



Saint Thomas Aquinas University Parish

A UNIVERSITY PARISH SERVING THE UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA

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Office of the Pastor

September 2019

Dear St. Thomas Aquinas Parishioners,

Time has flown since I arrived in October of 2014 as your pastor. As we look forward to the year ahead. With all of the parish ministries, events, activities, and services, (and the dedication of our new church!), it is now time for me to report to you concerning our financial condition. Without your generous contribution of time, talent and treasure, we could not effectively serve so many within our university parish community and beyond.

Our parish currently consists of 2,200 registered parish families, many others who are not registered, and the University of Virginia's Catholic students, faculty, and staff. Our parish continues to grow both with UVA student participation and many young families joining the parish. Although we have 2,200 registered families, only 805 support our ministries and facilities with regular, traceable contributions. Unlike governments and businesses, we are completely dependent on your free-will offerings. Honestly, we do need the help of all of our parishioners. In order to proclaim the Gospel effectively, we must have adequate facilities in both the church and parish center, good liturgy and music, vibrant ministries and prayer groups, outreach to the poor, and sufficient personnel. In addition, we must be faithful to our primary mission which is the campus ministry to students and ministry to the UVA Catholic community. Currently, we have more than 50 established parish ministries in addition to the Catholic Campus Ministry, Religious Education, Edge, and Life Teen. As you can well imagine, it takes a great deal of money to support all of this wonderful pastoral and evangelical activity!

We are blessed to have to many generous and involved parishioners. Many have contributed to the building of our new church building, which will be the heart of our many parish ministries. It is to those ministries that we must now turn our attention. Recognizing that families have limited resources and many expenses, I have discontinued most of the second collections at Mass, although they all benefit worthy causes. Despite this, we still have collections that are mandated by the Diocese which benefit the Church, and especially the poor, throughout the Diocese of Richmond.

In order to meet our needs for the current fiscal year, our weekly collection must increase by 9%. I have been unwilling to cut important ministerial programs. In fact, our Campus Ministry, Religious Education, and Youth Ministry programs are growing each new year.

A number of parishioners have mentioned to me that they have not been asked to increase their weekly giving for several years. I take this opportunity to ask all of our parishioners to contribute regularly, and in fact, to increase your giving by the 9% that we need to continue our mission.

May God bless all who help make St. Thomas Aquinas a wonderful, growing, and vibrant parish.

In Christ,

Very Rev. Joseph Barranger, O.P.
Pastor and Prior