



strengthening our faith

by rebuilding our heritage

September 2014

My dear parishioners,

Here it is the end of August. A rush of phone requests for marriage preparation and baptisms, questions about our open Faith Formation position, and planning for the fast-approaching 175th anniversary of the parish. July seems like a distant memory! I had a fantastic vacation, but now, reality has returned!

	2013-14	2012-13	2011-12
Baptisms	137	147	155
Marriages	64	99	68
Funerals	17	9	9
First Communions	39	33	45
Confirmations	167	149	154

Sacramental Life at St. Matthew's

August is the month for sharing statistics with the Archdiocese on parish finances and sacramental life, and I share them now with you. Note the numbers of marriages—high as they are, they reflect only couples who are married at the Cathedral and not the many others whom we prepare for marriage and are wed elsewhere. Yes,

we are a sacramentally and spiritually vibrant parish! On that note, please pray for the families and catechists of our children's religious education program as they begin a new year, and our newest RCIA Inquirers.

Our Financial Picture

It's also time for giving the Archdiocese a complete financial picture of the parish. Last month our Finance Council approved the financial statement; the picture was not all sunshine. This past year our operating income was \$2,415,580 and our operating expenses were \$2,466,309, leaving us with a deficit of \$50,729.

Consider this sample of expenses: printing of the Advent and Lenten brochures (\$2,850); sanctuary candles (\$28,743); Faith Formation programming (\$71,865); telephone system (\$14,360); rectory security system (\$18,104); AC/heating maintenance and repair (\$22,304); fuel oil (\$7,768); gas (\$24,557); electric (\$104,774); boiler repair (\$13,843); property insurance (\$68,336); archdiocesan and education assessments (\$156,615). To these, add our music ministry costs of around \$325,000 annually.

We were truly blessed last year to receive a \$61,000 bequest and special gifts from several parishioners who responded to my pleas regarding the then-existing large deficit. Our total offertory collection, however, was only \$177 more than the previous year. For the current year, I am praying for an additional \$150,000 in our offertory collection to provide a strong base for erasing our current deficit.

To do this, quite simply, I need your help—the help of all of our 2,850 households. 940 households last year gave a recognizable gift. This year, I ask the other 1,710 households also to please, give something—perhaps \$5 per week—using Faith Direct (www.faithdirect.net; parish code DC 284), and help us to meet our budget, which is not extravagant. Ask the Finance Council, who will affirm: it is bare-bones.

Your parish is here to serve your spiritual needs. We are here when you want to be married, have your child baptized, or need a sponsor letter when asked to be a godparent. We are here to offer forgiveness for your sins in the name of Christ Jesus, and to bring you to a special encounter with Jesus present in the Eucharist through good liturgy, good preaching and magnificent music. We provide a beautiful and sacred space in which to simply chat with God and listen to his voice, in peace and quiet. All of the above demand salaries, heating and AC, upkeep and preventive maintenance, repairs and insurance—24/7. We need YOUR help! **Faith Direct makes it easy to share your treasure and thereby participate in the abundance of God. Please consider enrolling!**

English and Spanish Language Programs

Classes for the fall semester of the English as a Second Language and the Spanish as a Second Language (SSL) Programs will meet September 16 through December 11, with pre-registration on **September 11**, in St. Matthew's Education Center (1726 N St., NW). The SSL Program provides instruction to persons serving local Hispanic communities, and also accepts students who want to learn Spanish for personal enrichment. We need volunteers

to serve as teachers, tutors, and hospitality ministers one evening a week on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, or Thursdays. Please contact Dan Horning at stmattsesl@gmail.com for more information on registration and volunteering.

Annual Health & Wellness Fair

Our Health & Wellness Fair will be held Sunday, **September 14** from 9:30am to 3:30pm in the North and East Conference Rooms. The fair will offer educational information in English and Spanish and simple health exams to help promote good health. At the fair will be health providers in the areas of vision, bone density, women's health, balance and strength, mental health, suicide prevention, blood pressure, cholesterol, diabetes, cancer prevention, dental health, nutrition, end of life issues, and administration of flu shots. For more information on the fair and volunteer opportunities, contact Gregg Glotnis at gglotnis@verizon.net.

Archdiocesan 75th Anniversary Celebration

On Sunday, **September 21** at our 11:30am Mass, the Archdiocese of Washington will celebrate the 75th anniversary of its establishment. Join Cardinal Wuerl and parishioners from around the archdiocese to thank God and to ask for his continuing blessings upon all the priests, religious brothers and sisters, and laity in the Archdiocese.

An Opportunity to Join the Parish Pastoral Council

In early November we will hold elections for our Parish Pastoral Council, which advises and assists me in developing, organizing and supporting programs and ministries to enhance our parish's spiritual and temporal life. Whether you are a longstanding parishioner or new to the parish, serving on the Council is a great way to participate in and help to shape our community life. Information on the election will be published soon in our parish media. I hope you will thoughtfully consider this call to service.

St. Matthew's 175th Anniversary Celebration

In just four months—January 2015—we will begin a year-long celebration of the 175th anniversary of our founding back in 1840. Look forward to occasions for remembering priests, religious, and parishioners, and for reflecting upon how we have manifested the Kingdom, how we are doing so now, and most critically, how to better manifest Jesus' presence in our city in the years to come. Our celebration will include an ecumenical service of religious leaders in this area of the city, a special lecture by a nationally- or internationally-known speaker, a gala, a multicultural heritage celebration, a Mass honoring past and present rectors and priests, faculty and staff of Calvert School, and parish staff members, a special dinner for our homeless neighbors, and a magnificent concert featuring our music ministries. The main event will be a bilingual Mass celebrated by Cardinal Wuerl at Noon on Sunday, **November 1**, followed by a reception.

Committees are forming to plan and implement these special events. I have already invited the participation and leadership of some, and now widely extend that invitation. I also want to know what you would like to see in our anniversary line-up. Send me an email and my staff and I will be happy to consider your ideas. We can't do everything but what we do undertake, I want to do very well. Thank you for your help.

What a great opportunity to celebrate Church. We are the Church, the body of Christ in this part of the city. All should be able to see Christ actively present here at St. Matthew's, and our parish as a beacon of His light. What will we look like in 3 to 5 years? How can we look at what we do through a different lens? How can we bring the Church alive in this 21st century? As we are called to do in our personal lives, so as a parish let us bring to mind and learn from our past as we examine our life today, and weave a future in which all share and participate in the abundance of God.

I look forward to our working, praying and building together an even better parish community. God bless.

Sincerely yours in Christ,



Rev. Msgr. W. Ronald Jameson
Rector