

From the Pastor April 22, 2018

Hoping that Easter provided a restorative time for you all, I write to thank everyone who worked so hard to make the Holy Week liturgies possible. Attendance and giving were both noticeably increased, and many new faces joined us throughout Holy Week.

Much of this increase is attributable to the investment made by many of you in the ongoing Stewardship Program and Evangelization Initiative we are carrying out in partnership with the Catholic Foundation and the Archdiocesan Office of Evangelization.

Phase one of this program began during the Advent Season, with specific prayer commitments made, and submitted intentions, offered up at all Christmas masses.

Phase two began January 14th of this year, consisting of a Time and Talent Survey, which brought us volunteers for an Evangelization Initiative carried through Easter, consisting of marketing and community outreach inviting those new to the area, and those who have been away from SLKF for a time, to join us for the Holy Week masses. This initiative, including, in part, the pew cards in church, has brought us twenty new parish registrations since Easter, and we hope for more to come.

Phase three of the Stewardship Program is the next step, focusing on financial investment in St. Louis King of France Parish. We will continue to offer the traditional envelope service, for those who prefer to support through paper checks. To those, we offer thanks for your generosity over the years, in some cases decades. At this time, we ask you to review the financial situation summarized below, as you make your decisions with regard to charitable giving in the coming fiscal year.

For those who prefer to manage finances electronically, we are now offering an online giving option, through a link found on our website: <https://slkfchurch.com/> .

The link is under the title, "*Online Giving*", and reads: "*click here to give online*". It will prompt you to register. After registering, you have the option of donating electronically, in the same way many of you pay your ordinary bills: electronic fund transfer from your bank, credit card, debit card, or text donation.

For those of you who prefer to conduct such matters on your cellphone, the service *ConnectNow*, offers a free app for your mobile device, to give that way, if you choose. The app, called *ConnectNow Online Giving*, may be downloaded free from the Apple Store, and allows you to give using your credit or debit cards, or fund transfer from a bank account of your choosing.

The advantage of this method is that you can decide how much you wish to give each week, and have it automatically paid, even if you happen to be out of town for a weekend. This automatic process offers convenience for you, as well as much needed stability for the parish in planning for the future.

To assist you in making your decisions, I offer the following statement of accountability. We are blessed at SLKF that the school is able to cover its expenses, as well as make capital improvements. According to archdiocesan policy, this is the responsibility of the parish, since the parish owns all school buildings, and the school is a ministry of the parish; but parish finances are not in a position to absorb such costs, and have not been such in several years.

To summarize, from this past fiscal year (2016->17), so that you can plan for the next fiscal year (2018->19), beginning in a few months, the parish had a deficit of \$58,828.00, which, if not paid, becomes a debt to which interest will be attached. Here are a few examples will clarify how such a state of affairs exists.

- ***One-year of the Clarion Herald = \$3,598.10***
- ***One-year sanctuary expenses (missalettes/hosts/candles, etc)= \$6,321.02***
- ***One-year of utilities/phone system = \$25,992.26***
- ***One year of the Parish Share of Archdiocesan Ministries = \$36,516.00.***
- ***One-year of Flood Insurance = \$51,779.00;***
- ***One-year of Property/Casualty/Workers Comp Insurance = \$78,334.00;***
- ***One-year of Personnel costs (salaries, social security, health, etc) = \$175,552.81***

It goes on and on, but, to put it another way, in order to meet our operating costs (not including any emergencies or major physical plant needs), our weekly collections must rise to \$8,740. This is published in the bulletin, along with the weekly collections, so that we can track progress (or the reverse).

Talking about money is never an enjoyable experience. Our faith teaches that money is not everything. This is certainly true, yet, the way our economy is constructed, money does affect nearly everything. Even an idea as simple as coffee and donuts after mass requires money.

Many of you prefer to give anonymously, simply putting cash in the collection baskets. Others formally register and use the envelopes, for which you receive letters and summary for your records. Many of you may change to, or begin for the first time, using the new electronic options. Whichever you have done, or may do in the future, know that the parish cannot survive without your generosity and support.

Feel free to contact me using the email or numbers on the cover of this bulletin, if you wish to discuss matters further. As always, whether you can give financially or not, please give us your spiritual support through prayer.

St. Louis King of France, Pray for us.