

JOINT PASTORAL FINANCE COUNCIL STATEMENT

August 2020

Dear Parishioners of the OLOL and SJTW Collaborative,

As members of the Joint Pastoral Finance Council for OLOL and SJTW, we are reaching out regarding the very strained financial position of both parishes. Fr. Hobson has been transparent in sharing the troubling trends in decreasing church enrollment, active participation and monthly collections. This is proving to be a significant challenge for the Collaborative and for the entire Archdiocese of Boston. COVID has certainly magnified the issue, but the downward trend began long before the pandemic hit.

The current path is untenable. Offertory for both parishes is down 22% and 32% for SJTW and OLOL, respectively. We have a forecasted a combined operating deficit (ongoing revenue, less expenses) of over \$67k. These numbers are AFTER the significant staffing reductions documented in the August 1st bulletin.

In June, a webinar was held to discuss what it would mean if our two parishes pursued a merger, where our finances and associated decisions were combined. As shared, the act of merging does not instantaneously increase our operating income or reduce expenses, but is a necessary step toward creating a more sustainable future. Once complete, we can make decisions to limit redundancies, make more efficient use of space and properly allocate capital investment dollars. This may ultimately lead to the closure of a facility, but a merger is the best step to take before a decision of that magnitude can be made.

If we do not take the step of merging, any future decisions may be out of our hands. As such, it is the recommendation of the Joint Pastoral Finance Council to pursue a merger.

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Brian McKeon

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