

St. Michael's Parish Family

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Dear Friends of St. Michael's,

It is the last week of Advent, the longest Advent possible, and a good day to be inside with snow, wind and falling temperatures. The six months since the last newsletter have gone by quickly. There is a lot going on at St. Michael's and in the community which I've written about below.

I hope you've had a Blessed Advent which will continue into the Christmas Season and 2017.

Peace,

PARISH HAPPENINGS and OTHER NEWS

Just Who Is Fr. John Wolesky? Fr. John, pastor and priest supervisor of St. Michael's since June 30th, is a native of Minnesota but was ordained for the Diocese of Salina. He is a hospital chaplain at Salina Regional Medical Center. He is a pilot who owns his own plane and is a part of the Priest Pilots organization. He flies home to Minnesota to visit family and to Priest Pilots gatherings—last year in Pennsylvania. He will turn 76 in January and continues to play racquetball several times a week. He will celebrate his 50th Anniversary of Priesthood Ordination on March 11th.

Changes Since June 30th—Besides Sunday Mass Time!

- ✓ More prayers are sung at Sunday Mass (Fr. John likes to sing) and different Eucharistic Prayers are used.
- ✓ Daily Mass is offered once a week.
- ✓ Fr. John attends monthly Parish Pastoral Council and Knights of Columbus Meetings.
- ✓ Baptisms take place during Sunday Mass.

Fr. Henry Adjusting to Semi-Retirement! Fr. Henry is living in the rectory at Belleville and helping Fr. David Metz who is the pastor at Concordia with missions in Belleville, Munden and Cuba. Fr. Henry is enjoying the slower pace and being free of administrative responsibility.

December 18th---The Good, The Bad and the In-Between!

- ✓ **The Good**—The Christmas Pageant had the largest number of participants in over 10 years with 20 characters (7 angels & 8 shepherds) portrayed by K-3rd grades and 13 in the choir (4th-6th grades).
- ✓ **The Bad**—The Live Nativity was cancelled due to the cold temperatures (around 8 degrees).
- ✓ **The In-between**—The 25th Annual Community Concert went ahead as scheduled with a few acts cancelling but 70 showing up for the performances in the bitter cold to hear local talent perform. The reception (usually held in the Parish Center) was held in the church so no-one had to get out in the cold an extra time.

Ecumenical Services:

- **24 Hour Prayer Vigil for America** was provided by the Chapman Nazarene church from 7 p.m. November 4th to 7 p.m. November 5th. Some parishioners participated.
- **Ecumenical Thankgiving Service** was not held on the Sunday before Thanksgiving this year. The attendance had dwindled considerably over the last few years due to age and death of attendees.

Works in Progress Still!

- ✓ **The Circle Drive Project** is close to completion but not enough for a picture to be included in this newsletter but hopefully in the June issue. Coordinating the work with parishioners' schedules takes extra time but it does save us on the overall cost of the project.
- ✓ **Landscaping** around the house and front of the church is completed and has made a big difference in the beauty of the property. Trees are next!

More Bricks Ordered! All 400+ bricks, engraved and not engraved, are in place. We were short by 20 bricks so an order was placed in November with 15 of those being engraved. They have not arrived and probably won't be placed until the weather warms up. **Engraved Bricks** can be ordered at any time—just contact the parish!

Celebrating Long Life! Birthdays of parishioners 90 years and older are marked by mentioning them in the bulletin. **Andy Schuler** turned 92 on October 3rd and **Dan Zumbunn** turned 93 on October 27th. Former parishioner, **Bill Stewart**, celebrated his 80th birthday with a reception at Leonardville, KS.

Parish Helps Those in Need!

- ❖ **Abilene Food Pantry**—the parish collected non-perishable food items and monetary donations during July and during the Advent Season.
- ❖ **Rachel's Vineyard Retreats** (healing retreats for those who have had an abortion or were affected by someone having an abortion)—the parish handed out baby bottles for parishioners to deposit money in and return. The \$580 collected provides scholarships.
- ❖ **Families in the area**—the parish adopted 3 families and 3 foster children to provide Christmas gifts, furniture and household items, and monetary help—from children's collection and special donations. The total helped was 22 children and seven adults.
- ❖ **Concepcion and San Lorenzo Mission**—the parish continues to support both financially.

Christmas Gift! "Resisting Happiness" written by Matthew Kelly will be given to parishioners at Christmas Eve and Christmas Day Masses.

Ladies of St. Michael's Role Developing! The Ladies continue to host the blood drives (four a year), provide prizes for Bingo at Chapman Valley Manor once a month, have a bake sale booth at Chapman Labor Day, provide plants for expectant mothers and meals once the baby arrives, and prepare lunches for families and friends after funerals at the parish. Catering is almost non-existent with only one class for Alumni Lunches last year. With busy lives, the Ladies are not seeking catering but step up when asked.

Knights of Columbus News!

- Tootsie Roll Drive was held in October with 80% of proceeds going to USD 473 Special Ed.
- 5th Sunday Praying of Rosary program continued on October 30th. Approximately 30 participated in praying the rosary after Mass.
- Held a pancake and sausage feed on November 20th for parish and local community. One benefit of Sunday Mass time change is that Catholics and Methodists enjoy breakfast together with both services getting out at about the same time.
- “Pennies from Heaven” collection on the last Sunday of the month began the last Sunday in November. The “Pennies from Heaven” program provides revenue for the Emergency Disaster Aid Program. The program provided gift cards to those affected by the tornado in 2016. Once a month a jar is placed in the church entryway for parishioners to throw in their pocket change.
- Celebrated the 110th Anniversary of the Charter Inception on December 8th starting with holy day Mass for their intention and with Liturgical Ministries covered mostly by Knights or possible Knights (boy servers) and followed by a catered meal and short video presentation.

4th Annual Bazaar (October 2nd) Highlights!

- ❖ The weather was beautiful—4th year in a row!
- ❖ A couple of games were held during Live Auction—“card blitz” and “heads or tails”—participants and crowd enjoyed these.
- ❖ The total funds cleared was down—less meat prepared (leftovers sold well) and less items for silent and live auction with one-time expenses for signage.

Deaths of Family and Friends of St. Michael’s:

+**Nancy (McCormick) Emerson**, daughter of Ray and Laura McCormick and cousin of Terry Root, Gary Root and Jan McCormick, of West Des Moines, IA, died July 4th.

+**Lou Ann (Whitehair) Karl**, sister of Leah Hern, of Detroit, KS, died July 23rd.

Youth News—Religious Education and CYO!

- ❖ Catechists for this year: Pre-K – Jill Hummel; K-1st – Courtney Morgan; 2nd – Sharon Engstrom; 3rd-4th – Brenda Blocker; 5th-6th – Janice Carroll; 7th-10th – Sara Cook; Adult Formation – Vicki Simenson.
- ❖ Numbers increasing! Religious Education and CYO numbers are up from a year ago—a good thing! There are: Pre-K – 7; K-1st – 13; 2nd – 6; 3rd-4th – 8; 5th-6th – 9; 7th-10th – 12; CYO – 10.
- ❖ New tables and chairs for K-1st grade room needed! With 13 in Kindergarten-1st grade, there were not enough chairs and one table was not big enough. Three Lifetime tables and 13 Lifetime youth chairs were purchased.
- ❖ CYO meets a couple of Wednesdays a month. On August 3rd they met to “hangout” with ice cream floats and sundaes.

- ❖ CYO Fall Lock-In was Oct. 29-30 (10 p.m.-7 a.m.) at the parish center with 14 high school youth participating and four sponsors. The sponsors and youth prepared and served sausage gravy over biscuits breakfast as a fundraiser for NCYC (National Catholic Youth Convention) and CYO Convention.

Year of Mercy Offerings:

- **Vicariate Masses**—the East Central Vicariate had Mass on August 21st at Sacred Heart Cathedral, Salina, KS, and the East Vicariate had Mass on September 11 at St. Thomas More, Manhattan, KS. Five parishioners attended the East Central Vicariate Mass.
- **Pilgrimage to Sacred Heart Cathedral**, Salina, KS, was September 25th with four parishioners gathering for prayer followed by a tour.
- **Day of Mercy** on Sunday, October 9, with the Sacrament of Reconciliation offered across the Diocese. St. Michael’s ran an ad in the local paper and offered confessions for a half hour.

MEMORIAL FUND FOR SPECIAL PROJECTS

No-one enrolled since our last newsletter.

ST. PATRICK’S CEMETERY NEWS

+**Olivia Marie Engstrom** died July 31, 2016. She is survived by her parents, Cliff & Sharon, six brothers, Tyler, Jesse, Henry, Levi, John & Robert, and two sisters, Sarabeth & Charley.

+**Daniel “Dan” P. Zumbrunn** died December 1, 2016. He is survived by wife, Noreen (Altwegg) Zumbrunn, one son, Steve, three daughters, Gail, Coleen & Patti, ten grandchildren and 11 great grandchildren, and one brother, Don.

SACRAMENT OF MATRIMONY

Mariah Lovgren and **Andrew Calovich**, son of John and Wilma Calovich, were married on November 19, 2016.

NEW MEMBERS OF ST. MICHAEL’S CHURCH

- **Edward Corbin**, son of Joel and April Calovich, and **Oliver Mark**, son of Stephen and Jennifer Calovich, were baptized on August 14, 2016.
- **Leo James**, son of Daniel and Abby Anderes, was baptized on August 28, 2016.
- **Robert William**, son of Cliff and Sharon Engstrom, was baptized on September 25, 2016.
- **Matthew Quinn**, son of Todd and Marci Smith, was baptized on November 6, 2016.

New Parishioners and Returnees:

- Osvaldo & Luz Gavillan and daughters, Alison and Heather
- Mac & Teresa Perrin
- Luis & Tracey Porres and children, Isabel, Alessandra and Max
- Todd & Marci Smith and children, Lilliann Roy, Olivia Roy, Matthew, Carter and Cooper
- Jamie Martinez and children, Cole, Abigail and Anna
- Lisa Bledsoe and daughter, Ashlynn
- Miki Sites