



# St. Michael the Archangel Parish

## AN UPDATE FROM OUR PASTOR:

### *Building On Our Foundation for the Future* *E Ho'okumu Kākou i ke Kāhua no Kēia Mua Aku*

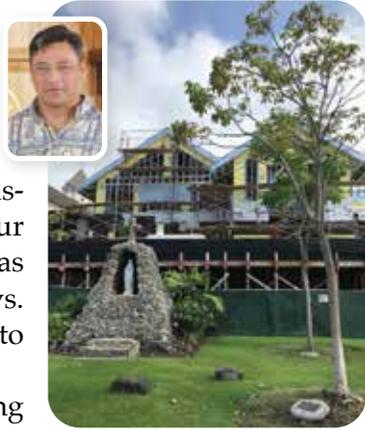
Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

**W**e are disciples who act justly, love tenderly, and walk humbly with our God.

This is our parish mission and the words we live by. This mission helped shape the plan for our Parish Center project, which has faced some unexpected delays. The completion date was moved to March 30, 2022.

However, the project is moving along nicely. When the Parish Center is complete, I look forward to celebrating with our parish community. On Passion Sunday, April 10, 2022, Bishop Silva is scheduled to celebrate Mass and bless our new space. A celebration will follow.

Although the project is a bit delayed, I am so excited to see the progress being made each day. The Parish Center will be



a blessing to the community with space for 300 people, two handicap-accessible family bathrooms, and more space for meetings, events, and presentations, to name a few amenities. It will also include state-of-the-art technology for both security and presentations. This is Phase II of the building project. A

Parish Center was in the plans before the 2006 earthquake destroyed our previous structure.

The opening of the Parish Center will be especially exciting after all the interruptions and cancellations brought on by the pandemic. I am excited about having an expanded space for the community. I am

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DECEMBER/JANUARY  
KĒKĒMAPA/IAUNALI

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## Keeping Things in Perspective *During the Christmas Season*

**T**he Christmas season has arrived. Garlands, poinsettias, lights, and Christmas trees are starting to pop up in homes and businesses. Cookies are being baked, holiday guests are arriving, and Christmas cards are flooding our mailboxes.

This joyous season is now upon us. But before we know it, in just a few short weeks, the Christmas cards will be replaced with holiday bills and statements reminding us of the money we spent on gifts for our loved ones.

So how are you financially handling the Christmas season thus far? Perhaps you are staying within your means by planning a detailed budget and remaining within its limits. You may be taking advantage of seasonal sales in order to purchase that otherwise expensive, sought-after item. Maybe you are simply overspending on unnecessary items, having been drawn in by the seasonal marketing campaigns.

The financial pressures of creating the perfect Christmas scenario can be quite daunting, especially for Americans, where the “buy now, pay later” philosophy prevails.

Of course, we all want to provide a wonderful Christmas for our `ohana. But at what cost?

As good stewards of our financial resources, we are called to be responsible with our money throughout the entire year, even at Christmas.

Take a moment to remember last Christmas. Do you remember all the presents you received? Probably not. Instead, you probably remember the way a certain food tasted, or the smell of the Christmas tree, or how the beautiful lights glistened in the dark. You most likely remember the feelings of joy caused by sharing a special occasion with loved ones. These are the memories that truly matter most, rather than what was packaged under the tree.

Though most of us believe this in our hearts, each year we find ourselves focusing on the material aspects of Christmas, sometimes forgetting the true reason for the season – the birth of Jesus Christ, our Savior. After all, it wouldn't feel like Christmas if we



didn't buy nice presents for every person on our long gift list – or would it?

Perhaps, instead of just buying and spending, we could use our talents to share with others. Or, as busy as we are these days, maybe we could actually spend more time with those we love.

We could make a gingerbread house with our mo`opuna, or brew up a cup of hot cocoa and watch *It's A Wonderful Life* with our family at our side.

We are often so busy shopping, we don't make time for sharing of ourselves. As good stewards, we are called to share our time and talent with others to glorify God, just as much as we are called to share our treasure. And even if we are fortunate enough to have the financial means to shower our `ohana and friends with gifts, should we so recklessly spend our money? Aren't there better places to utilize our God-given treasure?

Keeping our finances in perspective can be difficult, but asking God's guidance as we make our financial decisions this Christmas season is a perfect way to stay on track. Ask God to help you be a good steward. Ask God to give you the strength not to overspend as a result of guilt or a desire to “flex” or “show off.” Indeed, true friends and family members will love you for your gesture, rather than the size or cost of their gifts.



# The Marriage and Family Life Ministry:

## *Strengthening the Bonds of a Life Together in Christ*

**M**arriage is a living sacrament, and the family is the fundamental unit of the Church and society — like any living thing, these must be nurtured to flourish and grow. For the past three years, the West Hawai'i and Maui Vicariates have worked to develop guidance that will allow parishes — including St. Michael — to start their own Marriage and Family Life Ministry. Through this ministry, married couples and families of all ages and walks of life have opportunities to grow together, strengthen their familial bonds, and share fellowship.

“Our definition of family includes married, with or without children, single, divorced, widowed, young or elderly, two-parent families, single-parent families, blended families, families with special needs and families in various life cycles of development,” says Karen Unger, who will coordinate the ministry along with her husband, Scott. “Throughout life, you’re always trying to better yourself, and that same thought process should be applied when it comes to family and marriage. It’s always important to strengthen your communication with your partner and your children, and you

never hit the ceiling and say, ‘I’m done.’ There is always room for growth.”

Although the ministry is just starting to take shape, it will include activities and opportunities for discussion and fellowship with other parish families.

“I think there is comfort in knowing that other families are going through similar things that you are going through,” Karen says. “We can support each other and collaborate, and share our wisdom as a group. There is strength in numbers!”

Karen and Scott, who have been married for 31 years and have three adult children, know firsthand how important it is to continue to work on the marriage relationship and keep it strong.

“In our own marriage, our foundation is our Catholic faith,” Karen says. “That’s always been where we’re coming from and where we’re going. If we all followed Jesus’ way and kept our families strong, we would have paradise here on earth. We want to be accepting to everybody, and aren’t here to judge anyone — we just want to help people build their relationships and families on a strong Catholic foundation.”

*If you would like more information about the Marriage and Family Life Ministry, please contact Karen Unger at 808-989-8963.*



# The Immigration Ministry: HELPING NEIGHBORS HANDLE M

**O**ur challenge as Christians is to do Christ's work in our families and communities. That work looks different for everyone. St. Teresa of Avila gave us a great picture of what serving those around us looks like. She said, "Christ has no body but yours. No hands, no feet on earth but yours. Yours are the eyes with which He looks compassion on this world. Yours are the feet with which He walks to do good. Yours are the hands with which He blesses all the world."

Here on Hawai'i Island, in our parish and in the community, many immigrants who are here from around the world need assistance with matters of immigration law. The members of the newly formed Immigration Ministry stand ready to be the hands and feet of Christ.

There are very few resources on this island to help immigrants. To meet this need, the law school at the University of Hawai'i in Hilo is sending students periodically for open office hours in the Immaculate Conception Mission Church Hall here at St. Michael's Parish. Our goal is also to provide translators for the different languages to help during office hours. The processes related to immigration law can be very complicated, and this is just one way we can help. Several community agencies are also involved in this ministry.

Deacon Sándor Hernandez Morales is himself a political refugee from Cuba and he knows how vital this ministry is. His family came to the United States in 1979 with political asylum and legal resident status.

"I am very grateful for the life I have and know personally what it is like to seek freedom and a life of dignity," Deacon Sándor says. "All my life, I have seen countless friends and relatives do the same. Thankfully, the U.S. remains a beacon of hope and freedom around the world. This ministry is a small way to help people lawfully remain in the land of freedom and opportunity by going through the processes afforded them by our nation's laws."

Deacon Sándor says we need to be aware that there are immigrants present here from all over the world — not just Latin America. There are Asians, Micronesians, South Pacific Islanders, Filipinos, Europeans, Russians, and



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— DEACON SÁNDOR HERNÁNDEZ MORALES



## MATTERS OF IMMIGRATION LAW

others who may need help. By welcoming them into our parish, it's also a way to evangelize. Folks can see a smiling face there to help, which can spread Christ's love.

"People of many different cultures and faiths come to our parish and experience the 'aloha' we share that comes from being disciples of Jesus," Deacon Sándor says. "This is the most effective form of evangelization. We are supposed to be recognized as followers of Christ in the way we live love."

Deacon Sándor asks us all to consider how we might support this ministry. In particular, translators are needed. It's also helpful to have volunteers during office hours so that people may be greeted with a friendly face. Deacon

Sándor would love to see this ministry grow and provide real help to all those who need it. After all, when we welcome the stranger and shelter the homeless, we are living the Corporal Works of Mercy.

"This work is important because immigration has become a highly politicized issue with people often complaining about where things stand without really doing anything about it," Deacon Sándor says. "In the interim, real people suffer the consequences and the result is avoidable stress and suffering. We can help people resolve some of their immigration law matters and in this way take action locally to be helpers instead of being complainers, or worse yet, spectators."

*More volunteers are needed to serve as translators and be at the office to help. If you have a passion for helping, please contact Deacon Sándor Hernandez at SHMPax@gmail.com or 305-491-1277.*

## *Building On Our Foundation for the Future* continued from front cover

looking forward to all the ministries being in full gear and utilizing the wonderful space we will have for our gatherings, ministries, and socials. I am hoping for an end to the pandemic when we can gather together without all the restrictions. That is my first hope.

What's more, I hope to see even more ministries and more gatherings with this great new space being added. It will be perfect for what is needed here at St. Michael the Archangel. Having been at the parish for the past 17 years, this is something we have been looking forward to for a long time.

The Parish Center is long-awaited. It's just like the Advent season and waiting for Christmas.

In addition, I personally would like to invite you back to Mass if you have been away due to the pandemic. Our parish has been taking all of the

precautions necessary to keep people safe. We have a seat for you here!

Finally, I invite those who haven't given to this project to consider a gift toward the Parish Center building.

This is for the future of our parish. It is time to make this dream a reality.

With God as our help, I am confident that we will continue the good work that the Lord has done here in Kailua-Kona.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Fr. Lio Faletoi

*Please visit [stmichaelparishkona.org](http://stmichaelparishkona.org) and click on donations for info on how to give to the Parish Center project.*

## THE IMPORTANCE OF

# Loving God

**W**hen young people see a person that intrigues them, that attraction becomes the topic of conversation at every opportunity. This attraction alters behavior so that we become enthralled with the other and desire to share our enthusiasm.

Imagine if we were more enthralled with the presence of Christ in our lives. Imagine if we fully recognized that Christ is truly present to us in His precious Body and Blood, and present as well in the proclamation of His Word and in the gathering of our community, praying and singing (see *Sacrosanctum Concilium* [Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy], para. 14). Recognizing the living Christ in all these ways would awaken in us the desire to be with the One who is the object of our most fundamental, pure, and holy attraction to our merciful, loving, and gracious Savior.

If we were to recognize the presence of Christ in these beautiful ways, wouldn't our desire to be more completely in His presence increase? Surely our desire to be better stewards of our time with the Lord would grow. Our attention to the readings and other prayers of the Mass would bring about within us deeper communion with the One who suffered and died for us. If I recognized that God is the answer to all my pangs of hunger, that Christ is my way to the Father, and that the Holy Spirit works to convert my heart and soul every day, would I not seek to fill that hunger at the banquet of the Lamb?

While active participation in Sunday Mass is an obligation for Catholics, we also will do well to see the lovely, motherly care the Church shows us in establishing that requirement. The Code of Canon Law states clearly in paragraph 1247, "On Sundays and other holy days of obligation, the faithful are bound to participate in the Mass." Sometimes, we might hear that as an overbearing rule. But it might more correctly be understood as our Mother, the Church, helping us learn what is best for us. At Mass, we hear the living Word of God proclaimed. He speaks to us. We receive as hungry, needy sinners, the precious Body and Blood of Christ. We encounter Christ's living presence in our brothers and sisters worshipping God with us. If we truly understood that amazing truth, then how might it affect our lives? How might it affect our relationships? How might it impact our decision to bring our children along to Mass? How might it awaken within us a deeper attraction, fascination, desire for the Lord?

Generally, when we find ourselves fascinated with someone, we do not decide to spend as little time as possible with them. We do not ration our time with them. We want to spend time with them, to see them, to listen to them, to get to know them, to develop a healthy, loving relationship with them.

Considering our reliance on the Lord of life and love, our fascination with His mercy, His goodness, His willingness to call us to Himself, maybe we should



# More Deeply

## AT MASS

ask ourselves about what happens in us at Mass. As I prepare to come to Church, do I find my mind turning to a receptive welcome of the Lord, just as I'll be welcomed at the door of Church? Have I dressed for the important weekly (or daily) moment of meeting my King? Do I expect some profound wisdom from God in the readings? Am I open to correction, to challenge, to affirmation in the readings of God's Word? Do I intently pray along with the priest presider throughout the Mass? Do I make an offering of my life, along with the bread and wine? Do I genuinely hunger for the Body and Blood of Christ? And do I long for that blessing that sends me on my way with the mission to build the Kingdom?

Instead of worrying about what "counts" when it comes to Sunday Mass, maybe we should work hard at fostering our love for the Eucharist, our desire for eternal life, our attraction to the Master who calls us into a life of active discipleship. Instead of a merely heavy-handed requirement, maybe we can see more clearly that being at Mass together helps nourish us for a whole week of building God's Kingdom. Coming with those expectations, desires, and hopes, leaving early when unnecessary would disappear as a temptation instantly. Coming late because other things have taken priority would not typically happen, other obligations notwithstanding. Christ desires our company at Mass, from beginning to end. Let's draw near to Him.

## Christmas Mass Schedule

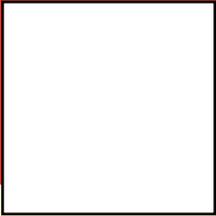
### Christmas Eve

6 p.m., 8 p.m., 10 p.m. (all in English)

### Christmas Day

7 a.m., 9 a.m. (English) and 11:30 a.m. (Spanish)

*The church is open and safe to attend Mass. Come and join us!*



## *St. Michael the Archangel Parish*

75-5769 Alii Drive  
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### LEAVE A LEGACY AND PRESERVE THE FUTURE OF ST. MICHAEL CHURCH

A well-crafted will or estate plan speaks volumes about your hopes and dreams for the future. It also ensures that what you have worked a lifetime for is distributed to your wishes. As St. Michael looks to our future, we would be honored to be included in your legacy and ensure that St. Michael Catholic Church is here for future generations.

Please send me more information about:

- Providing for St. Michael in my will or trust
- Making a gift of appreciated securities
- Making a tax-free gift through my retirement account
- I have already included a gift to St. Michael in my will or trust
- Making a gift through life insurance

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Fr. Lio at 808-326-7771 or Robert Leopoldino at 808-896-5532 or Don David at 808-756-6912.

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#### **Mass Schedule**

Saturday Vigil: 5 p.m. • Sunday: 7 a.m., 9 a.m., 1 p.m. and 4 p.m. (English), 11:30 a.m. and 6 p.m. (Spanish)

Daily: Mon-Sat 7 a.m. • Mon-Tues-Thurs-Fri 5 p.m. • Confessions: Saturday 9 a.m. • Adoration: Wednesdays 7:30 a.m. to 4:45 p.m.