Michael Emerson and Christian Smith, participated in a Town of Cary panel on racism, viewed the documentary film entitled 'Racial Taboo' presented by St. Francis Methodist Church, and attended a re-creation of the 1960 Martin Luther King, Jr. speech entitled 'Fill the Jails.' Many of us have also seen the recently-released film 'Hidden Figures' which tells the story of the African-American women mathematicians working at NASA during the early years of the US space program. Our current goal is to better understand racism and intolerance so we can provide awareness within our own parishes," he said.

CAMA is also interested in social action initiatives, and has most recently been working on the need for organizing community and church support for addressing issues concerning justice in Wake County.

## OUR GROWING DIOCESE

*The registered Catholic Population of the Diocese of Raleigh has increased 24% since 2006*

<b>231,230</b> Registered Parishioners
<b>250,000</b> Estimated Unregistered
<b>481,230</b> Estimated Total Catholic Population in the Diocese of Raleigh
<b>79</b> Parishes in the Diocese of Raleigh
<b>17</b> Missions
<b>24</b> Seminarians
<b>33</b> Extern Priests
<b>113</b> Active Diocesan and Religious Order Priests
<b>5,516</b> Baptisms
<b>5,508</b> First Communions
<b>3,003</b> Confirmations

*Sources: 2016 Official Catholic Directory*



# STEWARDSHIP REFLECTIONS

*with Pope Francis*

“True joy does not come from things or from possessing. No! It is born from the encounter, from the relationship with others, it is born from feeling accepted, understood and loved, and from accepting, from understanding and from loving; and this is not because of a passing fancy but because the other is a person. Joy is born from the gratuitousness of an encounter! It is hearing someone say, but not necessarily with words: “You are important to me”. This is beautiful.... And it is these very words that God makes us understand. In calling you God says to you: “You are important to me, I love you, I am counting on you”. (General audience, July 6, 2013)

Have you ever thought about life in this way? God counts on us to be good stewards of our lives and resources, to make the world a better place, to contribute to the reign of God. This may seem too much to think about, until we listen to Pope Francis’ words above: joy does not come from things, it comes through our relationship with others. When we are good stewards of our relationships, our friendship with family and friends is a sharing in the love of God.

– *Leisa Anslinger*



# Hispanic Parishioners Enrich Parish Life

*“They are a community with ardent faith expressed through faithful and joyful celebrations.”*

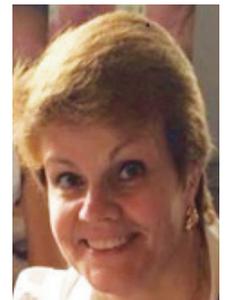
*— Fr. John Granados*

“Our Hispanic parishioners, more commonly called Latinos, originate from different countries in South and Central America. The majority are of Mexican heritage. This multicultural community enriches our parish with its culture, art, cuisine, and especially religious expression of respect and love for God. They are a community with ardent faith expressed through faithful and joyful celebrations,” explained Fr. John Granados, Parochial Vicar.

“So many good things are happening in our Hispanic community,” said Martha Smith, Hispanic Ministry Assistant. “For example, we held the first World-Wide Marriage Encounter for the Hispanic community here at



Father John



Martha Smith

St. Michael. More and more Hispanic parishioners are now registering in the parish, serving in many ministries, and learning more about their Catholic faith. Their energy is contagious!”

The parish holds yearly Emmaus retreats to help men and women fortify their Christian vocation and true commitment within the church,

**First Hispanic World Wide Marriage Encounter in NC and St. Michael the Archangel Parish**



Hispanic World-Wide Marriage Encounter



Parishioners share their culture

to evangelize in response to the needs and demands the modern world presents.

For the past three years, a Hispanic missionary group has been visiting local neighborhoods of the parish to announce the Kingdom of God, but the mission does not end there. It continues with follow through by mission members to nurture and

maintain the seeds that are planted so abundant fruit is produced.

Hispanic parishioners have been active in our annual Thanksgiving Basket project to feed the hungry and the Jesse Tree project at Christmas to provide gifts for families in need. They also go out into the community to evangelize, knocking on doors in predominantly Hispanic neighbors to

invite people to attend St. Michael the Archangel parish.

Our parish has partnered with St. Joseph Clinic to provide a Day of Caring health fair for Hispanic parishioners. The church members also travel each year to migrant camps to participate in Migrant Family Day, providing assistance to farm workers.

According to Lida Wong, who oversees Hispanic Faith Formation classes, students and parents are benefiting from catechesis on Sunday afternoons and then attending Mass at 2 p.m. as a family.



Lida Wong

“The adult formation program has been very successful. Fr. John always emphasizes the importance of these classes,” said Wong. “On Sunday afternoons we use most of the campus to provide education for children and adults. We have 60 catechists who work with small groups of about 20 people each,” she said.

Because the Hispanic community is growing, there is a great need for more catechists and for Eucharistic ministers to attend to the sick both at home and in the hospital.

Fr. John and staff members work hard to assist Hispanic parishioners and offer them the fullness of the Catholic experience at St. Michael the Archangel.

*For more information about the Hispanic ministry, please visit the church website or contact the parish office.*

# STEWARDSHIP BASICS FOR EVERYDAY STEWARDS



Tracy Earl Welliver, MTS

## *God would never call me to do something too difficult, would He?*

That is a question people always ask, and most have heard the response that God never gives us more than we can handle. I would never dispute that response, but it doesn't really answer the question. That's because the cost of the call of Jesus Christ changes based on our perspective, which is shaped by our spirituality and relationship with Him. However, any notion that following Jesus is easy or will be comfortable is just incorrect.

### **Jesus explained discipleship in this manner:**

*And he said to all, "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it; and whoever loses his life for my sake, he will save it."*

*Luke 9:23-24 (RSV Second Catholic Edition)*

The idea that following Jesus Christ is a pathway to a life of comfort and earthly joy is false. This spirituality put forth in so many ways by modern day false prophets is an illusion. Rather than gaining control of our lives, we essentially lose control of our lives, for we have given that over to Jesus. What we gain is grace. That grace provides for us the strength to make the sacrifices that befall a true Christian disciple. The joy we find rests in the justification of us as sinners. We are less than and through living a true stewardship way of life we become more than.





# Closing the Generation Gap

Currently, five generations make up our parish and they differ in more ways than simply when they were born. Because of the different social and technological influences of our society through the years, there are a variety of preferences among the generations for everything including how each chooses to communicate.

As a parish, we've been working hard to improve our ability to communicate within our diverse community. We now routinely employ email blasts, website and bulletin communications, text messages via our mobile app and quarterly newsletters to ensure that we are reaching the nearly 5,000 families

that comprise St. Michael Church. More recently, we have reached out to you to hear what you think about St. Michael the Archangel and the direction you would like to see us take in the years ahead. We've added online surveys and "listening sessions" as tools to get better two-way communication. We have just launched a new website that we believe gives you more information at a glance, is easier to navigate – and is simpler for our staff to maintain due to better technology.

There's more coming, so stay in touch as we continue our journey From Gratitude to Greatness. This is your parish and we are excited about the future of St. Michael with you as a part of it!

## TODAY'S GENERATIONS

- ☛ **Centennials:**  
Born 1996 and later
- ☛ **Millennials:**  
Born 1977 to 1995
- ☛ **Generation X:**  
Born 1965 to 1976
- ☛ **Baby Boomers:**  
Born 1946 to 1964
- ☛ **Traditionalists:**  
Born 1945 and before



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## Parish Online Survey – Help Us Plan Our Future!

The parish online survey was launched on February 10 and will be available for parishioners to access until the end of March. Please take a few minutes – it will take 5 minutes or less - to let us know how you feel about our parish. Your opinion matters and will help us as we build our long range plan for our parish community.



This is YOUR parish, so make sure we hear from you! Several “listening sessions” will be scheduled in addition to this survey and our long range plan will be completed by the end of June. Why not take 5 minutes today to share your thoughts?! Any questions can be directed to Larry McAnallen at [lmcanallen@stmccary.org](mailto:lmcanallen@stmccary.org) or 919-468- 6180.

