

PASTORAL PONDERINGS

Dear Parishioners

Sept. 29, 2023

Allow me to begin by first expressing my gratitude to the Members of the Finance Council and in particular the presentations by our parish trustees, Mr. Dennis Charland and Mr. Charles Strniste for their presentations last weekend concerning the present financial conditions and contributing factors that cause us all to be concerned.

I personally feel that together we need to keep focused on these difficulties and any progress we make because of our increased support to the parish and its various programs. Since it is possible that some who were not in attendance last weekend may not have heard the message of urgency shared by our parish trustees, I felt it would be advantageous to repeat some of the information presented at all the masses last weekend.

On the opposite side of this page is a copy of the address given last weekend by our trustees. May I ask your kindness in re-reading the thoughts shared through the address and concern. It is possible that reading it over again might give you a second reason to pause and consider the serious nature of this appeal.

Fr. Paul Grenon

“Today we are a small Catholic parish community with a history of extreme generosity and no debt. Although we have built a new parish center, purchased, and refurbished a new rectory, and have raised significant restricted funds which will be used for upcoming capital improvements via the Grateful for God’s Providence campaign which is still in final phases. All these accomplishments were done to support our worship, ministry, and social activities.

We have all felt the effects from the recent Covid pandemic in many ways. Our parish is no exception as we have seen expense rising an average of 4% annually, a decline in Mass attendance, the effects of inflation in higher costs for the goods and services we require, and the loss of income from the cancellation of the Art Festival, Parish Bazaar and parish meals all of which generate significant income.

In the past, we have maintained a small cash buffer which allowed us to absorb an occasional annual deficit, but this is no longer the case as the last few years have really stretched us. In fiscal year 2023 which ended this past June, we ended the year with a loss of \$ 5,000, As we have been planning for 2024, we are seeing a much larger deficit of approximately \$30,000 despite working very hard to manage our expenses.

Since our income comes primarily from budget envelopes and e-giving as well as special events, many of which depend on good weather, we need to plan for the risk that a large part of our income can be significantly reduced by inclement weather.

So, these facts – increasing expenses and substantial Income at risk - point to service challenges for our community to address as we cannot continue forward without some change.

After analyzing our situation - We - your finance council and trustee – are asking you to prayerfully consider increasing your weekly contribution by at least \$5.00. We believe that this increase will enable us to meet our needs for the upcoming fiscal year and help us to begin rebuilding a cushion to help with unexpected expenses. No matter what your situation, your prayers and generosity is most appreciated”. From the Parish Trustees & Finance Council