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The past six weeks have been truly amazing ones for our parish!

Our first message series of the year, 20/20 Vision,

challenged us to see ourselves as God sees us and concluded with parishioners offering a prayer of commitment to Christ.

Last weekend married couples renewed their vows for World Marriage weekend.

Starting this weekend we will host week dozens of men, women & children who are homeless in our parish hall for Warm Nights.

These are just three examples of the vibrancy and life we see here at St. Pius X and ways that God has blessed our parish.

But we know there are so many more people beyond the walls of this church who need the faith and blessings we possess.

And whenever we share with others--- especially those in need---

we're living out Jesus' message in today's Gospel when he calls us to put our faith into action.

SCREEN: Archdiocesan Appeal logo

This weekend, we're joining with parishes across Maryland and DC for the annual Archdiocesan Appeal.

And I want to begin by acknowledging that I know just how challenging it is to talk about money in church.

It's been especially hard these past two years because of

the clergy abuse crisis, which has shaken the Catholic Church to its core.

It's made everyone, including me, skeptical of giving money to the Archdiocese.

You may remember that in November I shared with you our parish's financial report.

And I said that some of our parishioners have stopped giving to the church, and others have adjusted their giving because they don't want any financial support to go downtown.

The Archdiocese is aware of this and beginning last year made some changes to the Appeal.

I've been asked to make sure you know that all the monies donated to the appeal ---100%--- go directly to programs and charities.

None of it goes to administrative costs and none of it is used to pay legal bills or settlements of clergy abuse cases.

So why should you join me in supporting the appeal?

The answer is simple: the appeal helps those who are most vulnerable and in need.

It funds programs that help the sick, helps those with disabilities, helps the aged, and helps migrants.

Dozens of organizations and ministries depend on our appeal donations for their funding.

The appeal also provides tuition assistance for families struggling to send children to a Catholic school - this has benefited our parish & school.

So today, consider joining me in giving a gift to those in need.

I know some of you have already given to the appeal this year, so thank you.

To everybody else, I simply ask you to consider a gift today.

At this time, I ask one person from each household that did not bring your direct mail pledge form with you, to please take a pledge envelope and pencil from the end of the pews....

and if those on the end can pass them down to others I'd appreciate it.

- Once you get an envelope & pencil,
please open the flap and find the pledge form. *(wait briefly)*
- First please print your name,
address and other contact information in the proper spaces. *(Pause)*
- Please note the name of our parish on the line provided,
so that we will receive the proper credit for your contribution. *(Pause)*
- Your pledge can be billed over ten months so there is no need to provide
a down payment today unless you wish to. *(Pause)*
- If you have already contributed by mail, please check that box at the bottom of the
form and do not fill out any financial commitment information. *(Pause)*
- If you have NOT given by mail, please check the amount of your pledge in the space
provided.

If you wish to contribute an amount other than the ones indicated, please check the
“Other” box and indicate the full amount of your pledge on the line. *(Pause)*

- Now, please look at the lines provided on the pledge envelope and
indicate the total amount that you pledge on the first line.

In the event that you are making a down payment,
write the amount of the down payment in the next box.

Subtract the down payment from the full amount of your pledge and note the unpaid
balance on the line provided.

And you can see it is possible to pay by credit card.

And you can check a box if you want to make this a one time charge or if you want
your credit card pledge to be 10 equal monthly payments. *(Pause)*

- Finally, there are FOUR boxes on the outside back of the envelope.

Please check the box that best describes what you have enclosed. *(Pause)*

- Please be sure to tear off the commitment form, place it inside the envelope and seal it. *(Pause)*

The ushers will now collect your pledge envelopes.

If you need more time, you can turn in your envelope after Mass.

Please hold your regular offertory envelope a few more minutes until collection time.

WAIT FOR USHERS TO FINISH THE COLLECTION.

AFTER SAY:

On behalf of those who will benefit from your generosity, thank you for your gift to the Appeal.

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Before we continue with the Mass, I want to follow up on our parish survey results from the Fall.

In today's bulletin you will find answers to some of the questions we heard from you...not every question, but the most commonly asked ones.

For example, many people had questions about the bulletin itself.

A few years ago we began producing our weekly bulletin inhouse.

It is emailed every Sunday to 780 households.

We also print hard copies for those who don't do email and the hard copies are available at the Info Desk and the side exit.

So check out your e bulletin this weekend for more answers to questions from the survey.

Let's stand to profess our faith.