

## Unleashing Parish Intercessory Prayer

(from the STM Bulletin – September 3, 2017)

After Jesus ascended into heaven, during the weeks before the first Pentecost, the disciples “*devoted themselves with one accord to prayer*” (Acts 1:13-14). Praying together, and for each other, and for the promised Spirit and his gifts, the disciples prepared to become the Church sent to share the Gospel. “Prayer and intercession are indispensable components of the new evangelization” writes Archbishop Vigneron in *Unleash the Gospel*, “since God the Holy Spirit is the principal agent for unleashing the Gospel. Prayer is the way we access the unlimited divine power of the Holy Spirit” (p.29) who is the life-giving soul of the Church.

Intercessory prayer is vital to parish life: “Parishes are to be founded upon prayer and a culture of encounter with Jesus” (p.34). You may recall how the Archdiocese prepared for the current season of renewal proclaimed in *Unleash the Gospel* with “a year of prayer for a new Pentecost” beginning in Lent 2014. The reason Synod 16 is “... a fresh outpouring of the Holy Spirit was that it was preceded by a whole year of fervent prayer” (p.29). We are charged to continue a “missionary conversion” of our parish “... grounded in prayer” (p.4). Intercessory prayer is “the hidden engine of the Church’s mission. [It] “cultivates a spiritual hunger in a parish so that hearts are prepared to hear the Gospel” (p.30). *Unleash the Gospel* charges us to become a more emphatically prayerful parish, “to avail ourselves of the power of intercession” (p.30) and be radically open to the Spirit, “preceding every initiative with prayer for his guidance, constantly allowing ourselves to be led by him, and obeying his promptings and inspirations” (p.9).



STM parish has an intercessory prayer group that meets on the third Wednesday of every month. You are invited to come together - *with one accord* - “to pray for the mission of the parish” (p.35), to pray for the needs and intentions of each person in our community, and to pray that the power of the Holy Spirit breathe his continually renewing life into our parish.

Watch the bulletin for more information about intercessory prayer at St. Thomas More parish.