



June 2010

My dear parishioners,

As I prepare to leave for my July vacation, I pray that all of you will have the time and money for some rest and recreation this summer. Quoting our Holy Father, "In the world in which we live, it is almost a necessity to be able to regain one's strength of body and spirit, especially for those who live in the city, where the conditions of life, often feverish, leave little room for silence, reflection, and relaxed contact with nature. . . . Holidays are, moreover, days in which more time can be dedicated to prayer, reading, and meditation on the profound meaning of life, in the peaceful context of one's family and loved ones." Let's all heed Jesus' call to "come away . . . and rest awhile"! (Mark 6:31)

First on my agenda, I ask you to join me in saying farewell and thanks to departing staff member Teresa Volante!

Teresa Volante Becomes Parish Partners Program Manager at Catholic Charities

I am delighted to congratulate Teresa Volante, our Social Justice & Community Services Coordinator, on her acceptance of a position as the Parish Partners Program Manager with Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Washington. She will serve as a liaison between Catholic Charities and the parishes of the Archdiocese, a great opportunity to bring her skills and compassion to many parishes as they seek to help the needy in the name of Jesus Christ. While I am excited for Teresa in her new venture, I am saddened that she will not be able to continue in her position here at St. Matthew's. Teresa has done a wonderful job reaching out to the most vulnerable among us and has coordinated so many services for them. She will be missed. I am sincerely grateful and wish Teresa all the best in her new position. I am sure we will be calling her often for assistance. Teresa, God bless!!

The True Jewels of our Parish Community—Prayer, Worship and Outreach

Stop for a moment and consider what a wonderful parish community we have! Such a variety of cultures, ages, backgrounds, and fantastic people. Among us are professionals and laborers, government workers, lawyers, doctors, architects, and workers for non-profits, all part of the exciting and diverse community called St. Matthew's Cathedral Parish. Our Cathedral is a safe and sacred space in which we welcome all to simply be with, to rest with, God, away from the bustle of Connecticut Avenue or K Street. In addition to prayer and worship opportunities, many are drawn to the outstanding mosaics, murals and marble. *The Washington Post* has called the Cathedral a "hidden jewel" in the city. Area workers and parishioners come to find a sense of peace and perspective. What a moving sight as hundreds poured into this Cathedral on 9/11; it seemed that St. Matthew's was the place to be. In times of sorrow, in times of joy, in times of doubt, in times of loss, in times of thanksgiving, we are always available.

In our community, we have many who are homeless. They live among us, walking alongside of us, looking for food, medicine or clothing. St. Matthew's is there for them as well. Each Monday we treat 55-70 men and women to breakfast, prayer, clothing, Safeway cards, toiletries and a brown bag lunch. We reach out to them day in and day out. Each year we also sponsor a drive to provide needy families with school supplies for their children, and a special outreach to these families at Christmas time—our Adopt-a-Family program.

Our social justice programs meet needs at many levels. We sponsor a blood drive and a health fair that offers many free services. We host WorkCenter, a nonprofit effort that helps people to find employment. We host a local chapter of Alcoholics Anonymous that for years has met daily during the week in our conference space at no charge. We organize service projects to aid schools, shelters, prisons and other local institutions, and we offer ESL classes.

The Cathedral also is known for its liturgies, featuring some of the best sacred music you can find. Of course, most of our singers in the Schola and the Contemporary Choir are paid. In fact, our music program is the single largest item in the budget (\$285,432). However, the music attracts so many who come and are truly uplifted!

Our Faith Formation program is outstanding. Just look at the large numbers of persons each year in the RCIA program. We offer religious education for our children (English and Spanish), Scripture Series, topical lectures, a book club, a movie club and preparation for adult Confirmations. We also host the annual John Carroll lecture and, beginning this Fall, Msgr. Peter Vaghi's First Thursday talks.

Please Appreciate the Costs to Continue Operation and Outreach

All that I describe makes us who we are as a parish. Our budget, however, has been hit very hard this year. Our Offertory collection is off as are several other income categories. We also had many unexpected expenses. Repairing the rosette that fell from the sanctuary ceiling was costly due to the need for extensive scaffolding. The mechanism that lowers the light bar in the sanctuary had to be changed from remote to manual. Two compressors and a chiller had to be replaced. Major water leakage and damage had to be cleaned up and repaired after a pipe burst, and a restroom on the west side needed major repairs. The total cost of these unbudgeted items was \$103,500!

The 2010-2011 budget includes more repairs and maintenance. First, we must replace the mortar between some of the bricks in the front steps of the Cathedral. Second, the weather-beaten wood trim on the high windows of the Cathedral needs painting. Third, brick work on one side of the Cathedral needs re-pointing. Fourth, we must replace another compressor. Fifth, repairs from water damage must be made in the east wall of the N Street property.

Various archdiocesan assessments continue to increase. The education assessment will be particularly high, rising from 2% to 9% of our Offertory collection. To that, add increases in the property insurance, retirement and health care benefits for priests and lay employees.

Here is a sampling of expenses for this year as of May 31: sanctuary candles (\$31,784); *Catholic Standard* assessment (\$21,656); telephone (\$14,655); security (\$13,269); gas (\$31,842); electricity (\$93,586). This gives you some idea of what we face.

Budget Cuts We Will Make

In order to balance our budget for 2010-2011, the staff and clergy and I, with the advice of the Finance Council, continue to consider actions to generate more income. In addition, I will take the following immediate actions:

- Eliminate a paid choir at the March for Life Mass and instead use a cantor and organist and a volunteer choir
- Eliminate the Patronal Vespers music program for St. Matthew's Feast Day
- Institute a two-month hiatus for the Contemporary Choir at the Sunday 5:30pm Mass and instead use a volunteer choir
- Defer replacement of the position of Director of Social Justice & Community Services until later in the budget year and allocate program duties among our clergy and the staff, with Fr. Evelio Menjivar as the major point of contact. ***Note that we have no plans to discontinue any of the SJ&CS programs and remain committed to reaching out to the needy in our community via all of our current programs.***
- Eliminate the use of bottled water in all areas of the rectory and Cathedral except the kitchen.

Decisions on what to cut were not easy to make. The Cathedral's Business Manager, Pam Erwin, combed through each line of the budget to determine what is really needed versus what we can do without, and made many small cuts as appropriate to achieve savings in addition to the cuts set out above. This new budget has been one of the most difficult for me to propose to the Finance Council in my years as your rector. I want to thank in a special way Pam, who has done an outstanding job in narrowing the deficit, and the rest of the staff for their work on the budget.

Now Is the Time to Give!! Now is the Time to Enroll in FaithDirect!!

My friends, we have a fantastic parish family. And nowhere will you find the quality of ministries and liturgies and magnificent buildings that we are privileged to have. We have so much, and we are so grateful. Jesus calls us to return a portion of our first fruits to the Father. Let's respond to God's goodness. Should we not support our parish?

To those who are so generous, week after week, thank you. Muchas gracias. To those who do not give regularly, please consider giving at least the cost of a Starbucks coffee or a beer each week! We truly need the help of everyone in the parish! If you forget your envelopes or cash on Sundays, try *FaithDirect*! Our electronic Offertory giving program can greatly increase the ease of your giving while providing us with a more sustained and regular Offertory income. To enroll, use the form in this bulletin or visit www.faithdirect.net and use our parish code: **DC284**. *FaithDirect* can help us to be faithful stewards, contributing each week, whatever the amount. We have 2,700 registered parishioners but only about 925 of them gave a recognizable gift last year! ***If all the others had given \$1 a week, we would have had NO deficit at all!!***

Please know that I am so grateful to you. You are great parishioners. I will remember you in my prayers as I prepare for my summer vacation. Together, and with your generosity, we will make this new budget work. God bless you.

Sincerely yours in Christ,



Rev. Msgr. W. Ronald Jameson
Rector