

**Remarks of Dan Lamey  
on Installation as  
2017-2018 President  
of the  
Men's Club of St. John Neumann Catholic Church  
July 10, 2107**

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**OUR MISSION:  
GIVING OF OURSELVES TO BUILD UP THE BODY OF CHRIST**

It is humbling to think of all of the Catholic men of this Parish who have served before me as President of the Men's Club since its founding 36 years ago, in 1981. Many of them are still serving the Club today and several have served multiple terms. Their commitment to the special place this Club occupies in the life of our Parish community is a true blessing. In fact the active part that so many men of

this Parish play in daily Parish life is a blessing we can never take for granted. Our role as a Men's Club is to make sure that never happens and that the role of men in our Parish life continues to flourish.

I joined the Parish in 1998 after my wife Rita and our then new-born daughter Catherine moved back to Miami from Washington, DC. You see my wife said at the time that we needed to either move to where my family was in Canada or back to where her family was in Florida. As most Canadians will tell you, when faced with those choices, it is hard not to pick the place with an average temperature of 75°F. In 2000, our son William was born and in 2002-2003 I joined the men's club – why? because we wanted our kids to attend the Parish school and joining Men's Club was a relatively quick and painless way to get involved with a Parish ministry. In 2005 both our kids entered St John Neumann School and both graduated from 8<sup>th</sup> grade before going on to high school at Lourdes and Columbus. This year Catherine will be a sophomore at Florida State and Will is a senior at Columbus. While Rita was active in Nursery duty for many years and Catherine and William became active in Youth Group, Choir, and as Altar Servers, Men's Club has remained my vehicle for being active in Parish Ministry. Three years ago, I finally came off the sidelines and became more active as a volunteer leader, during Eric's last most recent term as President, when he asked me to manage a renewed speaker program at dinner meetings. I continued that job in Dan's first term and have served as Vice President in his current term.

## **PURPOSE OF THE ST. JOHN NEUMANN MEN'S CLUB**

I doubt that many of us have given much thought to the purpose of the Men's Club, as stated in Article 1 of our bylaws – but here is it:

*The **purpose** of the Saint John Neumann Men's Club (hereinafter "the Club") shall be to achieve the following:*

*To provide a practical means to promote **camaraderie**, to form enduring **friendships** and to render **service** to build a **better Parish community**;*

*Through **cooperation** with other Parish organizations, to achieve the objectives of the Parish;*

*To provide a forum to **enhance spirituality** among the men of the Parish;*  
*and*

*To provide for **sustained growth** in numbers, service and fellowship.*

To me, this purpose and these objectives can be summed up in three words —

### **FAITH • FELLOWSHIP • SERVICE**

In other words, we are a Catholic Christian men's group dedicated to promoting faith development, camaraderie, enduring friendships, and service in aid of St. John Neumann Catholic Church.

However, I believe it is the last line of the purpose that speaks to my job as President and that of your Board, which is:

### ***TO PROVIDE FOR SUSTAINED GROWTH IN NUMBERS, SERVICE AND FELLOWSHIP***

All of the members of the Club's Board of Directors will work to ensure we build on the past and leave the club better than we found it, by:

- Helping more men have a closer and deeper relationship with Christ
- Building closer and more long-lasting bonds of friendship among our members

- Increasing the depth and breadth of the impact our service activities have on the Parish.

## **FAITH**

(1) This Club is a leading supporter of retreats in our Parish, including:

Organizational, promotional, and financial support for Jesus Hands Ministry's Our Lady of Florida Retreat held each June at the Passionist Community's Spiritual Retreat Center in North Palm Beach;

Financial and manpower support for the Men's Emmaus and Law Enforcement and Firefighters Emmaus Retreats;

Financial and promotional support for Cursillo, Marriage Covenant, and Marriage Enrichment.

(2) Men's Club is a well-spring of support and involvement for other faith ministries including Emmaus, Cursillo, Life in the Spirit, Marriage Covenant, Lay Ministry Leadership, and others;

(3) Opportunities for more interaction with our own and visiting Clergy including Deacons, Priests, the Archbishop and Auxiliary Bishop – such as our featured speech by Monsignor Navarro in August and Archbishop Wenski in November.

## **FELLOWSHIP – YOU ARE WELCOME HERE**

The heart of what we do as a club begins with these Monthly Dinner Meetings and with YOU – a place where each month you can be assured of a warm welcome and a sense that you are among friends who truly care about you, are happy to see you and break bread with you.

At the Our Lady of Florida Retreat in June there were two things I took away with me from talks by the wonderful Father Melvyn – the concepts of “Letting it Go” in terms of the baggage we carry around with us day after day and of “Being

Present” for others – listening, encouraging, praying, consoling, and empathizing. This is a place where you can try to “let it go” - leave the concerns of the day at the door for a couple of hours and be among men who will be “present” for you – be concerned for you and pray for you – because in this place where you are a member, it IS about you as much as much as any other person here.

To build our Fellowship we must

- Continue our outreach to bring in new ideas and energy through new members: GROW OUR CLUB from the 189 paid members towards 250 members!
- Place increased emphasis on *Personal Contact* – personally Inviting men to meetings
- Increase our efforts to get to know each other, including older members helping newer ones feel welcome and informed about the work of the Club and some of its history
- Increase first-time and repeat *attendance* at meetings by:
  - (a) better and smarter marketing, communication, and use of our web site – including smarter use of email campaigns – for example, if we send you an email notice, we can tell if you opened it and when we resend it we exclude those who have already seen it, unless there is new content.
  - (b) We will continue to build on our recent history of successful meeting programs with improved themes, menus, dynamic speaker programs, entertainment and just plain fun!

- (c) reaching out to other Ministries – to speak at our events and by speaking at THEIR events and let them know we are here to help and be a source of involvement and support
- (d) Continue and increase our outreach to the fathers at SJN School –
  - (i) We are the easiest Ministry for fathers to get involved with;
  - (ii) Participation counts as SERVICE HOURS necessary to reduce tuition as stewardship families;
  - (iii) Better communicate to Parish and school about how we have helped: e.g. \$1500 reading program for SJN School Middle school students – not a lot of people know about it.
- But all of this won't work if you don't keep coming and inviting others to join you! I would like nothing more than to have to request the full hall facilities more often!
- Provide more *value* for "membership"
  - (i) Merit Scholarships - we support higher education for the 8<sup>th</sup> grade and high school senior children/grandchildren of Members
  - (ii) Members get first opportunity to buy tickets for special events – like the Archbishop's Thanksgiving Dinner and at a lower cost
  - (iii) Will look at special consideration for retreat scholarships for members - we want to send more *Members* on the retreats we support
  - (iv) We will be offering some new styles and colors of embroidered member shirts
  - (v) We provide UNIQUE opportunities to bring Members' families together:

*Father- Son/Daughter Dinner* in December, *Sweetheart Dinner* for spouses in the spring! And, of course, Dads are always encouraged to bring their sons and grandsons to our meetings and events such as the "*Chili Cook-off*" in September, or you can have your kids *Deliver Teddy Bears with Dad* (13 and over) in December.

## **SERVICE –**

### **SUPPORTING THE WORK OF THE PARISH**

#### **AND COMMUNITY-AT-LARGE**

Thanks to our annual Golf Tournament and the work of our members, we are able to raise funds in support of our charitable projects and to assist over 20 spiritual and community outreach ministries of the Parish, such as Family Matters, Gift of Bethlehem and Christmas Pageant, Homeless Ministry, Youth Ministry, Marriage Covenant Ministry, Habitat for Humanity, and this past year a \$1,500 donation to St. John Neumann Catholic School for a middle school reading program. Since 1996, our Christmas Teddy Bear Project has visited and delivered Christmas Teddy Bears to over 11,000 children hospitalized during the Christmas holidays at area hospitals, including Baptist, Miami Children's, and Jackson. The Club distributes over 1500 orchids every Mother's Day to the mothers, grandmothers, and great-grandmothers of the Parish.

There are more opportunities for Members to get involved in other Parish activities through introductions made at General Meetings. We provide a forum for other ministries to come and make presentations on their work and to seek

support. We have sometimes kept the light of what we support hidden under a bushel, but this year we will work to make what we do more widely known. We know that men who start out in the Men's Club Ministry go on to help and lead and even create many other ministries.

This Club is not just a monthly dinner meeting, though that is an important function, but it is so much more. It is an opportunity to serve God and your Parish community by getting involved – a little of your time and talent will help a lot. Get more involved and join us on this journey to take the Club to a whole new level as we approach our next milestone - our 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary!

So in conclusion – as your Club's new Board of Directors, we ask for your support, we ask for your prayers, and we ask for your COMMITMENT to help us help the men and parish families of St. John Neumann!

## **GOD BLESS YOU**

God Bless you and your families - now we get to work!"