



Bringing Our
Faith to Life

Our Parish Life



ST. MICHAEL
IN OLD TOWN
A Redemptorist Catholic Parish

1633 N. Cleveland Ave • Chicago, IL 60614 • 312.642.2498 • www.st-mikes.org



*Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time
January 29, 2012*

The people were astonished at Jesus' teaching
(Mark 1:21-28).

Dear Parish Family,

We are about two months into the changes dictated by the *New Roman Missal, Third Edition*. How do you think it is going? Some of the feedback that I have received is perhaps most accurately categorized as "mixed." On the positive side people seem to be paying more attention to the mass, to the words that are spoken, to the meaning of the words. Perhaps this is a good thing. Who would have guessed that there would be so many conversations about the mass or so many people wondering about the word *consubstantial*? On the other hand we are well into the changes and there is a perceived uncomfortable feeling expressed by many parishioners. Perhaps not willing to make a mistake or unsure of what is required some people have significantly reduced their personal response to the prayers of the mass. From the position of the priest, and I admit that our hearing is perhaps not all that good, it is somewhat difficult to hear the assemblies response: Do I say "and also with you" or do I say "and with your spirit." Listening to the priest celebrants struggle with their assigned parts probably doesn't build a sense of confidence in the assembly.

For example, the other day at evening mass during the week I effortlessly reverted back to the old prayers at the time of the praying of the Lord's Prayer. I did not catch myself until the sign of peace and by then it was just too late to do anything about it. When I think about what happened I have to admit that after praying the Eucharistic Prayer with the intensity of paying close attention to each word and basically reading the prayer from the Missal I did not maintain the same intensity when the prayer was concluded. I believe that this is the result of praying the mass for thirty-four years as a priest celebrant and having a certain familiarity and comfort level with the prayers. That familiarity and comfort has now disappeared and now I need to keep my "nose in the book." I guess the lesson is that we (priest and assembly) all have a ways to go before what is new becomes familiar to each of us.

One way to build a sense of confidence in the assembly and to help all of us to become more confident with the mass is to establish some clear and consistent liturgical practices. With

This Week at St. Michael

For more information or to participate in any of the activities listed below, please call the parish office at (312) 642-2498.

Sunday, January 29

9:00 a.m. Mass
9:15 a.m. Religious Education Class
11:00 a.m. Mass
12:00 p.m. Church Tour
12:00 p.m. RCIA
12:00 p.m. Gala Planning Meeting
7:00 p.m. Mass

Monday, January 30

8:00 a.m. Mass
5:30 p.m. Mass
6:30 p.m. ACOA
7:00 p.m. Stillpoint/Contemplative Prayer

Tuesday, January 31

8:00 a.m. Mass with Perpetual Help
6:00 p.m. Mass with Perpetual Help
7:00 p.m. Bible Study
8:00 p.m. Alcoholics Anonymous

Wednesday, February 1

8:00 a.m. Mass
10:00 a.m. New Mom's Group
5:30 p.m. Mass
6:30 p.m. Alcoholics Anonymous
(women only)

Thursday, February 2

8:00 a.m. Mass
5:30 p.m. Mass
7:00 p.m. Rosary

Friday, February 3

8:00 a.m. Mass
5:30 p.m. Mass
7:00 p.m. Alcoholics Anonymous

Saturday, February 4

8:00 a.m. Mass
4:00 p.m. Young Adult Game
4:45 p.m. Confessions
5:30 p.m. Mass

Sunday, February 5

9:00 a.m. Mass
9:15 a.m. Religious Education Class
11:00 a.m. Mass
12:00 p.m. Church Tour
12:00 p.m. RCIA

Please note: There will be no 7:00 p.m. Mass on Sunday, February 5.

From the Pastor

the season of Lent fast approaching I have informed our Music Director that I want the organ silenced from Ash Wednesday through Good Friday of Holy Week. I have asked Daniel to move down from the choir loft to the sanctuary and to lead our gathered assembly with a key board, a cantor and/or reduced choir presence, and with an emphasis on simple songs and simple chants that all of us can easily learn. The purpose of this is twofold: one, it is fitting for the penitential and more reflective season of Lent to emphasize simplicity in our liturgy and two, it may build a certain comfort level in the assembly which will help all of us worship with a little bit more of a sense of confidence. It is the experience of the priest celebrants that a more intimate assembly can be formed in this way and I believe that this intimacy is perhaps crucial for us at this point in the process. I look forward to hearing your comments and your reflections.

The First Sunday of February is *Super Bowl Sunday*. Please note that we have decided not to try and compete with the Super Bowl and so we will not have our Sunday evening mass that day. (The attendance the last few years has been very small.) In addition to the fact that it is Super Bowl Sunday it is also the formal kick-off to the Cardinals *Annual Appeal*. This appeal will take place the first three weekends in the month of February and we must follow the script(s) that have been prepared for the appeal. If we choose not to follow the script then the parish is obligated to pay the full amount that has been assigned. If, on the other hand, we follow the script and we meet our goal, or even exceed it as we have in years past, then the parish directly benefits from these efforts. I think you will all agree with me that the best decision is to follow the script.

The script directs that the Pastor speak at each of the masses the first week of the appeal (Super Bowl Sunday) and then the next two weeks we take people through the pledge process at each of the Sunday masses. This process is somewhat tedious but at the same time it is quite familiar so please plan ahead. The process will be completed in time for the beginning of the Season of Lent. I hope that the process, even though it is familiar, nevertheless invites your generous response to the needs of the Church. I thank you in advance for your participation and your continued generosity.

The *Sunday Morning Café* continues to bring our parish community together. So many of you have chosen to be part of this new experience and I have received many wonderful comments. More than a couple of you have tried one of Christine's breakfast sandwiches and have enjoyed them about as much as she has enjoyed preparing them for you. I was especially pleased to see so many of our Religious Education parents stopping in and enjoying the café while religious education classes are in session. We will continue to make improvements and so I encourage you to stop in and take a look, enjoy the coffee and the food but most of all the sense of community and a deeper sense of belonging.

Have a great week and enjoy our somewhat balmy winter. I am sure that many of you like me are quietly waiting for a big storm to hit. We have gone this far but there is still quite a bit of winter ahead of us and none of us would be surprised if Old Man Winter has one or two snow events up his sleeve. Until that happens just enjoy the day. I will see you in the neighborhood.

Fr. Tom Santa, C.Ss.R.
Pastor



Parish Directory

Pastor

Rev. Thomas Santa, C.Ss.R.
tsanta@st-mikes.org

Associate Pastors

Rev. Thomas Donaldson, C.Ss.R.
tdonaldson@st-mikes.org

Rev. James Keena, C.Ss.R.
jkeena@st-mikes.org

Rev. Joseph Morin, C.Ss.R.
frmorin@st-mikes.org

Rev. Ken Sedlak, C.Ss.R.
KCSsR@aol.com

Director of Religious Education/ Pastoral Associate

Mary Catherine Meek
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mcmeek@st-mikes.org

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dcunningham@st-mikes.org

Pastoral Minister

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Music Ministry

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Director of Music and Organist
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dstucker@st-mikes.org

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Barbara Rose
Rose Slattery

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tours@st-mikes.org

Life Directions

Rev. John Phelps, C.Ss.R.

Parish Mission Team

Rev. John Paul Andree, C.Ss.R.
Rev. Tony Judge, C.Ss.R.
Rev. Maurice Nutt, C.Ss.R.
Rev. Gregory Schmitt, C.Ss.R.
Rev. Arturo Uribe, C.Ss.R.

Finance Council

Council Chair: Laurence Grant
financecouncil@st-mikes.org

Parish Pastoral Council

Council Chair: Paul Kleinaitis
pastoralcouncil@st-mikes.org

Communications and Special Events Commission

Commission Head: Jean Cocozza
communications@st-mikes.org

Spiritual Living Commission

Commission Head: Christine Kordiuik
spiritualliving@st-mikes.org
Monthly Meetings: 3rd Tuesday
7:00 p.m., Parish Center.

Human Concerns and Needs Commission

Co-Commission Heads:
Barbara Pope and Jeanne Sanna
humanconcerns@st-mikes.org
Monthly Meetings: 2nd Wednesday
7:00 p.m., Parish Center.

Parish Life Commission

Commission Head: Gisella Tomasio
parishlife@st-mikes.org
Monthly Meetings: 4th Monday
6:30 p.m., Parish Center.

Respect Life Commission

Commission Head: Del Ramirez
rlifesm@gmail.com

Worship Commission

Commission Head:
Diane Kelley-Thompson
worship@st-mikes.org

Stillpoint/Contemplative Prayer

Director: Fr. Ken Sedlak, C.Ss.R.
kc SSR@aol.com
Weekly Gatherings: Monday
7:00 p.m., Rectory Chapel.

Gala

Diane Kelley-Thompson
gala@st-mikes.org

Mass Schedule

Sunday: 9:00 a.m.; 11:00 a.m.; 7:00 p.m.

Saturday: 5:30 p.m.

Monday - Saturday: 8:00 a.m.

Mon., Wed., Thurs., and Fri.: 5:30 p.m. in the
Ancilla Domini Chapel (enter via the sacristy)

Our Mother of Perpetual Help Devotions:
Tuesdays after the 8:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. Mass
(in the church)

Confessions

In the Church: Saturdays 4:45 - 5:25 p.m.

At the Rectory: When a priest is available or by
appointment

Baptisms

**First and third Sundays of each month at
1:00 p.m. except during Lent**

Parent preparation sessions are normally held on
the second Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m. or
the fourth Sunday of the month at 2:00 p.m. Holi-
day weekends are the exception. To schedule a
baptism and/or register for a parent preparation
session, please contact the church office at (312)
642-2498 or see our website for information.

Weddings

Fridays: 3:00 p.m.

Saturdays: 12:00 & 3:00 p.m.

Arrangements should be made a minimum of four
months in advance of a wedding date. Please con-
tact the church office at (312) 642-2498 to make
an appointment with a priest in order to schedule
your wedding and to receive additional informa-
tion.

Anointing of the Sick

Please call the church office at (312) 642-2498 if
you have a family member or friend who is home-
bound, in a nursing home, or in the hospital who
would like to receive the Anointing of the Sick or
other sacraments.

Rectory Hours

Weekdays: 9:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Saturday: 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Sunday and Holidays: Closed

Visit our website at www.st-mikes.org



*Join our
"St. Michael in Old Town"
Fan Page!*

*Saint of the Day
&
Mass Intentions*

Sunday, January 29

9:00 a.m. Thomas McDonough
11:00 a.m. † Rose Merle (Birthday)
7:00 p.m. Parishioners - Living & Deceased

Monday, January 30

St. Hyacintha of Mariscotti

8:00 a.m. † William & Angela O'Connor
5:30 p.m. Mrs. Gibe

Tuesday, January 31

St. John Bosco

8:00 a.m. Special Intention
6:00 p.m. Charles F. Canning

Wednesday, February 1

St. Brigid of Kildare

8:00 a.m. † T. Lincoln O'Gara
5:00 p.m. † Danica Girardi

Thursday, February 2

The Presentation of the Lord

8:00 a.m. Membership Foundation Fund
5:30 p.m. † John & Marie Reiff

Friday, February 3

St. Blaise

8:00 a.m. Blaise Demko
5:30 p.m. † John Mikit

Saturday, February 4

St. Joan of Valois

8:00 a.m. Geraldine McDonough
5:30 p.m. † Joseph R. Kaye

Sunday, February 5

St. Agatha

9:00 a.m. † Joseph Joyce
11:00 a.m. Parishioners—Living & Deceased



This Week's Readings

Sunday: Dt 18:15-20; Ps 95; 1 Cor 7:32-35;
Mk 1:21-28
Monday: 2 Sm 15:13-14, 30; 16:5-13; Mk 5:1-20
Tuesday: 2 Sm 18:9-10, 14b, 24-25a,
30—19:3; Mk 5:21-43
Wednesday: 2 Sm 24:2, 9-17; Mk 6:1-6
Thursday: Mal 3:1-4; Heb 2:14-18;
Lk 2:22-40 [22-32]
Friday: Sir 47:2-11; Mk 6:14-29
Saturday: 1 Kgs 3:4-13; Mk 6:30-34
Sunday: Jb 7:1-4, 6-7; Ps 147;
1 Cor 9:16-19, 22-23; Mk 1:29-39

Ministry Schedule

January 30– February 5

Date	Celebrants	Homilist	Lectors	Eucharistic Ministers
Monday, 8:00 a.m. Mass 5:30 p.m. Mass	Fr. Morin Fr. Keena	Fr. Morin Fr. Keena		
Tuesday, 8:00 a.m. Mass 6:00 p.m. Mass	Fr. Morin Fr. Keena	Fr. Morin Fr. Keena		
Wednesday, 8:00 a.m. Mass 5:30 p.m. Mass	Fr. Morin Fr. Keena	Fr. Morin Fr. Keena		
Thursday, 8:00 a.m. Mass 5:30 p.m. Mass	Fr. Morin Fr. Keena	Fr. Morin Fr. Keena		
Friday, 8:00 a.m. Mass 5:30 p.m. Mass	Fr. Morin Fr. Keena	Fr. Morin Fr. Keena		
Saturday, 8:00 a.m. Mass	Fr. Morin	Fr. Morin		
Saturday, 4:45 p.m. Confessions	Fr. Sedlak			
Date	Celebrant	Homilist	Lectors	Eucharistic Ministers
Saturday, February 4 5:30 p.m.	Fr. Santa	Fr. Santa	S. Keenan, D. Eagan	C. Jaccarino*, S. Keenan, L. Scannicchio, L. Scannicchio
Sunday, February 5 9:00 a.m. Mass	Fr. Santa	Fr. Santa	A. Ball, J. Cheng	P. Cassidy*, T. Dunning, K. Peters, V. Rose
Sunday, 11:00 a.m. Mass	Fr. Santa	Fr. Santa	D. Sajous-Brady, V. Classen	V. Classen*, P. Clickener, R. Heidenrich, D. Kelley
Sunday, 7:00 p.m. Mass	NO	7:00 p.m.	MASS THIS	WEEK ONLY!

St. Michael's Café

Come one, Come all to the newest spot on campus. The Café is located in the parish Center on the first floor. Bring a book or enjoy a newspaper with your gourmet coffee, pastries or a breakfast sandwich, and juice. Visit with other parishioners and friends. The Café will be open every Sunday from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. so come check us out!

News & Announcements

Remember in Your Prayers



Bernice Baumgarten, Kathleen Beauchamp, Arlene and Bill Conrick, Katelyn Dodson, Tony Dorsey, the Flood family, Karyn Hanselman, Alec Johnson, Marge Kempen, Paul Kunach, Annie Morin, Carl Neubeck, Lyla Neubek, Tom Preibe, Christine Ramos, Craig Romaine, Dolores Roth, Fr. Ken Sedlak, C.Ss.R., Joe Spreitzer, Rafael Velez

To place or keep a name on our sick list, please call the rectory every 3 weeks to let us know that you, a loved one or friend are still in need of prayers.

Upcoming Wedding

February 11, 2012

Ms. Courtney Kramer

&

Mr. Christopher Clark

Upcoming Events

February 11, 2012

March 1, 2012

April 21, 2012

Marriage Enrichment

Lenten Gatherings

7th Annual Gala

St. Michael's Bulletin

Please feel free to take this bulletin home with you after mass. This publication is printed specifically for you so you will have all the latest information regarding mass times, ministry schedules and the events taking place here at St. Michael's Church. Also contained in the bulletin is the contact information for all the staff, commission heads and council chairs. These are the people that conduct the parish business or the events that are held here. They are always willing to help answer questions about anything pertaining to St. Michael's Church.

Check Us Out...

Have you visited the new St. Michael's website yet? We have a new look, with new capabilities. Sign up online for your donations and manage when and how often a donation is made. Print your statements from your home. It is simple and easy to do. Call Toni in the Parish Office or email her at tdunning@st-mikes.org for more information or to answer any questions you may have about the online giving process.

Parish Life Commission

Commission Head: Gisella Tomasio

Pastor's Representative: Fr. Tom Donaldson, C.Ss.R.

parishlife@st-mikes.org

Monthly Meetings: 4th Mon., 6:30 p.m., Parish Center

The Parish Life Commission provides a wide variety of programs that enhance the social experience and sense of community for all parishioners of St. Michael in Old Town. Its various activities include: Young Adults group, Docents of St. Michael's (Art and History Tours), New Mom's Groups, New Parishioner Welcome Events, Over 40's Club, Gardening Group.

Church Tours

Tours of the church are held most Sundays after the 11:00 a.m. Mass in winter and after the 9:00 a.m. Mass in summer. All are welcome. Please meet by the "1871 display" on the east side of the church. Tours for groups can be scheduled by appointment. Please contact Linda Evans at the church office (312) 642-2498 or send an e-mail to tours@st-mikes.org.

Tours: January 29 at 12:00 p.m.

New Mom's Group

Come meet other moms for coffee and chitchat. Babies and kids are welcome! We meet on the first and third Wednesday of each month from 10:00 a.m. - noon in the Café in the Parish Center. Bring your own snacks, lunch and toys to share.

Mom's Night Out

Are you a new mom who needs a night out? Join other new mothers for dinner and drinks.

Contact Laura Demko regarding either event at LEDemko@gmail.com for more information.

Worship Commission

Commission Head: Diane Kelley-Thompson

Pastor's Representative: Fr. Tom Donaldson, C.Ss.R.

Liaison for Baptism:

Fr. Tom Donaldson, C.Ss.R.

Fr. Joe Morin, C.Ss.R.

Liaison for Altar Servers:

Fr. Tom Santa, C.Ss.R.

Liaison for Confirmation:

Fr. Jim Keena, C.Ss.R.

Liaison for Eucharistic Ministers:

Fr. Joe Morin, C.Ss.R.

Liaison for First Communion:

Fr. Joe Morin, C.Ss.R.

Liaison for Lectors:

Fr. Tom Donaldson, C.Ss.R.

Liaison for RCIA:

Fr. Tom Donaldson, C.Ss.R.

worship@st-mikes.org

The Worship Commission's members plan, prepare, implement, evaluate, and educate about all aspects of the parish's liturgical celebrations.

Spiritual Living Commission

Commission Head: Christine Kordiuk

Pastor's Representative: Fr. Ken Sedlak, C.Ss.R.

spiritualliving@st-mikes.org

Monthly Meeting: 3rd Tues., 7:00 p.m., Parish Center

The Spiritual Living Commission offers programs that nurture living in the presence of God. Catholic in its roots and ecumenical in its outreach, the Commission strives to assist all in their desire for meaning, purpose, and community built on the foundation of God's unconditional love.

Ministries include: Adult Confirmation, Religious Education, RCIA, Family, Catholics Come Home, Culture of Life, Marriage Vocation Development & Enrichment, Religious Vocation Discernment, Single Life Vocation Development & Enrichment, Pathways/Stillpoint, Living the Questions, Spiritual Dream group, Bible/Scripture studies, Servant Leadership.

Finance Council

Commission Head: Laurence Grant

Pastor's Representative: Fr. Tom Santa, C.Ss.R.

financecouncil@st-mikes.org

The Finance Council advises the pastor on the tangible assets of the parish community including financial resources, buildings, and the church's grounds and provides financial oversight for all parish events. The Council discusses various ways to enhance the financial future of the parish. The Council consists of parishioners with skills in finance, accounting, legal, construction and architecture. Membership is by invitation of the pastor.

We're Counting on You!

Did it ever seem to you that the ushers are preoccupied when they are passing the collection baskets during the Offertory? Perhaps you tried to acknowledge them with a nod or a smile, but they seemed not to notice.

The most likely reason is that they were busy counting the attendees at each Mass while they passed the baskets. We track the attendance at each Mass and have done so for many years. The basis for this information is the ushers' count each week. Tracking the attendance is one of the ways we know if we are shrinking or growing as a parish. These numbers also help us with budget calculations when the Finance Council presents the needs of the parish.

So, the next time your usher passes your pew without returning your acknowledgement, you'll know what is really going on in his or her head.

News & Announcement

Bible Study

"WOMEN IN THE OLD TESTAMENT" is the topic for this season's Bible Study. We will begin the first lesson this Tuesday evening at 7:00 p.m. in the Parish Center West Room.

This series will be comprised of nine lessons in the following order:

- 1 - Women of Israel's Beginnings;
- 2 - More Women of Israel's Beginnings;
- 3 - Women of Israel's Passover;
- 4 - Women of Israel's Early Tribes;
- 5 - More Women of Israel's Early Tribes;
- 6 - Women of Israel's Monarchy;
- 7 - Women, Image of God;
- 8 - Women of Courage and Strength;
- 9 - Queen Esther.

The materials are in and the cost is \$15, if you can. ALL ARE INVITED TO PARTICIPATE. See you there.

Fr. Joe Morin, C.Ss.R.

Mercy Home Heroes

Make this the year you go the extra mile—literally!

Run the **Bank of America Chicago Marathon** for Mercy Home for Boys & Girls and be a Hero to countless youth who need a safe home, a quality education and the chance for a brighter future!

Contact Amber at ambcer@mercyhome.org or 312-738-7567 to start your journey to becoming a Hero! www.mercyhome.org/marathon

Gluten Free Hosts

It has come to our attention that some people may be gluten intolerant and are thus prevented from receiving Holy Communion because of the wheat wafer. If this is true for you please contact Fr. Santa or one of the other priests on staff and the procedure for receiving a gluten free host at mass will be explained to you.

Infant Baptism Preparation

All parents who wish to have their baby baptized are required to attend an Infant Baptism preparation session. Parents who have previously had a child baptized at St. Michael are exempt from attending a second class. Parents are asked to register in advance for the class by calling the parish office at 312-642-2498. Sessions take place in the 2nd floor Lounge of the Parish Center:

Upcoming Sessions:

Monday, February 13th, 7:00 p.m.

Please note: There are no Baptism Preparation classes or Baptisms during the season of Lent. The regular schedule for Baptism Preparation classes will resume on April 22 at 2:00 p.m. in the Parish Center. Baptisms will resume on April 15 at 1:00 p.m. in the church. Please be sure to contact the parish office in advance and reserve your place for all Baptism Preparation classes and Baptisms.

News & Announcements

Lenten Gathering

It seems hard to believe but planning has begun for Lent; Ash Wednesday is a short 4 weeks away! Last year the Spiritual Living Commission hosted the "Lenten Gathering". For four Thursdays during Lent various sessions for spiritual growth were offered for anyone interested in attending. On March 1, 8, 15, and 22 the commission is again sponsoring the "Lenten Gathering". Mark your calendar NOW. There will be sessions on

History of the Church with Fr. Tom Santa, C.Ss.R.

Spirituality of the 12 Steps with Fr. Tom Donaldson, C.Ss.R.

Prayer Experiences

Self-Discovery with Fr. Ken Sedlak, C.Ss.R.

Body movement and mediation using such practices as Yoga

The specific topics to be discussed each week in the sessions will be listed in detail in upcoming bulletins so keep watching and save the dates!

The format of the sessions is to gather for registration and a prayer between 6:45 and 7:00 p.m. After a short prayer people will proceed to the meeting place for the session they have chosen. At 8:30 p.m. all attendees are invited back to the Café for social and gathering with refreshments served.

Young Adults Game Night

Fight off the mid-winter chill with a cozy and competitive round of fun and games. The Young Adults are sponsoring an afternoon of card and board games on Saturday, February 4, 2012 from 4:00-6:00 p.m. in the Dining Room on the first floor of the Parish Center. If you have a favorite game, we encourage you to bring it but we will have all the beloved classics. Food and drinks will be available, but your own contributions will be greatly welcomed as well.

New Mom's Group

The next Mom's Group meeting will be this Wednesday, February 1 in the St. Mike's Cafe! We'll meet at our normal time from 10:00 a.m. to noon in the Dining Room. Hope you can come. All are welcome, invite a friend.

Cleaning out the closet? Mom's Group would love your old toys! Please bring any used toy donations to Mom's Group to add to our new toy collection in the Parish Center.

Ashland Addison Florist

When ordering flowers and centerpieces remember that St. Michael's has established a partnership with Ashland Addison Florist. Ashland Addison Florist Company will make a **10% donation** back to St. Michael's when you mention St. Michael via the phone or in store or use the special promo code "STMD" when purchasing online. Place your order via phone at (312) 432-1800 or online at www.ashaddflorist.com. **Don't forget to mention St. Michael in Old Town to ensure a donation back to our Church!**

Stillpoint

St. Michael's Spirituality Resource

Director: Fr. Ken Sedlak, C.Ss.R., kcscr@aol.com

Contemplative Prayer Gathering: Mondays, 7:15 p.m.

Parish Center 3rd Fl Chapel

Inner Views

Angry Birds. Have you ever played it?

It's a computer game where you use a slingshot to shoot birds at structures in which pigs are hiding. You shoot the birds at the structures like torpedoes. They break through the walls of the structures and destroy the pigs. It doesn't make a lot of sense but it's sort of fascinating. I played it for 45 minutes before I realized "I'm wasting my time."

"With a combined 500 million downloads across all platforms and including both regular and special editions,^[5] the game has been called 'one of the most mainstream games out right now',^[6] 'one of the great runaway hits of 2010',^[7] and 'the largest mobile app success the world has seen so far'.^[8] So says wikipedia.

Part of the fascination for me was watching the structures crumble when they are hit by the birds. This image was on my mind and in my imagination when I walked down the North corridor of the rectory. It was night time and as I looked at the clock tower looming in the distance it began to rain and lightning lashed out at the tower. Unlike the structures in which the pigs were hiding the tower did not crumble from this onslaught. It stood solid and majestic. But my imagination was still in the mode of the crumbling pig hideouts and I sort of expected the clock tower to react the same way. Its strange how our imaginations can affect our reality.

And just as strange was the lightening and rain happening in Chicago. On a January night. That's not supposed to happen at this time of year. My mind believes that but beliefs cede to fact. It was January. It was Chicago. And it was raining no matter what I believed.

I'm sure a meteorologist could explain how this happened. But I don't need explanations, I know it happened. And I trust my experience over my beliefs.

Many of our judgments, our analyses of other people, come from our beliefs. But with judgments our experience does not override our beliefs. Our beliefs color our experience and create our judgments about these people. The goal of the spiritual path is to change this dynamic, to learn to be present to people as they are and not as our mind portrays them according to our beliefs. This is especially true of the way we imagine God.

In "A Lever and a Place to Stand" Richard Rohr puts

this image before us:

If any of you were going to create a religion, who of you would think of creating as your religious image a naked, bleeding, wounded man? It is the most unlikely image for God, the most illogical image for Omnipotence. None of us in our wildest imaginations would have come up with it.

So true. This image of God stares us in the face with every crucifix. It is the beginning of the end of the greatest story ever told. It is the experience of Jesus' followers. And yet, if it would have ended there we would never have heard of Jesus, the man whose death profoundly changes our lives. The stark and startling image is the disciples' experience that stripped away all their hopes about God and God's messiah. And when those were sufficiently stripped away the Gospels tell us that the "veil in the Temple was torn in two."

This is another way of talking through our imagination. The veil in the Temple stood between the people and God. But now that it is torn in two it no longer stands between us and God. We are reconnected to God. The divine Son rises as an image of new life within all of us. Nothing stands between us and God. All the images and beliefs that stood between ourselves and God are stripped away in Jesus. When we let go of them completely we can come to know God and the Son as our divine foundation.

I think I can tell you how to awaken to the presence of God as the source of our life. We awaken to the reality of God in our lives by expanding our thinking to accommodate reality in all its breadth, complexity and delicate beauty. This means tearing apart the veil of our thoughts about who we want God to be. When we let go of our judgments and expectations about God we open space in our hearts to let God be our God. Spirituality talks about this as growing in detachment and trust.

These are all ways of saying the same thing but they have value only when you make sense of them in your experience. I can tell you how I've come to unravel my experience of God but you have to find a way to untangle your thoughts so that they no longer create a veil between you and God's presence in your life. It's a process of coming to know how your mind works in creating your beliefs about God. And it starts with a relentless and gentle dedication to know reality as it is.

Ken Sedlak C.Ss.R. - Stillpoint / PATHWAYS

Religious Education

Seeking Confirmation?

Are you like many young adult Catholics who somehow missed being confirmed as a younger student? Are you preparing for the Sacrament of Marriage and realizing you would like to reconnect with the sacramental life of the Church? If so, you might be interested in the St. Michael Confirmation preparation process, which will **begin on February 8** and will continue for 2 sessions each month through April. Confirmation will take place the first Sunday in May. There are 6 Wednesday evening sessions, one Saturday retreat day (10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.), and one evening of reflection. Your sponsor is encouraged to attend all sessions with you, but must attend the evening of reflection and Confirmation.

For those baptized in another Christian faith, but interested in becoming Catholic and being confirmed, there are similar opportunities for you. Please read about them below under the RCIA heading.

RCIA

If you have been thinking about joining the Catholic faith, completing your initiation through Eucharist and/or Confirmation, or journeying with someone who is seeking to know Jesus Christ and his Message and Mission, the RCIA process here at St. Michael might be the right place to begin.

The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) is a process for those seeking to become one with Christ through Baptism and/or membership in the Catholic Faith. Whether baptized or unbaptized, the process allows for spiritual progression of the individual and the opportunity to learn in depth about what the Catholic Church teaches and believes. For those already Catholic wishing to deepen their own faith and live out a spirit of mission, there is an opportunity to accompany a potential Catechumen (unbaptized adult) or Candidate (already baptized in a Christian Church) as they learn about and prepare for full initiation into the Church. These mentors may serve as sponsors or as members of the Team that prepares the sessions each week. A personal conversation is usually the best start to the process.

RCIA Inquiry (for those just beginning or newer to the process):

For information, please call 312-943-4767 and speak to Mary Catherine.

RCIA Catechumenate (for those who have already been journeying with us at St. Michael):

Sundays, February 5, 12, 26 after the 11:00 a.m. Mass

Saturday, February 18: Retreat

RCIA will celebrate the Rite of Sending at the 11:00 a.m. Mass on February 19. They will then go to Holy Name Cathedral later that day to celebrate the Rite of Election with Cardinal George. Please keep our Catechumens and Candidates in your prayers.

For information on any of the above programs contact:

Mary Catherine Meek, Director of Religious Education (DRE), or Deanna Cunningham, Administrative Assistant at the Center for Religious Education at 312-943-4767 or religiouseducation@st-mikes.org. The office is usually open Sunday through Thursday. Office hours vary by day due to the nature of the work.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION FOR STUDENTS

Jan 29: Regular classes scheduled

Feb 5: Regular classes for all levels, except Level 2.

Special for Level 2: First Reconciliation Retreat Day beginning at 9:00 a.m. Mass

Feb. 12: Regular class schedule. (Last class for the month of February)



Dear Parishioners and Friends,

St. Michael in Old Town will host its **7th Annual Gala on April 21, 2012 at Galleria Marchetti**. This event has something for **everyone**. No one is too **YOUNG** or too **OLD**, come meet and mingle with an **OPEN BAR, DINNER, DANCING, SILENT and LIVE AUCTION...** join in the fun and with **YOUR help** we can make this event the most successful Gala Yet!!

We need you! Please consider volunteering or donate to the Live and Silent Auctions. Listed below are some ideas on how you can help support the 7th Annual Gala. Please check at least one option and return this form.

I would like to be a Gala volunteer

I would like to volunteer to solicit items for the Auctions

I (or my friends, parents, etc.) can donate one or more of the following items:

Item(s): _____

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Can't think of what to give? *How about...*

- **Hotel, Travel, Vacation Homes** - Do you work in the hotel or travel industry? Do you or someone you know have a vacation home or timeshare? Do you have at least 30,000 frequent flyer miles or hotel points you can donate?
- **Sports or Theatre Tickets, Memorabilia** - Do you have season tickets to a sporting event or theatre group? How about donating a jersey or other sports memorabilia? Could you arrange for someone to meet a "Celebrity"?
- **Dining** - Do you work in the restaurant industry? Have an acquaintance who is a chef? Do you have unused gift certificates or cooking classes? If you are a "regular" at any establishment, could you ask on St. Mike's behalf for a donation? How about catering a party or arranging for a "Chef for a Day"?
- **Retail Items** - Do you work in retail? Do you or someone you know make purses, belts, jewelry? Do you have unused Gift certificates or items for specific age groups? Do you have any unused valuable items - jewelry, electronics, etc.?
- **Monetary Donations** - Do you know of a Company who would be a corporate sponsor? How about underwriting the Band, Flowers, or Purchase TABLES? The discount for purchasing a table of 8 is \$200.00.

Thank you in advance for your time and donations. Your contributions are important to the success of the St. Michael's only fund-raiser for 2012.

Donations are tax-deductible and should be dropped-off at the rectory - 1633 N. Cleveland Ave., Chicago, IL 60614. Please return this form to the rectory or deposit it in the collection basket. Your donation will be acknowledged in the event program, our website and the parish Sunday bulletin.

Sincerely,

Your Gala Committee - 312.642.2498 gala@st-mikes.org

St. Michael in Old Town



Communications and Special Events Commission

Commission Head: Jean Cocozza
Pastor's Representative: Fr. Tom Santa, C.Ss.R.
communications@st-mikes.org

The Communications & Special Events Commission is responsible for marketing and promoting St. Michael, its events and activities, internally to the Parish and externally to the community. Commission members coordinate information and publicize events and happenings through the designing of flyers, posters, bulletin and Mass announcements, the St. Michael website, Facebook and local media. The commission also sponsors other fundraising events throughout the year for use in offsetting annual operating expenses and capital restoration projects.

The Communications & Special Events Commission is always seeking new members with an interest in writing, photography, and graphic design. If you are interested in joining the commission or for more information call the parish office at 312-642-2498 or email communications@st-mikes.org.

Human Concerns and Needs Commission

Co-Commission
Heads: Barbara Pope and Jeanne Sanna
Pastor's Representative: Fr. Joe Morin, C.Ss.R.
humanconcerns@st-mikes.org
Monthly Meetings: 2nd Wed., 7:00 p.m., Parish Center

Mission Statement: The Human Concerns and Needs Commission identifies needs within our parish and community and develops ministries to provide service and material outreach to address those needs.

Join us for our next meeting on Wednesday, February 8 on the first floor of the Parish Center at 7:00 p.m.

Music Ministry

Director of Music and Organist: Daniel Stucker
Pastor's Representative: Fr. Tom Santa, C.Ss.R.
dstucker@st-mikes.org

Membership to the Parish Choir, Schola Cantorum, is open to all high school, college and adult parishioners. The rehearsals take place on Sundays at 10:00 a.m. It is desirable that singers have a strong love for sacred music and fundamental knowledge of music and singing. If you would like to learn more about the parish choir please contact Daniel Stucker to schedule a time to visit.

Contemporary Choir Director: Scott Arkenberg
scott@st-mikes.org