

Our Faith, Our Mission

An overview of the mission focus plan
for St. Michael Parish

- I. An historical review of our efforts
- II. What we hope to accomplish – A “New Evangelization”
- III. How we hope to accomplish this
- IV. Going forward



RISE UP! NOW!



SAINT

MICHAEL

THE ARCHANGEL
WORTHINGTON, OHIO

**“Saint Michael the Archangel is a Catholic Community on fire for the Lord that inspires people to ‘Rise Up Now!’ and become active disciples to fulfill God’s purpose in their lives.”
-St. Michael Parish Mission Statement**

- I. An historic review of our efforts
 - A. Assigned to parish in 2012 – informed of and observed a few issues.
 - 1) That of disunity (silos)
 - 2) No focus in direction or sense of unified mission
 - B. Prayed about how to respond
 - C. “Branding” project introduced – seen as a help, not an end in and of itself.
 - 1) Unity of Message
 - 2) Connection to our Patron
 - 3) Relevancy of the Church and Her mission
 - 4) Making Disciples – Parish as a place of formation
 - D. A variety of Organizations were interviewed – Key Questions and conclusions
 - 1) **What do you want the St. Michael faith community to stand for?**
A welcoming community with opportunities for one to fulfill their purpose in Christ and to participate in an active discipleship.
 - 2) **What associations do you want people to think of when they think of St. Michael?**
A vibrant Catholic community and a family of joyful disciples of Christ
 - 3) **What is the ideal personality or persona for St. Michael?**
A community of active disciples who are on fire for the Lord and dedicated to fulfilling the threefold mission of Jesus in their lives through the Sacraments, Evangelization, and Service.
 - E. Who is our Patron, St. Michael the Archangel?
 - 1) Defender of the Faith
 - 2) Protector of the Universal Church
 - 3) Judge of Souls
 - 4) Usually depicted as a warrior with sword or spear, a shield, battle armor, weight scales.
 - 5) Not a “cherub.”
 - 6) Defeated Satan and cast him out of heaven.
 - 7) Name means “Who is like God?”
 - F. Mission Statement

“Saint Michael the Archangel is a Catholic Community on fire for the Lord that inspires people to ‘Rise Up Now!’ and become active disciples to fulfill God’s purpose in their lives.”

 - 1) “Let us rise up and build.” – Nehemiah 2:18
 - 2) See Fr. Dinovo Homily September 2014

II. What we hope to accomplish? – A “New Evangelization.”

A. Statement of the Problem – a universal perspective

- 1) For many, the Church has become less relevant – Lapsed Catholics
- 2) Organized religion is looked upon as suspicious
- 3) Religious Indifference is on the rise.
- 4) Increase in non-affiliated Christians (“nones” and “dones”)
 - a) Early 1970’s = 3%
 - b) Early 1990’s = 6%
 - c) Today = 25%
 - d) Americans Under 30 years = 40%
 - e) Catholics under 30 years = 50%
 - f) Age at which people are opting out- has gone from between ages 20 & 30 to ages 10-20 (Median age 13)
 - g) For everyone one person joining the church, 6.3 are leaving
 - h) More and more are staying away permanently
 - i) Pew Survey Ranking of those on their General Religious knowledge:
 - 1) Jewish, 2) Mormons, 3) Atheists, 4) Mainstream Protestants and Evangelicals, 5) Catholics came in last

B. How did we get here?

- 1) Rise in Secularism (Relativistic) which is removing God from the worldview.
 - a) The “idea of God” – who is God? Does he really exist? (Christian Smith analysis of “Young Former Catholics” – 57% believed in God; 37% think God is a Personal being).
 - b) The perceived incompatibility of Religion and Science
 - c) Religion and Sexual Ethics
 - d) Abuse Scandal
 - e) Religion and Violence
- 2) Attractiveness of the Faith
- 3) “Separation” of Body and Soul – non-incarnational thinking
- 4) Poor Catechesis

C. How do we respond? The “New Evangelization”

- 1) What is the “New Evangelization?”
 - a) Encounter with a person, not an idea. That person is the only Son of God, Jesus Christ
 - b) Anyone who encounters Christ is automatically sent on Mission
 - c) “[Bishop] Barron believes that what distinguishes the New Evangelization from the old isn’t content—now, as it was then, it’s about preaching Christ as the Risen Lord—but rather the fervor [Ardor] one brings to it, and perhaps above all, the modes of expression and media one employs” (*To Light a Fire on Earth: Proclaiming the Gospel in a Secular Age*, Image Books, 2017, p 117).

- d) “It is not therefore a matter of inventing a ‘new program’. The program already exists: it is the plan found in the Gospel and in the living Tradition, it is the same as ever. Ultimately, it has its center in Christ himself, who is to be known, loved and imitated, so that in him we may live the life of the Trinity, and with him transform history until its fulfilment in the heavenly Jerusalem. This is a program which does not change with shifts of times and cultures, even though it takes account of time and culture for the sake of true dialogue and effective communication. This program for all times is our program for the Third Millennium” (St. Pope John Paul, II, *Novo Millennio Ineunte*)
- 2) What is True, what is Good, what is Beautiful?
- a) Bishop Campbell – Rite of Election question?
 - b) Start with what is Beautiful about the Faith. This will lead to the Good and the True, without diminishing their importance.

III. How we hope to accomplish this at St. Michael Parish – Parish as place of Formation in Christ

A. Encounter with Christ

- 1) EACH OF US NEEDS TO BE WILLING TO BE EVANGELIZED
- 2) Jesus identifies himself as the “one sent.” On a mission. The more we identify ourselves with Christ, the more we must understand that we are “sent” as well.
- 3) In that mission, we discover who we are.
- 4) Lack of sense of mission causes struggle. “There are a lot of people who are roaming around because they do not know their mission from God” – Bishop Barron
- 5) Know THE Mission! Know YOUR Mission!
- 6) Spirituality of Communion (See Section IV. A below)
 - a) Do not separate Jesus from the Church (or *vice versa*)

B. Be Formed in Holiness

- 1) Sacramental Life
 - a) The Eucharist is the Source and Summit of our Faith
- 2) Growth in personal prayer
 - a) Learn the Art of Prayer
 - b) Devotions, Adoration, Praying with Scripture (*Lectio Divina*), etc.
- 3) Catechesis – Never stop learning. Never!
 - a) Read! Read! Read!
 - b) Listen! Listen! Listen!
 - c) Watch! Watch! Watch!
 - d) Proclaim! Proclaim! Proclaim!

C. Practice a life of Virtue – Being a true hero

- 1) God has a plan for us-Salvation (Ephesians 1:3-14)
 - a) Contrary to what you may have been told, your salvation, the salvation of your family and, indeed, the salvation of the world is really important!
- 2) Choosing to live as Disciples of Jesus
 - a) Jesus never says, “Do the bare minimum!”
 - b) He does say, “Put out into the deep for a catch!”

D. Live and Talk about your faith – Don’t “hide it under a bushel” (See Matt 5:15)

- 1) Not everyone may be able to articulate well, but everyone can live it well!
- 2) Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy
- 3) Blog? Not for everyone, but, sure, why not?
- 4) Get a feel for what the world is yearning for.

IV. Where do we go from here?

A. Develop a “Spirituality of Communion.”

- 1) “To make the Church the home and the school of communion: that is the great challenge facing us in the millennium which is now beginning, if we wish to be faithful to God’s plan and respond to the world’s deepest yearnings” (St. Pope John Paul, II, *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, #43)
 - a) Hearts contemplation of the Trinity dwelling in us and others
 - b) Look at our brother and sisters in faith within the profound unity of the Mystical Body—“part of me”
 - c) See what is positive in others
 - d) Making room for our brothers and sisters, bearing each other’s burdens

B. The question must be asked “At its core, what does it mean to belong to a parish? To a Diocese? To the Universal Church?”

- 1) Eucharist must be at the center of every endeavor – “source and summit.”
 - a) Parish Sacramental & Liturgical Offerings – “Full active participation in the Eucharist”
 - b) Become a people of prayer
 - c) Parish Faith Formation Opportunities (invite others) so as to proclaim the faith in our lives
 - d) Be evangelists! Take to others what you have found yourself
 - e) Parish Opportunities for service in charity and justice to the poor, the outcast, etc.
 - f) Note: all of these should be of concern to everyone, not just picking and choosing

C. Catechesis

- 1) Youth Formation
- 2) Young Adult Formation
- 3) Not-so-young Adult Formation
- 4) All Take advantage of Parish offerings
 - a) Formed
 - b) Word on Fire
 - c) Men’s Faith and Fellowship
 - d) Women’s Faith and Fellowship
 - e) Parish Faith and Fellowship

D. Don’t be afraid of the culture around us!

- 1) Engage it!
- 2) Find what is good and build upon it!
- 3) Accompany people on their journey
- 4) Don’t try to “fix” the people you encounter. Be Christ for them, then let the Holy Spirit do His work.