

April 2025
Pastor's Report

Parish Vitality: Listed below is an update of our efforts this past month and moving forward to help accomplish some of the goals pertaining to our parish's vitality.

1) Service to Others:

- a. Our Lenten Parish Almsgiving Project this year is being offered in support of St. Vincent DePaul and the Dubuque Rescue Mission. Thus far we have had a pretty good response for this project. It will conclude on Psalm Sunday (although we will be accepting late donations until April 27th).

2) Sense of Belonging:

- a. Still no word on completion of our Parish Pictorial Directory.
- b. We are blessed to have some of our outreach efforts to the Filipino and Marshallese community posit some favorable results. We have one young lady scheduled to receive Confirmation and 1st Eucharist in the coming weeks and another to receive the Sacraments of Initiation at the Easter Vigil. Likewise, we have two youths receiving Confirmation in May and in July we will celebrate the marriage of a young couple who reside here from the Marshall Islands. Let's keep them all in our prayers.

3) The Mass:

- a. Thus far we have had a good turnout for our Bible Study/Reflection series during Lent hosted on Monday evenings (about 20 to 25 people) We will have one more session on April 1st before we conclude this program.

Parish events and program updates:

- We had pretty good participation for Women's and Men's Christian Experience Weekend Retreats (CEW). We greatly appreciate all the hard work by so many to ensure the success of these retreats. A big THANK YOU to you all. It is always a blessing to see the Holy Spirit working in and through the candidates and team members as the weekend progresses. May we keep the light of Christ shining brightly in our lives.
- Thus far with our Tuesday and Wednesday evening Stations of the Cross has been well attended. Moving this devotion from our traditional Friday evenings was a good idea as we always seemed to be competing with area fish fry events. Thanks to all who organized and participated in this worthwhile devotion.

- We had a very successful parish Fish Fry on March 21st. I believe we had a higher attendance than in recent years. The evening was certainly filled with good food and good fellowship. We appreciate all the hard work of so many volunteers who helped make this event wonderful on many different levels.
- Disciple Maker Index (DMI) survey results. We did receive the results of this survey and will be working with selected parish leadership members to review the survey's findings in more detail, following closely the archdiocese directives for this program. We can share a couple of the highlights of our overall results—namely, 1) Parish survey participants value the Mass and firm belief in the Eucharist and Word of God. 2) Parish survey participants value the importance of parents helping their children to know Jesus and recognize the importance of our Catholic Schools and Religious Education program to assist parents in their duty as Christian parents. 3) Parish survey participants believe the parish does a good job communicating parish information through its various social media avenues. We will be providing more information on the DMI program (as a whole) in the coming weeks and months.
- Toward the end of March, I did receive official notification from the archbishop that I will be reassigned to serve as pastor of St. Elizabeth Pastorate which serves the parishes in Bankston, Epworth, Farley, Peosta, and Placid. Fr. Ray Burkle (current pastor of parishes in Osage and Stacyville) has been assigned to be pastor of Holy Spirit Parish. As with leaving any parish assignment, there is some sadness--because it is the parishioners and staff that you will miss the most. I can't thank you all enough for your support and the work you do for this parish, and I am sure you will extend the same effort and courtesy to Fr. Burke when he arrives. Again, thank you for your prayers and support for these five and a half years. May God continue to bless you and this parish.
(P.S.--The change will take place on July 8th and so you will have to put up with me for a little while longer.)

My prayers for a blessed last few weeks of the Lenten Season, and for the upcoming celebrations of the Triduum and Easter Season.

Sincerely in Christ,

Fr. Steve