



The Anchor

A Newsletter of St. Michael Parish

September 2016

Volume 5, Issue 1

Phase One Begins!

Did you know...

that the church and school's social media accounts are great ways to keep up to date on St. Michael happenings?

Parish Facebook Page
@stmichaelpawcatuck

Renovation Project
Facebook Page
@stmichaelreconstruction

Parish Instagram
stmichaelpawcatuck

School Facebook Page
@smsct

School Instagram
stmichaelschoolct

School Twitter
@stmichaelsct

Upcoming Events

Signing of the TBA
First Truss

SMS 7th Annual Oct. 1
Road Race &
Fun Run/Walk

Blessing of Oct. 2
the Animals

Autumn Open Nov. 20
House



Bishop Cote and Father Perkins bless the foundation and site to prepare for the reconstruction of the church (blessing on page 6).

We are excited to announce that Phase One of the reconstruction of St. Michael Church has begun!

This phase includes the installation of a concrete floor in the basement, reinforcement of the foundation walls and main floor of the church, as well as replacement of the roof structure and exterior walls.

While we initially anticipated needing only to replace the roof structure as we embarked on the project, the findings of the pre-construction/investigation phase that took place this past spring indicated that it

would be less expensive and avoid **potential "hidden" problems** if we simply replaced the walls as well.

The church has disappeared briefly, but it will begin to reappear as the construction work progresses!

The timber for the trusses has been shipped from the Pacific Northwest. Vermont Timberworks is manufacturing the trusses at their facility in North Springfield, VT, and will then transport them to the church for assembly onsite sometime this fall. Bishop Cote has been invited to come and bless the first

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truss before it is hoisted into place, and the parish is invited to sign the truss as a commemoration of the occasion. The date and time for this signing will be announced as the construction schedule is finalized.

As the church is being rebuilt, it will give us opportunities to rekindle old friendships, establish new ones, and above all recommit ourselves as a community of faith. More get-togethers are being planned, such as Mass on the lawn of the church, an Open House at the Rectory in the fall, and some fun fundraising events—

stay tuned as these plans are finalized.

Phase Two of the project will include the interior of the church renovation. A generous response to the capital campaign along with additional fundraising will allow us to proceed with this phase. Many thanks to all who have generously responded to the capital campaigns over the past few years. It is your generosity and **commitment to St. Michael's that has allowed us to begin the first phase of this exciting and historic project!**

St. Michael's Needs Your Help!

The capital campaign is going strong thanks to the amazing generosity of our parishioners!

We started Phase One with approximately \$3.5 million committed, either in cash on hand or in pledges. We are halfway to what we need to complete both phases of the project, but we need to raise more money to continue the great work and to **reach our goal, and we need everyone's help to do it!**

If you have already made your pledge, thank you for your generosity! In the words of Father Perkins, feel free to do that again!

If you haven't had a chance yet, please consider joining the campaign—we would love your support! Just contact the Rectory office at 860-599-5580. All gifts, from the smallest to the largest, are needed and gratefully appreciated.

With all of us working together, we can finish the **renovation and return home to St Michael's!**

Making a Pledge or Donation

A pledge is an intention of good faith that can be **adjusted at the donor's discretion. All gifts of any size** are gratefully accepted in the spirit in which they are given. Please prayerfully consider the pledge amount, duration, number of payments, and schedule that best suits your circumstances.

As you make your gift, please remember...

- Payments can be spread over time.
- Payment reminders and a special payment envelope will be mailed to you in accordance with your payment plan.
- Pledges are not legally binding, but rather are an indication of your intention and commitment.
- Annual payments toward your pledge are deductible for tax purposes.
- Please make checks payable to St. Michael Capital Campaign.
- Pledge payments are in addition to your regular offertory contribution. The Sunday offertory collection pays for the day-to-day operations of the parish, while your pledge in this campaign will be used specifically for the renovation project.

Some parishioners may find it advantageous to contribute securities or other valuables. When donating stock, donors can take a charitable deduction for the full face amount of the appreciated stock without having to pay capital gains on the appreciation. In addition, retirees required to receive an annual minimum distribution from a retirement account at age 70 1/2 are permitted to have the distribution go to a charity and avoid taxation. Please contact the Rectory office at 860-599-5580 for more information.

Treasures Found

Some amazing items have been discovered during the renovation process!

A ticket dated October 16, 1895 was uncovered by contractors removing soil from the crawl space of the church basement. It was an admission ticket to an Ice Cream Festival at St.

Michael's sponsored by the Total Abstinence and Benevolent Society. The T.A.B. Society, established sometime before 1873 and more commonly known as the St. Michael Temperance Society, encouraged abstinence from the consumption of alcohol and provided support for the needy of the parish.

A pamphlet printed by the John Hancock Life Insurance Co. in 1924 entitled *Preventing Diphtheria* was found in the floor of the church when the carpet and tile were removed.

Small shards of stained glass were also found in the crawl space under the oldest section of the church. These fragments appear to have come from windows that were once in front of the church.

Finally, the relics of St. Sebastian and St. Martial were removed from the altar in preparation for the reconstruction work.



Scenes from the Site



The recent mountain of tires on the church lawn was used, along with layers of plastic and plywood, to protect the main floor of the church from damage from falling debris during removal of the structure.



The floor joists were reinforced in preparation for the reconstruction—the original floor of the church was not removed and will be used for many generations to come!



Now that the removal of the church is complete, the focus of the work will change

to the church basement. The floor has been removed, which was about two feet above the dirt floor. Concrete will be put down, making the ceiling seem higher with the lowered floor. The reinforcement of the granite work and insertion of steel columns will prepare for the new timber trusses. Look for more pictures on the parish website and social media pages!



Update on Our Seminarian

by Michael Bovino

This past year was such an incredible year, and the Lord has been abundantly blessing me in many ways.

One of my favorite aspects of my formation was a class called "Philosophical Anthropology," which focuses on studying the nature of man and who man is. We spent the first few weeks analyzing and critiquing the vision of man which our current culture believes man to be. One aspect of the current vision of man which we critiqued is the claim that man is a being who is entirely autonomous and self-made. The implication of this is then man gets to decide to "make up" reality for his/her self regardless of how the world around us presents itself to us.

One criticism of this claim which we discussed was our appreciation of the fact that, since both our own lives as well as the world itself do not originate in ourselves, but rather are "given" to us independent of our own initiative, then true human freedom comes through graciously receiving reality as it is presented to us. There is great freedom and joy in realizing that I am ultimately not the maker and master of my ultimate purpose. Instead of constantly being anxious and worrisome about the

future of my life, I can rest in the fact that I am not God, and therefore can place my life in the hands of the True and Living God.

Unlike the modern world's vision, the Christian perception of man rightly recognizes the fact that true freedom does not consist of being able to create and form your own world, but instead comes in appreciating the natural "gift" of my life as it has been given to me. By encountering the world as it is, we discover the awesome beauty and wonder that is already written within creation. It is only in discovering the world and the purpose of our lives within it that we come to see man as being made to be dependent upon one another, and ultimately, dependent upon God as the Purpose for Whom we were made!

Among other subjects I had the privilege to study are New Testament Greek, Contemporary Philosophy, Epistemology (the Study of Knowledge), as well as a class on Dante's *Divine Comedy*!

As I start the new school year, I would like to thank you all so much for your prayers and support, and please know that I am praying for all of you as well! If I can ever be of any help, please do not hesitate to write or contact me at mpbovino@email.msmary.edu! Thank you so much and God Bless!

A Discussion on West Broad Street School

You may have heard that it appears that the Town of Stonington will be moving forward with a plan to close **West Broad Street School and update Dean's Mill and West Vine** to accommodate those students. In this event, it would be of interest to the St. Michael community to relocate our school to that location.

Such an arrangement would bring together the two oldest educational institutions in the town and would satisfy a desire expressed by many that West Broad remain a school.

While there are some concerns regarding the age and condition of West Broad, the St. Michael School building

has some deficiencies, also. Functionally obsolete, the **school's current home has relatively small classrooms** and no assembly space. Additions and modifications made to the building over the past century have created issues that need to be addressed. Recent renovations have served to provide a temporary solution, but they cannot extend the long-term viability of the structure.

West Broad appears to be a plausible solution to our needs, with the added benefit that our students will remain in close proximity to what will be our newly-renovated church. We ask that everyone keep the school and its students in their prayers that God may continue to bless our school for many years to come.

School Happenings



ST. MICHAEL
1873
SCHOOL

St. Michael School Invests in New Technology

St. Michael students were engaged in learning in new ways during the recent school year thanks to a host of new technology in their classrooms.

Supplementing their existing computer technology and conventional educational tools, St. Michael invested in 36 HP Stream laptop computers. The computers have a Microsoft Windows® platform, and are able to run all Office applications such as Word® and Excel®. All data is stored in the cloud.

The computers are available to all grades in the school, from kindergarten through grade eight.

Middle school students are using the computers for research and other projects. They are also using them to investigate homework websites and other

reference sites to aid them in their studies. Younger grades are playing educational games on them which correspond to the curriculum. Kindergarten strengthened their letter identification and number sequencing skills by playing grade-appropriate games on the computers.

Kindergarten, first, second, and third grade classrooms also received Elmo Document cameras, devices that display, magnify and project an object to a large audience. The objects can be three dimensional as well as two dimensional, which allows a teacher to display an object, write on a sheet of paper, or enlarge a book and have the class view it easily.

The school has invested in other technology this **past year also, including MimioTeach™ interactive whiteboards** which turn regular white dry erase boards into interactive white boards. The device magnetically attaches to any steel dry erase board surface and has a large interactive area. This supplements the classrooms that already have interactive whiteboard technology. Lightweight and portable, the devices can be moved easily between classrooms and stored safely, or installed permanently.

St. Michael School Scores High in Testing

Results from the standardized Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) that St. Michael School students took in the spring indicate that our students are, once again, performing above grade level. Several classes performed in the top 15 percent of schools in the nation in reading and mathematics.

Middle school students tested at least two grades above their level. The sixth grade performed as well as an average eighth grader taking the same exam, while the seventh grade performed at a tenth grade level. The eighth grade scored as well as a typical col-

lege freshman would have in both reading and math.

This past spring, the eighth grade participated in the National Latin Exam – Introductory Latin Level. Nationally over 22,000 students participate in this examination.

This year one St. Michael student received an award for Outstanding Achievement. These awards are given to students who achieve at 90 percent or more. Three St. Michael students received Achievement Awards, which are given to those who score at or above the national average.



60 Liberty Street
Pawcatuck, CT 06379
860.599.5580
www.stmichaelpawcatuck.com

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The 96th Annual Maria Assunta Festa

Although it was a little warm, there was a beautiful breeze for St. Michael's 96th annual Feast of the Assumption of the **Blessed Virgin Mary**. This year's Maria Assunta Festa included a recitation of the Rosary and Candlelight Procession, a celebration of Mass, a blessing of the reconstruction site by Bishop Cote, the traditional Procession through the streets of Pawcatuck, and a wonderful community dinner provided by the Maria Assunta Society with assistance by Boy Scout Troop 9. May God Bless our parish and this wonderful tradition!



Bishop Cote blessed the site and foundation on which the church will be rebuilt, calling for God's abundant blessings on our parish and this endeavor:

O God, fill the entire world with your presence so that your name may be hallowed through all the earth. With grateful hearts we remember those who by their sacrifice and prayers provided this land and a church to offer you fitting worship for one hundred and fifty years. We ask your blessing on your people as they embark on the work of rebuilding this church. Guide their efforts by your wisdom and sustain them by your grace, so that they may once again celebrate the sacraments within your holy temple, and in time come to praise you forever in heaven. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.