

August 2020

Dear Parishioner,

We live in extraordinary times as we confront the continued challenges of the pandemic around the world, the Diocese, and even our Parish. We are all still making many sacrifices, and I want to express my sincerest gratitude to each of you for your prayers and for your continued support of our parish family. We know with prayer, and God's help, we will see His love and soon return to a more normal way of life.

The Diocese of Kalamazoo has also made several sacrifices for us. For example, they have slashed their operating budget for this year in half. In a quote from Bishop Bradley, he states, "This is a shared sacrifice we feel necessary to assist in securing financial stability for our parishes. We want every Parish in our Diocese to remain vital centers of worship, faith formation and service to their local communities." Even though their budget is drastically reduced, the need for our Bishop's Annual Appeal is still necessary.

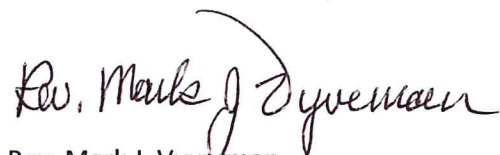
The Bishop's Annual Appeal was delayed from this past spring due to the pandemic but will officially be launched the weekend of September 12. I want you to be aware of a significant change this year in the allocation of funds. Bishop Bradley has generously authorized a program that will assist us in meeting our parish expenses in a much greater way. After Parishes reach 50 percent of their goal, all gifts to the appeal beyond that will be returned directly to the parish. Our parish goal for this year is \$283,014. That means that once \$141,507 is received at the Diocese, all donations in excess of that amount will come back to our Parish and be available for daily operations.

Please watch your mail for a letter from Bishop Bradley with an information piece explaining the appeal in more detail and the many helpful services it funds. It also will include your personalized pledge card to use in making your gift or pledge. You are encouraged to complete the pledge card and return it to the parish by mail or place it in the collection box by the baptismal font in church.

The times are difficult, but we ask you to do whatever you can as we seek to fulfill the Gospel's mission. With the number of parishioners still not attending Mass, I will be encouraging the use of the online giving feature that is made available through the diocesan online giving website (<https://www.osvonlinegiving.com/867>) or look for the link to the Bishop's Appeal on our website (<https://www.stcatherinesiena.org/give>).

I am grateful for all you do for our parish and on behalf of myself, Fr. Bill, Fr. Ben and Fr. Jeff as well as the staff, we have been most appreciative of the support you have provided during these most challenging of times. We pray that God continues to bless you and your loved ones always.

Sincerely Yours in Christ,



Rev. Mark J. Vyverman
Pastor