

Parishioner Stewardship

(This information was released in the Church Bulletin on January 31, 2010)

The St. Mary Church Finance Committee has conducted a thorough review of the financial health of the parish and believes that it is important to share with all parishioners the findings of their work. Indeed, the committee is committed to providing all parishioners with more information about the finances of the parish on an ongoing basis. There will be an increased presence in the bulletin, including regular notices regarding the state of the budget, the weekly and monthly collections, large expenditures and other relevant factors. While the primary work of our church remains to serve the people, it is prudent at this time to put into place a solid line of communication between the parish administration and the parishioners about the budget and finances of this parish.

2009

During 2009, the offertory income for the church, including weekly, monthly and Holy Day collections, was \$599,000. Additional revenues, such as stole fees and religious education tuition, raised the total revenue for the church to \$679,000. The total operating expenses for the church during the same time period was \$691,000. In some areas we were able to finish the year under budget, but other areas, such as necessary repairs to the church structure and utilities, were above projected budget amounts.

2010

For calendar year 2010, the Committee and Parish Council anticipate the budgeted operating costs will be \$842,000. A bulk of the increased expenditures will be in the area of capital expenditures and repair expenses. The church expects to make significant repairs this year to the church roof and the rectory heating system, to fix the parking lot and to install a new fire alarm system. For the revenue side of the budget, we will refine the reporting to the weekly offertory (excluding Easter), with a budget of \$582,500 or \$11,500 per week; Monthly collection with a budget of \$54,000 or \$4,500 per month and for Holy days and Easter) with a budget of \$56,000. All in, these categories total \$693,000. Additional revenues covering stole fees, religious education and investment income will bring the total revenues to \$782,000. The remaining \$60,000 to balance the budget with expenses, we hope to collect from the annual collection as discussed below.

Envelopes

The use of envelopes by parishioners to make weekly offertory contributions is critical to the proper functioning of the parish. It gives a clear overview of what money can be reasonably expected to be donated on any given weekend, which ultimately yields a useful and accurate budget of how the church can cover its expenses. That being said, only 51% of St. Mary parishioners use their envelopes on a regular basis, and those envelopes average 78% of the weekly offertory collection. We encourage all parishioners to use their envelopes – if you do not get envelopes, please call the rectory so that you may receive the next mailing.

Monthly Collections

The monthly collection is specifically designed to be used to cover the utility costs incurred by the church. It literally keeps the lights and heat on. Less than 50% of the parishioners use their monthly collection envelopes; those that do use them contribute over 88% of the revenues for the collection. Again, we encourage each parishioner to use their envelopes so that we might develop and maintain an accurate budget.

Annual Collection

The Parish Council has accepted the recommendation of the Finance Committee that St. Mary Church conduct an annual collection, via a mailing to all registered families of the parish. The sole purpose of this collection will be to offset the capital improvements and repairs that are necessary for the church. We will specifically be asking those who do not attend Mass regularly to participate in this collection. The goal, as noted previously, is to collect \$60,000 through this effort. More information on this collection will be forthcoming.

Conclusion

It remains the prerogative of each individual to decide how to support the church. This has been a hard year for many people, and personal spending budgets are limited. But each parishioner must be aware of the role and responsibility they have to keep the church available for their generation and those to follow. The church as a physical structure must be maintained, the utilities must be paid, the community services must continue. If you have been giving the same offertory amount for years, we ask that you consider a modest increase in your donation. An additional \$3 per envelope would yield almost \$100,000 in new revenues for the church.

It is critical that these steps be taken to assure that our church will always be here, for Mass and regular prayer, for community services, to baptize the children, marry the betrothed and bury our dead.

We thank you for your continued support and generosity.

May God Bless and Keep You.

The Finance Committee, led by Chairman John Meuser, and the Parish Council