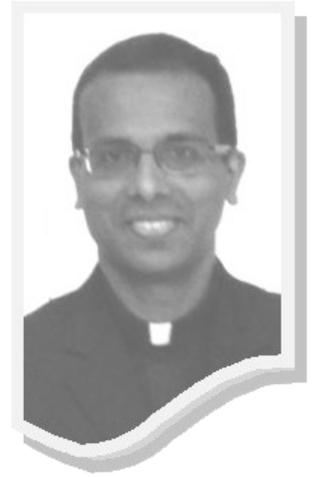




From the Pastor



Blessings Received . . . Blessings Given: Part II

We are currently working on achieving the vision that I had presented to you last year. Our Seminarian, Caleb Cunningham, has been a great blessing in this regard. He is working hard with Janet Schwarz, the Director of Faith Formation, and Sr. Jeannette to establish a strong parish Youth Group, Newman Centers at OSU Cascade and COCC, and a Young Adult Group. Initial contacts have been made, and their efforts are moving ahead nicely. We will need to start the ball rolling soon on hiring a full-time Youth Minister who will continue this work next year. It is also part of my vision to have a part-time person on staff for the Hispanic Ministry in the coming year. These two positions will amount to \$100,000 per year, all inclusive.

We also have important maintenance projects such as upgrading the heating system for the School and Administrative building, redoing the driveway, and finding another exit for the facility on 27th Street. We are also getting a list of short-term and long-term maintenance projects ready for the Historic Church. I would like the short-term projects to be completed before its 100th Anniversary in 2020. All these take financial sacrifices from all of us. Therefore, we cannot sit back and relax during and after the mortgage is paid off. The good news is that we do NOT need a campaign to accomplish these projects. We can take care of these if we keep up to our budget, which is \$26,000 every week—our current-year budget. So, we are holding the budget steady for the next year. However, this does not include your contribution to the debt retirement.

The Catholic Church in general has gone through some very rough times recently and is still feeling its effects where its sinfulness has come to the forefront. I have been tormented by this more than you. These are despicable things we are ashamed of. However, we need to pray for the victims, and pray for purification and renewal of the Church. The failures of a few do not determine the credibility of our Faith. Our Faith is in Him who died on the cross. He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. He never fails. This is not the time to shy away from our faith or to hold back but to evangelize and live it out boldly. This is the time for the laity to get engaged in the works of the Church. As Bishop Robert Barron (the founder of *Word on Fire Catholic Ministries* and Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles) says, “This is the time to fight for the Church.”

Jesus kept watch over his disciples, whom he sent in a boat to the other side of the lake, while he went up the mountain to pray. When they found themselves in the middle of a severe storm and were afraid for their lives, they found their master, Jesus, coming to them—walking on the water. When you face the storm in your personal life or in the Church, remember Jesus is close to you. He comes walking toward you.

—Fr. Jose Thomas

PS: Congratulations to Deacon Steve McGlone on his Ordination Anniversary—November 10, 2007!