

2012-2013 Parish Review

From the Pastor

I wish to thank you for a wonderful year as together we try to do our part to build up God's kingdom here in our part of it here in Eastern North Carolina. We are blessed to live in this beautiful area, and many of you who are retired in particular have spoken about how grateful you are for the blessings in your lives that have made it possible for you to move here.

Due to your generosity we served the poor, made capital improvements, were able to hire a music minister, successfully supported the ministries of the Bishops' Annual Appeal, and operated with a surplus. The Finance Report gives further details about our stewardship.

I came across this parable which I offer for our reflection.

Eulenspiegel was a 14th century villager of the German Duchy of Brunswick who was known for his jests and mischievous pranks. A storehouse of legends grew around him, one of which is the story of the Blindmen's Dinner.

It seems that one night 12 blind men came to Eulenspiegel's home asking for alms. He opened his door to them with a gracious welcome and heard their sad tale of hunger. "Go to the inn in the square," he told them, "and eat, drink and be merry, my good men. Here are 12 florins with which to pay the innkeeper." The 12 men thanked him in a chorus of joyful gratitude and hurried off to the inn.

After they had finished a truly marvelous meal, the innkeeper presented them with a large bill, whereupon they all said, "Let him who received the money pay for the dinner." But no one actually had a single florin! Each had supposed that another had received the money, but all their pockets were empty.

Each time we attend Mass, we sit at a feasting table. But at the end of the dinner, which of us is going to pay the bill? Like the blind men in the tale, we "pass the buck" (or, rather the bill) to another. No one wants any personal responsibility for the cost of such a dinner, for indeed the cost of the Eucharist is nothing less than the life of Christ on the cross.

Although we have eyes, we do not see the presence of a bill at the end of the meal of the Eucharist. While we easily 'bad-mouth' the poor on welfare for wanting a free lunch in life, that is how many regard this sacred meal – almost 2/3 of those registered in the parish do not contribute anything – or less than \$10 a year! Often it seems that the Eucharist is a handout for which we expect to pay nothing; nor do we like to do the chores afterward in payment for the bountiful feast, although that is part of the only way to respond in justice.

At the feast of the meal where God is the innkeeper, there are only separate checks, and no credit cards are accepted. But we can leave an I.O.U. That I.O.U would state that we owe something and intend to pay our debt by the way we respond to the various requests made of us in the parish and other service organizations.

Perhaps we should all leave church with an I.O.U on the altar that reads, 'I owe you a sacrifice, a gift of love that involves MY body and MY blood,' with our signatures below. We would find it fortunate indeed to meet a person who had left such an I.O.U on the altar if we had a flat tire or needed a favor.

Faith is required to believe that we have attended a banquet when we go to the feast of the Eucharist. If we believe that we have indeed been richly blessed, then justice demands that we pick up OUR tab instead of sneaking out without paying! (adapted from Edward Hays, A PILGRIM'S ALMANAC, p. 117-118)

Thank you for all that you do.....

From the Business Administrator

The Parish Annual Report is an opportunity to look back at where we were at, what we have accomplished, and what we still need to work on. At the end of the last fiscal year, we were re-forming our councils and had given ourselves a road map for the year with our annual parish plan. Administratively, we were reviewing all our programs and had identified deficits in our technology and building and grounds management. We also realized we needed a long term vision for our parish.

At the time of the report last year, we were developing a strategic plan team. We now have a vision for our future through our strategic plan, so we can grow into our vision of one unified parish community, and we have begun the process of implementing this plan to shape our way into the future. Parish leadership met in 6/2013 for a day of prayer and reflection about the needs of the parish and the way forward. From this retreat a communications committee and steering committee is being developed. A land acquisitions/facilities lead was selected and has been working with local developers and planners, looking at the future infrastructure for the area so when the new land/facilities team convenes they will be able make recommendations based not only on our demographics, but the availability of resources in the future.

However, the parish focus has not only been about future building. Our parish is about all the everyday activities that our committees and ministries do to reflect our mission to “serve one another and the communities in which we exist through the living and preaching of the Gospel”. Through the generosity of parishioners we have received \$10,500 towards the purchase of an organ to enhance our liturgy. We have donated approximately \$40,000 to outreach and charity through our parish outreach program and national collections. Finally, we were able to transfer \$55,000 into our Savings Account at the end of the year. This has allowed us to bring on a Director of Music and budget for education opportunities for our lay leaders and volunteers to better serve the parish. Our programs, ministries, and groups are growing and we have added Vacation Bible School, a Family Fellowship Group, and a Welcome Committee; as well as, monthly scheduled Anointing masses and fellowship opportunities.

Administratively, we have been working with vendors to reduce costs. We have updated our technology and are using our software resources to better communicate with parishioners including launching a new parish website. Leadership from both facilities are working to integrate liturgical scheduling parish wide to allow for more volunteer opportunities. Training with all liturgical ministers has been ongoing throughout the year. We have been reviewing, updating, and streamlining our data base with the goal of integrating parish data into comprehensive database representative of our entire parish. A building and grounds committee has been established. and with the guidance of the finance council, we have developed a capital improvement procedure to help us continually look at and prioritize our needs.

In fiscal year 2013-2014, look for our online ministry scheduling to be launched and online giving to be implemented. We are looking forward to continued cost savings, as we work with our vendors, and continued growth in our programs. Ongoing evaluation of the facilities needs at St. Mary, Gate of Heaven continues to ensure support of our summer ministry. Opportunities will continue to abound to serve the needs of our parish and community and to reflect, as our mission says, that “we are a people of faith giving witness to God’s love in our community through our commitment in living and sharing the discipleship of Jesus ...through the celebration of the Word and Sacrament, the practice of peace and justice, and the sharing of our gifts.” – Beth Mongeau

Parish Prayer

Heavenly Father, help us to remember that Saint Jude’s and Saint Mary’s is our parish.

That it is composed of all types of people. All of which are children of God. Its pews will be filled, if we help fill them. It will do great work, if we work. It will make generous gifts to many causes, if we are generous. It will bring other people into fellowship, if we bring them. Saint Jude/ Saint Mary’s will be a Church of love, faith, loyalty and noble spirit, if we, who make it what it is, are filled with these qualities.

Remain with us on our journey and strengthen us as we continue to build our community. Help us to remember those who have gone before us and built the communities of St. Jude’s and St. Mary’s. Enable us to focus on the unifying symbol of water, which through baptism formed us into a loving, serving, worshipping community. Empower us to appreciate all that has been, embrace all that is and be faithful and help to develop all that will be. In the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen

From the Parish Council

The purpose of the Parish Council of St. Mary Gate of Heaven and St. Jude the Apostle is to “advise and assist the Pastor in all matters relating to the activities of the Parish.” Or, as it was put by Father Mark Reamer who led a day of reflection we attended as part of a larger group this summer, the Parish Council members are “the stewards of the Parish mission.” This implies a responsibility not only to be caretakers but to actively help our entire Parish joyfully share in carrying out our mission.

Our mission is *why* we exist as a Parish; our vision is *where* we see our Parish going in the future in fulfillment of our mission; our strategic plan is the big picture roadmap of *how* we want to achieve our vision. This year the Parish Council developed and adopted a vision and strategic plan to tie the “where” and “how” to the “why” of our Parish by outlining priorities and goals for the future. The strategic plan was published as a bulletin insert in February and again in September this year – if you have not read it, please check the Parish website or stop by the office for a copy. Much of the work ahead will rely on active parishioner input and involvement in the specific actions needed to move forward – but we need everyone to pull together in the same direction. Every member of our Parish is important in determining how successful we will be in our mission of “giving witness to God’s love in our community.”

In addition to planning for the future, the reality is that much of the Parish Council focus is on the present and what the Parish is doing in the near term. Our Parish Council includes representatives from 10 committees that carry out the activities that support St. Mary Gate of Heaven and St. Jude the Apostle – everything from maintaining the infrastructure to celebrating the liturgy. This year we restructured some committees and also created some new ones based on Parish needs. These committees are the direct link between our Pastor and the volunteers that serve in the various ministries, outreach programs, daily business operations, and all of the other functions that help our Parish run. The success of these committees is driven by the volunteers - consider sharing the gifts God has given you with the Parish by volunteering with one or more of them.

Parish Council priorities for the upcoming year include: (1) developing and implementing specific actions to move forward with the Parish strategic plan, (2) continuing to build on the success of the committees that represent the various activities of our Parish by growing the number of volunteers, and (3) enhancing communication throughout the Parish.

Our Parish is blessed with talented people – and we are growing in a time when parishes in other areas of our country are in decline. This is a great time to be a part of our Parish and while there are some challenges, there are even more opportunities if we work together. The Parish Council is grateful to be able to assist the Pastor and serve the Parish as stewards of our mission.

Chris Buffalino, Mike Curley, JP Horvat, Mary Keesee, Beth Mongeau, Steve Mongeau, Jackie Rourke, Anna Smith, Dana Spillane, Rick Spillane

From the Finance Council

The members of St. Mary Gate of Heaven and St. Jude the Apostle Finance Council are pleased to present the following financial report to our fellow parishioners. First, thank you all for your generosity. Your contributions and our visitors enabled both churches to end in very positive notes.

Operations might look close, but since we are on a “cash-basis”, we actually saved over \$100,000 after we paid for the operations of both churches. Offertory collections for St. Jude were up \$53,614 and for St. Mary were up \$7,416. Both churches also received sizeable donations from even more generous individuals and due to special collections. Both churches exceeded our budgeted revenue with welcome praise. This enabled us to exceed our budget expenses by \$15,835 for St. Jude and \$5,786 for St. Mary to continue to do even more for our parish community. Over \$26,000 was given to needy individuals and charitable organizations. Another \$14,316.25 was sent to specific charities from special collections.

This left St. Mary with a NET positive income of \$478 and St. Jude a NET positive income of \$8,063.

We also paid for over \$40,000 worth of capital improvements what were in the budget. On top of all that we (for first time as a combined parish) exceeded our BAA goal of \$57,137.34 by \$4,826.66. We will be refunded 80% of this amount in the near future.

During the coming year we have planned for the following projects (not in any order): re-surface & re-stripe the church parking; paint the church; add a walk-way from the kitchen to the Gathering area; and some minor repairs to the rectory bathroom. All these projects plus operating the church are funded in this year’s budget. Thanks to all who are helping and those who are going to help.

So far this fiscal year (July reports) we are ahead of projections for both offertories. This will lead us forward to success.

J.P. Horvat (Chair), Tom Schroder, Jim Fortunato, Dawn Brannan and Michele Mele.

Census Data

| | |
|----------------------------------|------------|
| Parish – Total Households | 808 |
| Breakdown | |
| St. Jude | 676 |
| St. Mary | 132 |
| Total Parishioners | 1984 |

Reflects 33 family decrease over last year; however, this is most likely due to the data cleanup efforts that is ongoing.

New Parishioners through the years

2010-2011 – 45 new families

SJ - 32

SM- 13

2011-2012 – 51 new families

SJ – 39

SM – 12

2012-2013 – 72 new families

SJ - 63

SM - 9

2013-2014 – 38 new families

SJ - 33

SM - 5

Age (Combined Average) 48

Average Age 48

St. Jude 44

St. Mary 51

Median Age (AVG) 53

St. Jude 46

St. Mary 60

Modal Age

St. Jude 20

St. Mary 66, 71, 69

Where we live:

95% of our members live in the following towns:

| | |
|---------------------|-------|
| Burgaw | .12% |
| Hampstead | 67% |
| Holly Ridge | 5.5% |
| Jacksonville | 1.1% |
| North Topsail Beach | 2.4% |
| Rocky Point | .49% |
| Sneads Ferry | 8.6% |
| Surf City | 3.9% |
| Topsail Beach | .61% |
| Wilmington | 5.87% |

5% of our members live out of our area.

What we do:

| Activity | Members |
|------------------------|---------|
| Altar Server | 18 |
| Lector | 36 |
| Greeter | 57 |
| Usher | 31 |
| Sacristans | 19 |
| Counters | 13 |
| Extraordinary Minister | 60 |
| Choir | 24 |
| Catholic Daughters | 58 |
| Knights of Columbus | 70 |

| | |
|-------------------------|----|
| Outreach/Assistance | 14 |
| Pro Life | 20 |
| Prayer Chain | 14 |
| Prayer Shawl | 12 |
| Catechist/RCIA teachers | 17 |
| Bible Study | 10 |
| Parish Council | 9 |
| Finance Council | 5 |
| Office Volunteers | 21 |
| Welcome | 5 |

Who we give to

Community Outreach – Emergency Assistance/Food Drops
St. Joseph Food Pantry
4 Cs Food Pantry
CHAPS
Pender East Ministerial Association
Back Pack Food Programs – Topsail/Dixon
Catholic Charities Wilmington, Raleigh
Hospice
Relay for Life-American Cancer Society
Rice Bowl
Mama J's Helping Hands
Pender Correctional Institution Chapel Project
People of Faith Against the Death Penalty
Heifer International
Cape Fear Free Clinic
Onslow Community Outreach Soup Kitchen & Homeless Shelter

Members of Our Councils

Finance Council Members

Dawn Brannan Jim Fortunato
JP Horvat Tom Schroder
Michele Mele

Parish Council Members

Chris Buffalino Mike Curley
Mary Keesee Steve Mongeau
Jackie Rourke Rick Spillane
Dana Spillane Anna Smith
JP Horvat (ex officio – finance chair)

Parish Council Committees – (These committees are chaired by parish council members with membership from the parish at large. We are building out these committees now.)

Liturgy
Faith Formation
Peace/Justice/Outreach
Social Activities
Stewardship
Finance
Building/Grounds
Land Acquisition/New Facility
Strategic Planning
Parish Unification Steering Committee

St. Jude the Apostle/St. Mary Gate of Heaven Financial Statement

Fiscal Year 2013 (July 1, 2012 through June 30, 2013

| | | |
|------------------------------------|------------|---------------------|
| Ordinary | 432,246.00 | |
| Non-ordinary | 44,279.00 | |
| Fees & Misc. | 10,060.00 | |
| Donations | 30,711.00 | |
| Charity | 3,414.00 | |
| Total Operating Income | | <u>\$520,710.00</u> |
| Operating Expenses: | | |
| Word | 15,646.00 | |
| Worship | 19,231.00 | |
| Service | 26,379.00 | |
| Personnel | 187,452.91 | |
| Rectory | 24,182.09 | |
| Office | 40,269.00 | |
| Electricity | 10,190.00 | |
| Telephone | 9,590.00 | |
| Insurance | 13,285.00 | |
| Building & Ground Maintenance | 56,935.00 | |
| Assessments & Subsidies | 28,531.00 | |
| Total Operating Expenses | | \$431,691.00 |
| NET OPERATING TOTAL | | <u>\$ 89,019.00</u> |
| Non-Operating Income: | | |
| Transfer from Savings | 33,880.00 | |
| Specific Charities | 14,890.00 | |
| Building Fund | 28,457.00 | |
| Sales Tax Refund | 4,185.00 | |
| Stipends/Mass Intensions | 4,579.00 | |
| Total Non-Operating Income | | \$85,991.00 |
| Non-Operating Expenses: | | |
| Transfer to Savings | 66,843.00 | |
| Transfer to Building fund | 38,662.00 | |
| Capital Expenditures | 40,534.00 | |
| Specific Charities | 14,316.00 | |
| Sales Tax | 2,318.00 | |
| Stipends/Mass Intensions | 3,796.00 | |
| Total Non-Operating Expense | | \$166,469.00 |
| Non-Operating Total | | <u>\$ (80,478)</u> |
| NET INCOME & EXPENSES | | <u>\$ 8,541</u> |
| Checking | 91,466 | |
| * Savings | 474,416 | |
| * Building | 335,896 | |
| * Contingency | 11,993 | |

Fun Facts

- ❖ There are 397 seats in the Sanctuary at St. Jude
- ❖ There are 278 seats in the Pavilion
- ❖ We had 4 weddings this fiscal year
- ❖ There were 15 Baptisms
- ❖ We purchased 33,000 hosts
- ❖ We purchase 10 cases of wine per year
- ❖ Approximately 25 people attend daily mass
- ❖ Approximately 300 people attend each mass in the summer (roughly 1500 people per weekend)
- ❖ Approximately 600 people attended each of our four Easter Sunday Masses
- ❖ We use approximately 150 glow sticks during our Living Rosary
- ❖ We have several bluebirds on the property and they like to perch on the white traffic posts out front.
- ❖ We spend \$965 on electricity each month.
- ❖ The Butterfly Garden was put in and is cared for by the ProLife Group.