

## From The Pastor

We are moving into the third week of the CSA. To date, we have collected or pledged \$23,867.00. I am grateful for this strong beginning, and for the many that have made pledges to this annual appeal. We have another \$14000.00 to go to make our goal. I know many of you have not yet had the opportunity to respond. We are depending on you to be a part of this effort and helping us surpass our goal. The tables will no longer be in the back of church. Your gift or pledge can be put in the collection basket, mailed to the parish office, or dropped off there. I am, again, very grateful for the faithful sacrifice so many of you make to support the work of the Church and our parish. I will inform you of any updates as we move along. We do hope to surpass our goal with a strong response from as many as possible.

I am writing on Tuesday this week, and as I write, I am anticipating that the Charter School lease is on the desk of Archbishop Vigneron. It has been signed and approved by Choice Schools, and is now waiting for the Archbishop's signature. This will be a great blessing and support to our annual income. It is a five-year lease with the option of an additional two years. Even as the lease is signed, there will be further details to negotiate and make decisions about. One is the replacement of the back moveable wall of the church. It is a fine wall for our purposes, but it is not fire rated for school use. As such, the wall must be replaced with a two-hour fire rated wall. It may be moveable or solid. I will discuss these options with the Parish Council and make a decision. Realistically, we only need to open the wall once a year for one Christmas mass. A solid wall would be more cost efficient, but we would lose the option of open access to the hall from the church. This decision is pending.

Although I am very grateful for the additional income of the Charter School, I want to make the point again that this does not mean financial independence. On the monies received, we owe fifteen percent to the Education Office of the Archdiocese in addition to the six percent annual assessment. We also must pay the four percent commission fee for the real estate broker. Finally, fifty percent of the building upgrades required by code will be paid by us. All this whittles away at the final dollars we receive. These are the normal conditions of these kinds of agreements.

In the end, we are still benefited with additional income. Nonetheless, this rent income does not figure into our financial viability as a parish. That comes from the ongoing stewardship and faithful contributions of the parish itself. Even in these very challenging economic times, we are largely holding our own. We continue to be very diligent about cutting costs wherever possible. If all do their part through our weekly collections, we will remain in a stable and viable position financially.

On Pentecost Sunday, we will again choose new names for the Parish Council. This year three people will rotate off the Council. We would like to have at least five to seven new names of interested parties for these positions. If you are interested in serving on the Council, please give your name to a current council member, to myself, or to the parish office. The greatest resource we have is one another. Please share your gifts for the good of all.

Tuesday of this week, Deborah Tourville and I will depart for the Commonwealth of Dominica to serve as speakers/ministers in their annual Charismatic Conference. Ironically, it was through Father Art Cooney and Judy Troxell that this opportunity comes to us. It is a privilege and an honor to be asked to lead this large group of 2,500. We will be staying at the Cathedral Church in their local diocese where the conference will take place. The theme of the conference is 'Renounce Evil and Live'. It focuses on repentance and conversion while facing the challenges of staying alive in the Spirit of Jesus through the trials and pains of daily life.

Deborah and I have worked together in the deliverance ministry for almost eight years and have learned quite a bit about inner healing and the road blocks to knowing and living in the peace of Christ. It is a humble work in which we are completely dependent on the wisdom and mercy of Christ. I ask for your prayerful support not only for the people of Dominica and their conference, but also for our safe travel and well-being.

The gospel today immediately follows from last Sunday's verses on the vine and the branches. We pondered the communion we share with God through Christ. Today, the theme is only strengthened. As the Father loves Jesus, Jesus loves us in the same way. The Father loves you as much as he loves Jesus, and in the very same way. The love is a growing link or chain that winds its way around and through a fence. As Jesus is loved by the Father, through Jesus that love flows to us; received from Jesus we are to love one another. In this love, we become the friends of God because we share the love, the purpose, and the intention of God. To be a friend of God is to share in what God is about and who God is. God is about loving in relationship and connection one to the other; from the Father to the Son, from the Son to us, through us to one another. This is the divine life of God we share in the Holy Spirit. Be a part of the chain of love and share the love of God you have received in Christ with many others.

God bless you all,  
Father John Esper