



FROM THE DESK OF FR. MIKE

Every spring, the Parish Staff engage in deliberations and conversations regarding the budgets needed for ministry in the next fiscal year. Yearly, the Archdiocese provides Parish Business Managers, Principals, and Pastors information to be used in preparing budgets for the 2022-2023 Fiscal Year. This information is then shared with members of Parish Staff with which to assist them in budgeting fiscal resources for the next year of ministry.

The Archdiocese shares with each parish what the upcoming expenses will be for health insurance and benefits, property and casualty insurance, academic and years of service step increases for school faculty and the recommended salary increases for parish employees. There are a variety of Archdiocesan assessments each parish makes to the Archdiocese for supporting our parish as well as the Office of Catholic Schools assessments for each child enrolled in the Catholic grade school. These expenses are included in the budgeting process for parishes across the Archdiocese.

All of these conversations are reflective of the generosity, the tithing, and the financial support received from you, the faithful of St. Mary's. Many parishioners have supported the parish very generously during the COVID-19 pandemic. We have seen a very positive increase in parishioners who are supporting St. Mary's using **GiveCentral** as their means of contributing to the weekly Sunday offertory, the second collections as well as contributing to St. Mary's in the Christmas and Easter collections. (You can sign up to use **GiveCentral** with the link through the parish website.) We are busy preparing for the Triduum celebrations and the joyous Easter season. Your contributions to your parish this Easter are very much appreciated.

As we look at the upcoming budgets we always work at making sure the classes and curriculum for the School and Religious Education programs are updated on a regular basis. Working with parents in both programs, our children grow in faith and the knowledge of serving God and our neighbor. May our children always give thanks to God for gifts, graces, and blessings received as well as the knowledge that it is good to give back to God by sharing with those in need.

As the School looks forward to programs next school year, the Parents' Association is busy working on the upcoming School Spring Gala being held on May 13. All parishioners, parents of School children, alumni, and friends of the parish are invited. The funds raised through the Spring Gala go towards supporting the School in the current fiscal year. Any and all funds raised in excess of the goals for this year will further enhance school programs for the coming year. I am working with Dr. Brua, the Parents' Association, and the School Advisory Committee to find ways to expand our STEAM program. There is a cutting-edge STEAM program "Project Lead the Way" (**PLTW**). We are planning on ways that we can bring **PLTW** to our school in the coming years. Please follow this link for information regarding tickets for the Spring Gala on Friday May 13: bit.ly/SOSMGala.

Every Lent the Catholic Relief Services' **Operation Rice Bowl** makes a profound difference in the lives of those whose basic needs are not always met. If you have been using the Rice Bowl as part of your Lenten tithing, please return your offerings so we can combine the monies and send them in to Catholic Relief Services where they will make a wonderful and substantial difference in the lives of God's people around the world.

St. Mary's is working with Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Chicago supporting people in the Ukraine. If you are able to contribute to help those in the Ukraine, you can include your gift in the offertory basket or your **GiveCentral** support.

This coming Tuesday, April 5, Fr. Radley and I will be in the church to celebrate the sacrament of reconciliation beginning at 6:00pm. We are always available to schedule private confessions at a time that works best for you. If this coming Tuesday or our regular time for confession on Saturday mornings is not convenient for you, please reach out and schedule an appointment to celebrate the healing sacrament of reconciliation.

May God bless you with a spiritually enriching and renewing Lenten season,

Fr. Mike Nacup