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# ANNUAL REPORT 2019-2020

## Nativity Catholic Church

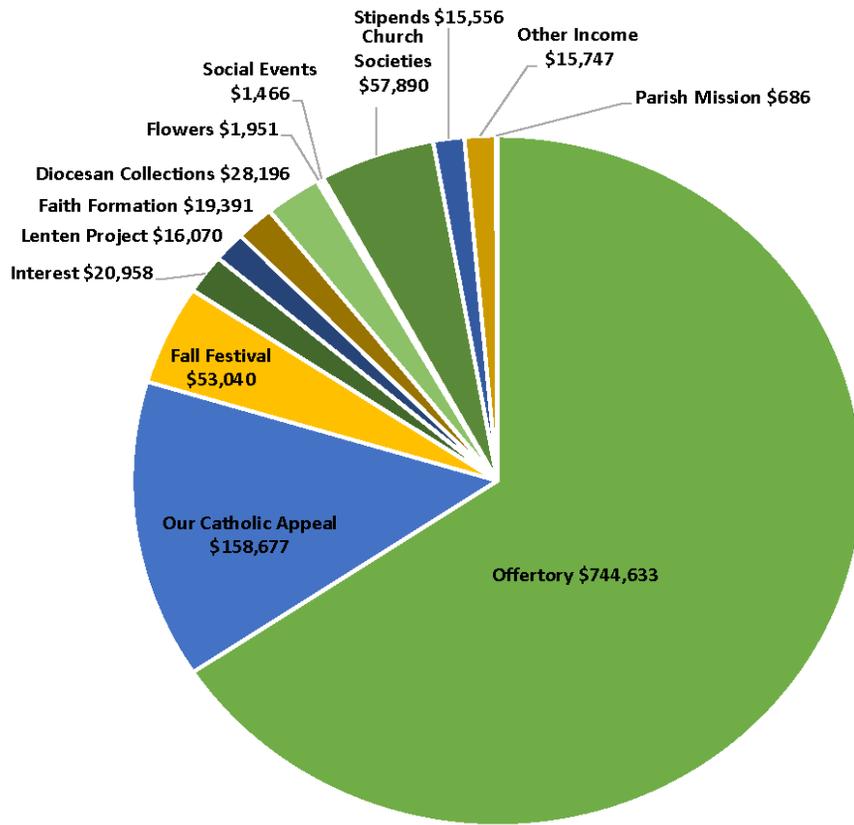
A welcoming family of believers  
in Longwood and Lake Mary for  
60 years

## Parish Statistics

- Average Mass attendance: 1134
- Number of registered parishioner households: 1412
- Estimated number of individual Catholics: 3980
- Catechesis/Faith Formation Program: 310 students
- Infant Baptisms (up to age 7): 42
- Christian Initiation: 8
- Received into Full Communion: 1
- First Communions: 10\*
- Confirmations: 36
- Marriages: 8
- Deaths: 29

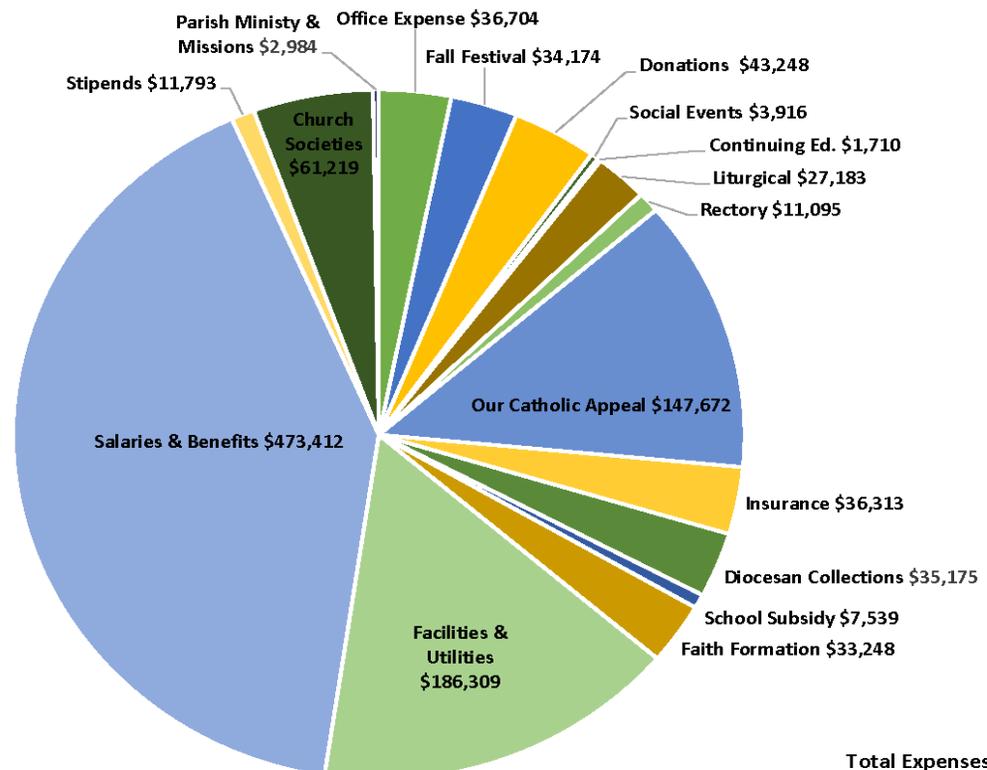
(\* postponed due to Covid-19)

## 2019-2020 Income



Total Income:  
\$1,211,871

## 2019-2020 Expenditures



Total Expenses:  
\$1,185,397

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

Father Augustine Clark, after five years pastoring Nativity, retired in December 2019. A faithful priest of Christ, he continues helping Nativity and other local parishes. He left me with big shoes to fill. Following in his footsteps, I offer this financial report on the parish for the fiscal year from July 2019 through June 2020. Even in the pandemic, you will see that we have much to be grateful for.



## LITURGY

The pandemic shut down public Mass for ten long weeks. This was so hard. The Sunday Mass is the center of who we are. In the Mass, we join Christ who offers himself to the Father. We listen to the Word of God and receive the Body and Blood of Christ. Viewing the Mass via livestream in spiritual communion was some consolation but left the parish longing for the Real Presence. Our many volunteer sacristans, altar servers, readers, hospitality ministers, eucharistic ministers, choirs and cantors deeply missed serving in the Mass. “You are fellow citizens of the saints and members of the household of God” (Ephesians 2:19).

## MINISTRY

At the end of Mass, we go in peace, “glorifying the Lord by your life.” We give glory to the Lord when we visit the sick and imprisoned with communion, comfort the mourning and bury the dead with funerals, feed the hungry with the food pantry, clothe the naked, and welcome the stranger. We carry out Christ’s great command to “go and make disciples” as we form our children in faith, prepare them for the sacraments, and take part in adult formation such as Monday morning Bible study, women of prayer, small group study of the bishops’ pastoral letter on racism, and Father Anthony Aaron’s parish mission in January.

The stay-at-home isolation during the pandemic has brought home how much we need our parish community. The Fall Festival in October, besides netting almost twenty thousand dollars, brought together hundreds of parishioners and families for fun and fellowship. Same with the Fall annual golf tournament, Monte Carlo night, Sunday coffee and donuts, and the Men’s Group monthly Country Breakfasts. Parish staff and volunteers have called the entire parish roster, especially the elderly, a number of times, to check on one another and keep in touch. A new ministry, Share a Prayer, offers prayers upon request. Our community events, though, are greatly missed. They cannot resume soon enough!

## STEWARDSHIP OF TREASURE

The Sunday offertory is like your household income that pays the bills, puts food on the table, and saves for a rainy day. For the parish, the Sunday collection is how we pay for the parish staff and the expenses of running our active parish, plus save for a rainy day.

That rainy day has arrived. The pandemic greatly affected the ability of some to give. Our Sunday offertory from March through June dropped 22%. The generosity of those who have gone before us and the good stewardship of pastors and parish staff have built up a cushion. Unlike many parishes, we have no debt. Instead, we have a rainy day fund to make budget.

Thank you for making the leap of faith and continuing to set aside a percentage of your income for the church. Many of you have discovered that you can give online securely and conveniently through our parish website. Online giving has more than doubled during the pandemic so that about one-third of the current collection amount is through online giving. If you receive envelopes, please use them so that we can keep a record which you can use for your tax return. You may be interested to know that stock donations and IRA distributions given directly to the parish may give you an income tax deduction and avoid taxes that makes your gift to the parish that much greater. Following diocesan policy for a parish financial review every three years, Withum, Smith & Brown conducted our review and found few items needing correcting. The parish risk rating dropped more than half from 74 in 2016 to 32 in 2019, where the diocesan median was 43.

Aside from the practical, financial giving is above all spiritual. "As each one has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of God's varied grace" (1 Peter 4:10). All we have is a gift from God to use for his purposes. Each year, I raise my tithe by one percent. Somehow, I end up with more than I need—my cup overflows!

If the Sunday offertory is our household income, Our Catholic Appeal is the Homeowners' Association. Just as an HOA takes care of the commons such as the landscaping and neighborhood improvements, the Diocese of Orlando takes care of matters that no one parish can shoulder such as the formation of seminarians into priests and Bishop Noonan's ministry. Once again, we crushed our goal of \$161,997 for a total pledge of \$228,653. If all pay their pledges faithfully, two-thirds of the overage will benefit the parish and one-third will benefit retired Orlando priests with unexpected medical or elder-care expenses. Thank you to the 426 families for your support of Bishop Noonan and the Diocese of Orlando!

Your envelope packets and online giving have opportunities to support a variety of national special collections. For example, the November 22 Catholic Campaign for Human Development collection empowers local communities to address the root causes of poverty. Our 2020 Lenten project raised \$16,291 for Life Choices crisis pregnancy center in Altamonte Springs and had a special Lenten focus on prayer for those in crisis pregnancies. The parish has given \$4,000 each to the Pregnancy Center in Sanford, Pathways to Care in Casselberry, and Shepherd's Hope in Longwood to tide them through the pandemic. We helped families with rent, car repair, and utilities to give them a bridge to financial stability. The Advent Tree collection of gift cards and food baskets made Christmas much brighter for many families. The back-to-school collection is yet another way we support those in need. The parish matched contributions to raise \$1,634 and buy a special chair which Father Zachary Oburu of Uganda needed for his recovery from a head-on car accident.

Our parish food pantry deserves special mention. Your strong food drive this summer has stocked the shelves so high that we have taken many bags of food to the Sharing Center Food Pantry. One family found help in an unusual way for their child who became sick after eating certain meals. "One day we realized after testing so many foods and drinks that he did not get sick with the almond milk that's usually in the church pantry. We switched his milk to almond and the difference was night and day. Maybe it was God's way to lead us to an answer to his difficulties." The food pantry can help in ways we might not imagine!

## BEHIND THE SCENES

Our parish staff of a dozen members has had some changes in the past year. Father Augustine retired from full-time ministry, and Bishop Noonan assigned me to follow in his footsteps. Mary Nielsen retired from her part-time position coordinating liturgy and ministries, and Billy B Williamson has taken on the position of Liturgy Coordinator. Brian Wood stepped down after 14 years on the bench, and Phillip Revekant became our new Director of Music to keep a song in our hearts. We are blessed with Deacon Walt Skinner, who coordinates baptisms, and Deacon Dave Baker, who coordinates weddings and ministry to the sick. Through the pandemic, the staff has been "all hands on deck" serving in the Mass and cleaning so that we could safely offer the Mass and open the church for daily prayer. They have been extraordinary.

We took advantage of the slowdown in activity to replace the church's main air conditioner (the smaller ones date from 1996 and need replacement as well), trim the tree canopies, move the crucifix over the tabernacle, redesign the chapel, upgrade WiFi so that you can use digital worship aids, replace the ten-year old office computers, install equipment to livestream the Mass, install Zoom for online meetings, and set up Flocknote to send emails to keep the parish connected. Whew!

As you see, we have much to be grateful for. The Lord is good! Let me add my own thanks for your warm welcome. I have felt lifted up. I look forward to getting to know you behind your facemasks as we follow together the way of the Lord.

In Christ, Father David