

ST.MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL PARISH AND SCHOOL

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“Behold, I am sending my messenger ahead of you; he will prepare your way.

A voice of one crying out in the desert: "Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths.”

---Mk 1:2-3

December 6, 2011

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

The passage above from the Gospel for the 2nd Sunday of Advent reminds us that this is a time to prepare our hearts and mind for the coming of the Lord. We see the outward signs of preparation for Christmas with the decorations that seem to go up earlier every year. Later this month we will decorate our sanctuary in a way in which I hope will celebrate and honor the rich diversity of our multicultural parish. I am grateful to God and to you for every opportunity we have to embrace the multicultural face of our Lord.

As we enter the liturgical season of Christmas and the vestment colors change from violet to white, we will also be embarking on the 81st year of St. Michael the Archangel Parish. I have a special resolution for the New Year and I'm asking all 3,627 members of our parish community to join with me to achieve it.

Our church building shows the effects of age and constant use by our many ministries and is badly in need of physical improvements---both visible and invisible. After consultation with our Pastoral and Finance Councils, and in accordance with our Strategic Plan, I ask for your financial support to begin making these improvements.

Phase I will involve painting the ceiling and walls of the sanctuary and installing new carpet as soon after the start of the New Year as possible. Before new carpet can be installed, the old carpet and underlying asbestos tiles must be removed.

The estimated cost of labor and materials for the painting project is \$25,000. For this project I ask you to consider the purchase of a gallon of paint at \$25.00. For the carpeting, installation, and removal of asbestos tiles and electrical outlets on the floor, the estimate is \$55,000. I ask each of you to consider donating \$50.00 for a yard for carpeting. If you are able to give more, please do so.

To accomplish this first phase of our renovation project, I am launching a Christmas Fund Drive, and I am asking every member of St. Michael's Parish to contribute. I ask you to consider these needs as you plan for your Christmas offering as this offering will be used for Phase I of our renovation project.

I am sure you will agree that these improvements are greatly needed and long overdue. With your help, now is our best opportunity to accomplish them. As you may know, through the generosity of our Archbishop, Cardinal Donald Wuerl, parishes retain 100% of their Christmas offertory and are not required to remit the usual percentage to the archdiocese. That means 100% of your Christmas offering can be dedicated to those renovations and will not be used for any other purpose. Please use a Christmas envelope for your contribution or mark your check "Christmas Fund/Phase One Project."

I believe the Phase I goal is achievable, and I ask for your help to reach it---one gallon of paint and one yard of carpet at a time.

The season of Advent yearly re-announces our opportunity and responsibility to be prepared for the coming of the Lord. We remember the incarnation and prepare for the return of Jesus Christ in glory and power. The liturgy of the second Sunday of Advent reminds us of the comfort of being reconciled with God and our mission to announce like Jesus, the kingdom of God. There is no more excellent way to prepare than to be reconciled with Christ and the Church through the sacrament of Reconciliation, so please add the reception of the sacrament this month to your Advent and Christmas preparations.

I ask you to recall the generosity of God manifest in The Nativity and respond to the needs of our parish as God gives you the grace to do so.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rev. Eddie Tolentino". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Msgr. Tolentino