



The Open Door

Open wide the door to Christ! - St. John Paul the Great

AUGUST 2018

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"We exist to joyfully worship God and carry out the mission of Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit." - Mission Statement of Christ the King



THE GAME PLAN

Creating a place of belonging

The Discipleship Game Plan is a process that brings people into a closer relationship with Christ and His Church

In his great article for last month's *Open Door*, Bill Pressprich explained that the Senior Leadership Team along with the Parish Advisory Council have discerned the following vision statement to guide our Mission at Christ the King:

We are a vibrant Catholic community, grounded in the Scripture and the Sacraments, where all experience belonging.

We live as radical, Spirit-filled disciples who share the love of Jesus.

This vision statement explains what we hope Christ the King will look like in five years and will guide how we implement our mission. As Bill wrote, we know that we have work to do if we are going to be a place where all experience belonging and live as radical, Spirit-filled disciples.

While we are excited about this vision and are looking forward to implementing it, I want to once again acknowledge that we have often failed in being a place where people experience

belonging. Just as Bill did, I want to apologize for any way that we have prevented you from experiencing that belonging.

Over the last year we have been developing a Game Plan for discipleship which will guide us in realizing our vision. This Game Plan is for those who are currently in the parish and for those who we hope will be joining Christ the King in the next years. **The whole key to the Discipleship Game Plan is that it is not a**

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Discipleship

The Word of God gives a simple description of early discipleship:

“They remained faithful to the teaching of the Apostles, to the fellowship, to the Breaking of the Bread, and to prayer.”

(Acts 2:42)

As we as a parish spend some time during this year reflecting on discipleship, the components of that verse will be critical to our understanding of it.



Fr. Ed Fride is Pastor of Christ the King.

What does it mean to be a disciple of the Lord Jesus? Trying to answer that question can reveal that what appears to be very simple is actually rather complex. Why is that?

In part, it's because there are so many different responses to that question. To paraphrase an old joke about rabbis, “when you have four disciples, you will have five opinions about what a disciple is.”

The situation is complicated by the addition of modifiers to the word *disciple*, e.g. “missionary disciples” or “intentional disciples.” But is there any such thing as a disciple who is not called to be missionary? Or is it possible to be an “unintentional disciple”? The modifiers were added because, unfortunately, it seems in both cases that the answer to the question is “yes.”

So what does it mean to be a disciple of the Lord Jesus at Christ the King? One of the great blessings of being a Catholic is that we don't have to reinvent the wheel when it comes to answering questions like this. The Church gives us guidance on how to respond.

When the Fathers of the Second Vatican Council taught us that “the entire

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Christian religion needs to be nourished and regulated by the Sacred Scripture,” they gave us a key to understanding discipleship: look to the Word of God. It gives a simple description of early discipleship: “They remained faithful to the teaching of the Apostles, to the fellowship, to the Breaking of the Bread, and to prayer.” (Acts 2:42). As we as a parish spend some time during this year reflecting on discipleship, the components of that verse will be critical to our understanding of it.

We are in the midst right now of a series of homilies to help us understand more deeply how we as disciples can better participate in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass—the “Breaking of the Bread,” as Acts put it.

Another aspect of our approach to discipleship is Alpha. This excellent course provides us with teaching, opportunities for prayer, and a great opportunity to grow in fellowship—both with each other in the parish, but also with those others the Lord Jesus is inviting us to share our lives with, especially those we may invite to share in the Alpha experience.

All of us can greatly benefit by participating in Alpha. It is certainly my hope and the hope of the rest of the Leadership Team at Christ the King that all our parishioners will take advantage of this opportunity to deepen our encounter with the Lord Jesus, whether we come accompanying a guest we have invited or simply come on our own.

Like the shared experience of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit that was so pivotal for the foundation of the parish, so, too, the shared experience of Alpha can greatly assist us in really coming together as a parish as we all grow together as disciples of the Lord Jesus. Even so, come, Lord Jesus, come! — Fr. Ed Fride

Creating a place of belonging

Continued from page 1

series of programs, but a process that brings people into a closer relationship with Christ and His Church. In other words, we want people to be caught in a net of relationships that draws them further along in the process of becoming missionary disciples.

There are seven main components to the Game Plan. It is best explained through the graphic shown on page 1. While these seven components are presented in a linear fashion and they do build on each other to a certain extent, people can jump into the Game Plan at the point where they are most interested.

Invitational Church

This first component highlights that we're not talking about a program, but a process. Success doesn't equal the number of people who actually attend Alpha or another event. It's the number of invitations that we make, and how comfortable we make people feel when they come into contact with Christ the King. Again, we want people to be "caught in the net of relationships" when they come into contact with Christ the King.

Alpha

If we are going to be an invitational Church, we need a tool for evangelism, and Alpha is the best tool for that. Alpha is a

unique experience, and it provides the backbone for the other tools that are part of the discipleship plan. It is a good entry point for people who have never attended Church or who haven't attended Church in a while.

It is also a way for those who have been members of Christ the King for an extended period of time to learn about the "Alpha Culture." This term describes a culture of reaching out, a culture where people know that they belong and are loved for who they are. We would like to invite everyone in the parish to have an experience with Alpha because the rest of the steps build on the Alpha experience and rely on the development of an Alpha culture .

In addition, we will use Alpha to develop leaders for other parish ministries. Alpha will also be the beginning point for the RCIA process.

Alpha Team

After completion of an Alpha, guests are invited to come back and be a part of the Alpha team. This helps to continue to build relationships that have been developing in Alpha and to help Alpha attendees grow in leadership skills. Our goal is that people who will serve on Alpha will experience the joy of serving and move on to serve in other ministries. The movement through this leadership pipeline creates opportunities for new leaders to be formed.



Connect Groups

Ideally, we would like everyone at Christ the King to be involved with a small group—i.e., a "Connect Group"—because it is through relationships that most evangelization and discipleship takes place.

Connect Groups consist of 20-30 people (which may or may not include kids) that meet twice a month. The Connect Groups should have the key ingredients of Alpha as a part of them: food, time of worship, and a talk or sharing. Generally, each group will meet in the homes of the members.

It is in the Connect Groups that each person is loved, cared for, and nurtured. As such, the Connect Groups are the primary place for pastoral care at CTK. This is the group that parishioners can look to for help if there is a death in the family, or someone loses a job or is diagnosed with a serious illness.

Generally, the requirement is that you need to have participated in Alpha in order to be in a Connect Group, although there will be some exceptions to this general rule. Alpha helps to provide a common experience on which to build a Connect Group.

We understand that there are already existing small groups. We would provide guidance for them on how to become Connect Groups if that is

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While these seven components are presented in a linear fashion and they do build on each other to a certain extent, people can jump into the Game Plan at the point where they are most interested.



Aimée Godfrey is Director of Adult Discipleship at Christ the King.

Creating a place of belonging

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something they would like to do. While we invite all parishioners to consider joining a Connect Group, no one will be required to leave their current small group.



Ministry

All parishioners are encouraged to take part in ministry at the Church (e.g., music ministry, Liturgy of the Word for Children, etc.) as well as ministry outside of the Church (e.g., Hope Clinic, serving in Flint, etc.). One role of the Connect Group leaders will be to help identify people's gifts and talents and help them find areas in which to serve.



Discipleship Groups

All parishioners are invited to participate in Discipleship Groups. These groups focus on learning content, catechesis, and Bible Study. They are temporary and exist for only four to eight weeks. Ideally, these groups would also include aspects such as small group discussion so that those attending can continue to experience belonging as they learn more about what we as Catholics believe. Each parishioner is encouraged to participate in one Discipleship Group per year.



Worship

This refers in particular to the celebration of the Eucharist, which is the source and summit of our faith. As Fr. James Mallon, founder of the Divine Renovation Network, states, "It is only when the fullness of the Christian life is being lived with some kind of involvement in these other aspects that the Eucharist has its proper place as the 'source and the summit of the Christian life.'" In other words, "When we are evangelized and in a discipleship process ... the Mass will come to life."

Other aspects of worship can be included in this as well. For example, Upper Room meetings are an important part of the worship experience at CTK, as it is there that we are able to exercise the charismatic gifts.

Again, while these seven steps are presented in a linear fashion, not everyone will do each of them in order. While we encourage everyone to start with Alpha, that won't always happen. However, since building an Alpha Culture is the key to the process working, we encourage everyone to either attend Alpha as a guest or join the Alpha Team.

Therefore, Alpha will continue to be the main focus of the parish for the next year. We anticipate starting a few Connect Groups in the next six months, and we have already been experimenting with Discipleship Groups through offering the *Oremus* and *Unlocking the Mystery of the Bible* programs.

The goal is that, as people move through this process, they will not only come to a deeper understanding of the faith, but they will find a place where they truly belong.

We are very excited about the vision that God has given us, and we look forward to talking with parishioners about it and having a chance to answer questions about it at the August 11 "Belonging Explained" event. If you cannot attend that event, we will be recording it and will post the materials presented online. — *Aimée Godfrey*

"Belonging Explained: The Vision and Game Plan for Christ the King" will be Saturday morning, Aug. 11, 9:00am-1:00pm. Join us for Mass, refreshments, and the opportunity to learn more about the vision and game plan for the parish in the coming year. Come with your questions! For more information, go to ctkcc.net/belonging-explained.

Tips for welcoming new people at Mass

"...love one another earnestly from the heart." — 1 Peter 1:22 (RSV)

Years ago I learned that the Greek word that the RSV translates *earnestly* comes from a root word that means "to stretch." So we shouldn't be surprised if loving others, especially people we don't know, stretches us.

Reaching out and welcoming new people at Mass, though, doesn't have to feel like a trip to the torture rack! Here are a few tips to help you "stretch out the tent pegs of your heart" and welcome newcomers into Christ the King. (Special thanks to Juliet Bogan, Terry Leblanc, Pat Mierendorf, Nanette O'Brien, MaryJo Paquin, Colleen Vermeulen, Ann Ward, and Deanna White for contributing their ideas.)

Before Mass

- **Pray for the gift of hospitality for yourself and for the parish.** Being welcoming and hospitable is both something we do and something we can receive from the Lord. Let's ask Him for the gift!
- **Ask the Holy Spirit to lead you to the people He wants you to talk to that day.** Several people noted that Sr. Ann Shields has been encouraging this practice, and it works! (Thanks, Sr. Ann!)
- **Smile and say hello to people as you enter church.** Pat Mierendorf says, "I don't always know if they are new or not, but everyone deserves a smile and a good morning."



- **Sit someplace new.** It's hard to meet new people if you always sit in the same place. Also, people new to a parish will often sit toward the back. Sit there, too.
- **Leave the aisle seats free, if at all possible.** Then people who are running late—as people new to the parish often are—won't have to climb over you to get a seat.
- **At the introductions before Mass, smile, look people in the eye, and introduce yourself by first name.** If there are children, try to get down to their eye level, if possible.
- **Pray for parents.** Colleen Vermeulen notes, "Parents who are less familiar with going to church are often naturally self-conscious about having children at church events or worship." Don't make it worse by turning to look at the parents of a crying baby. Just pray and ask God to bless them.

During Mass

- **Notice if someone around you seems to be lost.** Did the Mass have a special worship aid that they didn't pick up? Offer them yours with a smile and go get a new one for yourself. Give them a songbook opened to the appropriate page.

"We're here because the first time I visited, one person said 'hello' and talked to me. It so surprised and pleased me that I was willing to come back. Now, 13 years later, we're actively involved in the parish, we've grown spiritually as a family, and Ken works here. And it all started because of one person's greeting."

—Juliet Bogan

If parents of several small children are sitting right next to you and one or more children are fussing, you *might* offer to hold a child. Many parents, though, are uncomfortable giving their child to someone they don't know well, so phrase it in a way that makes it easy for them to refuse. If they do let you hold the baby, *stay in the pew*. Do not carry the child away from the parents, even to just stand in the back of the Church.

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Parishioner Testimony

“I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord!”



My tango on the turnpike with an 18-wheeler came after Jan and I celebrated our 43rd wedding anniversary dinner on Thursday, July 5, in Washington DC. She flew home, and I drove our '06 Camry alone back to Ann Arbor.

On July 6, at 1:30am, I was driving westbound on I-80 under the Boston Mills Road overpass, within 15 miles of where I grew up. It was a construction area with orange barrels in the far left lane; I was going at least 55 miles an hour in the right lane. It was raining. I was awake and alert, listening to a book on tape.

Suddenly, a tractor-trailer passing me on the left moved into my lane. The trailer was crushing the driver's side of my car, coming within 8 inches of my hip.

There was a guard rail on my right at that point, so I had nowhere to go. I hit the horn hard; the truck then retreated back into the lane on my left. I did not brake, but moved slightly to my right and then back to my left.

My car went into a spin counter-clockwise as the driver's side rear tire and rim were destroyed. I continued to go forward. I shouted, "Help me, Lord Jesus!"

I hit no solid object. There was no impact, other than hitting a number of orange barrels. The nose of my car came to a stop close to the concrete left median retaining wall. My airbags did not deploy; there was no broken glass. My bike on a carrier over the trunk was not damaged except for a slight tear in the tip of the bike seat.

The driver of the truck did not stop. I suspect that he heard my horn, but didn't feel any impact. I was shaken, but not injured. I did not need any medical assistance. I called 911 and my wife and then waited in the car.

The Highway Patrol confirmed that no alcohol, drugs, or falling asleep was involved. The female officer told me another driver had called after witnessing the accident and the truck involved had been identified.

My car was totaled and taken to a collision lot. The next morning with help I inspected the car, changed the tire and drove it home. I will soon replace my Camry; the driver's door works but leaks a lot of air.

"In my distress I called upon the LORD. . . From His temple He heard my voice..." (Psalm 18:6) This event has strengthened my faith. May you consider Jesus' power for your life. — *Bob Urbanic*

Do you have a story of how the Lord has worked powerfully in your life that you would be willing to share? Send it to Theresa Hofer (thofer@ctkcc.net). We may be able to use it in The Open Door!



Bob Urbanic and his wife Jan are founding members of Christ the King. They recently retired after many years practicing medicine in Plymouth.

Students are filled with light at VBS 2018

Almost 300 students, catechists, and helpers came together the week of June 25-29 for Christ the King's 2018 Vacation Bible School.

This year's theme was "We Are Full of Light" from Matthew 6:22. The students learned about the virtues of prudence, circumspection, docility, and foresight through Scripture, the lives of the saints, music, art, and other activities. There were also short daily teachings on Life in the Spirit so that our children could enter more fully into our life as a charismatic parish.

The week ended with a field day and time of praise, worship, and Adoration before the Blessed Sacrament, during which parents had the opportunity to pray with their children for more of the Holy Spirit.

Many thanks to Clare Kosmalski, who headed the program again this year; Lauren Sauter, who provided amazing administrative support; and the scores of adults and teen volunteers who made possible for our children this special experience of God's love! — TH

During the week, the students created artwork depicting saints who demonstrated the virtues that they studied: St. Gregory the Great (prudence), Sts. Dominic Savio and John Bosco (circumspection), Sts. Jacinta and Francisco Marto (docility), and St. Frances Xavier Cabrini (foresight).



Lauren Sauter



Sarah Thomm

The Lord provided a sunny summer morning for the field day at the close of this year's Vacation Bible School.



Thomas Hoving encourages Rachael Walters and Anya Thomason in the wheelbarrow race during the Vacation Bible School's closing field day.

Sarah Thomm

Desh Grieshaber and Buchi Akabogu join in prayer before the Blessed Sacrament during the closing prayer meeting.



Sarah Thomm

CTK leaders participate in DR18

Senior Leadership Team members (l-r) Bill Pressprich, Ken Bogan, Sr. Dorcee Clarey, and John Hoving take advantage of a break in the conference action to visit one of the lighthouses near Halifax, Nova Scotia.



In mid-June, I and several others from the Senior Leadership Team, as well as Aimée Godfrey and Martin Doman (our Directors of Adult Discipleship and Worship, respectively), attended the 2018 Divine Renovation conference in Halifax, Nova Scotia.

As you may remember from previous issues of *The Open Door*, Halifax is the home of Fr. James Mallon, the author of *Divine Renovation*, written while he was pastor of St. Benedict's Parish there. Out of their experiences grew the Divine Renovation Network (DRN), a ministry to assist other parishes. Christ the King has been an active part of the DRN for almost two years. (See the article on page 8 of the March 2018 issue of *The Open Door* for more information.)

This is the second year that the DRN has hosted a conference—this year called DR18—for anyone interested in Divine Renovation. They actually hosted three conferences.

DR18

The main conference targeted people who are interested in Divine Renovation and the network. Registration for the conference was limited to 600. The attendees were from 11 countries, including Australia, Ireland, India, France, and Germany. Over 180 priests attended.

It was so moving to see that many people gathered together as a result of recognizing that *something* needs to happen in their parishes to move them

from “maintenance to mission,” to use one of Fr. Mallon’s favorite phrases. A definite excitement was in the air as we gathered for talks, workshops, praise and worship, and testimonies.

Alpha Day

A good number of the DR18 folks stayed another day to learn more about Alpha. (For any youth out there: Ben was there.)

One of my favorite parts of the day occurred when one of the presenters led everyone through an exercise in hearing the Lord. Many of the attendees have no charismatic background, yet through this simple exercise, they each had a concrete experience of hearing the Lord for someone else at their table. Hence, they went home with an experience that would equip them to minister more confidently at the next Alpha session they hosted.

DRN Day

This day was put on for the 100 or so of us who are part of the Divine Renovation Network. It was a great opportunity for us to actually meet our brothers and sisters who have been traveling

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Adult Discipleship

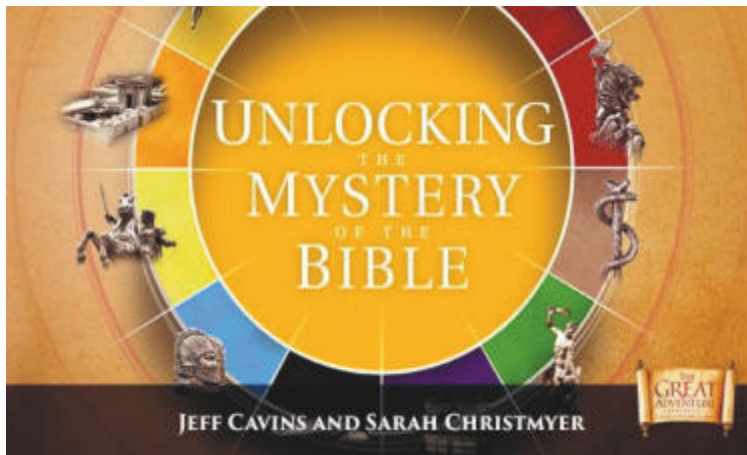
Course offers keys to understanding the Great Story of the Bible

I can still remember my excitement upon receiving my first copy of the official Catholic translation of the Bible in Chinese (my native language), which I found after months of searching in stores and online. It is a study edition with detailed commentaries, maps, and time lines. With this version in hand, I thought to myself, "I will finally be able to read the whole Bible from cover to cover."

No sooner than finishing Exodus did I realize that I was stuck again. I simply could not understand what Moses and Aaron had to do with the other stories of the Old Testament that I hear and know from Mass, much less how everything ties in with Jesus in the Gospels and the lives of the apostles.

Over eight weeks this spring, Christ the King offered the class *Unlocking the Mystery of the Bible* by Jeff Cavins and Sarah Christmyer. It was exactly what I needed to undo the knot of my frustration with sacred Scripture.

In this class, I was presented with the keys to understand the Great Story of the Bible. Reading the Bible as a development of one story over several time periods has helped me to appreciate how incredibly special is God's plan of redemption for mankind. During class time we first listened to a captivating video lecture by Jeff Cavins, and then discussed in small groups what we learned. At home, I read guid-



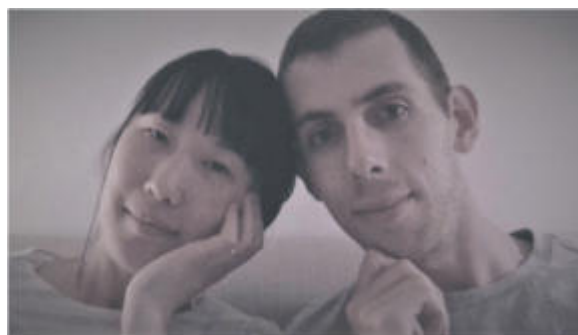
Unlocking the Mystery of the Bible is an 8-week course featuring teaching videos by Jeff Cavins and small group discussions. We hope to offer it again in the coming year. Check the bulletin and Mid-Week Notes for future announcements.

To me, Scripture now reads like a great symphony: at the end I hear the recapitulation of a theme that is present from the very beginning.

ed Scripture selections capturing important themes woven through salvation history. I was able to interpret the Gospel, in particular the Paschal, or Passover, sacrifice of Christ, in greater depth as both a continuation and a culmination of the history of Israel, God's people. To me, Scripture now reads like a great symphony: at the end I hear the recapitulation of a theme that is present from the very beginning.

"Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one" (Deut 6:4). God has always only asked us for one thing: to believe in Him and to live with Him as the center of our lives.

The words of the *Shema* prayer are as resounding today as they were three thousand years ago. The class motivated me to delve deeper into my history through the Chinese study Bible, but more importantly, the class taught me to continue the Great Story with the help of the Holy Spirit. — *Ying Lu*



Ying Lu and her husband Chris Pannier live and work (and sometimes pick wild berries) in Ann Arbor. Ying was baptized and confirmed by Fr. Ed at the '98 Easter Vigil. Together, Ying and Chris have been active in the parish since 2016. They are aspiring minimalists, so that's all.

Tips for welcoming new people at Mass

Continued from page 5

- **At the Sign of Peace, smile and look people in the eye.**

If they said their first name during the introductions, try to use it during the Sign of Peace.

After Mass

- **Look for people who hesitate a minute or two after Mass ends.** New people who hesitate are giving you an opportunity to greet them or invite them to coffee and donuts.
- **Use as your opening line, "I don't think we've met, I'm..."** That way, you don't draw attention to someone who doesn't want to stand out as new. You also don't have to worry if they've actually been coming to Christ the King for 10 years!
- **Ask questions, but don't interrogate.** Some people

are hesitant to give personal information too soon, so use more open-ended questions, such as, "How did you learn about Christ the King?"

- **Affirm parents.** Don't offer praise that could be taken as criticism, e.g., "those kids were rough during Mass, but you did a great job." A simple "thanks for being here, I love seeing children at Mass" cannot be misinterpreted.
- **Offer the person a way to take a next step** For example, offer your contact information or invite them to coffee and donuts or a light meal or dessert at your house. Do it in a way that shows you respect their freedom to decide whether

or not they want to take the next step.

Simple steps such as these can open the doors that change peoples' lives. Juliet Bogan says,

We're here because the first time I visited, one person said 'hello' and talked to me. It so surprised and pleased me that I was willing to come back. Now, 13 years later, we're actively involved in the parish, we've grown spiritually as a family, and Ken works here. And it all started because of one person's greeting.

Yours could be the next "hello" that opens the door to Jesus working in someone's life through Christ the King. —Theresa Hofer



Theresa Hofer is Editor of *The Open Door*.

CTK leaders participate in DR18

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alongside us as we seek the Lord for the best ways to renew our parishes.

Names took on faces; we had a wonderful day together. St. Benedict's Parish (the host parish) is known for its hospitality, and it shone that day. The volunteers prepared and served us a full Thanksgiving dinner for lunch!

We wish we could have brought all of you with us ... but stay tuned. Because of the speed at which the Network is growing, we will probably host a DR day in the future for anyone in the area interested in learning more about the Divine Renovation Network. — Sr. Dorcee Clarey, SGL



Sr. Dorcee Clarey, SGL, is a member of the Senior Leadership Team and a founding member of the Servants of God's Love and Christ the King.

Schedule of Major Events

- 8/10, 24: Upper Room
 - 8/11: "Belonging Explained: The Vision & Game Plan for Christ the King"
 - 8/15: Solemnity of the Assumption of Mary, a Holy Day of Obligation; Parish Offices closed
 - 8/17: Ruth Fazal concert
 - 8/18: Alpha Team Training
 - 8/19: Bishop's Priesthood Discernment Dinner, DeWitt
 - 8/19, 26: RCIA Orientation
- For more information about these and other events, check the bulletin or go to www.ctkcc.net.

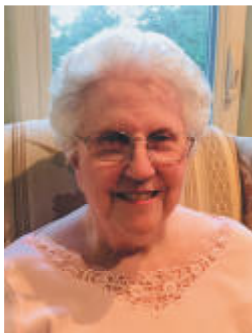
MAJOR EVENTS—AUGUST 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
29	30	31	Aug. 1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	Sept. 1

Save the Dates!

An Evening to Honor

Barbara Morgan
 Saturday evening, Sept. 15
 Parish Center Gym
 Our beloved DRE Barbara Morgan retired on June 30. Join us as we take time to thank her for her many years of service to the Lord, the parish, and the Church.



Fall 2018 Alpha!

Begins the week of Sept. 16
 Multiple dates, times, & locations
 Start praying now about who the Lord might want you to invite to a potentially life-changing experience through Alpha—or just come yourself! For information and to sign up, go to www.ctkcc.net/alpha. Questions? Contact Pete at alpha@ctkcc.net.



2018 Diocesan Assembly,

"Made for Happiness"
 Saturday, Sept. 22, Lansing
 Plan now for your whole family to join thousands of other Catholics for this historic event! Admission is free, but space is limited, so registration is required. Go to madeforhappiness.org to sign up or for more information.



Check future bulletins for more details about these great events!



Christ the King Catholic Church

4000 Ave Maria Dr.
Ann Arbor, MI 48105
734-665-5040
www.ctkcc.net
Facebook.com/ctkcc

Senior Leadership Team

Fr. Ed Fride, Pastor: fr.ed@ctkcc.net
Ken Bogan: kbogan@ctkcc.net
Sr. Dorcee Clarey, SGL: srdorcee@att.net
Dcn. Dan Foley: dcndan@aol.com
John Hoving: jhoving@ctkcc.net
Bill Pressprich: wpressprich@comcast.net

Deacons

Dcn. Dan Foley: dcndan@aol.com
Dcn. Gerry Holowicki: dcngerry@ctkcc.net
Dcn. John Ozog: dcjohn@ctkcc.net
Dcn. Larry Randolph: dcnlarry@ctkcc.net
Dcn. Lou Russello: dcnlou@ctkcc.net
Dcn. Wayne Slomiany: dcwayne@ctkcc.net

Parish Advisory Council

Fr. Ed Fride, President: fr.ed@ctkcc.net
Bill Pressprich, Chair: wpressprich@comcast.net
Veronica Cherney
Pete Cooney
Christian Fenton
Nuala Holowicki
Betty Meredith
Don Mierendorf
Katie Perrotta
Greg Stout
Colleen Vermeulen

Coming in future issues...

- Stewardship
- Parishioner and ministry profiles
- Dealing with loss

Look for this and more in future issues of

The Open Door

Parish Staff

Dorothy Babcock, Facilities Manager: dbabcock@ctkcc.net
Ken Bogan, Business/Operations Manager: kbogan@ctkcc.net
Martin Doman, Director of Worship: mdoman@ctkcc.net
Aimée Godfrey, Director of Adult Discipleship: agodfrey@ctkcc.net
Theresa Hofer, Communications Coordinator: thofer@ctkcc.net
John Hoving, Director of Youth Discipleship: jhoving@ctkcc.net
Tirienne Leonard, Assistant to the Director of Worship: tleonard@ctkcc.net
Sharon Messiter, Parish Secretary: smessiter@ctkcc.net
Susan Perrier, Assistant Director of Youth Discipleship: sperrier@ctkcc.net
Harrison Raney, Life Teen Music Director: harrisonraney@gmail.com
Lauren Sauter, Youth Discipleship Administrative Assistant: lsauter@ctkcc.net
Hannah Stroup, Clerical Assistant: hstroup@ctkcc.net
Christy Whiting, Assistant Director for Adult Discipleship: cwhiting@ctkcc.net
Mark Zielman, Liturgical Coordinator: mzielman@ctkcc.net

Newsletter Contributors

Theresa Hofer, Editor: thofer@ctkcc.net
Sr. Dorcee Clarey
Fr. Ed Fride
Aimée Godfrey
Ying Lu
Bob Urbanic

We welcome your comments. Please send them to Theresa Hofer at thofer@ctkcc.net.

The Open Door is the monthly newsletter of Christ the King Catholic Church.

Fall 2018 Alpha classes start the week of September 16th!

All CTK parishioners and others are invited to attend, with or without a guest.

Opportunities to serve on the Alpha Team are also available.

For more information, go to www.ctkcc.net/alpha or email alpha@ctkcc.net.

