Pastor’s Message

_An Interview with Father Murray Sample_

**We have been publishing this annual report for 10 years now - your thoughts?**

I am a strong advocate of the report. It is very important to be transparent in all our activities, actions and initiatives - especially in our management of finances. We must recognize the strong financial support provided by our parishioners. We could not undertake our pastoral mission without it. The annual report encourages us to look at our achievements and convey our accomplishments to our faith community.

**What were some of the highlights of the past year?**

It has truly been a memorable year. We have been most blessed to have Father Glen Ball with us. He has shared with us his great gifts of preaching and serving the parishioners through Baptism preparation and the Bible Study group. He has bonded with our school children and is actively engaged in the ministry, helping us build a strong, vibrant, and welcoming faith community.

We continue to celebrate the ordination of one of our own: Father Paul Kim. It has been 37 years since a member of the St. Michael’s Parish was ordained into the priesthood. The response of our community and the support of our Social Committee enabled us to truly celebrate a momentous occasion.

Lastly, the Give to Grow campaign continues to receive parishioner support and has allowed us to undertake a number of improvements to our church and hall.

**You communicated several initiatives last year. Can you provide an update?**

We continue working on establishing the family of Parishes: St Michael’s, St Peter’s, Christ the King and St Patrick’s in Lucan. We will be working on ways that the Family of Parishes can share the call to evangelize, perhaps providing a shared marriage preparation course, and a joint Mission for Easter. Committees representing the Pastoral Councils of each of the parishes will begin formal meetings to plan other joint initiatives.

As mentioned, our Give to Grow campaign is still very active. If we have funds available we will look at the church, and the sound and audio visual system. Our Praise and Worship choir has begun providing musical support at our 12:30 Sunday Mass. It has proven to be very popular with all parishioners and especially with our young parishioners. It is music they readily relate to. We are seeing increasing participation in our altar servers’ ministry, and it continues to be a priority. We are fortunate to have Father Glen Ball spearheading this initiative.

**What should parishioners look forward to in the coming year?**

Our pastoral council will be engaged in developing the next five-year St Michael’s Parish Strategic Plan, replacing the current plan that has come to a successful conclusion. A key element of the plan will be a vision about our family of parishes and how we will live in it together as a faith community.

Our ongoing mission is to increasingly engage our young people by creating energy about being followers of the Catholic faith. EDGE has started and is very popular. It will be followed by the LifeTeen program for students in grades 9-12. In September Father Patrick Beneteau, the director of vocations for the diocese, will begin a program for university/college students with monthly meetings consisting of Mass, religious education and social time. The vision is that these gatherings will support our youth as they live their faith, and be the foundation and support for their vocations- be it the vocations of marriage, single life or religious life.

We now have programs and activities to engage our young people from grade school to university.
We expect to soon replace our green Catholic Book of Worship hymnal with an updated hymnal provided by the
Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops.
Our pastoral team has been devoted to engaging parents along with our young people as they prepare to receive the
sacraments of first communion and confirmation.
We want to build a triad between the church, schools and parents - reinforcing the role of each in building a faith
community.
I am preparing for a two-week pilgrimage to the Holy Land in the fall along with Father Glen Ball, Father Don Pumpiritis,
Father Paul Kim, Father Danny Santos and Deacon Gaston Mabaya and 32 people of faith – three quarters of whom
are from St Michael’s Parish.
Lastly, we look forward to our parish Mission during Lent of next year entitled “Running the Paschal Ministry”, led
by Dr. Terry Nelson-Johnson. The mission will take place on March 31st, April 1st and April 2nd. We encourage our
parishioners to participate in this very affirming event.

Final thoughts?
In closing, I must recognize and applaud the efforts, commitment and outstanding work of our pastoral team and
staff: Father Glen Ball, Deacon Gaston Mabaya, Yana Adkinson, Sylvain Patry, Doug Manners, Jolanda Squire, Mary
Egan and Laszlo Molnar.
They have all contributed immensely in helping us achieve our many accomplishments in a manner that is
compassionate, engaging and spiritual.

Parish Pastoral Council Report
by Wayne Wolanski, Chair

The Pastoral Council is a consultative body to the pastor, who is primarily responsible for pastoral planning. Such planning ensures that the mission and vision of the diocese and parish guide the St. Michael’s community in the future. We do so by identifying, assessing and prioritizing pastoral needs, setting goals and developing objectives, and by recommending courses of action to Fr. Murray and the Pastoral Team.

The 2017-2018, the council consisted of Wayne Wolanski (chair), Peter Valiquet (past chair), Donna Thompson (vice chair), Dorothy Solomon (recording secretary), Marinette Laureano, Darlene MacKenzie, Larry McKenzie, Lola Gualtieri, Mark Thompson, Lucia Lehman, and Daniel Yurkewich. During the past year the council was assisted by members of the Pastoral Team: Fr. Glen Ball (Parochial Vicar), Deacon Gaston Mabaya, Yana Adkinson (Pastoral Minister) and Sylvain Patry (Co-ordinator of Youth Ministry) under the guidance and leadership of Pastor Murray Sample.

We have had another busy year working with Fr. Murray to address the day-to-day challenges of the church. The year started with several members of the council taking part in the Parish Pastoral Council Retreat at St. Michael’s in early October that included people from churches across our diocese. Bishop Dabrowski spoke about Jesus’ mission for the Church and how we can proclaim his mission. Bishop Fabbro introduced the book, ‘Forming Intentional Disciples’ by Sherry A. Weddell, and discussed the role of the parish pastoral council in ‘making disciples’. We also received an update about the Family of Parishes.
In October, the Ministry Fair, now a one-weekend event again, was held in the main hall and was very successful. The Social Committee provided lovely decorations and delicious treats as our 42 ministries received commitments from more than 100 volunteers from within the parish community.

In late February, a few members of the Council participated in the Kairos blanket exercise, which was organized by the Social Justice Committee, and supported by the Catholic Women’s League and the Knights of Columbus. This event was an opportunity to build understanding about our shared history as Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Canada.

Several members of the Council met with Father Murray in early March to create an on going Faith Formation Timeline for the next three years. This will include ongoing Bible studies (First Corinthians by Tim Gray beginning this fall), Women of Grace with Johnnette Benkovic, Oremus with Father Mark Toups as well as new studies by Bishop Robert Barron (“Priest, Prophet, King”, and “Seven Deadly Sins, Seven Lively Virtues”), and Matthew Leonard (The Bible and the Virgin Mary).

The LifeTeen Worship Team Band started in late March at the 12:30pm Mass with the hopes of drawing in youth from the university and college age groups.

Bishop Fabbro met with members of the Finance Committee and Parish Pastoral Council in late April. Many topics were discussed including various challenges at St. Michael’s and how they are being addressed. We also spoke about the successes, the youth and the Family of Parishes. Everyone had a chance to be heard and guidance was given.

The Council discerned in May and three new members were selected to join the Council. We are excited to welcome Scott Veenvliet, Gerard Smith-Hillier and Tim Frewen and look forward to the many talents they will share over the next three years. As well, Tom Majer has been invited on the Council for the next year as a representative of the youth and we look forward to the insight he will bring.

On behalf of the council I wish to thank Marinette Laureano, Darlene MacKenzie and Larry McKenzie for their contributions to the Council over the past three years. Their energy and devotion to the parish is appreciated and will be missed. I would also like to thank our past chair Peter Valiquet for his leadership and the high level of commitment he has shown over his past four years on the council.

Finally, the past three years of working under the guidance of Fr. Murray and our Pastoral Team has reinforced the message that Bishop Fabbro shared about the church going out and making disciples as they work tirelessly at spreading God’s message. I continue to be surrounded by such great people who are involved with our church and who always give their time and talents for the betterment of others. This spirit can only be contagious and continue to give us hope for a better tomorrow.
This past summer for the third year, I was asked to speak at and take part in a camp for boys called KnightQuest, along with 60 campers (aged 9-14), 12 leaders (high school), 14 dads, and Fr. Patrick Beneteau, the director of vocations for the diocese. In one of Father’s homilies, he talked about Matthew’s Gospel (9:35-38), where Jesus heals people as He walks through a town, and invites the disciples to consider that the “harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few...” Father challenged us to not fall prey to a “business as usual” mentality in ministry, but to really be attentive to people’s needs and our relationships with them.

This year has been very fruitful in many ways. For one, we have over a dozen leaders who are committed to our youth ministry. I believe it’s because of this: they know WHO we are. We are children of God, created because God loves us. They know WHY we exist. We exist to receive love and return it. They know HOW we are to live. We are to love God first, others second, and ourselves last. If we love in the wrong order, we miss the heart. Our leaders understand what it means to be missionary disciples. Our ministry is not about programs, events and so on. It’s about aiming for the heart. It’s about loving people WHERE they are. It’s about learning and sharing the Truth together. It’s about taking care of spiritual needs; it’s about getting to know people and their stories, the good and the bad. With encouragement, love, hope, and mercy, the seeds are planted for another generation of labourers.

This year, I thought it would be great to start introducing our team members by inviting one of them to write about this year’s report. Tom Majer is one of many dedicated people who is involved in many youth events.

**EDGE**

Last September was a our second year implementing St. Michael’s new youth group, EDGE. We had an enthusiastic and large number of EDGE leaders. There was enough interest from the parish youth to create five or six weekly discussion groups, where each student could share their thoughts, engage in dialogue, and reflect on the weekly faith messages. The evening consisted of games and stories related to the faith teachings, some food, and a final prayer. Parents indulge in our café and get to meet other parents while their kids participate in EDGE.

**LIFETEEN**

On Palm Sunday, we launched LifeTeen worship. The music team, consisting of young talented people, leads us in worship at the Sunday 12:30 Mass with a contemporary and vibrant celebration of the Eucharist. One visitor, who belongs to another parish in the diocese, commented on how inspiring and enjoyable the music was. Even with the change in music format, LifeTeen worship has been well-received by the parishioners. If you’re a musician or singer and would like to try out, please contact the parish office.

**STATIONS OF THE CROSS**

We had an incredible turnout of dedicated youth. There was a group of about 15 students; about half of them returned from last year. Although the Stations of the Cross were primarily for those in grade seven and eight, there was interest from some students in high school who wanted to come back and participate. With Pope Francis’ Stations of the Cross through the eyes of mercy as our inspiration, every week one station was added. These weekly sessions included a prayer, discussion surrounding the meaning of the Station in relation to today, and a reflection. The students were able to portray the fruit of these discussions on Good Friday, in their enactment of each of the Stations of the Cross. It was moving and emotional. the parishioners who attended commented on the portrayal of the Stations for the next few weeks.

**CHosen: the confirmation Journey and retreat**

104 confirmation candidates celebrated the sacrament of confirmation. A large number participated with their families in the extended confirmation program, CHosen. Each family got together on a Sunday morning to watch videos featuring some great Catholic speakers and comedians, to share personal stories, and to learn catechesis in small groups while preparing for the sacrament. The extended program of CHosen allowed...
parents to be equally involved in their children’s confirmation process. In this group, both parents and their children joined in the discussions. Parents were able to participate, share stories and model examples to help inspire their children and other students. Some parents commented after the program on how much they enjoyed it and how they appreciated the support, encouragement, and the opportunity to go through the confirmation process with their child. Some mentioned how much they appreciated the CHOSEN journey, saying it was an immense learning opportunity for them as well, as it has been some time since they themselves were confirmed. One parent said; “They have questions and I want them to come to me to know truth.” During our confirmation rehearsal night, a guest speaker was invited to share his experience and memories of his own confirmation. He talked about the educational benefits of being a sponsor, and how to continue strengthening the students’ responsibility of service, leadership and spreading the word of God with the collaboration and support of the parents. Our retreat was held on a Saturday and was led by Mike Hartman, with special guest speaker Sr. Elzbieta Mruczek, and worship led by our LifeTeen team.

**SCHOOL AND PARISH LIFE**

Our youth minister, Sylvain Patry, accompanied both of our priests to Masses at all of our feeder schools: St. Michael, St. Mark, St. Kateri and St. Catherine of Siena. Grade 5-8 class visits were certainly insightful, and students and teachers were enthusiastic about learning our faith through interesting small group discussions. The FIAT team joined us this year for several Masses. The pastoral team also had a co-op intern student for several months. Jacob Patry, in Grade 12 at CCH, spent time as a co-op student helping the pastoral team with various events, such as accompanying our priests at retirement home Masses, youth group activities, building maintenance and office tasks. He is grateful for the opportunity to work individually with every member of the team and presented Fr. Murray with a plaque of appreciation.

**Coming soon in Youth Ministry:**

**2017 September - 2018 August**

- Monthly class visits
- Confirmation parent-candidate registration Sept 26th
- Confirmation enrollment weekend October 13th & 14th
- EDGE youth launch party October 17th
- LifeTeen youth launch October
- Confirmation CHOSEN Journey sessions October 28th
- Confirmation retreat Saturday
- PD day altar server training
- Ministry fair
- EDGE & LifeTeen Christmas caroling and other events
- Youth Stations of the Cross
- Family skating March break party
- Confirmation rehearsal May 21st & 22nd
- Sacrament of Confirmation June 9th at 3pm
- EDGE & LifeTeen summer bash in June

**Ongoing opportunities for Youth at our Parish**

Liturgical ministries:

- Ushers, choir members, altar servers (Grade 5-12)
- Babysitting, lectors, Eucharistic Ministers (High School)
- Youth group leaders and assistants

**NEWS, UPDATES AND TWEETS**

For Youth Ministry updates, Catholic links and inspirational quotes check us out on our
Facebook: STM EDGE
Twitter: SYL@STM
Instagram: Syl_STM

For more information about Youth Ministry please contact
Sylvain Patry,
Coordinator of Youth Ministry,
at 519-433-6689 ext 206
or spatry@dol.ca
St. Michael’s Parish

ANNUAL REPORT

2017 Financial Summary & 2018 Six month Update

by Cherylann Grace, Chair, Financial Committee

On behalf of the Finance Committee, I am providing a financial update to the parish for the 2017 fiscal year. There is also a brief update on the financial status of the parish through to the end of June 2018. This is an update to the insert in the parish bulletin of the weekend of March 18th, 2018.

OVERVIEW OF 2017: All financial data for this report is from the Diocese of London and is formatted according to their accounting practices. As reported by the diocese in its Financial Statement for St. Michael’s Parish, our overall operating receipts for the 2017 year were higher than in 2016, at $899,019, or $20,331 more. At the same time, our overall operating expenditures for 2017 were lower at $853,799, a decrease of $31,210 compared to 2016. The 2017 operating receipts compared to operating expenditures, showed a total surplus of $45,220.

OPERATING RECEIPTS 2017: The regular Sunday offertory collection, when combined with Christmas and Easter collections, is the primary source of funds to cover the daily operating expenses of the parish. This resulted in a total of $708,570 compared to $633,966 in 2016. This is an increase of $74,604. The Thanksgiving Appeal offertory totaled $29,765, which was lower by $54,418, compared to 2016. The Thanksgiving Appeal is the only collection that does not count against the calculation of our Diocesan Assessment, which is now $96,793. Our Thanksgiving Appeal is a very important collection and is essential to producing a positive result for the annual operating costs. It should also be noted that the special collections which occur during the year are not available for the use of our parish. They are collected by the parish, and then forwarded to specific groups designated by the diocese. An example is the collection for the Priests’ Pension Fund.

OPERATING EXPENDITURES 2017: The parish operating expenditures for 2017 were down by 31,210 compared to 2016, with total expenditures of $853,799. The St. Michael’s Parish Diocesan Assessment decreased to $96,793 annually, and is paid directly to the diocese on a monthly basis.
SIX-MONTH FINANCIAL UPDATE (TO JUNE 2018): The first six months of 2018 saw the total Sunday offertory collection lower by $26,302 compared to the first six months of 2017. The Finance Committee continues to provide ongoing monitoring of the parish’s financial activity.

CAPITAL: The capital donations for 2017 were $228,601. This amount represents a mixture of one-time donations, as well as the pledges for the year for the Give to Grow - Foundations for Our Future Campaign. On behalf of the Finance Committee, we wish to thank all volunteers involved, with special thanks for their support and commitment, and our many parishioners whose generosity has led to the success of this campaign. It is truly a blessing that we were able to surpass our goal. Contributions to the capital work are still welcomed and encouraged. We thank all those who continue to fulfill their pledges. The capital projects for the parish these past three years have been significant. We have now successfully completed the replacement of the boiler in the parish hall, as well as the installation of a copper roof over the nave. In addition, the installation of a new, more efficient HVAC system for the nave and narthex was completed, along with a monitored security system, and an improved sound system. Renovations to the washrooms are now complete. Two new projects include: replacing the heating system for the parish hall and the kitchen. The peeling parish hall wall problem is also being addressed. These are the last pending large-scale projects.

PRE-AUTHORIZED GIVING (PAG): The Finance Committee again would encourage parishioners to consider enrolling in the Pre-Authorized Giving (PAG) program. This provides a predictable income to the parish which greatly assists in ongoing financial planning. This is a simple way for individuals or families to make a regular Sunday offering to the parish, and it helps with household budgeting. There are many benefits to this method of contributing: firstly, you know that once a month a specific amount will be directed to the parish. You won’t need to worry about envelopes, and you may use PAG Cards which are available to put into the collection basket every Sunday. Secondly, it reduces the need for the parish to purchase envelopes and is also more ecological. Finally, many parishioners are away on vacation in the summer months, but the costs and needs of the parish continue throughout the whole year. In summer months, we traditionally see a 6 to 7% decline in Sunday offerings, which results in cash flow concerns. The use of PAG by more parishioners would go a long way to ease these concerns. If desired, the contribution amount can be adjusted at any time. We are hoping for an increase in the enrollment in PAG through 2018. We thank those who have enrolled and encourage others to consider this safe, easy option. Please contact the St. Michael’s parish office to register.

Thank you for your continued generosity and support of St. Michael’s Parish. Your ongoing devotion to this wonderful and special parish is so much appreciated. On behalf of your Finance Committee: Cheryllann Grace (Chair), Fr. Murray Sample (Pastor), Doug Manners (Business Administrator), Jorge Arroyo-Boy, Dario Battel, Cheryl Brydges, Geoff Hutton, Kimberley Jogie, Mark Thompson (PPC), Howie Wright, Penny Yip, Rene Zwinkels.
The Celebration of the Sacraments

Jesus gave us the sacraments so that He could continue to touch us in our daily lives. Each sacrament has a particular way of drawing us into a closer relationship with God. For our part we have a duty to prepare ourselves to receive the sacraments worthily.

First Reconciliation

The sacrament of reconciliation speaks of God’s unconditional love for us. Given our human nature, we are sometimes tempted to sin, which weakens our relationship with God. The sacrament of reconciliation offers us the grace to admit our failures and to be reconciled with God. First reconciliation is offered to children in Grade 2 as they prepare for their first Eucharist. Those who attend Catholic school receive catechesis at school and those children who attend public school are prepared at the parish (classes for first reconciliation start October 21st, 2018 at 11:30 am). Registration for first reconciliation is now closed. If you missed the registration deadline, please contact the parish office. A parent meeting for first reconciliation will be held in the parish hall on October 10th, 2018 at 7:00 pm. The dates of the celebration of first reconciliation are December 4th & 5th, 2018 at 6:30 pm and Saturday December 8th, 2018 at 11 am.

Contact person: Yana Adkinson, Pastoral Minister

First Eucharist

Each week we gather to celebrate the gift of Christ among us. We are fed by the Body and Blood of Christ and then sent out to be Jesus in our homes, our schools, our workplaces and community. Children celebrate their first Eucharist in Grade 2. Those who attend Catholic school receive catechesis at school and those children who attend public school are prepared at the parish (classes for first Eucharist begin February 24th, 2019 at 11:30am). Registration for first Eucharist is now CLOSED. If you have missed the registration deadline, please contact the parish office. Parent Meeting for first Eucharist will be held in the parish hall on February 6th, 2019 at 7:00 pm. The sacrament of first Eucharist will take place during the following four weekends: April 27th & 28th, May 4th & 5th, May 11th & 12th and May 18th & 19th, 2019.

Contact person: Yana Adkinson, Pastoral Minister

The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA)

The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults is the process through which we welcome adults into the Church. The three sacraments of initiation – baptism, confirmation and Eucharist – are celebrated together at the Easter Vigil when the candidates are received into the Church. Sessions are held on Wednesdays from 6:30 to 8:30 pm, from October 17th, 2018 to April 24th, 2019. RCIA adapted for children (ages 7 and up) will take place on Wednesdays from 5:30 to 6:30pm, beginning on November 7, 2018.

Contact person: Yana Adkinson, Pastoral Minister

Confirmation

The sacrament of confirmation is the sealing of the Holy Spirit for all baptized Catholics. In confirmation we are strengthened in our responsibilities of service, leadership and spreading the Word of God. A Parent/Candidate meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 26th, 2018 at 7:00 p.m. in the parish hall. Confirmation registration deadline Friday, October 12th, 2018 - parish office. Confirmation Retreat Saturday (to be announced) Confirmation enrollment will be on the weekend of Saturday, October 13th, at 5pm and Sunday, October 14th, at 12:30pm. Confirmation rehearsal will be held on Tuesday, May 21st and Wednesday, May 22nd, 2019. The sacrament of confirmation will take place on Sunday, June 9th at 3pm.

Contact person: Sylvain Patry, Coordinator of Youth Ministry