February 9, 2020
The Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

SAINT MICHAEL PARISH
ONE PARISH. ONE SCHOOL. ONE FAITH COMMUNITY.

Our Mission

Rooted in our sacramental celebrations of the Eucharist, we seek to shape our future in a positive way through our parish school, religious education, youth ministry programs and numerous Christian services. While maintaining a strong sense of Catholic tradition, we look for ways to revitalize our Christian values through more openness to God’s word and our gospel call to love God and neighbor. Trusting in the Holy Spirit, we seek new ways of being a church for members, active or not, as well as reaching out to the wider community.
SAINT MICHAEL PARISH

One Parish. One School. One Faith Community.

543 Bridge St., Lowell, Ma. 01850
978-459-0713    Fax: 978-453-1123
Serving Lowell and Dracut since 1883

Administrator: Rev. Christopher Lowe
School Principal: Mary E. Elias
Director of Religious Education: Nicole Walsh
Director of Music: Jackie Thurrott
Director of Development: Pauline A. Minch
Parish Secretary: Mary Brooks
School Bookkeeper: Liz Homem
Organist: Ernie Houle

MASS SCHEDULE
Weekend: Saturday at 4:00pm, Sunday at 7:00, 9:00 and 11:15am
Daily: 7:00am
Holy Day: Holy Day at 7:00am and 9:00am and 7:00pm

Confession: The sacrament of Penance is available each Saturday from 3:00pm - 3:30pm or call the Rectory for an appointment.

Baptism: Celebrated monthly, please call the Rectory one month in advance.

Marriage: Contact Rectory at least one year prior to wedding.

Anointing of the Sick: When a family member is seriously ill or will be undergoing surgery, please call the Rectory.

St. Michael Parish School: Established in 1889, our parish school offers an excellent education for students in grades Pre-K thru 8.

Communion Calls: Communion to the homebound is happily arranged; Please contact the Rectory.

Becoming Catholic: Interested? Inquiries concerning Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (RCIA) can be made by contacting the Rectory.

New Parishioners: We are a vibrant, Christ-centered community. If you would like to share in our faith and spirit, please contact the Rectory. You may also register at our website: www.saint-michael.com

Phone Numbers:
Religious Education: 978-459-0713     School: 978-453-9511
St. Vincent de Paul Society: 978-459-1770

Deadline for Bulletin information - Monday noon at the Rectory
Website: www.saint-michael.com    Email: saintmichaels@comcast.net

Prayer of Saint Michael: Saint Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle, be our protection against the wickedness and snares of the devil. May God rebuke him we humbly pray; and do thou, O Prince of the Heavenly host, by the power of God, cast into hell Satan and all evil spirits who wander through the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen.
Many of you have been asking about my health, and I feel that I should give you an update.

In late September, I was down with the flu. You heard the coughing as I was recovering. Other parishioners were reporting three to four weeks of coughing after the flu and I was in the same boat. Soon after that I got a cold and the coughing continued. At the beginning of December things were clearing up nicely after some antibiotics.

Just before Christmas, I got another cold. You heard the voice and the coughing once again. Things are reasonably calm now. There is still some hoarseness and coughing. I have seen my doctor and a trip to an Ear, Nose & Throat specialist is in my future. All the coughing may have irritated or damaged my vocal cords. You have heard me coughing or hoarse for almost half the time that I have been here. I assure you, that is not normal for me and I am getting it checked out.

You may have heard that I was in Saints ER last week. This is true. I have a 20 year battle with vertigo. I experience little episodes often. Some of them have happened at Mass, and nobody but me was aware of them. I have learned to deal with these. It seems that my eyes and ears do not agree where the horizon is.

I have had three room spinning events in the last 12 years. One of those events was Monday (1/27) morning. My primary care expects me to go to the ER to ensure that it is not anything else but the vertigo that we know about. I got the X-ray, CAT scan and MRI and all is normal (well as normal as I ever am).

I do appreciate your concern and your questions. I try to take care of my health. I have two chronic conditions that make life interesting: diabetes and vertigo. Both are labeled well controlled by my care team and I do all that I can to keep them that way.

Fr. Chris
WE WANT YOUR PALMS!

Please bring in your palms from last year. The SMYLE (youth) group will be burning them to create ashes for distribution on Ash Wednesday. Please place your palms in the basket in the Gathering Space in the back of the church.

BAPTISM AT SAINT MICHAEL’S

Baptisms are generally held on the fourth Sunday of each month and they fill up quickly! Limited space is available for January baptisms. If you are interested in having your child receive the Sacrament of Baptism, please call 978-459-0713. Parents are required to attend a one-hour class and provide their child’s birth certificate. A reminder that prospective godparents should have received the three Sacraments of Initiation: Baptism, First Eucharist and Confirmation.

THE BLOOD OF CHRIST SUSPENDED DUE TO PEAK FLU SEASON

The Office of Liturgy has asked all parishes in the Archdiocese to suspend communion under both species (body and blood) for the immediate future. The flu season is peaking here in Massachusetts and there is concern about spreading the flu from a common cup. Most people would refrain from the Blood of Christ if they knew they were sick, but sometimes, we don't know that we have the flu until a few days later. We pray for those who are suffering from the flu and from all diseases. We trust that this temporary ban will be lifted by Holy Thursday when we celebrate the institution of the Eucharist.

DISCERNMENT RETREAT FOR WOMEN AGES 18-35
Saturday, February 22
Saint Paul’s Parish, Harvard Square, Cambridge
This one-day retreat will provide at the opportunity to learn more about religious life, to speak to the Sisters and to pray and give time and attention to discerning God’s call. Contact Sr. Germana Santos at gsantos@rcab.org.

CARDINAL SEAN O’MALLEY DISCERNMENT RETREATS FOR MEN
February 21—22
Pope Saint John XXIII Seminary, Weston
For men ages 30 and over. Contact ecdin@rcab.org.

February 21-23
Saint John’s Seminary and Betania II Spiritual Life & Marian Center
For men ages 18-30. Contact ecdin@rcab.org.

WHAT’S YOUR CATHOLIC IQ?
Here’s a fun way to find out how much you know about your Catholic faith! Answers are on the next page.

1) *Hoc est enim corpus* is Latin for (a) Peace be with you (b) The Mass is ended (c) This is my body (d) The Lord be with you

2) Catholics are encouraged to abstain voluntarily from meat on which day of the week? (a) Sunday (b) Wednesday (c) Saturday (d) Friday

3) Which of the following is a Luminous Mystery of the Rosary? (a) the Birth of Jesus (b) the Transfiguration of Jesus (c) Jesus Carries His Cross (d) the Assumption of Mary

4) A popular Italian reference to the Blessed Virgin Mary that is often used in titles of paintings and sculptures is (a) Magnificant (b) Magdalena (c) Madonna (d) Mantilla

5) The two things that do not break the fast before Communion are (a) bread and water (b) bread and butter (c) bread and jelly (d) medicine and water

5TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

IT’S HARD BEING A LIGHT FOR JESUS IN SUCH A DARK WORLD!

THE DARKER IT IS, THE BRIGHTER THE LIGHT SHINES!
BOOK OF PRAYERS
The Book of Prayers is located on the side altar in front of the Blessed Mother statue. You’re invited to write your prayers, hopes and needs in this book and as a parish family, let us remember these written intentions in our daily prayers.

LIGHT A CANDLE IN PRAYER
Two stands of candles in the Sanctuary are there for you to light as a symbol of your intentions and prayers. We ask that a $1 donation be offered for each candle that you light to help defray the cost of the candle.

MOMUMENT OF THE RISEN CHRIST SPRING ENGRAVING
Don’t miss the opportunity to have your name and the names of your loved ones – living and deceased – engraved this spring on the Monument of the Risen Christ, which is located between the Church and the Rectory. Engraving prices start at $300. For more information, please take a brochure, which can be found at the “Gathering Space” in the Church or contact the Rectory at 978-459-0713. You can also email us at saintmichaels@comcast.net.

2019 GRAND ANNUAL COLLECTION IS AT 70% OF GOAL!
What does the legacy of Saint Michael’s Parish & School mean to you and your family?
Hopefully you, as a registered parishioner, received a letter from Fr. Chris at the end of September about this year’s Grand Annual collection, stating that the goal for this year’s Grand Annual is $100,000. This year there is no suggested or requested family donation amount, only the $100,000 parish goal. Instead, you are asked to please prayerfully consider making a donation that might be a bit of a stretch for you – one that reflects the depth and importance of the legacies of the parish and school, past, present and future. If a pledge for the Grand Annual is more convenient for your budget, please visit www.saintmichael.com. Thank you to those who have generously donated. If you have yet to donate, Grand Annual envelopes are located in the gathering space.

SHOP AMAZON & SUPPORT OUR PARISH OR SCHOOL!
Shop on Amazon and help support Saint Michael School or Parish will a few simple clicks!
AmazonSmile donates 0.5% of the price of your AmazonSmile purchases!

1. Go to smile.amazon.com on your web browser on your computer or electronic device.
2. On your first visit to AmazonSmile (smile.amazon.com), you will need to select a charitable organization to receive donations from eligible purchases before you begin shopping. For future shopping, it will remember your selection, but that selection can be changed.
3. If you’d like to support the parish, search & select ST. MICHAELS PARISH. To support the school, search & select SAINT MICHAEL SCHOOL.

SAINT VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY
Saint Michael Parish is blessed to have a Saint Vincent de Paul Society chapter, complete with dedicated volunteers who participate in community outreach, helping to supply relief to our neighbors in need. To help support these efforts, please remember to deposit your donation in one of the boxes at the entrance of the church. Thank you!

BOX TOPS FOR EDUCATION
Box Tops for Education can now be earned digitally by scanning your receipt within 14 days of purchase. If you cannot download the App, please drop your receipts in the collection basket. Unexpired traditional (clipped) Box Tops can still be submitted as well. Thanks for supporting Saint Michael School!

Are you between the ages of 15-25 and looking to participate in some fun faith-based activities?
If you are, come to the next SMYLE (Saint Michael’s Youth Leadership) social on Sunday, February 23rd! We’re meeting at the School parking lot at 4pm.
If you or someone you know is interested in joining SMYLE, please contact Ashley Melanchook at SMYLE@saintmichael.com for more information.

REMENBER…….
HIGH SCHOOL CLASS ON SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 9th 6-8pm, Church Hall
Please remember to pray for the men and women of the Armed Forces of the United States of America, that they be kept safe wherever they are stationed or deployed. We ask this in Jesus’ name. Amen.

ANSWERS TO “WHAT’S YOUR CATHOLIC IQ?”
1) (c) These Latin words of consecration were mocked by magicians who used the words *hocus pocus* to perform magic tricks.
2) (d) Catholics perform works of penance on Fridays in recognition of the death of Jesus on Good Friday.
3) (b) Pope John Paul II introduced the Luminous Mysteries (Mysteries of Light) in 2002.
4) (c) “Madonna” simply means “Our Lady” or “My Lady” in Italian. Paintings and statues that bear the reference “Madonna” usually depict Mary holding the Child Jesus.
5) The Eucharist Fast, outlined in the Code of Canon Law (1983) includes: fasting from food and drink one hour before receiving Communion; water and medicine (liquid or solid) do not break the fast; those who are sick or elderly may receive Communion again at another Mass on the same day.

SCHOOL BUZZ

January went by without snow storms; however illnesses affected the school with the flu and stomach virus. We persevered with the use of hand sanitizer multiple times and that sneezing the proper way was the correct way to go.

January Highlights:
- Dine for Dough at the Blue Angus in Dracut. What a perfect time to take advantage of not cooking. Let someone else do the work, while the school makes a profit from your bill. So eat and eat!!!
- Bake Sale was sponsored by Grades 2 and 6. Wonderful treats, good popcorn and great raffle items.
- Dress Down Day theme was to wear your favorite winter scarf. There was a variety of colors and styles worn.
- Catholic Schools Week was great. The entire school hall was decorated with pennants depicting how students feel about Catholic education and footsteps with each child’s family interest were on exhibit with 3 sizes to reflect our younger students’ feet.

During the week we focused upon a folklore storyteller telling tales with life lessons expressed, an alumni panel of SMS graduates who spoke about their lives after their education, career days, and ice cream sundae treats. Snow tubing event, Chunky's Movie Time and meteorologist Danielle Niles are rescheduled to next week. As we ended the month of January, Faculty and Staff were honored with an enjoyable brunch sponsored by P.T.O. members and other families. This was a very appreciative gesture to all.

Until next month for more SMS Happenings!

Pass the word: Open Enrollment is going on for the next school year for Grades PreSchool age 3 to Grade 8 students. Call us at 978-453-9511 or email: melias@ saint-michael.com. Don't forget our Donate to Saint Michael's by going on our website at school.saint-michael.com to give a contribution.

“Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire.” W.B.Yeats

Respectively,
Mary E. Elias, Principal
OFFERTORY COUNTER SCHEDULE
February 10/Team 2: Patricia White, Joni Bedford, Clare Hamilton, Margaret Janas, Jane Duffley, Joyce Cloutier, Mary Conole
February 18/Team 3: Brenda Richardson, Colleen Dubuc, Mary Kay Gorman

WELCOME NEW PARISHIONERS!
We’re so happy to see you here at Saint Michael’s! Please, feel free to introduce yourself to the presiding Priest or any of our Extraordinary Ministers or volunteers. Welcome Packets are at the entrance of the Church and contain a rich source of information about our warm parish. We look forward to seeing you again to celebrate Mass with us as one faith community.

IMPORTANT SURVEY & TOWN HALLS ON MASS SCHEDULE RESTRUCTURING
The Parish Council's subcommittee on Mass Schedule Restructuring is conducting a survey to better understand your needs as a parishioner. This is a third step in the process for determining the new mass schedule. The proposed times are based off the results from the first two steps in the process:

1. Research of all area parishes' schedules
2. A review and analysis of the current mass collections and mass attendance numbers.

To participate in the survey, you can fill out a survey online at: bit.ly/2RA8632 OR in paper form at the back of the Church (your answers will be anonymous). We will be collecting survey responses from Saturday, February 8th to Sunday, February 23rd.

Town halls specifically addressing the changing of the Mass schedule will be held in the Church Hall on these dates/times:
- Monday, February 10th at 2:00pm & 7:00pm
- Tuesday, February 25th at 1:00pm & 7:00pm

JANUARY 2020 TOWN HALL RECAP
These questions were posed by attendees:...
New Mass Schedule, Collaboration with Saint Francis, Church acoustics, Gluten Free hosts, Catholic Quiz in Bulletin, Cardinal’s Abortion Letter, Attendance questions, Acceptance of Ministry changes, Convent and Garage, Timeliness of getting checks to drawings winners, School Stability, Lent plans, SMS Alumni, Naming a Deacon, Kenyan Priest coming, Christmas Pageant, Offertory is down, Lack of programs here vs. Saint Francis.

WORLDWIDE MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER WEEKENDS IN MARCH & APRIL
Just as Mary and Joseph took Jesus to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord, present your marriage to the Lord. Strengthen, renew and rekindle your marriage sacrament by attending a Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekend on March 13-15 in Duxbury or April 18-19 in Brewster.
For more information, please call Stephen & Michelle O’Leary at 800-710-9963 or www.mema.org.

101 QUESTIONS
Father Chris is offering a new class titled "101 Questions.” People often ask him questions and he has collected these into four classes, 1) The Mass & Liturgy 2) Sacraments and Sacramentals 3) Dogma, Doctrine & Tradition 4) History, Hierarchies and Hodgepodge. Each night we will cover 25 questions (26 one night) with answers ranging from a single word to more complex answers.

Come learn a little more about the faith in four, one hour sessions on Mondays at 1:00 PM or at 7:00 PM. Class dates are February 24th, March 2nd, 9th & 16th. Signup sheets are in the gathering space for each class.

SAVE THE DATE FOR OUR NEXT SCHOOL BINGO!
Our last Bingo fundraiser for Saint Michael School was so popular that we’re doing it again! Make sure to join the fun!
Sat., March 14, Doors Open 5pm, Bingo from 6-8pm
Admission Tickets $3 per person (available soon)
More playing Cards, More Raffles, 50/50 Raffle, Hot Dogs, Beverages, Plenty of Parking, Snacks & More!
Lowell Senior Center, 276 Broadway Street, Lowell

LOOKING FOR YOUR 2019 DONATION INFO?
Your patience is requested! Fr. Chris expects to fill our vacant Office Manager/Parish Bookkeeper position this week and once that person is onboard, they will send out your requests as soon as possible. Thank you for your understanding.

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