

Column092020

Companions on the Journey

September 20, 2020

Dear Friends,

Today is Stewardship Sunday and this year, in the wake of the pandemic which has so disrupted our lives and livelihoods these past six months, we have chosen a theme to focus our concentration and donations. **The Promise of Hope and Healing.** Our faith in Jesus Christ is the source of this promise as well as the hope that comes from placing our trust in Him. Saint Anthony's, like so many of our parishioners, experienced an economic impact from a shortage of collection revenue especially in the months of March, April, May, and June.

The shortfall in revenue was \$144,500. That is a large enough shortfall to take your breath away. But the Lord was also at work behind the scenes. Even though our PreK and Child Care Program went into hiatus in March we were still able to receive \$60,000 in Debt Reduction. In addition, a parishioner made a one-time donation of \$100,000 and another contributed a special one-time gift of \$20,000. Those gifts and some other smaller gifts from deceased parishioners enabled us to breathe a little easier. In June, the parish received an additional revenue stream from a Small Business Grant from the Federal Government totaling \$75,500. Those three things enabled us to finish in the black for the fiscal year even though there were no Sunday Masses in Church for three months. But it is highly unlikely that we will receive another \$120,000 in donations and another \$75,000 from the government. That is a \$200,000 differential.

That is why I am asking each parishioner to consider making an enhanced, one-time gift on Stewardship Sunday if it is at all possible. Our hope is to generate an amount over and above the usual \$40,000 revenue from the Stewardship Sunday collection. Our goal is to generate \$100,000 to get us back on track financially and avoid any parish deficit. I truly believe that Our Lord prompted some of our people to step up financially and make special donations to the parish. I have spoken with a number of our parishioners about participating in this year's Stewardship Collection and received wonderful support of pledges. I am most hopeful that this collection will have a healing impact on the parish and on us all as we move forward.

This year's Stewardship Sunday collection can be done at one time or spread out over the next few months if that works better for your budget as an individual or a family. Give what you can. Pray. Discuss. Decide. Give. Thank the Lord for placing you in a position where you can make such a gift. And if your means do not allow you to give at this time, please pray for the success of our campaign. All can give something. It just is not always the same thing. But all is necessary. Let us continue to pray for each other in the time of the corona-visitation. May it end very soon.

In the peace of Christ,

Msgr. McHenry