

BUT ... WHAT *IS* "UNLEASH THE GOSPEL"?

From the STM Bulletin January 21, 2018

"This is the time of fulfillment. The kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel." (Mk 1:15)

These words from today's readings announce that Jesus has come to fulfill the Father's promise to restore us to life in him. That Jesus brings the kingdom by his life, death and resurrection is powerful news, news that is too often unheard and unheeded by the world today. This is the challenge for our time. The Archbishop's letter *Unleash the Gospel* sets a course for us to meet this challenge together as "a band of joyful missionary disciples."

Unleash the Gospel is a roadmap showing us how we can help in releasing the power of that Good News, a power alive in the Church today through the gifts and charisms of Holy Spirit. The letter calls us to live faithful joyful lives, individually and together as a parish, so that the Holy Spirit might attract people to encounter Jesus here, and bring our families, friends and neighbors actively into his kingdom.

We are still learning what the Pastoral Letter *Unleash the Gospel* means for the parish and each of us. Last week Msgr. Rice, the parish pastoral staff and over 20 STM council and commission members met with Mike Chamberland, representing the Archdiocese, to learn more about *Unleash the Gospel* and reflect on how it will guide us in the years to come. As parish leadership begins to take up the call to *Unleash the Gospel*, each of us also ought to read or re-read this important Letter and learn and reflect on what it means.

In the months since *Unleash the Gospel* was released at Pentecost, a series of "commentaries" were published in this column showing what the Letter has to offer and pointing out how it is relevant to our lives, our families, and the parish. These brief commentaries describe key parts of the Letter, relate it to Scriptures read at Sunday Masses, or show how we might put it into action. The Archbishop is also writing a series in *The Michigan Catholic* in which he presents *Unleash the Gospel* "in bite-sized chunks" to help us understand his Letter. The goal of all the articles and commentaries is to help us "unpack" and apply the teachings in this rich document to our lives.

All the commentaries are posted on the STM website under the "UNLEASH THE GOSPEL" tab. Please click there to learn more. By the power of the Holy Spirit, "this *is* the time of fulfillment. The kingdom of God *is* at hand" and we are commanded by our Lord to "Go make disciples of all nations" (Matthew 28:19).