

This report is a summary of the work done by our Parish Council Committees and other groups this past year. Anyone with questions or comments is welcome to attend the June 23, 2009 Parish Council meeting at 6:30 p.m. in the Granville Room.

SCHOOL STUDY RESULTS IN SCHOOL MERGER NORTHWEST CATHOLIC WILL BEGIN OPERATION IN JULY

Last fall, after considerable consultation and planning with parents, parishioners and staff, the Tri-Parish School Study Steering Committee recommended that for the long-term viability of excellent Catholic School education on the Northwest Side of Milwaukee the three parishes form a single Catholic school entity by July 2009. It was further recommended that Our Lady of Good Hope and St. Bernadette each provide facilities for a K-8 school and St. Catherine of

Alexandria provide a facility for athletics, as well as study the feasibility of having a community education center in some of its facilities. Archbishop Timothy Dolan approved this plan at the end of December 2008.

To date, Mary Lorusso and Jodi Casetta have been hired as principals at the West and East Campuses, respectively. Debra Hintz has been chosen as the pastor/parish director delegate. The two principals will report to her.

Teachers have also been hired from the three current school staffs. There are specialty positions yet to be filled.

As this article is being written, the enrollment for the 2009-10 school year looks very good. Past experience has shown that many registrations continue to come in through the summer months, so we are anticipating good sized student bodies.

The Steering Committee, which is made up of

representatives of all three parishes, continues to meet. However, a School Advisory Board will soon be formed to govern the new school.

It is important to remember that while St. Catherine will no longer house a school on our premises, we will still have a parish school. Not only will Northwest Catholic continue to provide a Catholic education for our children, this new arrangement allows us to improve the quality of

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HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2009-2010

- June 7th celebration acknowledging 144 years of Catholic education at St. Catherine
- Northwest Catholic begins operation July 1st.
- Exploratory committee will be formed to develop Community Education Center.
- Faith in Our Future fund continues to grow.

CAMPAIGN SUPPORTS OUR 'FAITH IN OUR FUTURE'

A major undertaking for our parish during the past year was the Faith in Our Future Campaign. It's hard to believe that more than five months have passed since we celebrated our Commitment Weekend in November. Remember the Nacho Bar after 4:30 Mass and Breakfast Quiche and Yogurt Parfaits after the Sunday Masses that weekend? So much has happened in all our lives since then, and we felt it was time to provide everyone with an update.

To date, 244 parish families have made a commitment to the Faith in Our Future Campaign with total dollars pledged being \$300,746. (This is a slightly lower figure than originally reported as some members have made changes to their pledges.) Although this was short of our original goal of approximately \$419,000, we are really happy with the participation of so many parish families in this worthwhile campaign. Attendance at our FIOF events has helped to foster

our parish community, which may be one of the most valuable contributions we can make to our parish family.

Below is a graph which shows the dollars our parish has received thus far from the pledges made. We will provide quarterly updates in the first year of the campaign so everyone can see the progress we are making. It's not too late to make a contribution if you have not done so; please contact the

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LITURGY REPORT: THE SOURCE AND SUMMIT

Everything we do every week flows out of our Sunday community worship and everything we do during the week leads up to Sunday worship. Sunday liturgy remains the high point of our week.

Bishop Richard Sklba, Auxiliary Bishop of Milwaukee, joined us in June for his pastoral visit. He presided at Sunday liturgies and met with numerous groups of the parish.

Fr. Dick Mirsberger joined our parish community in August, 2008 as an assisting priest. He brings his many gifts and talents to us as well as a wealth of parish experience. He is a regular presider at Sunday and weekday liturgies as well as weddings and funerals.

The Prayer and Worship Committee discerned the needs of our worship as part of the process of our 'Faith In Our Future' Capital Campaign. A new sound

system, chairs to replace some of the pews and a new organ were added by the parish council to our 'case'.

Our Children's Choir has really gotten off the ground this year. The Children's Choir sang four times this year: Fall, Christmas, Winter and Easter Sunday. The choir ranges from 10-12 children in grades one through six. They are a wonderful addition to our music ministry.

We have also been able to involve quite a number of instrumentalists from our community in our Sunday worship. Adding instruments to our liturgical music serves to enhance our worship and we are grateful for those who have come forward.

Liturgical ministers gathered for an evening of prayer and reflection in early Advent. It was time well spent as we reflected on the importance of our various liturgical ministries in our worship.

Lent brought additional opportunities to gather for fellowship and prayer. Daily Mass was added on the Fridays of Lent. Stations of the Cross were prayed on Friday evenings. We gathered for soup and Evening Prayer several times.

St. Catherine of Alexandria is a member of The Mighty Ministerium Ecumenical Ministerial Association. This is a group of Christian churches on the northwest side of Milwaukee. The annual Palm Sunday Service was held at St. Catherine. Bishop Sklba was the homilist. A combined choir of 50 members sang for the service. I was honored to serve as the director.

Holy Week was again the high point of our liturgical year. From the passion and the drums of Palm Sunday to the candles and water and music of Holy Saturday, we kept holy this most important week. A new baptismal pool was designed and built so that

we could baptize Alex Buschmann by immersion. We also welcomed Peter Collins and Charles Coleman into the Catholic Christian Community.

The Milwaukee Children's Choir Cantorei Choir and the Platteville Children's Choir gave a free community concert at St. Catherine this Spring. Approximately 80 middle school students sang incredibly beautifully and thrilled all those who were there. We hope to be able to offer several fine arts concerts during the coming year.

Many thanks to all those who participate in any way in our liturgical celebrations and liturgical ministries. Our hope for the coming year is to involve even more people, especially youth. Spread the word. St. Catherine of Alexandria is a GREAT place to belong and a GREAT place to be.

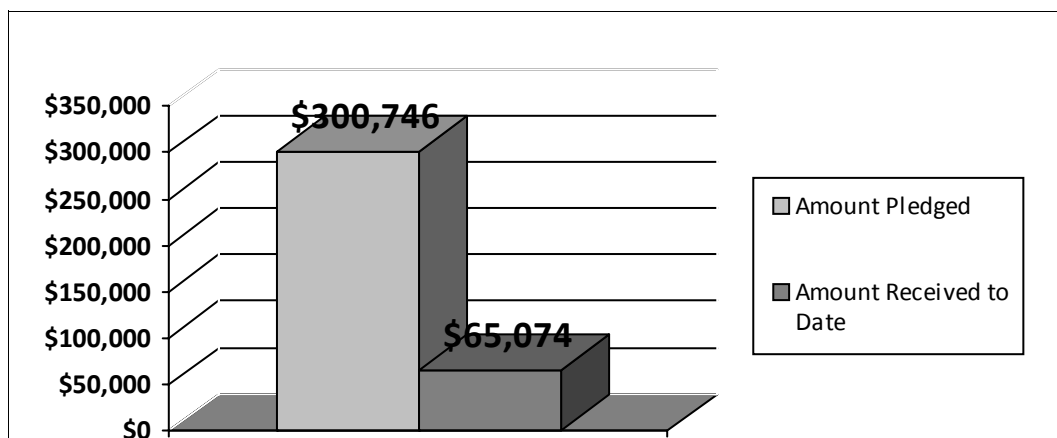
—Jim Stout
Director of Liturgy & Music

FAITH IN OUR FUTURE CONT'D

parish office if you would like a pledge card.

The first project we will undertake is the new church roof. Additional bids will be obtained before contracting the job. We will keep you informed as to the cost of this project and when it will begin. Thanks again to everyone who contributed to this important campaign for Catholic education and faith formation and more.

Michael & Reneé Steger
and Jack Chmiel
Faith In Our Future Co-Chairs



The Faith in Our Future Capital Stewardship Campaign supports both parish and archdiocesan initiatives. 60% of monies collected stay at St. Catherine; 40% support archdiocesan life long education efforts and programs.

CHRISTIAN FORMATION UPDATE

This past year our Christian Formation programs served 35 grade school students and 30 high school students from both St. Catherine and St. Bernadette Parishes. Eleven students from St. Catherine will celebrate the sacrament of Confirmation on May 27th, along with candidates from St. Bernadette, Our Lady of Good Hope, and Blessed Savior Parishes.

After preparing for the sacrament of First Communion with their parents and with families from St. Bernadette, eight children celebrated their First Communion this year. It has truly been a blessing to work with all of these students, and I have loved meeting and growing in faith together with

all of our families throughout the year.

Looking forward to next year, we hope to continue to provide the best possible Catholic education and formation to our students and families. This ranges from our weekly Christian Formation classes, to Liturgy of the Word for Children, to additional formation programs and social opportunities at all age levels.

My goal is to provide the parish family here at St. Catherine – including families with children, youth, young adults, and adults – with the opportunity to grow in faith and fellowship with each other. Be sure to continue watching the bulletin, the

mail, and your email inbox for updates and invitations from us!

One way in which we can ensure the best formation possible is to continually evaluate our curriculums and programs, and the needs of our parishioners, and to make changes where necessary. This evaluation includes textbooks, program content, and the layout and schedule of the programs themselves. Our Christian Formation Committee has worked hard this year to ensure that the positive aspects of our programs remain, and that we improve our programs where it is needed.

Two such changes include the curriculum used at the grade

school level, and the layout of the high school program. The program that has been used for the past nine or more years at the grade school level is no longer being published. The Christian Formation Committee and I have come up with a number of standards, and will be selecting the best curriculum for our parish.

We're very excited about the prospects! Families of high school students should look for more information regarding the program in the summer.

I am thoroughly looking forward to the next year! I hope that it will be as graced filled as my first year here at St. Catherine has been!

—Nicole Fastabend
Director of Christian
Formation

SCHOOL MERGER CONT'D

education by combining the resources of our three parish communities. We are excited about the possibilities that lie ahead for us.

Once the new school is in place, we will form an exploratory committee comprised of members of all three parishes to develop the

Community Education Center that will be housed in our school building. All three parishes have agreed to take ownership of this project. Through programs and services, we hope to be able to serve the needs of those who live in our surrounding communities.

A great deal of time and energy has already gone into the planning process for this endeavor. We are confident it will produce much fruit in the years ahead.

—Debra Hintz
Parish Director

CELEBRATING 144 YEARS OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION

Sunday, June 7, 2009
10:30 outdoor Mass
followed by Parish
Picnic, School Open
House, games for kids

Alumni are invited to
join us.

STEWARDSHIP: OUR RETURN TO THE LORD

The Stewardship Committee struggled this year. The committee is in need of additional members in order to carry out the work they would like to do. For instance, while our annual Stewardship Commitment will take place, we hope to

add a ministries fair to our offerings. This fair would allow parishioners to talk with those involved in different ministries prior to making a decision about their own commitment. If you are interested in learning more about the Stewardship

Committee, please talk with me.

This year's Stewardship Commitment began with the mailing of a new parish Guide Book and Directory directly to your homes in early May. This mailing included a Stewardship

Commitment form. Commitment Sunday will be the weekend of Pentecost Sunday, May 31.

—Debra Hintz
Parish Director

HUMAN CONCERNS COMMITTEE

SERVING THOSE IN NEED, RAISING AWARENESS

The following ministries have incorporated the Christ-like actions of the parish to meet the needs of our community. These activities reflect many volunteers and hours.

St. Vincent de Paul Society. Four ministries carry out the work of this conference at St. Catherine:

- *Food Pantry:* The pantry is open twice a month to serve the northwest Milwaukee area from 9:00 to noon; 1,781 bags of food were this past year;
- *Home visits:* Referrals from the 211 Help Phone Line are followed up with home visits to determine the needs of furniture and clothing and vouchers are issued;
- *Bundle Sunday:* In August half a truck of donated items was sent to the Lincoln Avenue St. VdP store;
- *Vincent Family Resource Center (St. Gall's) Meal Program:* Ingredients are provided to prepare and serve a meal at this site in the inner city on the fourth Monday of each month. Each month we serve 125 - 250 individuals at this program.

Visits to nursing homes and the homebound. 121 visits to the homebound and 67 visits to nursing homes. This number doesn't include the many visits Deacon Dan makes.

Bereavement Ministry. 34 families who lost a loved one were called after the funeral, invited to the All Souls Memorial Service in November, and were sent cards and flowers at Christmas. Parish members who lost a child or spouse were visited and received flowers.

Granville Interfaith for Older Adults. The Northwest Senior Center on Good Hope Road which housed Granville Interfaith was closed in 2008 and the meal program relocated to the Elks Club on Good Hope Road. The offices of Granville Interfaith were relocated to Abiding Savior Lutheran Church on Bradley Road. Despite this relocation, 12,596 services were provided in 2008. St. Catherine provides \$800 to support this agency. The collection taken at the Palm Sunday ecumenical service also went in support of this ministry.

Guest House Ministry. A joint collaboration between St. Catherine and St. Bernadette provides 40 lunches each month to the clients of Guest House.

Mighty Ministerium Blood Drives. In conjunction with the Blood Center of Southeastern Wisconsin, blood drives were begun this past year at five churches that are part of the Mighty Ministerium. In September, St. Catherine hosted a blood

drive with 24 individuals from the parishes of the Ministerium registered to donate.

Repairers of the Breach Sleeping Bag Ministry. Parishioners from the tri-parishes met four times, twice in the fall and twice in the spring to assemble 38 sleeping bags for the homeless clients of Repairers of the Breach.

Rides to Mass. 86 rides to Sunday Mass were provided to parishioners of St. Catherine.

Respect Life. Three events this past year were supported by parishioners:

- Rose sale on Mother's Day provided funds for Wisconsin Right to Life
- Postcards to send to our U.S. senators and representatives regarding FOCA (Freedom of Choice Act) were also made available for parishioners to send.
- Participation in the Life Chain in October

CROP Walk. St. Catherine was represented at this annual event on the lake front sponsored by Interfaith Conference of Greater Milwaukee. Four parishioners participated. 20,036 pounds of food were donated to Hunger Task Force through this event.

Advent Giving Program. Agencies that benefited were Christ Child Society,

Pregnancy Help Center, La Sagrada Familia, St. Vincent de Paul and Habitat for Humanity from donations of \$3,180 and 70 bags of items.

Lenten Almsgiving Program. The following agencies received \$1,708 in contributions and 36 bags of items for this year's Lenten program: Repairers of the Breach, Daystar Women's Shelter, Casa Maria, Guest House and St. Vincent de Paul. A staff person from Guest House also gave one of our "3rd Sunday Speaker Series" presentations describing the work of Guest House and the people they serve.

International agencies that received support this year through our parish outreach funds were Engineers Without Borders-UWM Chapter for a water project in Gutamala, Volunteer Missionary Movement with parishioner Paul Agnello serving in El Salvador, Fr. Venne in Bangladesh with the Maryknoll Missionaries, and Fr. Matt's orphanage in India.

Information was distributed in October during **Domestic Violence Awareness Month:** 250 parishioners signed a petition to support the Million Voices Campaign to promote the awareness of domestic violence in this country.

—Jim and Judy Dollhausen
Human Concerns Co-Chairs

St. Catherine School

**Celebrating 144 years
of Catholic education**

**As we transition from St. Catherine School
to Northwest Catholic,
we, as St. Catherine of Alexandria Parish and School Community,
pause to give thanks and praise to God
for our rich history and heritage.**

**Sunday, June 7, 2009
10:30am to 2:00pm**

10:30am—Outdoor Mass

11:30am-2:00pm Picnic—
Hamburgers and brats will be provided.
Please bring a dish to pass.

Tour the School—The school will be
open to walk through.

Games for the Kids

Visit with friends and classmates –
We are inviting all alumni to join us. If you
have contact information for alumni, please
forward it to Jennifer Rice at 414-365-2030
or stcat76@execpc.com.

Displays of Photographs—If you would
like to lend us some photos, please drop
them off at the parish or school office.

**St. Catherine School
8660 North 76th Place
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53223**

FINANCE NEWS

2009-2010 BUDGET STILL UNDER DEVELOPMENT

The budget for the coming fiscal year is still under development. The Finance Committee has reviewed the proposed budgets for all areas of parish ministry.

However, with the school merger comes the process of setting up a budget for that entity to operate. We do not as of yet have final figures for the school and the subsidy each parish will contribute.

The business managers from the three parishes, along with the principals, pastors and parish director, have been hard at work on the school budget to present to their respective parish councils for approval. Each parish will provide financial support to Northwest Catholic. Once the amount of financial

support for each parish has been determined, it will complete our annual budget for St. Catherine. We hope to have that information available in the near future.

The school merger will help us balance our budget in the future. However, the financial impact for the coming year is uncertain since this school entity will be new. Once we have a year's experience with Northwest Catholic, we will be better able to make projections for the future.

With regard to our current budget, our utilities last year amounted to \$53,135. This was slightly more than \$1,000 than the previous year. Each year, every parish has an Archdiocesan

assessment that is based on a percentage of our annual income. Our assessment this last year was \$36,419, reflecting a \$3,000 increase.

Our contributions in calendar year 2008 from offering envelopes and loose offertory were \$396,481. This is down by \$41,000 from 2007.

We have approximately 650 active families currently on our parishioner list. In addition, we have 80 more families that are "Friends" of St. Catherine who are not registered but contribute to the support of the parish nonetheless.

—Shari Brennan
Director of Administrative Services

Breakdown of Givers For Calendar Year 2008

\$0	135
\$1 - 50	58
\$51 - 100	34
\$101 - 250	69
\$251 - 500	95
\$501 - 750	89
\$751 - 1000	58
\$1001 - 2000	91
\$2001 - 3000	15
\$3001 - 4000	3
\$4001 +	3

PARISH LIFE COMMITTEE: BUILDING COMMUNITY

The Parish Life Committee plans activities that bring parishioners together for community building and the celebration of special events. During the past year, we sponsored the following activities:

- **Donut Socials** are the first weekend of every month. We now provide crayons and pictures to color for the little ones. The donut socials also include the opportunity for new members to register for the parish.
- **Trip to the Fireside** to see *The Rock and the*

Rabbi on August 14. We filled a coach bus and a great time was had by all.

- **Chili Dinner** was held after 4:30 Mass on October 11. Magician Alan Borg performed for us after the dinner.
- **Reception** after the 4:30 Mass for All Souls Day. Those who lost a loved one from St. Catherine were sent an invitation and the parishioners were encouraged attend.
- **Women's Advent Evening of Reflection** was held after 4:30 Mass with a potluck on

December 6. Monica Meagher who is on the staff of Sts. Peter and Paul, and also teaches at Cardinal Stritch, lead us in our reflection.

- **Women's Lenten Evening of Reflection** with a potluck was held on March 14 after 4:30 Mass. Pastor Grace Imathiu of Brown Deer United Methodist Church spoke.
- **The Parish Picnic** on June 7th is in the plans. This will be our third year.

—Kathy Lucas
Parish Life Chairperson

PARISH STATISTICS FOR THE CALENDAR YEAR 2008

Parish members: 1301
Parish households: 650
New families: 32
Baptisms: 15
First Communion: 13
Confirmation: 19 youth; 2 adults
Received into the Catholic Church: 1
Marriages: 5
Funerals: 29