



My friends... by Fr. Patrick Kennedy

Last week, I met with the Parish Advisory Board. I spoke with them about my concern regarding our parish finances. For the last quarter, July–September, our giving is down, and we are \$156,000 short in our budgeted contributions. Our operating budget for this fiscal year of 2018–2019 is \$1.8 million dollars. I suggested to the Council, if this trend continues, I will need to make some decisions about how we can reduce our operating expenses and try to operate a balanced budget after the first of the year.

We have about 560 regular parishioner households. They are the people who pledge and donate around half of our weekly contributions. The other half comes from just over 300 associate member households and from visitors. Associate members are those who work downtown and come during the week, or who have some special connection with St. Olaf. The lion's share of our operating revenue, 80%, comes from these three groups of people. The rest is made up from rental income such as from the Exodus Residence, cell towers on that building, the billboard in our parking lot and Simpson Housing, who uses Cowley Hall for the Adult Shelter Connect. There are also Mass stipends, votive candles, memorials, and other miscellaneous income. Occasionally, we receive a legacy gift, upon the death of a parishioner or

friend of St. Olaf. Those always come as a surprise, and when we least expect it.

In talking with the Council members, they asked what I believe are the reasons giving is down. While the answer to this question is not easy to put my finger on, I can offer some possible reasons. The first is the road construction around our building and on major highways people use to come into downtown. This is a deterrent for people getting to St. Olaf. This past summer has been a nightmare maneuvering around downtown.

The second problem we have is participation. In recent years, it has declined. The self-inflicted wounds we have created by our inability to protect and create a safe environment for children in our churches and institutions has taken its toll. Some well-meaning Catholics cannot reconcile what we have done and have decided to go elsewhere. The media headlines continue to expose Bishops who have long covered up the problems we ourselves created, all in attempt to keep a "pretty face" on the Church. The Catholic population has not only walked away, but some who still participate have curtailed or stopped giving.

There are no quick fixes to these items and there may be other impediments to people giving to St. Olaf. The construction

will become even more complicated next summer when all of 8th St. will be torn up and replaced. The highway project affecting all of downtown won't be finished until 2021. The Church will continue to be mired in the sexual abuse scandal for some years to come.

What can you do? We are in the midst of our Annual Fund Appeal. Please take time to consider making a gift to St. Olaf. Send the card back to us sooner rather than later. I have said before, if everybody would just do their part, give what they can afford, I believe we would have enough financial resources to meet our obligations.

We need volunteers. I am grateful for those of you who say yes to our invitation to help us in our ministries. We could not do it without you. But, if you have time on your hands and are looking to engage more in the life of St. Olaf, please tell us. We would love to put your talent and time to good use.

I am grateful to many of you for offering us your assistance of time, talent, and financial resources. We have some serious challenges in making our budget. I want you to know I am committed to operating with a balanced budget and will do what is necessary to ensure this. In the process, I trust we will provide the ministries we have committed ourselves to, to the best of our ability. We will, with your sustained kindness and generosity.



EVENTS AND OTHER INFORMATION

Additional Information at www.saintolaf.org/events

ANNUAL STEWARDSHIP DRIVE

Thank you to all who have responded to the gift of St. Olaf in your life. We deeply appreciate your greathearted pledges and gifts, and the time and talent you offer this parish. Please reply if you have not and are able to. We are close to the \$350,000 mark. THANK YOU! Contact Fran at FRMurnane@saintolaf.org or 612-767-7635.

GIVING TREES BRING HOLIDAY CHEER

The 2018 Holiday Giving Trees are ready for another year to help connect St. Olaf members and visitors to those in need. Located at the skyway entrance and under the skylight at the 8th Street entrance, the Giving Trees are decorated with colorful ornaments with suggested gift ideas to provide some holiday cheer for guests of St. Olaf Samaritan Ministry. The process is simple; take an ornament, or two, (or more!), shop for the requested items and return them the next time you are here at St. Olaf. It is also possible to make a check/cash contribution clearly marked "Samaritan Ministry" and volunteers will shop for you. Returning items ASAP helps us plan for what else might be needed as the season moves forward. The Giving Trees will be up until December 16. Please contact Michael Griffin with questions or for more information at 612-767-7632 or mgriffin@SaintOlaf.org.

CHRISTMAS FLOWER DONATIONS

Donate toward Christmas environment in memory or in honor of a loved one. Names will be posted at Christmas. Suggested offering \$20 per honoree. Donation cards are in pamphlet racks. Deadline is December 12.

WELCOMING LIGHT - ST. PAUL VOCAL FORUM

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 1, 7:30PM

Directed by Karin Barrett, who also directs our St. Olaf 4:00pm Sunday ensemble. Choral music of the season with harp and oboe. Featuring music by Stephen Paulus and images by Jan Richardson. Free will offering. Suggested donation \$20. Park free in the Minneapolis Club parking ramp.

BOOK CLUB

Book club meets December 2, 2:30-3:30. We will be discussing *The Reed of God* by Caryll Houselander.

JOIN THE SEASONAL CHOIR FOR CHRISTMAS

Singers are welcome to join the seasonal choir and sing for the Christmas Season. Seasonal opportunities this year include the 4:00pm Masses on the following dates: Christmas Eve: December 24; Feast of the Holy Family: Sunday December 30; Solemnity of Epiphany: Sunday, January 6; Feast of the Baptism of the Lord: Sunday, January 13. Rehearsals are 6:30-8:30pm in the church on Tuesdays, December 4, 11, and 18. Please contact Joel Anderson at 612-767-7628 or janderson@saintolaf.org to sign up.

ANNUAL BUDGET AS OF WEEK #19

CONTRIBUTIONS	ACTUAL	BUDGET	DIFFERENCE
WEEK #19	30,173	26,825	3,348
YTD THROUGH #19	372,582	528,359	-155,768



THIS WEEK'S SCHEDULE

Additional Information at www.saintolaf.org

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 24

9:00am CENTERING PRAYER
 12:00pm MASS/CONFESSIONS
 2:00pm AFRICAN CHOIR REHEARSAL
 2:30pm VENITE CHOIR REHEARSAL
 4:00pm MASS w/VENITE CHOIR

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 25 (Christ the King)

Hospitality after 8:00am, 10:00am, 12noon, 4:00pm Masses

6:00am MASS
 8:00am MASS
 9:00am NURSERY OPENS
 10:00am MASS
 12:00pm MASS
 4:00pm MASS

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 26

7:00am MASS/CONFESSIONS
 7:30am SAMARITAN MINISTRY HOSPITALITY
 12:00pm MASS
 12:00pm ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 27

7:00am MASS/ CONFESSIONS
 12:00pm MASS/ CONFESSIONS

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 28

7:00am MASS/CONFESSION
 7:00am ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS
 12:00pm MASS
 12:00pm ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS
 6:30pm PARISH CHOIR REHEARSAL
 7:30pm AL ANON

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 29

7:00am MASS/CONFESSIONS
 7:30am SAMARITAN MINISTRY HOSPITALITY
 12:00pm MASS/CONFESSIONS

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 30

Office closed on Fridays

7:00am MASS/CONFESSIONS
 12:00pm MASS
 12:30pm ADORATION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 1

9:00am CENTERING PRAYER
 10:00am RCIA
 12:00pm MASS/CONFESSIONS
 2:00pm AFRICAN CHOIR REHEARSAL
 4:00pm MASS
 7:30pm CONCERT-ST. PAUL VOCAL FORUM

PLEASE CONSIDER GIVING TO ST. OLAF



- Drop your gift in the collection basket at Mass.
- Visit the Kiosk in the vestibule at the back of church.
- Visit SaintOlaf.org/give