

# THE PASTOR'S POST

## NOVENA, NUMBERS, AND NOT WHAT YOU THINK

Dear Parish Family:

As we come to the end of the liturgical year and prepare for some new beginnings with Advent, thank you for taking the time to listen at Masses last weekend and this weekend about the "state of our parish". I am grateful for your concern for our parish and for me. Together, as friends of the poor, we continue to be prophets of hope for one another and a world in need. Let's use this week's readings, some details of our parish and an opportunity to pray together in the next few weeks as good jumping off points.

### **Not What You Think**

The title of today's feast can cause some confusion and Jesus, right to the end, defies expectations. The Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe is not about a king as the world would see it. It is about recognizing Jesus as King as he would see it. It is not about some human definition of kingship, it is about a vision of the Kingdom of God.

Today's Gospel does not show a king by the world's standards. It shows a king who testifies to the truth, whether popular or unpopular. It shows a vision of royalty that is inspired by the Matthew 25, as we spoke about many of the Masses last weekend - to feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, visit the imprisoned and to love the other with everything we have.

This is the kingdom we belong to. As I have said before, it is about the power of love, not the love of power. We encounter that in the Gospel today, no? We read this Gospel as Jesus is about to make the ultimate sacrifice. For who? You and me! In the hope that as the recipients of this royalty, we might go forth to do the same, not counting the cost.

### **Numbers**

But speaking of counting and costs, I want to follow up on some of the information I shared last weekend and will speak about this weekend as well. As I mentioned, as part of the bankruptcy process, which we pray is coming closer to resolution, St. Brigid's contributed \$383,966. This, obviously, presents a significant financial threat to the parish. It is eased a bit by the sale of the house on Maple Avenue. We need to be extra vigilant going forward.

Second, as reported last week, we finished the past fiscal year with a \$51,000 deficit. This is not as bad as it could have been. With the loss of income on St. Brigid's Lane (an approximately \$140,000 loss which we did not budget), we came through this as well as we could have. In the year ahead, we have created a budget that does not rely on any income from any rentals of buildings. If we are able to rent the convent, that money will not become part of the operating budget. For the 2024-25 budget we have worked hard to reduce expenses including a reduction of approximately \$7,000 from communications improvements, \$84,000 in benefits, and \$16,000 in salaries. Honestly, the last two involve the changing of employee's jobs and responsibilities so this is particularly hard for our parish and for them. In addition, we anticipate a significant savings in oil as we made significant investments in the boiler system in the school. Obviously, nothing is guaranteed and we will need to monitor and be cautious, as I am sure you are with your family's budget.

Third, the only way we are able to have a reduced deficit and the only way we can continue to invest in our parish is through your generosity in the Sunday collection. This is the most important and significant way you can support our parish. I want you to offer what you have to St. Brigid's because you believe in the work of kingdom building that is happening here. There is no better place to do that than your participation in the Sunday eucharist. Last year, Sunday collections rose nearly 10%. If we can keep at that pace in the year ahead, it will allow us to do even more for God's people. Thank you for your incredible generosity, in ways big and small, to help this parish continue to carry out its mission.

Fourth, please consider the ways you can offer the gifts God has given you, using them both inside and outside of the parish. In a reflection for this Wednesday's readings, E. Jane Rutter writes, "As good stewards, we can no longer expect recognition for our gifts of time or treasure, or attach strings to sharing our talents. We have to transcend from an attitude of 'what do I have to give up?' to an attitude of 'what else can I give?' 'What other need may I help fill?'" Please consider the ways you can not just volunteer but share



# EL POST DEL PARROCO

## EN QUE NOVENA, NÚMEROS Y NO LO QUE PIENSAS

your gifts and talents freely with our parish community. Just look through these pages to see the many ways your gifts are needed, wanted, and desired.

Once again, thank you for your ongoing patience, support, generosity, and prayers for the work of St. Brigid's. Of course, if you have any questions about the financial report, I ask you to contact me or to contact Marcel Catafago, our Business Manager, at the main office. His email is marcel.c@saintbrigid.net.

### **Novena of Grace**

As you may know I was ordained a priest on December 3, the Feast of St. Francis Xavier. Since I learned that date from Bishop Murphy in 2011, I learned more about this patron saint of missionaries. He was called to work he did not plan to do and gave it everything he had. His work was not easy, yet he continued to pour out his life for each new community he encountered and evangelized.

There is a tradition of praying the Novena of Grace leading up to his feast day and, more commonly, to the date of his canonization, March 12. (I pray it both times - I figure it can't hurt!). This weekend, I am leaving Novena of Grace booklets out at the doors of the Church and Our Lady's Chapel. I invite you to consider joining me in this prayer. Honestly, I am always a little leery of providing certain prayers and novenas. Remember, just because it works for me does not mean it has to work for your prayer life. If you think you might find it helpful, please take a copy as you leave today and pray it with me.

Before praying it, ask the Lord and St. Francis Xavier to help you discern the grace you need and make your intention for the novena. I have probably prayed this novena for 13 years. As I have written before, I cannot tell you that my intention was answered as I desired but I can tell you, with certainty, that my prayers were heard.

Please pray for me. I promise the same.

*Father John*

Querida familia parroquial:

A medida que nos acercamos al final del año litúrgico y nos preparamos para nuevos comienzos con el Adviento, gracias por tomarse el tiempo para escuchar en las misas el fin de semana pasado y este fin de semana sobre el "estado de nuestra parroquia". Les agradezco su preocupación por nuestra parroquia y por mí. Juntos, como amigos de los pobres, seguimos siendo profetas de esperanza los unos para los otros y para un mundo necesitado. Aprovechemos las lecturas de esta semana, algunos detalles de nuestra parroquia y la oportunidad de rezar juntos en las próximas semanas como buenos puntos de partida.

### **No es lo que piensas.**

El título de la fiesta de hoy puede causar cierta confusión y Jesús, hasta el final, desafía las expectativas. La solemnidad de Nuestro Señor Jesucristo, Rey del Universo, no trata de un rey como lo vería el mundo. Se trata de reconocer a Jesús como Rey tal como él lo vería. No se trata de una definición humana de realeza, sino de una visión del Reino de Dios. El Evangelio de hoy no muestra a un rey según los criterios del mundo. Muestra a un rey que da testimonio de la verdad, sea popular o impopular. Muestra una visión de la realeza que se inspira en Mateo 25, como hablamos en muchas de las misas del pasado fin de semana: dar de comer al hambriento, dar de beber al sediento, vestir al desnudo, visitar al encarcelado y amar al otro con todo lo que tenemos.

Este es el reino al que pertenecemos. Como he dicho antes, se trata del poder del amor, no del amor al poder. Lo encontramos en el Evangelio de hoy, ¿no? Leemos este Evangelio cuando Jesús está a punto de hacer el último sacrificio. ¿Por quién? Para ti y para mí. Con la esperanza de que, como receptores de esta realeza, podamos ir a hacer lo mismo, sin contar lo que cueste.

### **Números.**

Pero hablando de cuentas y costos, quiero dar seguimiento a parte de la información que compartí el fin de semana pasado y de la que hablaré este fin de semana también. Como mencioné, como parte del proceso de bancarota, que rezamos se esté acercando a su resolución, Santa Brígida contribuyó con \$383,966 dólares. Esto, obviamente, presenta una amenaza financiera significativa para la parroquia. Se alivia un poco por la venta de la casa en Maple Avenue. Tenemos que ser más vigilantes en el futuro.

En segundo lugar, como se informó la semana pasada, terminamos el pasado año fiscal con un déficit de

**St. Brigid**  
**August 31, 2024**

	Budget 2024-25	Final 2023-24	2022-23	difference between 23- 24 and 22-23	pct. Change	2021-22
<b>Income</b>						
Collection Revenue	1,547,000	1,496,296	1,366,759	129,537	9.48%	1,317,794
Fund Raising Income	52,000	66,615	42,942	23,673	55.13%	67,000
Parish Programs Revenue	360,000	385,259	481,004	(95,745)	-19.91%	314,000
Auxiliary Revenue	488,400	512,722	796,017	(283,295)	-35.59%	800,781
<b>Total Operating Revenue</b>	<b>2,447,400</b>	<b>2,460,892</b>	<b>2,686,722</b>	<b>(225,830)</b>	<b>-8.41%</b>	<b>2,508,574</b>
<b>Expenses</b>						
Salaries	651,000	675,919	715,250	(39,331)	-5.50%	76,182
Fringe Benefits	454,900	460,943	434,035	26,908	6.20%	410,005
Fundraising	-	7,560	3,060	4,500	147.06%	2,000
Parish Program	235,500	299,084	431,018	(131,934)	-30.61%	25,149
School Subsidy	190,320	190,320	186,860	3,460	1.85%	179,000
Printing and Office	168,000	154,986	153,475	1,511	0.98%	140,000
Auxiliary	302,700	315,024	301,313	13,711	4.55%	229,059
Rectory Household	18,500	18,264	17,818	446	2.50%	2,955
Building, Utilities & Maint	448,300	392,680	443,262	(50,582)	-11.41%	41,451
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>2,469,220</b>	<b>2,514,780</b>	<b>2,686,091</b>	<b>(171,311)</b>	<b>-6.38%</b>	<b>2,450,000</b>
<b>Net Operating Surplus/(Deficit)</b>	<b>(21,820)</b>	<b>(53,888)</b>	<b>631</b>	<b>(54,519)</b>		<b>50,607</b>

*Note: The large decrease in auxiliary revenue above represents the loss of the rental effective January 2024. Operating surplus (deficit) exclude extraordinary items such as one-time project costs, and other non-operating revenues and expenses such as capital gains and losses and the sale of the house- all reflected below.*

Non-Ordinary Operating Activity	80,000	397,483	180,634	216,849	120.05%	(33,163)
Diocesan/3rd Party Collections (net)		0	0			0
Extraordinary Activity (net)	(96,000)	175,428	(166,312)	341,740	-205.48%	(354,136)
<b>Net Total Surplus/(Deficit)</b>	<b>(37,820)</b>	<b>519,023</b>	<b>14,953</b>	<b>504,070</b>		<b>(63,692)</b>

**INFORME FINANCIERO**

**FINANCIAL REPORT**

