



ANNUNCIATION CATHOLIC PARISH

Christ the King and Holy Spirit Churches

MEET THE PARISH COUNCIL

Helping Our Pastor Fulfill the Parish Mission

Here at Annunciation, we are blessed to have a pastor who is dedicated to helping parishioners grow closer to the Lord. Indeed, Fr. Alex does a wonderful job of nurturing our spiritual growth! And along with our pastor, there are both staff and volunteer parishioners working faithfully to help make the pastoral vision for our parish a reality. You may already know some of them — the office staff, our associate pastor, our deacon and the directors of various ministries, to name just a few. Another invaluable group working behind the scenes to make our parish a wonderful place to call home is the Annunciation Parish Council.

Bob Farney, in his third year as Parish Council Chair, greatly enjoys the opportunity to serve our parish in this role.

“I always really enjoy the meetings,” Bob says. “One of the things that surprised me was getting to know these 12 people on the council who all have this genuine sense of mission and of being Christ-like — it really strengthened my faith a lot. They have a true interest in and concern for the parish, and their support energizes what we’re doing.”

Each August, the Parish Council sets its objectives for the upcoming year. This past year, the council has been working toward four goals — “evangelizing through personal experience,” “challenging and being challenged,” “distinguishing by uniqueness” and “using parish experiences to grow in friendship — putting a little fun in your faith!” Using these goals as a guide, the Parish Council seeks to help Fr. Alex strengthen and nurture the faith life of our parish.

As Bob points out, the opportunity for parishioners to work together with our priests is invaluable to the development of our faith community.

“We aim to support the pastor in achieving the parish mission, to provide him with council, guidance and support, and to identify and energize resources in the parish,” he says. “Not only are our pastors the administrators of a parish, but they are the spiritual shepherds as well,



The Annunciation Parish Council — (left-hand column, from top) Bob Farney, Jonathan Emery, Mel Justak, Julie Rosario, Lisa Reising, Ruth Ann Lichlyter; (center column) Bev Williamson and Fr. Alex Zenthoefer; (right-hand column, from top) Fr. Pascal Nduka, Brad Muehlbauer, Tom Loveridge, Amy Salmon, Sarah Bohrer. (Not pictured: Mary Biever, Roland Rosario and Scott Stratman.)

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HIGHLIGHTS OF OUR 2018 STEWARDSHIP RENEWAL

This past fall, our Annunciation parish leadership held the 2018 Stewardship Renewal. This renewal was an opportunity for our parish community to evaluate how we share our gifts from God, and to make commitments of Time, Talent and Treasure.

This month, we are happy to share with you some of the results of the 2018 Stewardship Renewal, which demonstrate that our Annunciation community has truly embraced the stewardship way of life.

- There were 261 commitment cards received from 52 percent of active parish households.
- There were 948 prayer commitments — the Stewardship of Time — from 56 percent of participating households, with each household making an average of seven prayer commitments.
- Some of the commitments to prayer included: “Attend Mass every Sunday and Holy Day,” 126 commitments; “Pray for the sick, the lonely and the deceased,” 110 commitments; “Spend at least 15 minutes a day in personal prayer,” 95 commitments.
- There were 987 ministry commitments — the Stewardship of Talent — from 78 percent of participating households. Of these, 397 were new commitments to ministries, while 590 were ministry re-commitments.
- Some of the commitments to ministry included: If You Can, Bring a Can for St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry, 95 commitments; Summer Social, 80 commitments; Campus Clean-Up, 45 commitments; Bereavement Dinners, 42 commitments.
- There were 236 offertory commitments — the Stewardship of Treasure — from 90 percent of participating households. The average annual pledge was \$3,491.

We thank all those who participated in the 2018 Stewardship Renewal, making commitments to Time, Talent and Treasure. If you did not have the opportunity to take part by completing and returning a commitment card, we invite you to consider the ways you might share your gifts with God, the parish and our community. After all, there is no time like “now” to begin living out stewardship! Commitment Cards are available in the church foyer or by contacting the parish office.



A LETTER FROM OUR PASTOR

Answering the Call for Lent

Dear Parishioners,

This month, as we proceed on our Lenten journey to Easter, every one of us should ask ourselves, “What does it mean to be a disciple of Christ and how well am I living that out each day?”

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops addressed what it means to be a disciple when they wrote their pastoral letter *Stewardship: A Disciple’s Response*. “Who is a Christian disciple?” the USCCB asked and, in turn, they also provided the answer, “One who responds to Christ’s call, follows Jesus, and shapes his or her life in imitation of Christ’s” (9). So, as disciples of Jesus Christ, it is essential that we consider the true meaning of that answer.

The first step in the Christian life is responding to Jesus’ call. Jesus invites every person to develop a relationship with Him. But obviously, not every person is a Christian disciple. Some people are too busy to even hear that invitation or don’t make the effort to recognize it. Others make a conscious decision to reject the call because it demands that they can no longer place themselves at the center of their lives.

On the other hand, for those of us who make an affirmative response to Christ’s call, the most meaningful life possible awaits us, both now and into eternity. However, saying “yes” to Jesus has consequences that affect the rest of our lives.

The first consequence of becoming a disciple is that we now follow Jesus. The Gospel accounts record that when He called His disciples, they left what they were doing and followed Him. The same is true for us today. Becoming a Christian disciple does not necessarily mean that all of us will leave our present job, or enter into the consecrated life, or serve as a missionary in another country — although that might be where the journey leads you. But it does mean that we offer our work — whether as a doctor, homemaker, mechanic, farmer or teacher — to build



up the Kingdom of God.

In following Jesus as His disciples, we should strive to more fully absorb His teaching and then apply it to our daily lives. As we do, we find that we attempt to imitate Him, treating others with the same welcoming and generous spirit. St. Peter was direct when he described how Jesus acted: “He went about doing good... for God was with Him” (Acts 10:38). That’s the model for how we must live.

Discipleship leads naturally to stewardship as a way of life. The time we offer in prayer and worship will

give us the strength and guidance for serving Christ. Using the skills and gifts we have to build the Kingdom will direct our offering of talent. The support of all these endeavors with our treasure will ensure that our lives as disciples and stewards are genuine.

As a Christian steward this Lent, I encourage you to reflect on the changes you can make in growing as a disciple of Jesus.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Fr. Alex Zenthoefer'.

Fr. Alex Zenthoefer
Pastor





THE RCIA PROCESS PROVIDES GUIDANCE AND

Faith isn't something that we "graduate from." No matter where our journey began or how well formed we are, there is always more that can be learned, and there are new ways for us to come to know, love and serve our Lord. This has been made clear to parishioner and coordinator Mike Vogel time and time again through our Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) process.

"I often have sponsors who come through this process saying they learned all kinds of stuff, even though they've been Catholic their whole life," Mike says. "And, for me personally, it's been a great way to continue learning more and more about my faith. Each year, I'll get questions asked that have never been asked in that way before, and it just pushes me to go back and dig deeper into the faith."

Mike's involvement in the ministry began over 16 years ago, when his wife entered into the faith through the RCIA process. Walking alongside her during this journey, Mike was able to get to know the ministry's volunteers. And he became excited about the prospect of helping other men and women explore the richness of our Catholic faith.

"Officially, the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults is the process for people who are either unbaptized [catechumens] or were baptized in another faith [candidates] to join the Church," Mike says. "And though we don't necessarily solicit people, it's definitely a way for us to reach out to our fellow Christians — a way for people to come out and really learn what our Catholic faith is truly about."

These candidates and catechumens meet weekly from August through May, going through what Mike describes as "four distinct phases" in the faith formation process. Topics covered include the fundamentals of Christianity, Church doctrine and social teaching, sacramental life, and prayer.

"We really cover all sorts of things, from virtues and vice, personal prayer, the importance of the liturgy in the Church, and Catholic social teaching," Mike says. "That's why we really encourage people to come, even if they're just



Annunciation candidates and catechumens learning about the faith as they prepare for the Easter Vigil.

curious. It's just a great place to find out about the Catholic Church. Generally, when people come, they already have an idea that they want to convert, but other times we have people who just want to test the waters, and that's fine."

Following an initial inquiry phase, candidates and catechumens transition to several important Rites before finally obtaining full communion with the Church during the Easter Vigil Mass. No longer mere observers, they are now able to fully engage in the sacramental life of the Church. RCIA classes consequently continue to meet through May or June in order to help transition the neophytes into this new spiritual phase.

"We want to help convey that the faith journey doesn't end," Mike says. "It's not like you hit the Easter Vigil and then you're done. We also want to make sure that we introduce them to parish ministries and the larger faith community, so that they remain connected even after our group finishes meeting — because for a lot of them, this really becomes their community."

LOVE ON THE CONTINUING FAITH JOURNEY

That's why a lot of times, we'll have people come back to continue learning and helping out even after they've come into the Church."

Parishioners can help in this process, says Mike, by going out of their way to welcome and support those preparing to enter the Church, and to invite them into parish ministries and events, making them feel welcomed by their new family.

"It's so good for our parishioners to be reaching out to the candidates and catechumens, making them feel welcomed," Mike says. "We also welcome prayers, supporting these people in the journey. And additional volunteers are also always welcome. They can help with refreshments, set up, or even serve as one of our catechists."

***"I often have sponsors who come through this process saying they learned all kinds of stuff even though they've been Catholic their whole life. And for me personally, it's been a great way to continue learning more and more about my faith. Each year, I'll get questions asked that have never been asked in that way before, and it just pushes me to go back and dig deeper into the faith."* — Mike Vogel**

If you would like more information about Annunciation's RCIA process, please contact Mike Vogel at either 812-455-8217 or vogel@wowway.com.

Parish Council continued from front cover

so they are wearing these two huge hats all the time. Any support we can offer them is a good thing."

Another important role of the Parish Council is to keep communication flowing between the pastor and all church members.

"Having a Parish Council gives all parishioners an opportunity to participate in guiding the parish themselves," Bob says. "The council serves as a two-way communication between the pastors and parishioners, giving parishioners a mechanism to express feedback and concerns."

Those who serve on our Parish Council find themselves inspired by the great things happening in our faith community, and by the strong and active faith of our parishioners.

"Being in a leadership position has given me a great perspective on the deep faith and Christian commitment of our parishioners," Bob says. "This faith and commitment exist in more parishioners than I ever realized before. Serving on the council has made me realize that I have a responsibility to the parish and to be a disciple of Christ."

Ultimately, one of the greatest rewards to serving on the Parish Council is the opportunity to get a direct look at what is happening in the parish and to work as a team with our priests to make Annunciation a truly wonderful place to come together in worship. We are thankful for all that our council members do to help our faith community grow and thrive!

Are you interested in being a part of our Parish Council? The election process for positions opening up this summer will take place in June, so stay tuned! For more information about serving on the Parish Council, please call the parish office at 812-476-3061.



ANNUNCIATION CATHOLIC PARISH



STEWARDSHIP: *The Four Pillars*

You've heard about the three Ts of stewardship, but what about the four Ps?

The three Ts – Time, Talent, and Treasure – describe the personal gifts we offer to the Church. The four Ps are the Four Pillars of Parish Stewardship described by the renowned pastor Msgr. Thomas McGread. They are the hallmark of a stewardship parish – Hospitality, Prayer, Formation, and Service. Let's take a look at each of them to understand how we can improve in each area.

Hospitality *Christian Kindness*

“When I was a stranger, you welcomed me” (Matthew 25:35). The Gospel teaches that whenever we welcome the least of our brothers or sisters, we welcome Christ Himself. That is why the first mark of a stewardship parish is hospitality. Being friendly is one of the first ways we can be Christ-like toward others.

Modern Catholic parishes are often so large and have so many Masses that many parishioners don't know one another. To create a sense of community, be sure to smile and greet others as you enter and exit the Church. Let's try harder than ever to be a welcoming community.

Prayer *Heart-to-Heart with God*

“Do not become so involved in the work of the Lord that you forget the Lord of the work,” a seminary professor once taught. In other words, don't get so caught up with parish projects and outreach efforts that you forget to draw aside to spend time with God in prayer. Every great saint has taught that prayer is the most essential component in the life of the Christian. Through prayer, we nurture our most important relationship – the one that will last for all eternity.

A healthy prayer life should include communal prayer such as Mass, as well as personal prayer and

family prayer. The two biggest obstacles to prayer are lack of time and lack of understanding of how to pray. We have to schedule time for prayer just as we would for an important appointment. And we have to learn how to pray from other people. Many saints have written spiritual books that describe different methods of prayer.

Formation *Continuous Conversion*

Pope John Paul II always emphasized ongoing conversion. From childhood through adulthood, our whole life must be a process of drawing closer to God. He never stops calling us forward to learn more and to examine ourselves more deeply.

Very often our society values material things more than interior virtues. But as personal experience shows, when we finally acquire the car or house or “toy” that we wanted so badly, it doesn't really satisfy. On the other hand, we don't tend to desire spiritual virtues with the same kind of longing, but when we actually have them, we find them far more rewarding than material things.

Service *Love in Action*

“Amen I say to you, whatever you did to the least of my brothers, you did it to me” (Matthew 25:40). This Scripture was one of St. Teresa of Calcutta's favorites. Each time she picked up a poor and hungry child, she knew she was ministering to Christ. While we may not view ourselves as saints, we too are called to such heroic service right within our own community. As St. Teresa of Calcutta said, “To be a saint is not the privilege of a few, but the duty of everyone.”

We have many service opportunities right here within our own parish. If you have the willingness to serve and take the initiative to find where you are needed, you'll find that there is no end to the families and individuals who truly need help. How can you reach out to them in love?

CAMPUS CLEANUP MINISTRY

Sharing in Fellowship Through Important Service

Annunciation Parish's Campus Cleanup Ministry has benefits that go far beyond taking care of our Christ the King and Holy Spirit locations. While ministry members work to keep the campuses tidy, fellowship and great friendships have been forged that might not have otherwise happened.

Frank Ehrensbeck and Kirk Freeman coordinate the ministry that currently has at least 40 members. They work in teams of six, on a six-week rotation basis. Some members are in their 60s, while others are young parishioners who hadn't yet had a chance to participate in parish activities.

"About five or six years ago, we had a get-together before the campuses merged and we talked about good ideas for the merger," Frank says. "I got an idea from a friend elsewhere whose parish had merged, and when his parish went through a merger, they formed teams. So we took three guys from Holy Spirit and three from Christ the King and made up six teams. We got to know parishioners you wouldn't ordinarily know. It was a needed team-building exercise focused around the grounds."

The ministry teams take care of the spring and fall cleanups, mowing the lawns, trimming, cleaning gutters and snow removal in the winter. Christ the King's campus is two and a half acres, and Holy Spirit has nine acres to mow.

"We do the general work to keep the campuses how we would like them to be," Frank says.

While the teams take care of the general work, there are what Frank calls "subset" groups who handle other tasks.

"Sean and Mary Gallagher at Christ the King take care of the entrance way at the church, and have been doing it for 15 years," he says. "There is a dedicated group at Holy Spirit that keeps the entrance to that church looking good. The subsets do great work!"

The creation of the Campus Cleanup Ministry contributed to the members' appreciation and

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Blooming lilacs and well-tended plantings attest to the work done by our Annunciation Campus Cleanup Ministry. The group of about 40 members work in rotating teams of six.



The diligent work by our Annunciation Campus Cleanup Ministry is evident in the beautiful landscaping at the Christ the King campus.



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Campus Cleanup Ministry *continued from page 7*

understanding of stewardship.

“A lot of us didn’t know other folks at the other churches,” Frank says. “We didn’t know any people, but it’s become a unifying ministry to make the campuses look good and get to know others. When we do Annunciation-wide activities we know we can call people. It’s good for stewardship – we have common interests and it’s a good deal.”

While the teams are working together and getting to know each other, they also have found themselves growing closer to Christ.

“We’re all a like-minded group,” Frank says. “You learn about other’s faith when you work next to them every six weeks.”

Other projects around the parish beyond the campus work have benefitted from the Campus Cleanup Ministry. Frank points to the additional help that Mary and Sean Gallagher now receive when they cook chicken for the summer social. And Frank has been able to put together a 15-man team that works on the Habitat for Humanity project in Evansville.

The spring cleanup will take place on Saturday, April 6th, to prepare the campuses for mowing. Anyone interested in joining this wonderful ministry of service and fellowship may call Frank Ehrensbeck at 812-431-9487.

LITURGY SCHEDULE

Holy Spirit: Saturday: 4:00 p.m. | Sunday: 9:00 a.m. | Tuesday: 6:00 p.m. | Wednesday: 8:30 a.m.

Christ the King: Saturday: 5:30 p.m. | Sunday: 7:30 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.

Monday: 7:45 a.m. | Tuesday: 7:45 a.m. | Thursday: 8:30 a.m. | Friday: 7:45 a.m.

Confessions: Saturday: 3:00 - 3:45 p.m. at Holy Spirit | Saturday: 4:30 - 5:15 p.m. at Christ the King