



03.2014

Saint Paul

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Appreciative Inquiry Initiative to Help Lead Parish From Good to Great

As Catholics, we should live our lives constantly striving to be the best we can be — both as individuals and as part of our community. This past fall, St. Paul — with the help of consultant Rick Krivanka — took its first steps in the Appreciative Inquiry method, or AI, which will help to further develop the great ways in which the parish serves its parishioners and community.

Rick, who resides near Cleveland, Ohio, has a Master of Organizational Development from Case Western Reserve University. He has been working in the Appreciative Inquiry field for over 20 years, and he served as the director of Pastoral Planning for the Diocese of Cleveland before he went into consulting. In that position, he became instrumental in helping to implement AI in different parts of the country. He also helped author Susan Star Paddock and Thin Book Publishing develop the book *Appreciative Inquiry in the Catholic Church*.

Appreciative Inquiry was developed at Case Western Reserve by Dr. David Cooperrider — in fact, Rick met Dr. Cooperrider while at the university, and the two have been friends and colleagues since 1980. AI is the process of asking questions and exploring things that give life, health, energy, excellence and success in an organizational context. The process has been used successfully for many companies and organizations as a way to bring different people together from different backgrounds or cultures — one such example is the U.S. Navy, which hosted several three-day AI summits in the early 2000s that were attended by 500 to 800 people.

When used in parish settings, AI focuses on those moments when individual parishioners or the community as a whole have been the most faithful to God's call, as well as when they have most noticed God working actively in their life — in a sense, looking at the glass as half-full rather than half-empty.

"The dynamic from a faith perspective is best expressed in the words of Jesus: 'I came



A graphical depiction of the Appreciative Inquiry method

Appreciative Inquiry Initiative continued from front cover

so that they might have life and have it more abundantly,” Rick says. “So we start out by asking, ‘What gives life?’ The core focus is that instead of looking at the parish and seeing what problems there are and how we can fix it, we instead look at what gives life to people, and where people experience God’s blessings. Then we go from understanding what gives life to imagining what can bring forth this fullness of life, building on things that are already life-giving.”

AI uses the “four Ds” to go through this process, starting with “discovering” what gives life, followed by “dream,” which is an invitation for people to share their dreams for the parish, building on what we’ve discovered. The third D, “design,” refers to looking practically at the steps the parish can take to make good things better. The fourth D, “destiny,” refers to the implementation of these plans and how the parish can continue to build and sustain a culture that continues to focus on what gives life.

This past Oct. 9, St. Paul brought together 58 parish leaders for an initial AI meeting, during which they were introduced to Appreciative Inquiry. These leaders also answered questions about the highlights of their parish experience, and what they valued most about the parish.

“They had one-on-one interviews, and also got together as groups where they talked about the highlights of their individual discussions,” Rick says. “A lot of this was then communicated to the rest of the parish. After this information was studied, we created an expanded set of questions, related specifically to what they found important.”

This expanded set of questions will be utilized at the Parish Assembly and Planning Days summit, a two-day event that will be held on March 8 and 9. Although the previous meeting was held for parish leaders, this summit will be open to the entire parish community. Rick will travel to Pensacola to be present at the summit and to help introduce the concept of AI to those in attendance.

“We will discover what have been the most inspiring, exciting and compelling things, and then we’ll build on that past and envision what we can be and do in the future,” Rick says. “In one session, we will invite people to share their dreams for the parish, and find creative ways to express the dream, through something like a skit or a song. This tends to be a very fun, engaging and creative time.



(above and below) Charts and notes from the initial AI meeting in October.



“We’ll also ask people, as they’re hearing these dreams, what are some opportunities that they’d like to work on with other people,” he continues. “This is a process called Open Space, where people are open to developing initiatives that are growing out of the conversation. As people express their dreams and others listen, they are then asked to get really practical and think about what they can do in everyday life. The overall process is something that can become a way of life.”

All parishioners are invited and encouraged to attend the Parish Assembly and Planning Days. For more information, please contact the parish office at 850-434-2551.

“We start out by asking, ‘What gives life?’ The core focus is that instead of looking at the parish and seeing what problems there are and how we can fix it, we instead look at what gives life to people, and where people experience God’s blessings.” — Rick Krivanka

A Letter From Our Pastor

Lenten Subtraction Also Needs Addition

Dear Parishioners,

You may have heard someone say “Lent and Easter are late this year.” That is not really true in an actual sense (In the next 25 years Ash Wednesday is in March nine times, once as late as March 10). However, this month of March is the time we need to focus on both the meaning of Lent and what that means to us as Catholics.

According to the Church, Lent officially begins at midnight on Tuesday, March 4, as March 5 is Ash Wednesday. Like myself, you probably have already seen Lent as a time to “give something up,” to make yourself more holy. The three practices of Lent have always been highlighted by “praying, fasting, and almsgiving.” We are indeed called to try to infuse those things into our lives more deliberately during Lent. However, I would point out to you that two of the three require action, not rejection. Prayer and almsgiving are things we must do. Fasting involves denial.

The word “Lent” comes from the Middle English word *lencten*, which actually means “lengthening,” as when the days get longer. We all appreciate the fact that the days begin to get longer, and we have more daylight. I would maintain that all of this means “new life” and that is what we are really called to during this Lenten season.

From a stewardship perspective I would suggest to you that Lent and our preparation for Easter calls us to a different way to look at our Lenten preparation. Yes, Lent is a time for repentance, a time for establishing ourselves spiritually for Easter. We may think it is a time for us to seek God’s grace, but I would point out to you we have already been given God’s grace. What we need



to do is to try to develop more intensely in God’s grace. How can we as good stewards do that?

Giving something up is certainly one way, but I would suggest that we expand that. If you give something up, add something positive in its place. Lots of people give up candy. Should we not add fruit and vegetables in its place? If you fast, which is certainly beneficial, should you not place prayer in its place? If you give up television, what do you replace it with? Perhaps we could spend that time in a parish ministry. It is those positive, action-oriented things we do to make our lives better, and our spiritual lives more full that really reflect stewardship and our willingness to do more during Lent, not less.

I have heard of one Catholic high school where the students fast on Fridays during Lent. What makes that act particularly significant is that they

then donate to the poor the money they would have spent on the meal, and those who follow the fast gather during lunch for prayer. There it is — all three Lenten practices — prayer, fasting, and almsgiving.

Sometimes we make this too complicated. This month is the perfect time for us each to evaluate our lives, and to do something positive to make our lives more holy and more spiritually fulfilling. It is a time for us to commit ourselves to stewardship as a way of life.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Fr. Doug Halsema
Pastor

Catholic Schools Week 2014

St. Paul Catholic School celebrated Catholic Schools Week during the last week of January. While many of the activities were postponed because of the winter weather, our school community still came together to celebrate the gift of Catholic education with events like the National Junior Honor Society Induction Ceremony.



(left) New inductees to the National Junior Honor Society (NJHS).

(below) Student Georgia Rogers receives a certificate as she is inducted into the NJHS.



Several members of the student body (as well as an alumnus) spoke during the induction ceremony, offering words of wisdom and encouragement on topics such as “scholarship,” “character,” “leadership” and more.



James Struck, president.



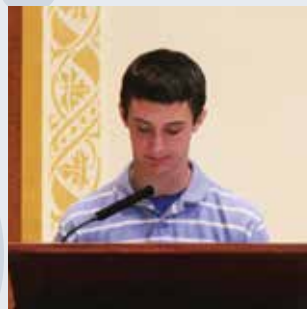
Robert Nusbaum, CHS Representative and St. Paul alumnus.



Josh Brady



Kayla Carrell



Jacob Nusbaum



Hannah Chambers



Patrick Richardson

Results of the 2013 Stewardship Renewal

This past fall, our parish conducted the 2013 Annual Stewardship Renewal. The results certainly demonstrate that commitment to prayer, ministry and the Catholic faith are of great importance to our parish community.

As of press time of this newsletter, a total of 494 households — 33 percent of all registered parish households — took part in the Stewardship Renewal by filling out and returning a commitment card.

Several of the notable results from the 2013 Stewardship Renewal include the following:

A total of 1,969 Prayer Commitments — or commitments to Stewardship of Time — were made by 451 households who returned commitment cards.

The top five “Time” commitments were:

- “Attend Mass every Sunday and on Holy Days,” 439 commitments
- “Spend 15 minutes a day in personal prayer,” 388 commitments
- “Pray the Rosary at least once a week,” 235 commitments
- “Pray together daily with my loved ones,” 230 commitments
- “Read the Bible for one hour a week,” 167 commitments

There was a total of 2,068 Ministry Commitments — or commitments to Stewardship of Talent — made during the Stewardship Renewal, with 611 of these being new commitments and 1,457 being re-commitments.

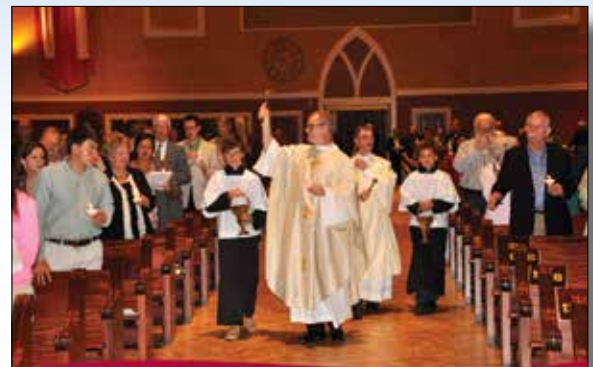
The top 5 “Talent” commitments were:

- Parish Picnic Volunteer, 182 commitments
- Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, 105 commitments
- St. Paul Catholic School Volunteer, 97 commitments
- Angel Tree Volunteer, 95 commitments
- ACTS Retreats, 91 commitments

A total of 446 households made “Treasure” commitments. The total amount pledged to the offertory by this group was \$1,086,605. The average annual pledge per household was \$2,452.

Indeed, these statistics point to an already-active commitment to stewardship here within our parish community.

And while the spiritual benefits of stewardship can never be fully quantified, this annual commitment on behalf of our parishioners helps to ensure that St. Paul’s remains a vital and faith-filled parish community.



Prayer & Stewardship
Lift Up Your Hearts!
St. Paul Catholic Church



Lift Up Your Hearts!



ST. PAUL CATHOLIC CH

2013 Commitment Card
My Offering of Time, Talent & Tre

First & Last Name (Church previously)

Street Address

City State

Telephone (optional)

Email

After completion, please bring this card to All Saints October 12th or 13th, or mail using the envelope provided. Thank you and God bless you!



Lift Up Your Hearts!

Youth Commitment Card
St. Paul Catholic Church
2013 Stewardship Renewal

First & Last Name (Church previously)

Name: First & Last Name

Street Address

City State Zip

Telephone (optional)

Email

Please bring this card to Mass on October 12th or 13th, or mail using the envelope provided. Thank you and God bless you!

Understanding the Role of Sacramentals in Our Faith

Most Catholics are familiar with the idea of sacraments in the Church, of which there are seven. Sacraments are the foundation of the spiritual life for an individual and the Church. Sacraments are sources of grace — God’s very presence in our lives and unmerited favor from God. They are signs of God’s love, and these signs make present what they signify. Although a person benefits — receives the gift of grace — from the sacraments regardless of whether he or she is well disposed to them, one must cooperate with what the Spirit is doing in the sacrament to receive its full benefit.

Sacramentals are different. These are also sacred signs that can build holiness, but they do not work on their own. One must be aware and fully conscious of the sacred action. Sacramentals sanctify us to get the most benefit from the Sacraments (*Catechism of the Catholic Church* 1667). Sacramentals are given to us to make holy certain actions in life and life’s circumstances. There are many such sacred signs which are reminders to us of God.

The sign of the cross is perhaps one of the most fundamental of these signs, and for Catholics, this invocation is done at the start of every sacred action and prayer. Holy water is a sacramental, as it reminds us of our Baptism. By dipping our fingers into holy water and making the sign of the cross, we are combining two foundational symbols of the Christian life and the Paschal Mystery — the passion, dying and rising of Christ — and bringing them to life in us.

The exchange of peace in the Mass — and at other Catholic rites — is another example of a sacramental. By making some kind of meaningful sign of peace, we are giving the peace of Christ to another person. The chalice and other sacred vessels at Mass also are sacramentals, as they remind us of what they

are to contain — the very Body and Blood of Christ.

It might be helpful to organize the types of sacramentals into categories, as author Michael Pennock lists in *This Is Our Faith: A Catholic Catechism for Adults*:

“Actions (blessings; genuflections; the sign of the cross; bowing one’s head at the name of Jesus; church processions); Objects (candles; holy water; statues and icons; holy pictures; blessed ashes; palms; rosaries; relics; incense; vest-

ments; scapulars; church buildings; crosses; religious medals); Places (the Holy Land; Rome; Fatima; Lourdes; the National Shrine in Washington, D.C.; and other places of pilgrimage; chapels, retreat centers, and even Catholic cemeteries; Prayers (short prayers we say throughout the day; grace before and after meals; prayers at rising and going to bed; praying the rosary, praying a host of other traditional Catholic prayers and devotions); Sacred Time (liturgy; holy days; feasts of saints; your saint’s name day; special days of prayer; fasting and abstinence; retreats, etc.)” (*This Is Our Faith: A Catholic Catechism for Adults*, 176-177).

“Sacramentals... prepare us to receive grace and dispose us to cooperate with it” (CCC 1670).

In a word, sacramentals, through the prayer of the Church, bring us to holiness in Christ. All devotions of piety, including sacramentals, should point us toward the liturgy of the Church, a connection to a local parish community, and to the Eucharist (CCC 1675).

The Church, through Christ’s passion, death and resurrection, has given us these sacred signs to lead us in holiness, and to better recognize an authentic Christian life. How many sacramentals can you recognize in your life? Probably more than you think.



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“Put the Family Back in the Hands of the Father”

Men of St. Joseph

Many television shows and movies convey negative depictions of fathers. While the media wages war against fatherhood, the Men of St. Joseph join together to counteract current culture. Their aspiration is simple — to put the family back in the hands of the father.

“Of course, ‘father’ carries the dual meaning of God the Father, and the head of the household as the man,” says Mike Mangrum, former chapter leader and current member of the National Board of Directors. “Men are stepping up because we’re called to be priest, prophet, and king in our house. We’re all on the same mission, whether you’re a grandfather, husband, single man or whatever your stage in life. There is value in this commitment to become the best person and saint you can be.”

The Men of St. Joseph started in Mobile, Ala., and the organization has chapters in 18 states, as well as two chapters in Australia. Five years ago, Mike and a few other men of St. Paul heard of the chapters in Mobile and noted the absence of a men’s spiritual organization at the parish. They invited men from the Mobile chapters to assist them with beginning a local chapter.

“We’ve grown from a group of seven or eight men to having multiple chapters in the community,” Mike says. “In the chapter, men have found a way to communicate with other men and have an accountability group of sorts to become better men.”

Each week, the men in St. Paul’s chapter meet at the parish in the Giri Room on Tuesday at 6 a.m. to pray morning prayer from the *Magnificat*, read the Gospel for the upcoming Sunday, and separate into small groups for discussion about the Gospel. The men frequently return home to continue the conversation with their own families.

“All these things make Mass so interesting the following Sunday because we’ve already heard the Gospel, asked questions, and made it more open,” Mike says. “We talk about what the Gospel meant then and what it means today. The conversation goes from there.”

The leadership of the local chapter rotates on a regular basis to “keep the organization fresh” and spread a sense of ownership. Chapter leadership includes a leader, co-leader, communication director, and a designated chaplain. Currently, Paul Jansen is the chapter leader.

This year, the leaders of the different Pensacola Men of St. Joseph chapters are coming together in an unprecedented way for these local chapters. Recently, the National Board of Directors approached the Pensacola group to ask if it would be a test model for a new national structure.

“They’re asking us to lead the way on a national basis as a model for other chapters,” Mike says. “This is breaking ground for us. The Pensacola Leadership Conference model will establish a



A group shares in discussion.



A meeting of the Men of St. Joseph.

means to improve our internal communication, assist with new chapter development, and coordinate other area events for men and their families. We’re looking to bring the groups together for citywide Men of St. Joseph events. We’re meeting with all the chapter leaders, and we’re going to have a Men of St. Joseph’s Mass on March 19 at St. Ann’s in Gulf Breeze.”

On a personal level, as a relatively new Catholic, Mike found in the Men of St. Joseph the conversation and discussion that opened up the Gospel and the Mass much like RCIA had.

“There is a tremendous amount of trust and openness that has developed in that small group format,” Mike says. “With all the different ages we have in the group, there is always someone in my group who is older and has gone through something I haven’t, and there are always men who are going through what I am.”

For more information, simply stop by a Men of St. Joseph’s meeting at 6 a.m. in the Giri Room, or contact Mike Mangrum for more information at mmangrum1@cox.net.

“Men are stepping up because we’re called to be priest, prophet, and king in our house. We’re all on the same mission, whether you’re a grandfather, husband, single man or whatever your stage in life. There is value in this commitment to become the best person and saint you can be.” — Mike Mangrum

Address Service Requested

St. Paul Community Invited to Attend Parish Mission

Our parish family is invited and encouraged to attend our Parish Mission, which takes place beginning on the evening of Sunday, March 30 and on each evening through Wednesday, April 2.

The theme of the Parish Mission is Being “On the Way to Jesus Christ”, and will be presented by Fr. Blaise Czaja, C.P. of the Passionist Community in Citrus Heights, Calif. Ordained in Louisville, Ky. in 1964, Fr. Blaise has been a full-time minister of parish missions since 1972.

Starting each evening at 7 p.m., the Parish Mission will cover each of the following topics:

SUNDAY, MARCH 30 — “If Grace is a Gift, why do we have so much trouble accepting it?”

MONDAY, MARCH 31 — “Repentance — Opening all the doors of my person to Jesus Christ.”

TUESDAY, APRIL 1 — “Eucharist — Living on Jesus Christ.”

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 2 — “Our membership in God’s Family.”

In addition, Fr. Blaise will be available for confessions before and after each Parish Mission talk.

The Parish Mission is a wonderful way to share in formation and fellowship this Lenten season, and all are encouraged to take advantage of this wonderful spiritual opportunity. For more information, please call the parish office at 850-434-2551.

Liturgy Schedule

Saturday Vigil: 4:30 p.m. | **Sunday:** 7:00, 9:00, 11:00 a.m., 6:00 p.m. | **Daily Mass:** Monday-Saturday, 8:30 a.m.

Confessions: Saturdays, 9:00 a.m., 3:30 p.m. - 4:15 p.m.,

most Sundays during 9:00 and 11:00 a.m. Mass, 1st Wednesdays, 6:30 p.m., and by appointment

Eucharistic Adoration: Thursday 9:00 a.m. until Friday 7:30 a.m.