



SAINT XAVIER CHURCH JESUIT

Inward Reflection. Outward Action.

A·M·D·G

February 6, 2019

Feast of St Paul Miki, S.J. and companions

V. Rev. Brian G. Paulson, S.J., Provincial
UMI Provincial Offices
1010 N. Hooker St.
Chicago, IL 60642

Dear Fr. Paulson, P.C.

On behalf of the staff and parishioners at St Xavier Church, I write to extend our thanks for the opportunity to participate in the Parish Examen process. This holy process was an opportunity for us to reflect upon the Ignatian Charism at St Xavier parish. We were also happy to go through this process as we prepared for our Bicentennial year: 2019.

All who participated found the experience to be enlightening and stimulating, as we discerned how we might continue to sharpen our Ignatian identity and grow our Ignatian Charism. Our hopes are that we somehow come closer to knowing what it means to be a Jesuit Parish. This letter summarizes the basic elements of the examen: our process, our calls and commitments, and our hopes. We hope this benefits your own discernment.

Our Process.

St X warmly embraced the Parish Examen Process. We had excellent and enthusiastic participation across many constituencies. We had the opportunity to reflect, pray, and discern the important questions presented to us. **The staff** gathered for a day retreat in early August 2018, which is where we started the process. We dedicated time in subsequent staff meetings.

The Parish Pastoral Council likewise dedicated significant time to the Examen over this fall; and many other **“invited” parishioners** met for spirited listening sessions and conversation between our Sunday Mass times. These sequential conversations were enthusiastic, generative, and well attended. They allowed for us to discover how St X’s Ignatian Charism is already strong and how it might grow even more in the years ahead. We learned that our constituents enjoyed the process and are optimistic about actualizing our commitments in the years ahead.

Our Calls and Commitments.

As you know, there are five commonly understood “Elements of Jesuit Parish Ministry.” Of these St Xavier Parish discerned the following three to be invitations for our growth. This is not to say that other elements don’t deserve attention, only that we feel the strongest invitation and most energy towards these in the years ahead as we look to deepen our Ignatian Charism.

*We feel called to grow in our efforts toward **Liturgy, Worship, and Community.***

So, we commit to:

- Continuing the rich and important ministry of preaching excellence with even deeper engagement of contemporary issues through the lens of Ignatian Spirituality.
- Growing in “vibrancy” during Eucharistic celebrations and creating opportunities for outreach to a significant demographic shift within the neighborhood and larger Archdiocese.
- Using communal discernment to seek ways for us to foster fellowship across worshipping cohorts, interior to our parish, and between liturgies.

*We feel called to grow in our dedication to **Collaboration.***

We therefore commit to:

- Opening our doors and hearts as a place of welcome (entrances) and continuing to be an engaged, participatory parish in service to the local church of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati.
- Seeking ways in which St. Xavier Parish might serve as a bridge to greater young adult / volunteer / marginalized / “adult-to-adult” affiliation within the life of the community.
- Using communal discernment as a means to find ways that we might collaborate with the USA Midwest Province and other Jesuit works in the Cincinnati region. We hope this collaboration would help us to promote Ignatian Formation (Ignatius House) and our basic solidarity opportunities (Peru).

*We feel called to grow in our capacity for **Ignatian Spirituality.***

We therefore commit to:

- Encouraging and forming key staff and parish leaders in our Ignatian tradition. We want to offer more opportunities for staff, lay colleagues, and key volunteers. We hope our key players might benefit from whatever strengthens our Jesuit mission.
- Intentionally integrating elements of Ignatian Spirituality throughout parish activities (Bicentennial) and communications (website, bulletin, preaching).
- Initiating greater opportunities for staff and parishioners to experience the Spiritual Exercises.
- To more strongly live the Gospel call to promote a sincere preferential option for the poor, as Ignatius and Xavier exemplified in their own endeavors.

Our Hopes.

We hope that by deepening our **Liturgical Life**, our **Collaboration**, and a renewed **Ignatian Spirituality**, St Xavier Parish will be even more vibrant in our Ignatian Charism. Growing and strengthening these elements will allow St X to be of even greater service to our parishioners, to the Archdiocese of Cincinnati, to the USA Midwest Province, and ultimately, to the Gospel.

As we make a commitment to these areas, we also ask for your support to help us grow in our capacity for forming key staff and parishioner leaders in our Ignatian tradition. We would welcome opportunities to participate in opportunities for continuing education, Ignatian Formation, and adult faith enrichment with other Jesuit ministries. These resources will help us better network with our partners in ministry and be of greater service to our collective mission.

Again, thank you for this opportunity and for your ongoing support of our parish. Especially now that we have completed this spiritual exercise, we know how important a contribution Jesuit Parishes can make to the faith life of our Church. As we continue in 2019 to celebrate the graces of God for 200 years of community and sacramental life, we look forward to growing in our mission in the years ahead. We pray to offer more fervently all our intentions, actions, and operations purely for the greater honor and glory of God.

In the Lord,

Rev. Patrick Fairbanks, S.J.,
Pastor

*... on behalf of St Xavier Parishioners,
Parish Council, and Staff*

