



ST. ANDRÉ BESSETTE PARISH

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November 9, 2014

Dear Parishioners:

On this Stewardship Sunday, I am pleased to be able to present to you the final annual reports for the four Malone Catholic Parishes before they combined to form the new St. André Bessette Parish on July 1, 2104.

Such reports, of course, can never fully capture the life of a faith community, but they do give us a snapshot of how things are going. As usual, the financial reports reveal the great generosity of our parishioners to supporting the mission and ministries of the Catholic Church in Malone. Hopefully, you'll agree that the reports also show the prudence that the parish staff and I try to exercise in making use of our resources. We pledge to you to continue to do our best!

Allow me now to explain a few things and highlight some others.

I believe that most of the numbers in the Spiritual Life Report are pretty self-explanatory. While they may be clear, they are nonetheless quite concerning. It's troubling to note that we had only 30 baptisms during 2013-2014, while we had more than three times as many funerals. This, unfortunately, is part of a pattern we've been watching in recent years:

	<i>Baptisms</i>	<i>Weddings</i>	<i>Funerals</i>
2009-2010	45	23	104
2010-2011	51	23	118
2011-2012	55	11	119
2012-2013	32	14	98
2013-2014	30	11	106

This pattern is not unique to Malone, as similar decreases are being seen in other North Country parishes, too. I should also mention that a few of these baptisms—and even more of these weddings—are celebrated for folks who have moved away from the area but come back “home” at these key moments in their lives. With figures like these, it's only reasonable to expect that things like Sunday Mass attendance, the number of students in Christian Formation, and those receiving the other sacraments, will continue to decline sharply in the coming years.

A few general observations can be made concerning the Financial Reports. Under *Ordinary Income*, we must take note of the collections (both *Envelopes* and *Plate Offerings*). I'm sure that you, like me, watch the trends in the Sunday collection every week in the bulletin; during fiscal

year 2013-2014, the collections were down about \$21,000 from the year before. (While nearly 700 households request offering envelopes, less than half of them are being used on any given Sunday.) *Extraordinary Receipts (Claims)* is, in large part, a substantial health insurance rebate (totaling \$36,000) for which we applied and then received from the federal government. *Withdrawn from DLF* (the diocesan “Deposit and Loan Fund”) is the money we took out from our savings to help make ends meet—totaling \$75,000. Under *Ordinary Expenses*, it’s noteworthy that *Utilities* were up a total of \$17,000 from the previous year.

There are also a few particular numbers in the Financial Reports that require some explanation. At St. Helen’s, under *Extraordinary Expenses*, the \$3,000 listed as *Other* was the cost of a major mildew clean-up at St. Joseph’s Oratory in Owls Head. (Even though we are not currently using the building, we must keep it up as long as it belongs to us.) At St. John Bosco, under *Extraordinary Expenses*, the \$1,100 designated as *Other* was the cost of clean-up of some water damage after a “flood” in the parish center. At St. Joseph’s, under *Extraordinary Income*, a generous bequest of about \$33,000 was received; you can see this same bequest go back out again under *Ordinary Expenses, Other (Bequest Assessment)* and *Extraordinary Expenses, Amount Loaned to DLF* (i.e. the remainder deposited to savings). Also at St. Joseph’s, under *Ordinary Expenses*, the noticeable spike in *Building Expense* was due in large part to the improvements made in the church bathrooms.

When looking at so many financial figures, most people simply want to see the “bottom line”...which can be a bit hard to pin down in the accounting system we are required to use by the diocese. To help clear matters up, if we had not received the significant health insurance rebate from the federal government, nor withdrawn considerable monies from our savings, the four parishes would have ended fiscal year 2013-2014 looking like this:

Notre Dame	\$15,769.93 deficit
St. Helen’s	\$ 3,797.96 surplus
St. John Bosco	\$ 5,266.69 deficit
St. Joseph’s	\$39,564.94 deficit
<i>Total</i>	\$56,803.60 deficit

I hope you’ll spend some time carefully reviewing these reports and considering what all these numbers mean. They certainly give us plenty to think and pray about! For me, they are further evidence to support the founding of St. André’s Parish last July, as well as a sober encouragement to ponder what other changes we will need to make in the near future in order for our parish to stay vital and effective. If you have any questions on what you see, I’ll do my best to answer them for you.

In Christ’s peace,



Rev. Joseph W. Giroux
Pastor