

# ST. VINCENT DE PAUL CATHOLIC PARISH



MEET

## Michael Stratman, OUR NEW YOUTH MINISTER *“The Faith Is an Adventure”*

**T**welve years ago, Michael Stratman started working with some of the Church’s youngest members in Vacation Bible School. He loved seeing them light up as they understood more and more about Jesus.

“They have such innocence, and when you’d share about Mary or Jesus, they would listen and want to learn,” Michael says. “Today, I love working not only with youth but also with adults and families who want to grow together and who are truly seeking.”

Michael was the Associate Director for the Family Life Department with the Diocese of Dallas, but when COVID led to layoffs, he had to make changes. It was then that he found the position of Youth Minister at St. Vincent.

“I applied right away,” Michael says. “I’m really excited about this position and seeing the youths’ talents and gifts. I’m excited to see what we can do together.”

Michael will be working primarily with youth from seventh to 12th grade and their families. He hopes to build the support team for Youth Ministry within the faith community.

“In this first year, I’d like to create a prayer team for Youth Ministry, and this team would be like a support system,” Michael says. “In the second year, I’d like to work more with families and see their involvement increase so that they’re seeking the faith together with their youth.”

Michael’s long-term vision for our Youth Ministry involves increasing intergenerational faith opportunities and renewing family life. He also hopes the youth will really be seen as the vital asset to the parish that they are.

“Our mission here at St. Vincent de Paul is to offer youth and young adults a place and space where they are welcomed, supported, loved, and to walk with them



*Michael Stratman*

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# ST. VINCENT DE PAUL

## *Stewardship and Evangelization:* Using Our Time and Talents to Spread the Good News

Jesus came to save the world and to draw all men to Him. When we think of the salvific work of Christ, many of us think of His life, death, resurrection, and His ascension into glory. And while those salvific events are of primary importance in salvation history, it doesn't end there.

Christ wants everyone to know the salvation He has won for them. He wants every soul to experience heavenly glory. Therefore, after having conquered death through His cross and resurrection, Christ commissioned His disciples to carry the Gospel to the world. They were charged to “preach the Gospel to all nations,” winning, through their words and examples, souls for the kingdom! What a task! The disciples were overwhelmed at the thought of carrying the Gospel to all nations after Christ had returned to heaven. But the Lord assured them, “You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, throughout Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8). When the Holy Spirit descended upon them on the feast of Pentecost, all those in the crowd were amazed. They all spoke in different tongues, preaching the same message, and everyone there could understand!

And so it was that the Church was established through the power of the Spirit and for the purpose of evangelization. Each of us has been baptized in that Spirit, and through that, made a member of the Church. It is, thus, up to each and every one of us to actively participate in the Church's mission — proclaiming the Good News to all the world and building up the Kingdom of God!

Each of us must re-evaluate how we are using the gifts God has given us to build up His Kingdom. Do we preach the Good News in all that we do and say? The same Spirit that descended upon the apostles that first Pentecost remains with us now, giving us the strength and courage to labor in the vineyard of the world.

Christ came to save the world, and He established the Church as the “universal sacrament of salvation” (*Christifideles Laici*, 2), by which many people throughout the world would know the glory of His truth. St. Paul describes the Church as one body with many parts. And just as each part of the body has a particular function, so each member of the Church has a particular calling, but united as one body in the Spirit, all of the members are to carry out the Church's one mission. How is God calling you to carry out this mission? What particular gifts has He given you with which you ought to build the Kingdom?

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*A Letter From Our Pastor*

# SEPTEMBER

## An Ongoing Opportunity to Change the World

Dear Parishioners,

In his letters, St. Paul often began by greeting his “brothers and sisters.” Every time I read one of these letters, it reminds me that you and I truly are sisters and brothers in the Body of Christ, the Church, but especially here in our parish. We need to understand that we are indeed a family, and the way we see and treat one another is fundamental to the health and happiness of this family.

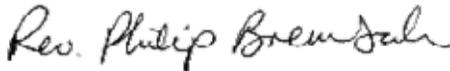
Our spiritual family doesn’t stop at the walls of our church, but rather, extends to include every man and woman created in God’s image and likeness. You may be familiar with the term “Catholic Social Teaching,” part of which is built on a commitment to the poor. These are the beliefs that guide Catholics on how to apply the faith to all aspects of life, and they lay the framework for the Church’s teachings on the dignity and sacredness of human life. Once we make a commitment to be disciples of Jesus and pursue stewardship as a way of life, the principles of Catholic Social Teaching become very easy to incorporate into our lives.

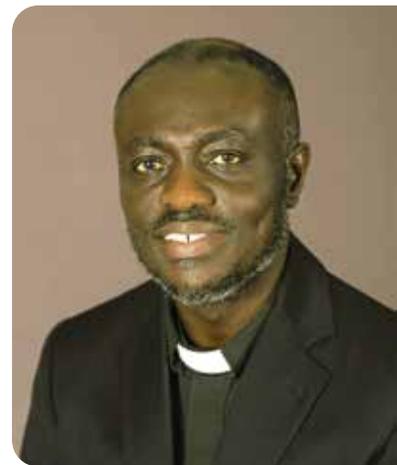
Catholic Social Teaching has been around since those first followers of Jesus tried to balance their new faith with the realities of living in a world of Roman oppression. Jesus reminded His disciples then, just as He reminds us now, that caring for and administering to the poor should be at the core of all we do. Recall when the Lord said in Matthew, “For I was hungry and you gave me food; I was thirsty and you gave me drink; I was a stranger and you welcomed me; I was naked and you gave me clothing; I was ill and you cared for me; I was in prison and you visited me.”

This is our foundation as we seek to embody mercy and justice to our fellow man and should be one of our major goals as a faith community. Many of our parish ministries provide for us an opportunity to do just as Jesus asked — to serve those most in need. As we move into the fall season, with Thanksgiving, Advent, and Christmas soon to follow, now is a good time for us to recommit ourselves to addressing the needs we see around us — both as a parish society and as individuals.

I am proud of our collective efforts in assisting and serving the poor, but I also know that we can do more. Many of us personally need to get involved in these efforts. Our Holy Father, Pope Francis, has a great love and regard for the poor and, like Jesus, he reminds us often of what we need to do. Pope Francis once said in a homily, “The measure of the greatness of a society is found in the way it treats those most in need, those who have nothing apart from their poverty.” Together, we can make a difference.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

  
Fr. Philip Brembah  
Pastor



# ST. VINCENT DE PAUL

## OPEN ARMS HEALTH CLINIC *Pro*



*The sign for the clinic offers a warm welcome.*



*Dr. Richard Urso gives his time and talents to help the patients.*



*James Harvey, a clinic minister, takes care of data entry.*

Maybe it's the colorful flowers blooming in the front of the Open Arms Health Clinic building. Or perhaps it's the clinic's logo itself — a figure with outstretched welcoming arms. But no matter — when prospective patients enter the doors of the free Open Arms Clinic, they will immediately understand that they will be cared for by ministers who are serving Jesus by serving the sick.

Members of the Good Samaritans Ministry at St. Vincent de Paul parish are among the ministers for the Open Arms Health Clinic. While many clinic ministers are medical personnel, people with administrative experience, office skills, computer skills, language interpretation skills, and more are also needed to provide care for those in need. Located at 3311 Little Road in Arlington — less than two miles from our church — the Open Arms Health Clinic provides non-emergency medical and social service care to the uninsured and underinsured.

Three of our parishioners — Jeanette Fitzpatrick, RN; Maureen Vega; and JoAnn Catalano — encourage us to share our time and talent at the clinic. While COVID-19 restrictions are limiting some in-person patient visits, care is still being given through telephone calls. When the pandemic first began, there were no in-person visits, but patients were cared for via phone or video chats. Classes were held outside, as were COVID-19 testing and flu shots. When patients visited in person, the ministers were equipped with protective gowns, masks, and gloves, and the indoor areas were thoroughly disinfected. As part of the fight against COVID-19, the clinic served for a time as a vaccination center, making the vaccine available for those in the local community.

“The community needs to know that the clinic really stepped up to be an important part of the fight with COVID,” Maureen says.

Currently, the staff will take prospective patients' names and place them on a waiting list to be contacted later, or refer them to another agency appropriate for their needs. Once a patient makes their

# *Providing Essential Service to Uninsured and Underinsured*

initial visit, appointments can be made. Prior to COVID-19, the clinic had more normal operations. It provides not only medical care but also psychological and mental health needs — in other words, the total health of an individual.

The clinic first started in a donated storefront about nine years ago. Through many ministers' hard work and fundraising efforts, the clinic now owns the building that was a vacant former medical facility. There is room to expand.

The name Open Arms Health Clinic came about when there was discussion about being able to show that all are welcome at the clinic. The issue came up that those seeking help at a free clinic often did not have a good experience. The logo of a figure with outstretched arms was chosen to show that truly, patients are welcomed with open arms.

"We wanted them to know that they are accepted and validated when they walk in the door," JoAnn says.

Our Good Samaritans Ministry members offer their time and talent because they believe they are serving Jesus as His disciples by serving the sick.

"God expects us to take care of each other and be a Good Samaritan," JoAnn says.

"I retired and came here, to the clinic, and all the ministers are here because they want to be," Jeanette says. "We love our patients and go home feeling good that we've helped someone."

*"I retired and came here, to the clinic, and all the ministers are here because they want to be. We love our patients and go home feeling good that we've helped someone."*

— JEANETTE FITZPATRICK, RN



*Jeanette Fitzpatrick, RN, at left, cares for one of the clinic patients.*



*Vickie Leza, standing, and JoAnn Catalano take care of patient information.*

*Ministers are always needed at the clinic. Anyone interested in joining the Good Samaritans Ministry at St. Vincent de Paul for the Open Arms Health Clinic may go online at <https://svdpcc.org/open-arms-clinic>. Although the clinic hours are currently limited, those interested may also call 817-496-1919.*



ST. RAPHAEL



ST. GABRIEL



ST. MICHAEL

## Celebrating the Feast of the Archangels

Every Sept. 29, the Church celebrates the feast day of the Archangels — St. Michael, St. Gabriel, and St. Raphael. We are blessed to be inspired by these “servants and messengers of God” (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 329).

The term “archangels” has its Scriptural basis in the New Testament (1 Thes 4:16, Jude 1:9), indicating a chief or leading angel. “Archangel” generally refers to St. Michael, St. Gabriel, and St. Raphael, as they are the three angels most frequently mentioned throughout Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition. The fact that these three angels are mentioned by name on multiple occasions indicates the significance of their roles in the history of salvation. It is because of these important roles that we take pause to celebrate on Sept. 29.

St. Michael is mentioned by name on several occasions in Sacred Scripture (Dn 10:13, Rev 12:7), and his role in the Tradition of the Church has been extensively documented. He has been widely referred to as the “great prince,” and is most often associated with the apocalypse — the final battle against Satan. Christian Tradition gives St. Michael four different roles, but he has primarily been regarded as the patron and protector of the Church.

St. Gabriel is mentioned by name in Scripture (Lk 1:19), and Tradition has also assigned him implicit roles within Scripture where he is not specifically mentioned. Most important, however, is St. Gabriel’s role as the messenger of God, delivering to Mary the announcement of the birth of Our Savior (Lk 1:26).

St. Raphael is mentioned by name only in the Book of Tobit, where he is responsible for healing Tobias. Raphael means “God has healed” and thus, he has also often been associated with the “angel of the Lord” (Jn 5:4).

The feast day on Sept. 29 gives each of us the opportunity to consider our own role in the Church, as we gratefully commemorate the Archangels responsible for carrying out their roles of defender, messenger, and healer.

# The Reader Ministry:

## *Bringing Alive the Word and Treasures of the Bible*

**A**s Catholics, we are called to celebrate the Holy Mass each Sunday and on Holy Days of Obligation. The Holy Mass has many important parts, and one of those is the readings — for as stated in the second chapter of the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, “In the readings, the table of God’s Word is spread before the faithful, and the treasures of the Bible are opened to them” (57). Thus, since the readings are so important, the person proclaiming them has an essential task.

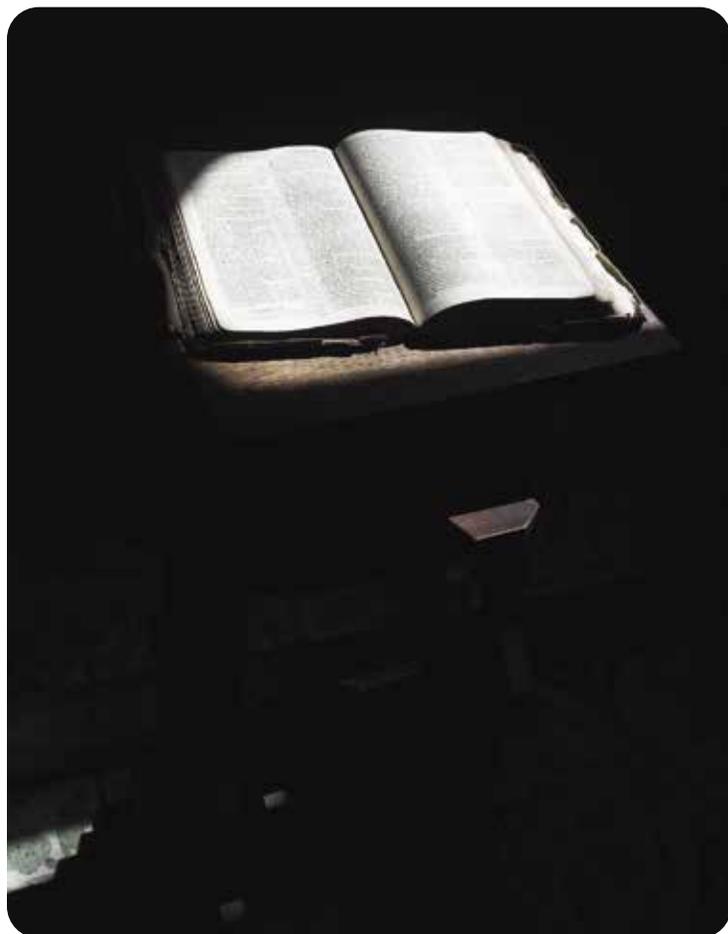
We’ve all been to a Mass and heard a reader who proclaims the readings well and gets parishioners listening. Larry Hurley wants to do that when he’s serving this way. Larry Hurley had been involved in many parish ministries since he joined St. Vincent de Paul in 1986, and has been a reader for about seven years. He first got involved after reading at a funeral. A few attendees, after hearing him read, told him he should get involved as a reader. So, he followed their advice and began serving as a reader. Larry is passionate about learning about the Bible and has taken college classes on the Old Testament and New Testament.

“I am an avid Bible reader,” Larry says. “I love learning about the story of our faith.”

When Larry trains new readers, he emphasizes eye contact. Several readers even memorize the Sunday readings. Larry wants to make sure everyone serving in this ministry is well-prepared. All readers also receive a guide from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

“With how many people we have at a given Mass, we want to make sure readers are intentional about eye contact and engaging the congregation,” Larry says.

There are currently about 45 readers at St. Vincent de Paul. Larry would invite more people to step forward to serve in this important ministry. If you are not afraid of public speaking, this ministry could be a perfect fit for you.



“You have to have a real appreciation for the Word of God,” Larry says. “We also want those who have a servant’s heart to be a true minister.”

Having previously served as an usher, Larry believes all parishioners should get involved in any ministry that fits their gifts and talents. If we all do our part, all the work gets done for the glory of God.

“Being a reader has given me more of a feeling of attachment to the church community,” Larry says. “It’s also helped me make new friends.”

*If you would like to learn more about this ministry, or if you are interested in serving as a reader, please call Larry Hurley at 817-637-2472.*

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## MASSES

**Saturday Vigil:** 5:30 p.m.

**Sunday:** 9 a.m. and 10:45 a.m.

**Weekdays: (M/T/Th/Fr)** 8:45 a.m. in the church  
(Wed) 6:00 p.m. in the church

**Holy Days:** 8:45 a.m. and 7 p.m.

**Confessions:** Saturday: 4-5 p.m. in the chapel

## Meet Michael Stratman, Our New Youth Minister

continued from front cover

on the journey of life,” Michael says. “The vision we hope for is where the youth of today see themselves as worthy and wonderfully created by God, who wants the best for them and delights in who they are and meant to be.”

This fall, our Youth Ministry will have its kickoff event on Sept. 29, and parishioners are welcome to join the core support team.

“We’re always looking for support,” Michael says. “Our Youth Ministry is set up in small-group format, so the more adults we have as part of that, the better to see how adults live the faith.”

Young people can look forward to plenty of activities together this year alongside their peers in St. Vincent’s Youth Ministry. Like Michael says, “The faith is an adventure.”

“Each day brings its own challenges and struggles, and it is okay to wrestle with them and invite God and Jesus to help make sense of it,” he says. “May we and the young people never lose hope and stop seeking and deepening our relationship with God.”

*“Our mission here at St. Vincent de Paul is to offer youth and young adults a place and space where they are welcomed, supported, loved, and to walk with them on the journey of life. The vision we hope for is where the youth of today see themselves as worthy and wonderfully created by God, who wants the best for them and delights in who they are and meant to be.” — Michael Stratman*

*If you would like more information about our Youth Ministry, please reach out to Michael Stratman at 817-478-8206, ext. 214 or [mstratman@svdpcc.org](mailto:mstratman@svdpcc.org).*