

Dear Parishioners of MHT,

I want to take this opportunity to share with you how our parish has been doing this past year and give you a sense of what this year and next holds. Since October of 2018, we've had 36 Baptisms, 37 Confirmations and 13 weddings. We had 3 adults enter the Church through the RCIA (one catechumen and 2 candidates) and 22 funerals. We can also say that we have had an additional young woman enter religious life and continue to have three young men in the seminary.

Our financial picture is looking good. We ended our 2019 fiscal year in June with a fund balance of \$586,839. This represents a slight decrease from last year but overall is a healthy number for our parish. The biggest reason for this loss has been a combination of the rising cost of health insurance and staff salaries. The average member of our staff has been here for over five years. I feel strongly that we have a great team here at Most Holy Trinity and I think it's a priority to keep them here.

I am grateful that both the Finance Council and Pastoral Council has supported me with this vision. I'm grateful that you have all supported this as well as we continue to see our Sunday collection increase each year.

At the same time though, I want to ask every family in our parish to prayerfully consider if the Lord is calling you to give more. Our Finance Council projects that our slight loss this past year will grow this next year as our basic costs continue to rise. We are always looking for ways to cut costs in our budget, and can do that if needed, but as you will read below, we are excited about the direction our parish is going and feel like all of our expenses are necessary to continue our success.

I rarely speak about money and I'm very gratified and amazed by the generosity of so many parishioners during the Witness to Hope Campaign. But I am, at this time, going to ask you to pray about increasing your giving. If each family considered giving 3-5% more, that could provide us with an additional \$20,000 - \$30,000 for our budget and would be a huge help moving forward. So if your family gives \$100 a month, that would be an additional \$3-5 a month. I ask you to pray about this.

Our financial picture clearly shows us that, despite the trends, there is a committed group of people here at the parish supporting the work of the Gospel. As Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI predicted, the future right now may be a smaller, but more committed church.

What have we accomplished this year? This past year, as always, was a very busy year. Of course our Witness to Hope Campaign contributions continue to flow in. I want to remind everyone that we are almost 3.5 years into our 5 year campaign. We have currently received

70% of the pledges so we are making pretty good progress. You will remember that we resurfaced the parking lot, and now are well through our second goal, a new parish office. The cost of the new building is slightly higher than we had originally forecast. This is quite common with building projects. We had originally budgeted \$150,000 but we will probably end up spending closer to \$180,000. Our third goal is the reworking of the Activity Center. Our committee has been discussing plans and as this third project approaches, we will be providing information and images of what we hope to accomplish.

School Renovation Project: I'm sure most people are aware that we are doing some renovations at the school. We put in new windows this summer and began transforming our old computer lab into more office space. The cost of the renovations are being covered by school savings (donations over the years), approximately the first \$75,000 and ETF reserves are covering the rest (estimated to be about \$35,000). Estimated completion date is January 6, 2020.

It is also worth noting that our school enrollment has increased to above 100 students this year. I'm grateful to Anne Hufnagel and our school staff for all their hard work. We have an excellent school staff and I know our parents are pleased with the quality of education and faith formation our school provides.

Where are we heading/our vision for the parish? Scripture tells us: "Where there is no vision, the people perish." (Proverbs 29:18) Our purpose for existence is to assist the faithful on their way to eternal life. We are called by Our Lord to invite people into a deeper relationship with Him and His Church. This is done by equipping the faithful. Through the Holy Spirit Encounters (with parishioners, young people and grade school students from our Catholic school and Religious Education program), Adult Retreats, Kerygma Retreats, and our youth ministry we've seen a lot of graces and fruits from these efforts as more people each year are growing in their relationship with Christ and experiencing His love.

As always, I want to thank everyone who has generously supported the parish this past year financially, with your time and gifts, and pray that you will continue to partner with us so that the Gospel can be proclaimed to our brothers and sisters.

God bless,

Fr. Dennis Howard, Pastor