

Dear members of Saint Clement Parish,

Each time I meet visitors to our community, I am struck by their remarks about the strength of our community and the depth of belonging they experience here. As I reflect on my 12 years at Saint Clement and as I begin my fifth year as your pastor, I am flooded with gratitude for the incredible leadership of our founders, the people who have shaped our history, and you, our members today, who strive to see their parish fully alive and passionate about the love of Jesus.

Recently, I came across a study that stated 50% of Christian churches didn't add even one new member over the past two years. In stark contrast, here at Saint Clement, we have welcomed over 500 new members in the last year alone, significantly strengthening our community. This achievement not only showcases our members' commitment to invite others (as per our study 54% were invited by a friend), but also our collective ability to transform human hearts.

As we continue to expand and engage more individuals, we remain committed to our 2024-2027 strategic plan envisioned in collaboration with a group of our parish leaders in 2023. The goal of this plan was to clearly outline a three-year strategy to double our engaged members, program participants, and guests to 30,000 a year. In 2023, over 16,000 people partook in our programs and offerings! To reach our goal, together with the strategic committee of our Finance Council and Pastoral Council we have been diligently assessing our staffing needs and additional programming to support our leaders.

With this in mind, I am thrilled to announce the addition of a new role to our team -- the Manager of Growth and Transformation. Elise Giles will be taking on this position starting May 1, overseeing our spiritual growth and transformation programs like Alpha, Beta, Ever Wonder, etc.

We're also gearing up for our annual Theology on Tap series and Wine Down Wednesday events this summer. We're privileged to have Fr. Mike Schmitz, one of the most popular speakers and podcast hosts, as our opening speaker for Theology on Tap on Tuesday, July 9 and our speaker for WDW on Wednesday, July 10!

As we look forward to Mother's Day, we are preparing a heartfelt celebration to honor all our mothers with a blessing at all Masses. Additionally, our First Communion will take place on May 4, a momentous occasion for 75 children from our community.

As we continue this Easter season, I thank each one of you for your participation and dedication, especially our parish leaders. To those who are new to our parish, I encourage you to consider stepping into ministry, as we always welcome new faces and talents. It is in serving together that we build up the Church, share the joy of the Gospel, and make a difference to those we serve!

May God's blessings be upon you all,

Fr. Peter Wojcik, *Pastor*