



COVID-19 RESCUE APPEAL

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PARISH & FINANCE COUNCIL CHAIRS

To our fellow parishioners,

Fr. Joseph's message and our COVID-19 Rescue Appeal video testify to the extraordinary efforts of our Dominican friars, lay staff, and countless volunteers to sustain parish life—the sacraments, pastoral care, core ministries, and administrative services—despite severe COVID-related restrictions over these past eight months. We know you will join us in expressing our heartfelt gratitude for all they have done.

Among parish activities affected by the pandemic is the weekly offertory collection, particularly in-person donations at attendance-limited weekend Masses. Fortunately, many parishioners have switched to E-giving, which has reduced the drop-off in giving that might otherwise have occurred. Nevertheless, despite supplemental gifts by a number of generous parishioners, we are not where we need to be in total giving.

As you know, offertory donations are the primary source of funding of parish operations and ministries, comprising more than 80% of parish operating revenue. After five years of stagnation in offertory giving, which peaked in 2016, and despite reducing parish operating expenses by 10.2% on an inflation-adjusted basis over the past four years, parish operations are projected to end the current fiscal year in deficit for the third year in the past four. This calculation is before considering mortgage payments on the new church of more than \$20,000 per month beginning January 1. Those payments must come from a combination of increased offertory giving and new pledges to the Building Fund.

The goal of this special COVID 19-Rescue appeal is to raise \$200,000, supplementing normal offertory giving, in order to eliminate this year's projected operating deficit of \$70,000 and to fund the first six months of mortgage payments, January through June.

Therefore, mindful that opportunities to be generous seem to be never-ending, we respectfully ask that every member of the parish, especially those who may have fallen behind in their regular giving, join us in making their very best sacrificial gift to this special appeal. By doing so, we will affirm our support of our parish and its mission and help to ensure that the parish begins this new-church era on solid financial footing. Your offering may be paid in a lump sum or in installments through January 31, 2021.

Finally, please consider joining the many parishioners who have switched to E-giving for their offertory giving and other donations. This safe, secure, convenient alternative to checks and envelopes also reduces staff administrative costs and month-to-month fluctuations in operating revenue.

We are confident that the people of St. Thomas Aquinas University Parish will build on our decades-long tradition of generous financial support by meeting or exceeding the ambitious goal of this special appeal. May God continue to bless you and your families.

John Flood, Parish Council chair

Tom Laux, Finance Council chair