

## CHALLENGES

*This is the fourth in a series of short essays designed to illuminate and promote discussion of important issues regarding the state of our parish. Please note: The entire series of **Challenges** can be found on our website, [www.stjohnthebaptistchico.org](http://www.stjohnthebaptistchico.org).*

Independent research results indicate that parishes who communicate with parishioners in multiple ways have more engaged parishioners who focus more actively on the success of the parish. Apparently many of our parishioners at St. John's agree. The Finance Council's **Challenges** have elicited numerous responses from parishioners, most of them positive. The one theme that appears most often throughout the comments and suggestions is communication. Parishioners have expressed gratitude for our effort to communicate with parishioners about the state of the parish and have encouraged the pastor and others in leadership roles to continue to pursue avenues of effective communication. As one parishioner put it, parishioners ".....want to know what's happening , what's planned, where their money is being spent. Who, kywhat, when and where---inclusion---not exclusion---."

In addition to the **Challenges** series Fr. Tim and his designees communicate to parishioners through several avenues. Of course, our St. John's bulletin is a vital channel of communication and we hope that each of you will take the opportunity to take it home with you each week. Also, our priests and designated parishioners make announcements from the pulpit about information of importance to parishioners and to our mission as Catholics.

Our parish website, [www.stjohnthebaptistchico.org](http://www.stjohnthebaptistchico.org), contains a great quantity of information about our parish. The web site offers a library of church bulletins from January 2006 through the present, along with Mass and sacrament schedules, and contact information. The ministry page provides a description of each ministry along with contact information for each ministry leader. Funeral readings and wedding guidelines are easily accessed from the home page. *The Pulpit and the Pew*, an historical narrative with accompanying priceless photos is available on the web site along with pictures of our sister parish, St. John the Baptist-Kenya and a link to the Kenya parish web site. Links to **Saint of the Day** and **Daily Readings** are available on the home page. Parishioners can also register for and manage **Online Giving** on the web site.

This Lenten season we began using an email communication program to provide parishioners with important information. Two *ebursts* were sent to the 200 parishioners on our email list notifying them about the Lenten Penance Service and Holy Week Schedule. We have received numerous messages of thanks for this effort. This is an efficient way for us to convey important information to you and we hope all of our parishioners will share their email addresses with us. We make a promise to you that we will not sell or share your email address with others and we will not send you a large number of messages. To make sure you are on our email list, grab a form from the table in the vestibule of the church, fill it out and place it in the locked wooden box on the table.

On most days from early morning until late in the evening one can feel the energy at St. John's. Our campus is buzzing with school, prayer, ministry and social activities and we want our parishioners and the outside community to know about the many opportunities for spiritual engagement at our church. For this reason we are currently seeking individuals with a background in communications, public relations and/or marketing to join a newly formed Communications Committee. Anyone with an interest in communications (including writing, editing, graphic design, web design, and social media) is also welcome. The development of a communications plan to improve communications with parishioners and with the outside community will be the task of this committee. If you are interested, or if you have suggestions, please contact us.

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