

A Message from Our Pastor



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Well, the Christmas season is over and we're back into Ordinary Time (not ordinary as in boring, but ordinary as in no major seasons like Christmas, Lent or Easter). As we settle into the new year, I'd like to present you with this State of the Parish report.

When I arrived here at Good Shepherd, Fr. Mike Higgins, TOR had implemented a five year strategic planning process. This planning process wrapped up this past January. In the following pages you will see the work (this was no small task) that the six working groups accomplished. I'd like to thank the chairs of these working groups as well as all those who took part in the

various meetings and discussions. You are helping our parish family to grow, both in numbers and in spirituality.

You will also see that we have a strong Finance Council. You heard them speak at the end of Mass in November, and for me the key take-aways were that Good Shepherd Parish has a balanced budget *and* we are **debt free!** We also had a Capital Campaign, *Go and Rebuild My House*, and as of December 31, 2024, we have collected 81% of the pledges!

Think back to about a year ago. Last Lent, the parish Lenten Journey was focused on giving of time and talent. Many people responded to our stewardship drive and enabled our ministries to continue to flourish. Thank you for sharing yourselves with your brothers and sisters in Christ. Too often I've been at parishes where people see things that need to be done but assume others will step in to do them. That's the great thing about *our* parish, *you* see a need and *you* don't sit back but you step up. **Thank You.**

During my short time here, I am amazed at the number of visitors I meet after Mass who take the time to come up to me to tell me that what we have here is special. They notice what you've done to make this parish what it is. I think it's appropriate that the leadership team came up with our parish theme for this year: *You Belong Here.*

You Belong Here invites us to continue to be a community. We offer **Small Church Communities**: helping you find people within our parish who share similar interests. Our **Quarterly Connect** event welcomes all parishioners to learn about all Good Shepherd has to offer, meet our staff, and explore our ministries. **NextStep** will be a 12 week journey taken with one another to allow us to see how faith and daily life intersect.

So, thanks to all of you for making this one great parish community! And, as you can see, even though we're entering into Ordinary Time, we are not an ordinary parish.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Fr. Mike" with a stylized flourish at the end.

Rev. Michael Ciski, TOR, Pastor



Fr. Mike addresses what it means to BELONG at the Fall 2024 Leadership Summit