

State of the Parish 2012

Fr. Tim Alkire, Pastor

Now that we've had a financial review of the parish, I thought as we continue early on during this new year, it might be good to have a spiritual review as well. And I preface this by saying that this isn't an original idea of mine. In fact, a priest friend of mine told me he does this at his parish every year, and I thought it was a very good idea.

So, where have we been spiritually over the past year, and what is planned for the future? First some figures. In 2011, there were 117 baptisms, 17 weddings and 25 funerals here at St. Boniface. With three priests now able to visit shut-ins, Sr. Jane has compiled a list for us, so that those who most need to be anointed, can be anointed regularly and receive Holy Communion. Though we can't promise which priest will come to visit, we can make sure that all those who need the Sacraments can receive them. If there is a need in your family, please contact one of our parish secretaries, or Sr. Jane, so that one of us can make a visit. Just yesterday Fr. Gustavo and I were able to visit some of our shut-ins and assure them that they are remembered here in our daily Masses.

Spiritually this year, we're going to continue with some initiatives that we enjoyed last year, as well as propose some new initiatives for 2012. We will continue to offer our annual Men's Retreat -- which will take place next Saturday, by the way, our annual Women's retreat in October, our annual parish mission -- this year March 10-15 -- and as always we will kick off with our talent show. A little difference this year is that the night of our talent show (and as always, talent optional), we will have a fish fry. So, save the date -- March 10th -- you're all invited. There's no cost for the fish fry, and if you are able, we'll ask you to bring a dessert to share.

At the talent show and fish fry we will also share a little information about some programs which are being planned for the future -- including a focus on Marriage Enrichment, as well as opportunities for our parishioners to get to know each other better -- some of whom have been here for a long time, and some who may be new, and want to get to know each other in our St. Boniface community even more.

As always, St. Boniface will remain solidly in support of our Lafayette Catholic Schools, doing all we can to open the doors to all who will take advantage of the treasure the Catholic Church offers us through the teaching of Christ, and a solid academic program. In addition, we are in the discussion stage of planning for youth programs at all levels in the parish, and we will be seeking your input, and your help.

In 2012 at our parish celebrations, we will continue to strive to live the Theology of the Body -- by connecting events such as our annual May Crowning, Corpus Christi procession, and Feast of Christ the King, with a parish celebrations which will follow, on our campus.

In the Spring there will be a parish meeting regarding GermanFest. This meeting will provide a comprehensive explanation of all that is required to make GermanFest a success, a report of expenses, with opportunities for broad parish participation which is so needed and treasured to make this event the success it has become. Last year we saw an increased revenue of over \$40,000, and we realize that this is not possible without all of you. This revenue helps St. Boniface to continue its primary mission -- to bring the Light of Christ to our community.

Now, if you would not please pick up your St. Michael Hymnals. This is the latest edition -- the Fourth edition -- with all of the new translations of the Roman Missal. While the cards will remain at the doors, the St. Michael hymnal also contains all of the new responses, and the Mass of St. Michael that we learned before Advent, and have been singing since the 1st Sunday of Advent.

The liturgy, and at its center, the Holy Eucharist, will continue to lead and guide us throughout this year. That is to say, let each and every one of us always remember that every celebration here must have at its core, love for Christ, which begins with His complete love for us in the Eucharist.

This hymnal is a treasure. Our music director Linda Schafer is editor of the St. Michael Hymnal along with Br. Michael O'Connor, a Dominican Friar who will be ordained to the priesthood this summer. Why the hymnal? Turn to page 10 -- the Preface: that's why. And, before it was published, there were over 16,000 pre-orders throughout the country. I want you to know how stunning that is for a parish our

size. It's been in St. Patrick Cathedral in NYC, in the chapels of various bishops throughout the United States, and in convents in the States and as far away as Rome -- and all coming from a little home office with a computer and answering machine. Thank you Linda Schafer.

As I mentioned a few Sundays ago, I hope and pray that this year will be a year of renewed love for Jesus in the Eucharist here at St. Boniface. I urge all parishioners, and especially families, to please consider the regular practice of Adoration and Benediction on Sunday nights at 7 as well as on the First Fridays, Children's Adoration on the First Fridays of every month, and a dedicated regular hour of Adoration at the St. Elizabeth Hospital chapel. We will be celebrating 15 years of Adoration this month and there's a special insert in the bulletin this weekend of further details.

Enlisting the prayers of Bl. Pope John Paul II to foster as he called it a "renewed awe and wonder" in the presence of so great a gift, we will be placing his relics on the Altar every Sunday night at Benediction.

And I want to mention one more spiritual initiative that will take place again this year at St. Boniface. In August, we will once again go on our 30 mile foot pilgrimage in honor of Our Blessed Mother. This pilgrimage grows every year, and we want especially the teens and young adults of our parish to experience the joy that so many of us have experienced during those two blessed days, when walking through the beautiful Indiana countryside, we sing, and pray and laugh and be surrounded by the beauty of God in His beautiful world.

And as for the priests I can't tell you how moving it is for us, as the Eucharist is exposed in a simple farm field at night, to offer the Sacrament of Reconciliation that always leads us to the Heart of the Eucharist at Mass the next morning.

This is enough for one weekend, but I hope it offers the parish an insight into what we hope to be able to offer as a "way of life" for 2012. May God continue to bless all of you for your goodness, generosity, love and hard work that makes so much of what happens here possible.