

HOLY SPIRIT

PARISH

Dear Parishioners,

In August at one weekend's Masses, Father Bob spent a few minutes talking about the parish's financial situation. We, the Finance Council, would like to give you a more complete picture as it stands now, and our plans to overcome the challenges we face.

First of all, we would like to thank everyone for their continued support of Holy Spirit Parish. It is because of you that we are able to support the many ministries that Holy Spirit is able to provide to our parish community!

The first concern is that we have seen a decrease in the tithing over the last few years. When we prepare the annual budget to support our ministries, we estimate the next year's revenues and expenses based on prior years. We do increase the projected revenues based primarily on the number of new members joining our parish. We also estimate anticipated fund raising (bingo revenue, scrip sales, donations, and the picnic); however, tithing provides the majority of the revenue generated.

Our fiscal year that ended June 30, 2017 showed a loss of \$143,000.00. Of that, \$78,000 was due to a decrease in tithing, \$52,000 to decreased fundraising/donations, and about \$13,000 for unbudgeted expenses. We made up that difference by taking an advance on our line of credit and by withdrawing funds from a savings account. These options are not going to be available as the line of credit is at the maximum limit and the savings account is almost depleted. In addition, we owe the Diocese \$39,000 for our Cathedral assessment and our Bishop's Appeal deficiency.

Before coming to you, we made a concerted effort to reduce the expenses including a reduction in parish staffing (\$100,000), elimination of the maintenance and utility costs associated with the rental of the Kimberly school (\$60,000), and elimination of rent for priest residence with the purchase of the priest's home (\$10,000). Unfortunately, it has not been sufficient.

To alleviate our revenue shortfall, we are asking everyone to prayerfully consider increasing their tithing. The amount needed to fix this problem per contributing family is small. If each of us contributes a minimum of \$5.00 more per week, we would increase our tithing by approximately \$208,000 annually. If you are able to contribute more than that on a weekly basis, it would be greatly appreciated. For those that have not contributed to this point, a contribution of any amount would greatly help our ministries. We, the members of the Finance Council, have committed to personally increase our tithing as well. Will you please join us?

Our second concern is that our cash flow is lower in the summer months. Attendance at Mass is always lower in the summer months because people are out of town so tithing is dramatically lower during this time. This is when we end up using the line of credit to pay our bills. The most effective way to help alleviate the cash flow problem is to set up electronic withdrawal (ACH or Bill Pay). If you are not currently using an electronic withdrawal, please consider this option. Many of us pay our bills that way (insurance, utilities, house payment, YMCA, etc.). This would be just one more automatic deduction to add. We are enclosing an ACH form that can be completed and returned to the Parish Center to set up an automatic deduction. Someone will also be available after the September 24th and October 1st weekend Masses to answer questions or help you complete the form.

Our third concern relates to our buildings. The Kimberly Church boilers are 55 years old. Our boiler company has informed us that they can no longer do any more repairs on them, there is just not enough metal left to work with. We have negotiated the price down from \$68,000.00 to \$44,000.00, including rebates. We are hoping to replace them before it gets cold. If your employer has a grant program, could you please consider asking if a grant or a matching funds program would be available?

We also want you to understand that we, Holy Spirit Parish, have really made significant progress in straightening out our finances over the last few years. Our mortgage balance was in excess of \$1.0 million just six years ago. Today, our mortgage is under \$400,000.00 and it will be paid off within five years which will save us \$90,000.00 annually. Our buildings and grounds committee did a five year plan for repair and maintenance of building systems—roofs, electrical, plumbing, etc. While there will always be some expensive capital improvements that need to be done, we have taken care of the all of the backlog—except for the boilers. We have started and maintained a program of routine maintenance that helps prevent future emergencies. We took care of the bat problem, fixed the steeple and the roof of the Darboy Church. More recently, we completed the renovation of the inside of the church through with the generosity of our parishioners. For the Kimberly church, we repaired the leaking heating system, replaced the damaged ceiling tiles, and painted and refurbished the church. At the same time, we continued to provide over 70 ministries throughout our parish to help continue to spread the Good News. With your ongoing help, we will be able to continue to offer all these ministries all for the honor and glory of his name, Jesus Christ.

We felt it was important that everyone was aware of our current situation and that full transparency was best. We will be providing updates on our financial situation regularly, as well as publishing information so that everyone is informed. Look for the updates in our weekly Essentials bulletin and our Connections monthly newsletter.

“You are enriched and gifted in many ways so that you can be generous, and through us your generosity can result in thanksgiving to God.” 2 Corinthians 9:11 (adapted)

Blessings to you all,

The Finance Council Team

Tim Wyngaard, Melody Buchinger, Jonathan Probst, Roy Verstegen, and Steve Hamilton