

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to all those who helped make the St. Michael's Parish Picnic a success last weekend. I am deeply appreciative of Bob Kittle, who has spent numerous hours planning and preparing for this event. From the delicious food to the fun activities, everyone enjoyed a great day. I also want to personally thank Stephanie Halas, Bruce Gordon, and the parish staff for all of their hard work, including Jim Shundry and the maintenance staff. I want to recognize the Knights of Columbus for their outstanding efforts in selling our 50/50 tickets and all of the volunteers who helped in any way. I also want to thank Claire Gatti and the St. Michael School Teachers and Staff for a successful open house. Your support is invaluable to the parish.

I love that we had this special time to come together to celebrate our faith and our parish family. This connects to our readings this weekend because they all reflect inclusion and coming to God's table. The Kingdom of God is for everyone. God wants to bring everyone into union with Him.

These are also suitable readings as we start a new year of faith formation. Our Families Growing in Faith (FGF), Youth Ministry, and Order of Christian Initiation of Adults (OCIA) will begin meeting soon. These opportunities for faith formation are essential. Every member of our parish, regardless of age, can grow in faith and a deeper relationship with Christ. If you have not registered your child or teen for faith formation, please do so soon. Registration information can be found in the bulletin on our website.

Most of us are familiar with the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA), the formation process for adults to be initiated into the Church. Last year, it was retranslated in Rome, and its name was changed to the Order of Christian Initiation of Adults (OCIA). However, the formation and process remain the same. The terminology changed to reflect the journey of encountering Christ and becoming a disciple.

In our process, everyone journeys at their own pace. We have weekly gatherings to connect with Catholicism and parishioners and learn about scripture, history, prayer, sacraments, morality, and spirituality. I am so excited that we have many inquirers seeking to be initiated into the Church. You will get to know them in the coming weeks through the bulletins as they continue their journey. If you or someone you know is interested in becoming Catholic, please get in touch with Roberta in the parish office.

Our readings remind us that all are welcome in the Kingdom of God because God's love does not have boundaries. I pray we continue to welcome all to God's table.

God Bless,  
Fr. Benson