

Good Evening / Morning Folks.

I am Ron Marnicio, Chairman of the Stewardship Commission. The Stewardship Commission serves in an advisory role to Fr. Andy on Parish financial matters and the maintenance of our buildings and facilities. The other members of the Stewardship Commission are:

Bob Brown, Pat Cardarople, Bindy Curtis, Henry Marchi, and Pat Murphy.

Mike Zalansky also was a member of the Stewardship Commission this year before he and Judy left the Parish.

The Stewardship Commission has two main responsibilities:

- 1) The first is to develop and monitor the annual budget, provide periodic reports to the Parish and individual Commissions, and ensure the Parish complies with the financial management and reporting requirements established by the Diocese.
- 2) The second responsibility is the care and maintenance of our Church, the Rectory, the Catholic Student Center, and the other Parish facilities. While routine maintenance is funded through the general operating budget, the Commission must also develop plans for meeting longer term capital needs and responding to emergencies related to the Parish facilities.

Diocesan guidelines encourage every Parish to report annually to its members on the financial state of the Parish. That is why I am here now. In past years, I have told you if we finished the prior year "in the black" or "in the red", how our Parish Income and Expenses affected that outcome, what adjustments the Stewardship Commission is planning for this year, and identifying how you can help. I am going to stick to that same agenda today.

First, our Fiscal Year for accounting purposes ended on June 30<sup>th</sup>. At the end of May, one month before the end of the Fiscal Year, we were approximately \$10,000 "in the black". One month later, we were officially about \$14,000 "in the red". However, it was during this last month that we needed to immediately address the unsafe front steps of the Church which cost \$18,000. In addition, some security enhancements in our buildings, fixes to address issues raised by our annual fire code inspection, and emergency repairs to bolster our aging buildings required immediate expenditures. As we had no real choice but to do this work at that time, I don't think the year end deficit was avoidable or involved poor decision-making. Thankfully, the Matching Gift Campaign we ran in November and December of 2016 kept the Parish finances at a balanced level through most of 2017 without requiring a further drawdown of our savings.

Having said that, let me tell you a few things about our Parish Income for the last Fiscal Year. I am glad to say that the offertory and general donations both trended upward slightly last year for the first time in a few years. Actual offertory and donations both exceeded our budget estimates. These donations represented about two-thirds of our total Income. We again received a \$65,000 subsidy from the Diocese to help support, but not fully pay for, our Catholic Student Organization program and UNH Campus Ministry mission. The 2016 Matching Gift Campaign I mentioned earlier brought in about \$18,000 which was critical to meeting expenditures for the last Fiscal Year. We had some very generous lump sum donations and estate bequeaths from Parishioners during the year that also were very important to covering key expenses and program needs. We also initiated the Sponsorship Program that you see in the bulletin which allows you to directly purchase and donate specific items needed by the Parish or to donate the funds needed for the Parish to purchase the items. Parishioners have been very generous in covering the costs of a wide variety of requested items this past year, from new altar server robes and the Easter candle, to the new CSC kitchen ceiling lights and two new grills for our Parish cook-outs. The Sponsorship Program has been very successful because of your support of items and Parish programs of importance to you personally. These contributions were all very positive and I thank you on behalf of the individuals who have benefitted from the Programs and actions that were enhanced by these donations.

Our only disappointing performance last year was the continued financial decline of our traditional fundraising events: The Yard Sale and the Christmas Fair. For many reasons, including more local Durham and UNH competition, lack of organizers and volunteers, and insufficient advertising and communication, we brought in about \$15,000 less than what was budgeted on these two events for last year. Unfortunately, the recent Yard Sale in September 2017 also brought in less than what was expected for this year, and we will have to deal with that in this Fiscal Year's juggling. Clearly, these traditional fundraising events have tremendous community-building and public interaction benefits beyond just raising money. However, their fundraising potential in their current forms cannot be relied on to produce the Income they once generated. The Parish recently had an open meeting to discuss this situation and other ideas for increased fundraising. There are plans for an additional raffle-based fundraiser, another Matching Gift Campaign this winter, and a new approach to a Yard Sale/Fall Festival. You will hear more about these things in the coming weeks and months. In the interim, please lend your support to the coming Christmas Fair.

So beyond new Church steps and safety features, you may wonder what we spent the money we did receive on. The biggest portion by far are the basic costs of maintaining our small but multi-tasking staff and supporting the day-to-day operation of the Parish. The staff-related expenses include salaries, insurance and benefits. In addition, we have many of the same utility bills you have at home:

oil; natural gas; electricity; water; cable; telephone and internet. Keep in mind, however, that we have 3 Parish buildings to supply and support. Liturgical supplies (such as candles, wine, hosts, flowers and the Music Ministry) and regular office and Faith Formation supplies and equipment add up quickly. In addition to the repairs already mentioned, we wage a continuing battle with leaks in the CSC and Church roofs (the latest repairs to the Church roof are scheduled to be performed very soon), and we must maintain our Church grounds in the warm weather and remove snow in the winter. We also are assessed funds throughout the year by the Diocese for many good causes and Diocesan initiatives via second collections, and assessed more generally for the year through for a portion of our Income. It should be noted that some of the second collections carry mandatory minimum assessments which means that the Parish must send at least the minimum specified amount to the Diocese even if the money that is collected at the Masses is less than that amount. In these cases, the additional money comes out of the Parish's general operating fund.

The best news, however, is that your donations and contributions last year allowed the Parish to continue many of the programs and maintain facilities that have been a longstanding tradition at STM:

- Faith Formation was again a growing and critical part of our Parish's core mission. Enrollments were up and we had a large Confirmation class, many Baptisms, First Communions, and a few RCIA graduates.
- Our Food Pantry served a growing number of our neighbors in need, and our Thanksgiving and Christmas baskets and the Christmas Giving Tree were important and appreciated undertakings.
- Our CSO was active and growing again last year and maintained an important link to the UNH community. The long-standing tradition of the Student Suppers continued.
- The Parish Picnic, Yard Sale and Christmas Fair all were held, affording us many more opportunities to build community and fellowship. We supported Parish programs and Commissions focused on Fellowship, Service, Spirituality, Worship, Care for Creation, Prayer Shawl, Bereavement, and the Music Ministry.
- The upgrades to the CSC Kitchen were completed and a new sign for the CSC was designed, constructed and installed with the help of several Parishioners.

All of this is truly tremendous. Thank you for your efforts and contributions to these many good works.

The Stewardship Commission is continuing to identify and develop plans for increasing our Parish Income and being as cost-effective as possible in our Expenses for the remainder of this Fiscal Year. I'll now briefly describe a few specific ideas we are now working on, and you will hear more about them over the weeks and months ahead in the bulletin, on the STM website, or through mailings.

- The offertory contributions make up 2/3 of our total income. If you have not contributed in the past, please consider starting at whatever level you can. When you see the amount of offertory collected the previous week in the bulletin, again remember the amount \$4,567 – the amount we need to collect on average each week to hit our offertory budget. If you haven't increased your contribution in some time, please consider doing so if you can. We know that many of you are on fixed incomes and this may be difficult. Any increase in the offertory will certainly help our situation. We are continuing to work out the bugs in our new on-line giving program, VANCO, that will facilitate regular automatic contributions from a checking account or credit card. We will provide more information on this when we get everything in good working order.
- Please continue to actively support our Yard Sale, Christmas Fair, Matching Gift Campaign, Sponsorship Program, and any new fundraisers that we may ultimately try. Anyone interested in reaching out to the UNH Alumni who were part of the Parish Community in the past to ask for help in supporting our current CSO and its activities should contact the Parish Office. New volunteers of all ages for any of these endeavors are needed and are always welcome – no prior experience is needed.
- We will continue to fix our buildings and assets, and not let them degrade to the point that repairs will ultimately be more expensive and more complex. Our policy is always to immediately address safety issues with the needed repairs or modifications. We hope to someday get ahead of this cycle and make some proactive discretionary improvements.

In closing, it is hard to ask for more from people who give so much already. The countless hours of time and service donated by our volunteer Christian Formation teachers and the volunteers on the many Parish Commissions cannot be monetized. However, hard currency comes in very handy in the operation of our Parish. I would like to thank our Parish staff who have done an amazing job controlling costs again this year. The continued vitality of the Parish and its many programs and good works depends on all of us giving what we can of our time, talents, and resources – this includes our high school students, the UNH students, our energetic individuals, our young parents and families, and our seasoned seniors. Please, get more involved in some aspect of the Church this year. It is a rewarding experience and no time is better than right now. With your help over the coming months, we will find ways of increasing our Income and continuing to support the activities that are important to us all and maintaining our welcoming Church and facilities. Thank you, once again, for your attention.