

Pastor's page: *"It was not you who chose me, but I who chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit...."* (John 15:16)

The Pastoral Council of St. Kilian along with the Pastoral Team (their names are listed in our parish bulletin and on our website) met in conference Wednesday, June 7. The purpose of the meeting was to evaluate what our parish community has accomplished since September 2016, in our Spirit- led efforts to accomplish the goals and objectives of our St. Kilian Vision Statement.

Here is a summary of the results of the meeting. Discussion of the first pillar of our statement, Hospitality, revealed that we had established the offering of monthly after mass opportunities for mixing and mingling over refreshments. These hospitalities are hosted by different ministry groups each month and we are attempting to combine them with the monthly Family Life Hospitalities. It was believed that this has had a positive effect on our sense of belonging to St. Kilian. Some of our monthly after mass refreshment opportunities were more successful than others. We will try to connect this community building event with our faith formation program.

In addition, we have begun a program to reach out to families who have their children baptized at St. Kilian. Baptism is where it all begins within our faith, and it is our desire to continue this by reaching out to families who have chosen to have their children enter into this sacrament.

Liturgy and Eucharist, our second pillar. The 9:30 AM Sunday mass now has a contemporary guitar based choir, and a youthful orientation. It is attracting young families with children preparing for reconciliation, first communion, and confirmation. A recommendation was made that we recognize at mass those who are celebrating birthdays or anniversaries or the birth of the baby or a recent baptism. These families would be especially welcomed at the hospitality refreshment time after the morning masses.

It remains a goal that Sky, our Youth Ministry, directed by Ed Fronckwicz, will assume leadership of the 9:30 AM Mass, acting as lectors, ushers, greeters, and expanding the 9:30 AM choir.

We continue to welcome other Christian churches in Farmingdale to join our choir during Advent and Lent. It was believed that these ecumenical experiences of prayer are not to be missed. Too few parishioners participate in these powerful religious experiences of unity in Christ. How can we increase attendance?

The Welcome Wagon Ministry remains a goal that needs to be accomplished in the coming year. If you would like to be part of the organizing committee on this important new ministry, be sure to let a member of the Pastoral Council or Pastoral Team know of your interest.

Our vision dreamed that prayer and retreat opportunities would be made more available both at St. Kilian and nearby retreat centers. We did have an Advent retreat led by a Franciscan friar, and a Lenten retreat conducted by a Redemptorist retreat master. Both received very positive feedback from St. Kilian parishioners. It remains a goal to be accomplished to offer more opportunities for prayer off St. Kilian's grounds.

The third goal of our action plan for the pillar of Lifelong Faith Formation, was to offer ongoing training of our 80 parish catechists; to offer Christian parenting skills to our parents of the 800 families in religious education; and to invite young families to a particular grade level mass each weekend so

that they might engage with the gospel message. (90% do not attend mass regularly) there are about 200 children on each grade level. 200 received reconciliation, first communion, and confirmation this past year.

These action plan goals were accomplished since last September. We presently have two part-time directors of religious education (faith formation). With your financial support, we will be able to hire an additional part-time DRE. This is badly needed to spiritually reach the 800 families currently enrolled at St. Kilian, and to offer support and nourishment to our catechists.

The fourth pillar of the vision statement is Stewardship. The spirituality of stewardship refers to everything that we do after we say yes to Jesus Christ. Out of love for Jesus, we offer our time and talent in ministry, and we give generous financial support to our parish so that the five pillars that make up our faith community can flourish. The Stewardship Committee meets monthly with Barbara Geary as their Director. The main focuses each year are: 1. In the Fall, emphasis is on reviewing the appropriate use of our treasure, the financial resources given to us by Almighty God to use for his glory and honor. 2. And the Spring weekends focus on the giving of a portion of our time and energy, our talents back to God in lay ministry. When possible, we will continue to hold outdoor Ministry Fairs and we look to provide these for Faith Formation families as well. Every one of us is called to sacrificial giving, and involvement in one of the many ministries of our parish. The steering committee was heavily involved in developing the first pillar of our action plan – Hospitality.

The fifth pillar of our vision statement and action plan is Parish Social Ministry. There are many members of our Farmingdale community who are hurting and in need of our pastoral care. The disabled receive special attention and are referred to agencies in the Farmingdale area when they have a mental health diagnosis. Nina Peterson directs our efforts in these corporal works of mercy. During the past year she has worked exceptionally hard to expand our offerings to the poor and needy. She is hoping in the coming year, to develop a Social Justice Committee. The committee will receive education on the teachings of the Catholic Church over the past hundred years on social justice. Your involvement with that committee is needed. It hopes to address poverty and its root causes, affordable housing on Long Island, education of the public on mental health issues, and much more.

Throughout the year, we have served about 500 people each month at our Parish Outreach building on our grounds. Your weekly offering is critical to meet their needs. Many hundreds of people are on the edge of poverty, and many others regularly need food, clothing and shelter. This past year we have been able to increase our food resources through two organizations Long Island Cares, and Island Harvest. In addition, we have received some grant money to meet needs. Most of the people who come to our Outreach office, are on food stamps. Demand for food will increase if our government cuts this or eliminates the food stamp program. Nina has been training ministry volunteers in their serving of clients. Folks with limited incomes have a need to be taught how to budget so that they can increase their income, and lower their expenses. Nina hopes to expand services to low income folks in the coming year, including senior citizens.

The five pillars of our parish community are foundational to who we are as a faith community. The action plan that we developed a year ago is coming to fruition through your efforts as committed parishioners of St. Kilian. Your sacrificial giving in the offertory, and your hours of involvement in our outreach office, in planning our stewardship efforts, in handing on the faith to our young people, in

**making our liturgies come alive with your musical talents, in proclaiming God's word, in bringing the Eucharist to the homebound, in consolation ministry and pre-Cana, and so much more - all give honor and glory to God who gives us everything that we have. Thank you! Praise the Lord!**

***Peace, Father Bruce***