

St. Mark Parish Leadership Meeting Report

July 2009



FROM

**Fr. John Auer, Pastor
and
Bridget McEowen,
Parish Manager**



What a great year it has been! We have been blessed in so many ways. Fr John has come to us and Bridget McEowen has joined our staff at St Mark to help and support the existing staff of Jennifer, Julie, Katherine, Ron and Tim. The future is ours. There are broad stroke plans that we want to share:

Eliminating Church Debt

If you think about it, St Mark is still well within its infancy as a parish, but look at the growth within; 900+ households, moving from St Thunder Ridge to a building. St Mark might be like the newly married couple who have just graduated from college with a lot of school debt and want to start a family and move into a house. We have a nice church building, and, while the growth of new registrations may have slowed, we have many babies being baptized! The St Mark family is growing. We do have debt! Our mortgage is \$1,869,725 which we are paying off and our land debt is \$2,867,576, which we are just beginning to pay off. We are so grateful to the Diocese of Colorado Springs for giving us the seed money to buy the land that our church is sitting on. We need to pay that loan back so other churches can be built in our diocese and people can have the chance to experience the richness of spirit and community as we are experiencing here at St Mark. We seemed to have a fix on our income but have slowed on contributions. Please pray about your financial support. Consider an increase if possible.

Increasing Community Opportunities

Our participation is impressive; We have over 50 ministries!! Our Knights of Columbus provide many opportunities for community events. Our liturgies are carefully crafted and celebrated. Our Faith Formation for adults and young people has some outstanding and creative ways to get the message out about our faith. The 2009-2010 speaker list for adult formation will be as outstanding as last year. Our Vacation Bible School is getting quite the community talk...people from outside the St Mark community are participating in this week long event! Deep down we are the Lord's special people and we are blessed!

What's Ahead

We have marked the start of our 10th anniversary celebration with the theme of "renewal". This year we are focusing on three pieces of renewal.

Where's your place in this crazy race?

Fr J-Glenn Murray has come to the Mission, and is back this week to renew our spirits. He challenges us to take this renewal and integrate it in our daily lives. If you missed the original Mission, please find the recordings of all three nights on our website. You can download it and listen at your convenience, or refresh (renew) yourself in preparation for his visit this weekend.

Parish Assessment and Renewal Project

This will occur starting in September and go until the fall of 2010. It will be introduced this month. We have hired a consultant to help guide the parish to enhance parish life in the areas of Worship, Formation, Pastoral Care, Outreach and Leadership. The two individuals whom you will meet in January are Fr Tom Sweetser S.J and Sr Peg Bishop O.S.F. The company is called the Parish Evaluation Project (PEP). They will conduct a Parish Assessment and Renewal (PAR). This process contains an extensive set of interviews, a parish wide questionnaire with a random sample of parishioners as well as an opportunity for those who wish to give their input. There will be a parish staff retreat for formation and development. Tom and Peg will actually "live" the parish for two weeks in January. There will be a parish town hall meeting and communication at all Masses in the

last two weeks of January 2010. The result will be a series of information pieces and goal setting for at least three years. He will include an extensive list of suggestions that will be considered Best Practices and the Next Right Steps for the parish. The leadership and staff of the parish will work to ensure these suggestions be put in place. Communication will continue to improve at all levels.

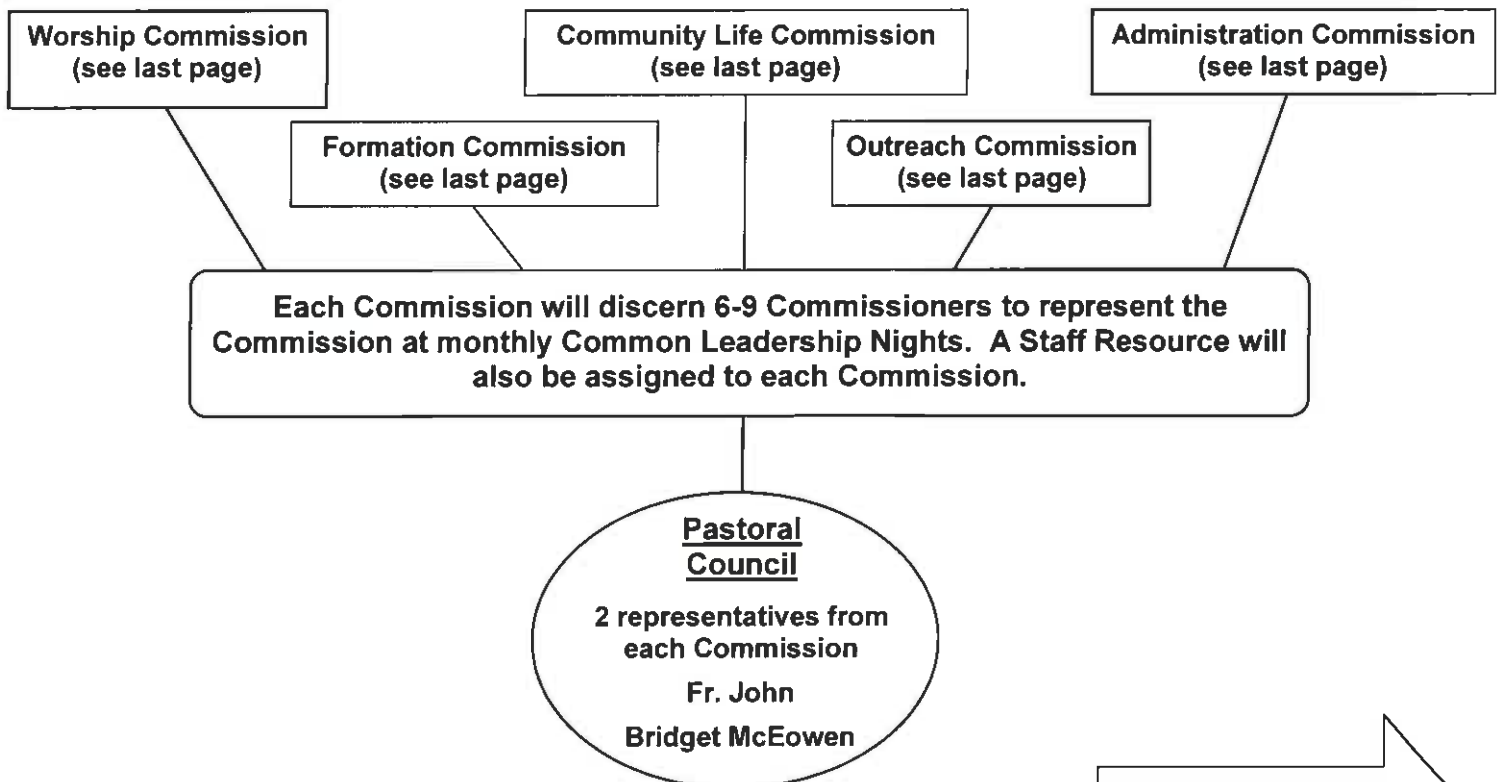
Christ Renews His Parish

There will be two weekend retreats this fall and spring to enable us to deepen our relationships with Christ and the Church. More information to come on this.

What's Happening Now.....

For the past year we have been internally working out the co-managing of St Mark. It has been a work in progress, for Fr John, for Bridget, and for the staff. As we work on this process, the thing that keeps us focused is the result of this; improvement of servicing the parishioners of St Mark. As Bridget takes on the temporal affairs of the parish, Fr John is freed up to become more pastoral to the people of St Mark. Listening to the people, praying with the people, administering Sacraments to the people. More home visits, more hospital visits, focusing outward in ways that haven't been a focus due to the day to day operation of the parish. As we continue down this path, please don't be offended if you ask Fr John something that he may not know the answer to, or direct you to Bridget. Our partnership is intended to enhance the overall spirituality of the St Mark family. From now until January, when Fr. Tom and Sr. Peg arrive, the Pastoral Council and Parish Staff will be very busy laying the foundation for the renewal of the leadership structure of the parish. This is phase two, if you will, that stems from co-managing. Please continue to read this report to learn about the new structure. Each month a Leadership Meeting Report will be published in order to keep you up to date with the latest information on important issues within the parish. What's happening now...this renewal...is what we plan to continue to breathe life, love and faith in St Mark. That will be seen by more people involved in ministries, more people flowing ideas up, more people joining our community, even more energized liturgies. We are so looking forward to traveling on this new road on our journey as a faith community!

ST. MARK LEADERSHIP STRUCTURE



The new structure will consist of five **Commissions**:

Worship Commission
Formation Commission
Community Life Commission
Outreach Commission
Administration Commission

Each of the 50+ ministries in the parish is categorized under one of these Commissions (see back page).

Each **Commission** will be represented by a group of **Commissioners**. The nominees for **Commissioners** are discerned by the volunteers of the ministries associated with each **Commission**. This typically happens during Lent each year at the **Gathering of Ministries**. During the first **Common Leadership Night** that follows the **Gathering of Ministries**, the nominees will discern 6-9 **Commissioners** to represent each **Commission**. **Commissioners** will serve a 3 year term with one third of the membership being selected each year. From those 6-9 **Commissioners** two **Co-Chairpersons** will be discerned to lead the group.

From the remaining **Commissioners**, **Pastoral Council members** will be discerned to serve a 2 year term with half of the membership being discerned each year from each one of the **Commissions**.

One of the **Commissioners** will be a member of the Parish Staff and act as **Staff Resource**.

The **Commissioners**, who meet monthly at **Common Leadership Night**, are charged with four important tasks:

Linking-to connect with each ministry associated with their **Commission**

Assessment-evaluate what is going on and hold individuals and groups accountable for what they said they would do

Visioning-dream what could happen in their area of ministry and set goals for the future

Funneling-delegate the duties of accomplishing the goals to the ministries

The **Pastoral Council** meets monthly after the **Common Leadership Night**. The **Pastoral Council** provides a common direction and focus for the parish as a whole; they are charged with maintaining the Parish Mission Statement.

Learn the Language

Gathering of Ministries: An annual meeting of all volunteers in all ministries of the parish that takes place during Lent

Common Leadership Night: A monthly meeting of the Commissioners from all five Commissions followed by a Pastoral Council meeting

Commission: A group of similar ministries grouped under category; ALSO the group of Commissioners discerned to represent that Commission.

Commissioner: A member of a ministry associated with a particular Commission discerned to represent that Commission; serves a 3 year non-consecutive term; must be actively involved in a ministry associated with the Commission, at least 16 years of age and not the Servant Leader of a ministry.

Commission Co-Chair: Discerned by a group of Commissioners to lead the Commission; not a member of Pastoral Council or Parish Staff.

Pastoral Council: Consists of two people from each Commission, the Pastor and the Parish Manager for a total of 12 members.

Pastoral Council Member: A Commissioner discerned to be a member of Pastoral Council; serves a two year term; not a Commission Co-Chair or member of Parish Staff.

Staff Resource: A member of the Parish Staff, appointed to a Commission by the Pastor and Parish Manager to assist the Commission; may not be a Co-Chairperson or a Pastoral Council member.

Servant Leader: Person/persons charged with administrative duties associated with a ministry.