

February 13, 2010

Dear Parishioner,

Horizontally, snow is being driven across the landscape. The parish buildings appear to rest in the middle of a desert of snow. I am sure that you see a similar view from your homes. This winter's weather has not been without effect. With the exception of snow removal and emergency services, gainful labor has almost come to a complete halt on many occasions this winter. Consequently, hourly employees are anxious about their ability to meet their monthly expenses and budgets are being both challenged and strained. These challenges and constraints experienced by many are also shared by our parish.

I have been postponing this letter to you since our first weekend of inclement weather in December. That weekend was followed by a second weekend of heavy rain and then snow and Christmas arrived. Now we are experiencing the effects of our third snow storm of 2010. Over this period of time mass attendance has declined with a corresponding decline in our offertory. (Every mass celebrated, however, has been surprisingly attended. I greatly admire all of you who live near and are robust enough to brave the weather or hazard the drive from a distance. I cannot begin to tell you how powerfully your response to faith has moved me). Our expenses have, however, remained constant with the addition of expenses related to the weather.

To give you some idea of our challenges, our December 2009 income was \$25,182.95 less than our December 2008 income. It appears that our January 2010 income will be less than our January 2009 income. Our February 2010 decline in income is likely to be even more drastic. Our snow removal expenses exceed \$10,000.

Even before the advent of the winter's additional expenses we have been laboring to satisfy all of the parish's expenses. Salaries and vendors are now current. However, our indebtedness to the Archdiocese continues to grow at a monthly rate of \$27,000. An additional weekly offertory is therefore, needed to satisfy all of our obligations. Divided among all of our parishioners this is a very small per capita obligation if we all recognize and accept it as our own.

Because God is extravagant in His gifts to us I ask of you, as I ask of myself, to make a generous return to God for the maintenance of His church and the expansion of our mission to proclaim the Gospel to the ends of the earth. For my part I will examine my giving and make sure that my return to God of the first fruits of my labor has been returned to him according to his command. Actually, I confess that I am delinquent. In obedience to God and as an example to you I promise to correct this before this weekend.

I thank you in advance for your response to this plea to satisfy and in some instances increase your offertory giving. With the cooperation of the weather we might be snow free by Easter. By cooperating with God's grace and example we can similarly be debt free, forever.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Rev Msgr. Eddie Tolentino

A Prayer for Our Priests

We thank you, God our Father, for those who have responded to your call to priestly ministry. Accept this prayer we offer on their behalf: Fill your priests with the sure knowledge of your love. Open their hearts to the power and consolation of the Holy Spirit. Lead them to new depths of union with your Son. Increase in them profound faith in the Sacraments they celebrate as they nourish, strengthen and heal us.

Lord Jesus Christ, grant that these, your priests, may inspire us to strive for holiness by the power of their example, as men of prayer who ponder your word and follow your will.

O Mary, Mother of Christ and our mother, guard with your maternal care these chosen ones, so dear to the Heart of your Son. Intercede for our priests that, offering the Sacrifice of your Son, they may be conformed more each day to the image of your Son, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen

St. John Vianney, universal patron of priests pray for us and our priests