

Dear Saint Michael parishioners,

I hope you are well. I want to share some of the great things happening here at Saint Michael.

1. **Progress** is in full swing for our long-planned new church. Your fellow parishioners who have agreed to help as campaign workers are planning our upcoming capital campaign. Some parishioners will receive letters in the next week regarding the project and asking for their support. Would you please review these materials and prayerfully consider a sacrificial pledge to this much-anticipated project? Eventually, in a phased approach, I will reach out to all parishioners personally asking for your support for this project.
2. **School** will begin on August 17, a week from Monday. As you well know, this academic year will be a year of “firsts.” I am very grateful to Mrs. Braun and all Saint Michael School teachers and staff for their creativity, innovation, forward thinking, and incredibly hard work in preparing to make this upcoming school year a success. Thanks, too, to all of our school parents for your patience and understanding and support of Mrs. Braun, all of the teachers, and me. We will undoubtedly have to make changes and adaptations in the first weeks of school as we get used to this new “normal.” I ask for your patience, understanding, and cooperation as we get the school year off to a great start. We are very much looking forward to having your students back in class and are very grateful for you partnering with us to teach and form your children as Jesus’ disciples.
3. **I sent a note** to our high school students recently. This likely has been a tough several months for them. I, too, would be missing my friends, sports, and ordinary summer activities. I want them to know that Father Schwenka, Father Pfeiffer, and I care deeply about them and want them to know we are always here for them. I also plan to send out a note to our college-age students soon.
4. **A warm welcome** to Con O’Shea-Creal, St. Michael’s new parish facilities manager. Con and his wife have five children. His sister, her husband, and their family are members at St. Michael, and Con’s brother, Liam (whom you have seen at Mass here), is entering his third year of theology studies. God willing, he will be ordained a deacon next May.
5. **My last communication** about Catholic web and blog sites generated a fair amount of interest, discussion, and feedback from parishioners. As a follow-up, I suggest a couple of additional YouTube sites, which for me at least, are perennial favorites: Bishop Robert Barron and Archbishop Fulton Sheen. They both address all sorts of topics about the Catholic faith. They are good presenters and are easy to listen to and watch.

A couple of you shared recent books that you just completed. My most recent book was George Weigel’s, *The Next Pope*. I am currently working on *Dagger John*, a biography about mid-19th century New York Archbishop John Hughes by John Loughery.

Archbishop Hughes was a feisty Bishop who fought the Know Nothing and Nativist movements in the mid-19th century in the United States. The parallels to what Archbishop Hughes faced and what the United States faces today are uncanny. Also for your consideration is Fr. John Riccardo’s 100 recommended Catholic books: https://actsxxix.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/FrJohnRiccardo_100Books.pdf I would be open to hearing from anyone regarding Catholic blogs, websites, periodicals, and books that you think might be of interest to parishioners.

6. **Mass Attendance** continues to increase. I believe we have adequate room in the gym for anyone who wants to attend Mass. Most importantly, I want to make sure that each of you takes care of yourself in relationship to this pandemic. If your health permits, please join us for Sunday Mass. Just a reminder that weekday Masses are at 7:00 A.M., 8:15 A.M., and 5:30 P.M., all in the gym. Weekend Masses are Saturday at 5:00 P.M. and Sunday at 8:00 A.M., 9:30 A.M., and 11:10 A.M., also in the gym. Confessions are Saturday afternoon from 4:00-5:00 P.M. and Sundays one half-hour before each Mass. These confessions are heard in the entrance to the bell tower. Weekday confessions are from 7:30-8:00 A.M. in the regular confessional.

7. Planning for **CCD and high school youth ministry** is in the works, as we are trying to determine the best way to conduct both of these great programs. Stay tuned for more details.
8. **Parish Festival** co-chair, Denine Erlemeier, shares that because of COVID, we cannot hold the festival as we usually would. Therefore, things will look quite a bit different this year. The committee has determined that we will not have kids' games, bounce houses, a food court, etc. However, we are looking into a process for the raffle and a potential plant fundraiser.
9. Many of you have been very generous in maintaining or increasing your **church support** in the last four months. Because of lessened attendance at Sunday Mass, our collections have obviously gone down. We continue to have fixed costs such as utilities, salaries, property insurance, etc. Would you please consider maintaining your level of giving or maybe increasing it just a little? Your support is noted and much appreciated.
10. I am very glad to be your pastor. Your words of encouragement and support are very much appreciated by Fr. Schwenka, Fr. Pfeiffer, and me. As always, you can contact me with prayer requests, ideas, input, and questions.

Let us pray for each other.

Father Borowiak

KNOW HIM. LOVE HIM. SERVE HIM.

be a missionary disciple
