

Good Evening / Morning folks.

I am Ron Marnicio, Chairman of the Stewardship Commission. The Stewardship Commission serves in an advisory role to Fr. Andy on Parish financial matters and the maintenance of our buildings and facilities.

The other members of the Stewardship Commission are:

- Pat Cardarople;
- Bindy Curtis;
- Henry Marchi;
- Pat Murphy; and
- Mike Zalansky.

Tom Tatarczuch also was a member of the Stewardship Commission this year before his passing.

The Stewardship Commission has two main responsibilities:

- 1) The first is to develop and monitor the annual budget, provide periodic reports to the Parish and individual Commissions, and ensure the Parish complies with the financial management and reporting requirements established by the Diocese.
- 2) The second task is the care and maintenance of our Church, the Rectory, the Catholic Student Center, and the other Parish facilities. While routine maintenance is funded through the general operating budget, the Commission also must develop plans for meeting longer term capital needs and help the Parish staff respond to emergencies related to Parish facilities.

Diocesan guidelines encourage every Parish to report annually on the financial state of the Parish. That is why I am here now.

As the saying goes, I have good news and bad news this year.

First the good news. The income and donations we collected last year allowed the Parish to continue many of the programs that have been a longstanding tradition at STM:

- Faith Formation was again a vibrant and critical part of our Parish's core mission. Enrollments were up, especially at the Middle School and High School ages. We also had a large Confirmation class in 2015, many Baptisms, First Communions, and RCIA graduates.
- Our Food Pantry served a growing number of our neighbors in need, and our Thanksgiving and Christmas baskets and our Christmas Giving Tree were significant undertakings and very appreciated. Fr. Andy also was able to provide direct financial support to a number of individuals through our Charitable Giving Fund.

- Our Catholic Student Organization was active and growing again last year and remained a strong link to the UNH community. The long standing tradition of the Student Suppers continued.
- The Parish Picnic, Yard Sale and Christmas Fair all were held, affording us many more opportunities to build community. We supported Parish programs and Commissions focused on Fellowship, Service, Spirituality, Worship, Care for Creation, Bereavement, and Music Ministry.
- We collectively donated to a number of Diocesan special collections and paid our annual Diocesan Assessment, and provided financial support to visiting missionaries and various charitable groups.

All of this is truly tremendous and you are to be commended for your efforts and contributions to these many good works.

However, our Fiscal Year which ended on June 30th was not a good one. The one bright spot was that our expenses were \$3,000 LESS than were budgeted due to the cost-consciousness of the Parish staff, but this was overwhelmed by the fact that:

- a) our offertory collections were down \$3,000 from the budget;
- b) general unrestricted donations made to the Parish were down \$12,600 from typical annual amounts; and
- c) fundraising fell \$16,600 short of the budget.

All told, our net income deficit for the year was \$32,000, which we covered by withdrawing approximately 1/3 of our rainy day savings.

So what happened?

Donations, contributions and fundraising were just not at the level that we had been seeing and have come to rely on. Unfortunately, the trend of lower offertory and donations that was so pronounced last year has continued into this Fiscal Year and we are below expectations again so far for this year. The perennial shortage of funds has forced us to postpone badly needed facility repairs and upgrades for a number of years and spend as little as possible on “band-aids” rather than real “fixes”. This past year we continued to experience leaky roofs, had to address Fire Code violations, and made emergency safety and security upgrades that should have been dealt with long ago if the money had been available.

As the Stewardship Commission, we are charged with looking out for the long-term viability of our Parish programs and facilities. At this time, more so than we have been since the bad flood damage in the church over a decade ago, the Stewardship Commission members are very concerned about our

ability to financially support and sustain the Parish's good works and maintain our facilities. The math is easy, two more years like last year and our savings will be gone and we will have to decide how to cut programs, staff hours, or some of the things that make us the exceptional Parish community that we are. The Stewardship Commission is committed to turning things around well before we get close to that point.

How can we do it?

The Commission has been developing a plan for a couple of months now. We are going to have to increase our Parish income in multiple ways. I'll describe a few specific ideas now, and you will hear more about other steps over the weeks and months ahead in the bulletin, on the STM website, or through mailings.

- The offertory contributions make up just under 2/3 of our total income. If you have not contributed in the past, please consider starting to contribute at whatever level you can. When you see the amount of offertory collected the previous week published in the bulletin, remember the amount \$4,567 – The number is easy to remember, four numbers in a row – 4-5-6-7. That is how much we need to collect on average each week to hit our offertory budget. If you see a collection less than \$4,567, we increased the offertory deficit a little more that week. If you already contribute and haven't increased your contribution in some time, please consider increasing your contribution if you can. We know that many of you are on fixed incomes and this may be difficult. Any increase in the offertory will certainly help pay for our routine operating expenses, but will not be enough to enable us to make the major repairs that we know we will soon need to make.
- Please continue to actively support our Yard Sale, Christmas Fair, and other fundraisers. The most recent 2016 Yard Sale reversed a multi-year trend of decreasing net proceeds and earned us about \$5,700 more than the year before. This is moving in the right direction and only happened because so many of you worked so hard. While this increase will help, it will not come close to solving our operating income problem by itself. However, keep up the good work and see what you can do to help at the upcoming Christmas Fair and sign up for things in the back after Mass. We also need to look for other ways to raise funds that are not so volunteer time and labor intensive. All new fundraising ideas will be considered and evaluated. We are

also planning to reach out to the UNH Alumni who were part of the Parish Community for help in supporting our CSO and its activities.

- We have to start fixing our buildings and assets, and not let them degrade further such that repairs will ultimately be more expensive and disruptive. The Stewardship Commission has already identified a number of high-cost projects that will have to be done over the next few years. These costs will need to be addressed by a Capital Campaign that we have also started planning for.
- We are exploring ways for people to contribute to the Parish through alternative giving options, sponsorships or pre-purchased goods, if they prefer, rather than with checks or monetary offerings in the collection basket. As one example, we are compiling a list of things we purchase or pay for at various annual dollar amounts (such as liturgical candles, supplies or specific projects). Parishioners individually or in a group could then choose to make the purchases for the Parish. We will publish this list in the bulletin and people may decide to take on a sponsorship of some operating expense or directly support some cause.
- We will also welcome Parishioners who want to make single donations or matching gifts in combinations with other fundraising initiatives, or take a more active role in fundraising. Just this week, a Parishioner called me and offered up to \$5,000 in matching contribution if the Parish raised a similar amount. This is a great start to getting our donations back on track.

It is hard to ask for more from people who give so much already. The countless hours of time and service donated by our volunteer Christian Formation teachers and the volunteers on the many Parish Commissions is worth so much. Unfortunately, however, we also need more regular old money to pay our bills, which the Parish staff has done an amazing job to control. The continued vitality of the Parish and its many programs and good works depends on all of us giving what we can of our talents and resources. With your help over the coming months, we will find ways of bridging our income gap and continuing to support the activities that are truly important to us all and maintaining our welcoming Church and facilities. Thank you for your attention.