

SAINT PATRICK CATHOLIC CHURCH

April 20, 2010

Dear Saint Patrick Community Members:

It looks like the winter weather is gone and we are being treated to the bulb flowers and blossoming shrubs and trees. I write this having just returned from Louisville, where things were in full bloom. I walked out of the hotel one evening and thought for a moment they were having snow flurries, but it was simply the breeze taking blossoms off the trees.

Our warmth has some folks looking ahead to the summer. In my absence, I learned there were inquiries regarding VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL. Any response indicating that we were not having this activity was incorrect. If you are interested in VBS, we need your help to make it a cooperative effort. Please call and let the office know that you will be available for planning and staffing. Tomorrow the pastors and DRE's in each parish are meeting. Our goal is coordination and improvement of the entire spectrum of Faith Formation in the area. Hopefully, we can either cooperate in common programs or make sure we are scheduling at different times to give our people more options.

In May, we will be conducting our annual CSA appeal. In meeting with parish leadership and interested parishioners last Saturday, it became very clear that there is a lack of understanding of what the Catholic Services Appeal is all about. Offering you some information regarding the history and the needs is the primary purpose of this letter.

When the Diocese of Gaylord was founded, Bishop Szoka did not want to uncritically establish structures which were a source of critique. One of those structures was the custom of individually taking national and international collections as a second collection and supporting the Diocese with a tax on parish income. He suggested a formula for church support based upon the Biblical TITHE (10% - the first fruits—back to the Lord). He suggested that half our tithe - 5% should be gifted to our local parish, 1% pledged to CSA with the remaining 4% used for the variety of charities that appeal to our generosity within the broad community (United Fund) and the Church itself (Mission Sunday and Religious Retirement which were not included in the CSA formula).

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In the early days of our Diocese, CSA involved a home visit by teams of parishioners. For Bishop Szoka, EVANGELISM is the PRIMARY purpose with an essential link to fundraising. His hope was that when practice of the faith had faded for some reason, there would at least be a yearly reminder that a person was Catholic and had a place in the community in a relationship of interdependence. Over the years, many parishes moved away from the door to door canvas of CSA and reduced it to a simple request for donations. This factor partially explains why some parishes (including St Pat's) have difficulty collecting their assessment.

Last Saturday, several folks were surprised to hear me use the term "assessment" and were equally surprised to learn that any donations received beyond our target goal are returned to the parish, and any deficits become an obligation the parish must pay out of normal income. The formula is based upon parish income and the number of parishioners. I have included some charts to illustrate the roller-coaster statistics of St. Pat's over the last decade. The most interesting chart involves the number of parishioners whose gifts fall into various tiers. While the generosity of everyone is appreciated, I'm afraid that continuing this pattern of giving makes it impossible for our parish to meet our obligations. Less than 40% of donors are giving more than \$250.00 annually. That means that 60% of donors need to increase their contribution. MOST importantly, the many who do not understand that this pledge is NOT an option but a basic requirement of being a Catholic Christian, need to develop a plan of Christian stewardship. Someone asked what do you need? That question is ideally answered with the original one percent formula. For every thousand dollars of income, a gift of \$10 is needed. If the average income of a person in this area is \$35,000, then we are asking for a CSA PLEDGE of \$350. Some folks arrive at a similar amount by pledging \$1 a day. One could say that a pledge of **\$350.00 (\$35.00 monthly for 10 months) is a starting point that needs to be raised or lowered depending upon real income.**

Amount	# of Gifts	%
\$5000 & up:	0	0%
\$1000 to 4000:	8	2%
\$500 to 999:	34	8%
\$250 to 499:	125	30%
\$100 to 249:	145	35%
\$50 to 99:	47	11%
\$1 to 49:	57	14%
TOTAL:	416	100%

FAIR
SILARE
FOR
MOST

NEED
TO
IMPROVE

<u>TREND ANALYSIS</u>					
YEAR	TARGET	PLEDGE	PAID	AVERAGE	
				PLEDGE	PAID
02	\$86,640	\$81,750	\$86,640	\$71	\$75
03	\$86,640	\$60,798	\$86,640	\$79	\$113
04	\$85,952	\$82,116	\$85,952	\$77	\$81
05	\$92,292	\$100,449	\$92,292	\$84	\$77
06	\$87,549	\$88,171	\$87,549	\$92	\$91
07	\$98,132	\$105,869	\$98,132	\$101	\$93
08	\$108,156	\$109,138	\$100,721	\$98	\$90
09	\$95,385	\$98,080	\$88,184	\$99	\$80
10	\$92,415	\$0	\$20	\$0	\$20

I am using the term **PLEDGE** because it is the rare individual who can give what they should give with a single gift. Your CSA worker will be able to help you arrange the pledge payment in various ways to meet your needs.

Within our parishes, those parents who use the GTACS have a heightened obligation to proportional giving because of the agreement they signed with the school which allows this parish to make a substantial weekly contribution which allows us to keep our tuition at the present rate. WEEKLY support of the parish at 5% and annual CSA pledging would suggest that in most cases, Parish support should total in the FOUR digit range ANNUALLY (\$1,000 to \$9,999) and CSA must at least reflect an honest one percent (greater than \$350).

Sadly, there are a significant number of school parents who are not meeting this obligation and have not officially informed the Pastor and school of changed circumstances which may be creating difficulty. If you are among these parents, please budget to make your weekly tithes and CSA. If you did not pledge last year, please substantially increase this year's pledge into the \$500 and greater tiers. Without personal contact and information why you may be challenged in doing this, the parish will not be able to confirm your claim of membership when asked by GTACS for confirmation.

St. Patrick Parish was three years in arrears to CSA as well as in debt to the school when I became pastor last year. We have maintained our school payments this year but have not been able to address the debt which magnifies the burden on the school since requests for tuition aid has expanded. Families who not only paid their tuition in the past, but made additional contributions, are now requesting aid! Everything we do in the parish has a ripple effect.

You will soon be getting a letter from Bishop Hebda with detailed information regarding the CSA campaign. Essentially the CSA is a ONCE a YEAR pledge which covers the many national and international collections which otherwise would be addressed separately and trigger the critique of "always talking about money"! When you study the material you will see that the bulk of the budget is for local needs. This portion replaces the "cathedraticum" – the tax allowed in the law on parish income. It is the simplest way to address many real needs.

FOR ME, CSA is an illustration of what it means to be a CATHOLIC Church. If our focus is only on ourselves, we become Congregational. Because of the culture in which we live, elements of Congregational and other forms of thinking not compatible with a Catholic identity have affected our thinking. CSA allows us to affirm the interdependence of all believers and all human persons. It is not a one way dynamic in which we give so others may benefit. We get back ministry and services that help us remain in communion with each other and aids us in addressing our challenges.

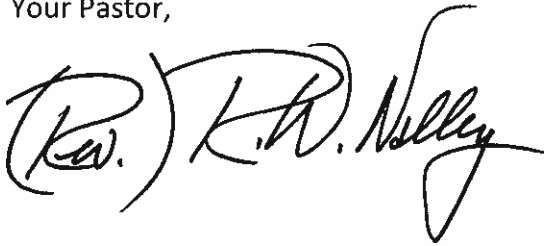
I do not ask you to do anything I do not do myself. My salary is about the average \$35,000. Because priests are considered "self-employed" for tax purposes, I must pay all my Social Security taxes – the parish does not pay the employer portion. I have pledged \$100 per month (\$1,000 annual pledge). My weekly gift to the parish is \$30 (\$1,560.00 annually). When I was assigned to St Patrick's, I transferred the balance of my CSA pledge to this parish because we needed it. My contribution pales in light of the sacrificial generosity of many of you. Several parishioners with families to raise and tuition to pay gift the parish \$100 or more weekly. Get out your pencil; divide the number of supporting parishioners (envelope numbers) into our weekly total.

Ask yourself on which side of the average do you fall; and ask why. Consistency and tithing in proportion to income would allow us to address the many needs of the parish and justly deal with our employees. Please pray over this information and your budget. I am convinced that the **great majority of our parish needs to be at least in the \$250-499 pledge tier.** I know that a substantial percentage should be in a much higher tier if 1% of income is given. IF you have not been a proportional giver, begin NOW with this year's CSA. Our GOD is never outdone in generosity. YOU will be blessed and become a blessing to countless others.

FINALLY, let me again THANK everyone who in a spirit of Christian stewardship makes payments on last year's pledges. IF everyone who pledged honored that pledge we would not add to our debt. The **assessment for 2012-11 is \$92,415.** The lay leaders of this year's campaign and I have decided to set a personal **higher parish goal of \$128,000** which would allow us to address the outstanding debts. We invite any questions you may have and will publically address them on the weekend of May 1-2 after all the Masses. I encourage you to attend one of these informational meetings prior to deciding on your pledge.

I remain in need of your prayers and support and assure you of my prayers for you. In Jesus the Good Shepherd, I am,

Your Pastor,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "(Rev.) K. W. Nalley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "K" and a long, sweeping tail on the "y".