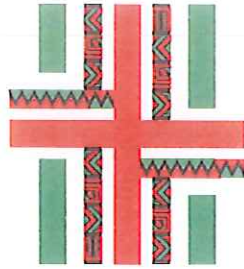


One Hundred Years of Faith and Service



*St. Columba Church
1898 - 1998*

July 18, 2015

Dear St Columba Parishioners,

Blessings and Greetings. As the end of my term as St. Columba Parish Council Chair approaches, I would like to thank all the members of the Parish Council for their service and achievements over the past four years. During the past four years, the Parish Council has evolved into a collegium collaborative body of which the Parish can be proud. Some of the highpoints of the Parish Council's achievements under Fr. Aidan leadership over the past four years include:

1. Heathy Eating Initiative and Policy in partnership with the Health Cabinet
2. 2012 Ministry Fair to promote Parishioner engagement with St. Columba's Parish Ministries
3. First Annual Ministry Retreat held in May 2015 in collaboration with St. Columba's Forty Ministries and Ministry Leadership fostering Community, Parishioner involvement, diversity and alignment with St. Columba's Mission.
4. Partnering with the Haiti Committee to develop fundraising policy/protocol insuring the sustainability of St. Columba's support for education in Haiti.
5. Discussion of gentrification of North Oakland and the impact on St. Columba and the surrounding community.
6. The launch of St. Columba's first Annual Parish Picnic fostering Community Building and an ever increasing sense of Parish Family

GOING FORWARD, the Council with the support and guidance of Fr. Aidan have laid out clear visionary and spiritual goals to insure the sustainability of our Parish. They specifically include:

1. Establish ad hoc Committee consisting of representation from Parish Staff, Parish Council, Finance Committee on the development of a Parish Five Year Plan---
"Where do we want to be 5 years from now.
2. Engage young adults (18 to 29 age group) in taking on an active role within the Parish.
3. How do we maintain the Afro-Centric culture of St. Columba with the ever changing landscape of the North Oakland Neighborhood and the following challenges:
 - a. St. Columba is a Commuter Parish with Attendees coming form 64 different cities and over 100 different zip codes.
 - b. Aging Congregation – How do we engage with our Legacy Families to keep second, third, fourth generations as present and future St. Columba members?

4. How can we engage more families and youth without having an on-site school connected to the Parish for grades kindergarten to junior high?

In working toward the achievement of these goals, Fr Aidan would like the Parish to consider activities addressing social issues such as the criminal justice systems effects on people of color and given the Charleston AME Church Tragedy, open discussions on race relations. As my tenure comes to an end on August 31st, Fr. Aidan has asked me to work with him on these issues engaging the St. Columba Parish Family.

My service on the St. Columba Parish Council has been a blessed and rewarding experience and I wish to thank past and present Council Members for your support and inspiration. The Parish Council will continue, built on the foundation of doing God's work in fostering Catholic Social Teaching and in building up the Kingdom of God together.

With God's good blessings to you all,

Margaret Peterson,
Parish Council Chair