



# HARK

*Announcing the Good News at St. Michael Parish*

Volume 1, Issue 2  
October 2009

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## Let's Put the "T" and the "U" and the "US" in STIMULUS

Everyone in the parish was invited to attend a Stewardship Stimulus meeting in the church in August. With our parish leadership in transition, the Parish Staff was eager to hear the parishioners' evaluation of the strengths of the parish, what obstacles might interfere with the growth of stewardship, and their vision for St Michael Parish in the near future. After some brief comments from members of the Parish Staff, twenty-eight parishioners took the opportunity to address the gathering about their ideas and dreams for reenergizing the involvement of parishioners in activities and ministries in parish life. Suggestions involved a wide variety of areas which included service ministries for the benefit of the community, events for the youth, social activities, programs to enhance spirituality and worship, and formation programs. Many parishioners are already active in parish and community ministries. Their dedication to our parish mission brings positive energy to us all and also keeps us optimistic that we will successfully renew our dedication to a stewardship lifestyle. In addition to those projects that have

continued to flourish, new concepts are being explored.

Following on the heels of this exciting meeting, the Parish Staff and the members of the Pastoral Council gathered together as the Leadership Team of the Parish to review all the suggestions and prayerfully discern priorities for the parish in the coming year.

Three priorities emerged as a starting point for our efforts in stewardship:

- Welcome and community building
- Education and catechesis at all levels
- Building connections among parishioners

How do we begin? As a starting point, a census is being taken to correctly identify the households who call St. Michael their "home" parish. Pastoral Council assigned members to chair committees related to the priorities that had been determined. By October, several opportunities have already been presented to the parish:

Donut socials, hosted by various parish organizations, have been held twice a month.

A five-week Adult Formation program related to the study of A Portrait of Je-



sus by Rev. Demetrius Dumm has been arranged.

The RCIA program has begun with members eager to explore the Catholic faith.

On Sept. 23rd, a Memory Mass was the inaugural event for the Bereavement group.

Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist and Lectors received additional training.

Scouting groups continue to flourish.

Children's Worship Services are beginning again during the 9am and 11am Masses.

The Youth program is beginning an exciting new initiative! (Details on p.2)

The newsletter **HARK** was published to facilitate communication of parish news.

Soon a complete listing of stewardship opportunities will be provided to all parishioners for review and consideration. What gifts do you have to share? What commitment are you willing to make with the time, talent, and treasure you have been given by God?

**"The gift you have received, give as a gift."**

*Matthew 10:18*

According to the teaching of our Catholic Bishops, good stewards are disciples of Christ who:

- *Receive the gifts of God with gratitude*
- *Cultivate them responsibly*
- *Share them lovingly in justice with others*
- *Return them with interest to the Lord in a spirit of accountability*

Stewardship is not a program. It is a spirituality, a way of life for disciples who are motivated by faith and a deep sense of gratitude. That faith leads them to share their time, talent, and treasure with other members of the Church and other worthy causes.

### Stewardship Prayer

Take Lord, and receive all my liberty, my memory, my understanding, and my entire will; all that I have and possess.

You have given all to me; to you, O Lord; now I return it; all is yours, dispose of me wholly according to Your will.

Give me only your love and your grace, for this is enough for me.

St Ignatius Loyola

## Looking for a Way to Serve?



The wonderful men and women of our Holy Name Society and Christian Mothers provide tremendous service to our parish. These organizations work behind the scenes on many projects. In a spirit of hospitality, the Holy Name men are often found behind the grill for parish celebrations, while Christian Mothers work to provide delicious baked goods. By recognizing altar servers for their committed service to the parish liturgies, the Holy Name Society strives to encourage the youth of our parish to be active in our worship. Christian Mothers help families at a time when they are vulnerable, as they organize and serve luncheons following funerals. Both groups are committed to prayer and the spiritual growth of their members. Their hands and hearts are given to charitable projects, and they are always willing to help whenever they are asked. Their involvement in parish life continues to grow and you are invited to join them!



## Building Bridges: Generational Youth Ministry

By Jennifer Carter, Youth Director

Imagine a Sunday evening at St. Michael Church. Seated in the pews are people of all ages: children, parents, young adults, grandparents and teens, people from all walks of our community and beyond. Members of our own parish, as well as from neighboring Wheeling parishes, are all gathered for one purpose. Imagine an evening where everyone comes together for a Mass led in ministry by the high school teens of our area parishes joined in faith and love.

Over the past month and a half, teams of parishioners from St. Michael's, St. Vincent's, Corpus Christi, and Our Lady of Peace, coordinated by Jen Carter, have been hard at work to make such a celebration a reality. At St. Michael's, our Pastoral Council Youth Sub-committee (DawnAnn Dean, Megan Fahey, Sarah Fultz, and Jen Carter) has been a key part of prayerfully preparing for the January start of a Wheeling high school youth program called Life Teen, an international high school youth ministry program that integrates generations into a faith and fun-filled evening.

Life Teen is a parish-based Catholic high school youth ministry program. The program begins with a parish Mass that is open to the entire community. Teens are invited to be trained in liturgical ministries such as lectors, ushers, altar servers, greeters and confirmed teens may be Eucharistic ministers for the Mass. In our program, the teens will also be leading the music. Following Mass, a "Life Night" is held and incorporates skits, games, interactive activities, and socialization. Life Nights cover catechetical and social issues that are 100% Catholic and comprehensive. They are led by team members of the parish community who are trained and prepared to plan the nights they lead through times set aside for spiritual reflection and organization. Life Teen now has over 1000 individual programs in the United States and 22 countries around the world.

Our Wheeling program will incorporate several area parishes and will take place the first and third Sundays of the month so that we can encourage increased participation for our teens in their home parishes on the "off" week-

ends. Parishes and Mass times, as well as liturgical ministry contacts will be listed on the backs of worship aids to encourage this continuation of Mass involvement. The Masses and Life Nights will take place at St. Michael's while other opportunities for spiritual growth and socials will be regularly scheduled to take place at our sister parishes. It really is an exciting time of building bridges and bringing generations together to grow in our Catholic faith.

Over the next several months, we will be vigilantly preparing for the planned January 17th kick-off of Life Teen in Wheeling. We will need your prayerful support more than ever. Please keep those who are discerning involvement on the teams in your prayers. Most especially, please keep our teens in your prayers as we try to reach as many of our area Catholic youth as we can. We invite and encourage you to join us and be a part of our liturgical celebrations and help us to surround our youth with the support of their communities. We look forward to seeing you on January 17th!

## In Praise of God - In Honor of St. Michael

### 2008 Liturgy Statistics



260 Sunday Celebrations of the Eucharist
584 Daily Masses
34 Baptisms
43 First Communions
97 Confirmations
16 Marriages
2 Professions of Faith
35 Funeral Masses

On Tuesday evening Sept. 29th, the parish community gathered to celebrate our patron St. Michael, along with Archangels Gabriel and Raphael. The SMPS Choristers sang two prelude hymns directed by Danielle Payne, SMPS Music teacher and accompanied by Chad Carter, Parish Music Director, and Jacob Coughlan, SMPS 5th grade violinist. Father Dan reminded us in his homily that as a Christian community under the title of St. Michael we should imitate his charisma, or special gift, in our lives. In the case of Michael we should be aware of our responsibility to care for and protect the poor and the downtrodden. He was elevated to the status of Archangel because of his belief in a tender and almighty God. Only 3 angels are listed by name in the Gospel: Michael (Defender), Gabriel (Announcer), and Raphael



(Comforter). We celebrate them together because the Church wants us to realize that a true disciple is not afraid to defend others, to announce good news, and to comfort the afflicted.

Above the front doors of our parish church we find the meaning of Michael's name. Therein lies our challenge - to imitate Michael "Who Is Like God" in our daily lives of service to others.



## Pulling Together

For over three years, St. Michael Parish School and St. Michael Parish School of Religion (PSR) have been collecting pop tabs for the Morgantown Ronald McDonald House. This facility has served as a "home away from home" for families of critically ill children since October 1990. One of only three in the state, the organization provides temporary, inexpensive housing for relatives of children receiving treatment at nearby hospitals.

This project started small but quickly grew as members of the parish were asked to help with the undertaking. The aluminum treasures have arrived in every conceivable container: baggies, coffee cans, plastic pretzel jars, and carefully threaded safety pins, paper clips, and pipe cleaners. Each donation is appreciated and has been added to the frequent deliveries to Morgantown. The parish has really pulled together and the most recent "weigh in" brings

our grand total to 358 pounds. One tab is 1 inch long, and it takes 1267 tabs to make a pound. Grab the calculator and you will be amazed at our contribution! The project remains ongoing and contributions can be given to any SMPS or PSR student or dropped off at the Parish Office. Thank you to all of our collectors!



## Your Legacy - A Reflection

by Wendy Hinerman, Parish Catechesis

My mother, Beverly Balch Fluty, died August 8, 2009. I cannot express how much I loved and adored my mother. Nor can I describe the agony and deep sadness that accompanies the loss.

My mother was quite a lady. She was an outstanding mother and a loyal wife. She adored her grandchildren, her friends, nature, travel, the ocean, and history. She lived and loved life with all her heart. Her obituary detailed the many volunteer projects that she had enthusiastically tackled over the years.

In the weeks that followed Mom's

death I received many thoughtful phone calls, notes, and cards. Each was very much appreciated. The kind words touched my heart, but they also carried a lesson. Anecdotes and narratives cited Mom's loving personality, warm smile, dedication to historic preservation and numerous community endeavors. There was no mention of diamonds and pearls, the car she drove, or the size of her home. No one reminisced that they'd always remember her for her designer clothes. Rather, Mom was defined by what she gave, not what she kept. Quite simply, her legacy is the life she led and the love she shared.

Her positive impact serves as a model for me, for my children, and hopefully for future generations.

We all have received gifts and blessings from God. Those gifts, unique to each of us, are to be shared. St. Michael Parish is preparing a Stewardship Renewal. Are you ready to take a step toward a more active role in stewardship? When you receive your stewardship renewal form, please join me in dedicating your time, talent, and treasure. I invite you to take this step to define YOUR legacy.



**St. Michael Parish**  
**1225 National Road**  
**Wheeling, WV 26003**

**Return Service Requested**

**IT'S TIME TO OPEN THE DOORS!**

**PLEASE JOIN TOGETHER ON SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 2009  
AS WE THANK GOD FOR ALL OF HIS BLESSINGS TO US,  
PARTICULARLY THE COMPLETION OF THE ANGELUS CENTER.**

**MOST. REV. MICHAEL J. BRANSFIELD  
WILL BE JOINED BY LOCAL CLERGY AS HE PRESIDES AT THE  
12:30PM MASS IN CHURCH.  
FOLLOWING THE LITURGY, ALL PRESENT WILL JOIN A PROCESSION  
TO THE NEW BUILDING FOR THE DEDICATION.**

**IT WILL BE A WONDERFUL DAY TO GATHER TOGETHER IN PRAYER  
AND CELEBRATION AS WE ALL ENJOY OUR NEW FACILITY.  
A LIGHT RECEPTION WILL FOLLOW THE DEDICATION.**