



strengthening our faith *by rebuilding our heritage*

September 2019

My dear parishioners,

What a wild and wonderful summer!



First - time to get to know our new Archbishop, Wilton Gregory - a fantastic experience. He is down to earth, approachable, pastoral, compassionate, and simply enjoyable. He really wants to get to know us and help us to heal from all that happened last year, and before. I hope you will experience his presence when he celebrates Mass at St. Matthew's this fall or winter.

Clergy Changes & More New Faces in the New Year

Then the bittersweet - sending off **Fr. Conrad Murphy** as the Archbishop's priest-secretary and **Fr. Agustín López** as a missionary with Neo-catechumenal Way, and welcoming newly ordained **Fr. John Benson** and **Fr. Martino Choi**. I spent a few days helping them to acclimate before heading off for a great 20th vacation with Msgr. Amey and Fr. Gardiner in Emerald Isle, NC! I hope you, too, made time to relax, recreate and renew with family and friends this summer.



Soon we will see more smiling faces - two Sisters from the **Servants of the Lord and the Virgin of Matara** community, and **11 seminarians** begin ministries here this month! The latter are assigned from **Theological College** (my alma mater), the **Dominicans**, the **Paulists**, and the **Institute of the Incarnate Word**. We all enjoy these enthusiastic young people as they spread the Gospel message in new ways. Thank you for greeting and welcoming them!

Another change - after many years of faithful service chairing our parish Finance Council, **Aldona Robbins** has stepped down as she and her husband move further out in Virginia. Aldona's skills as an economist have been a great asset to the parish; we send her our thanks, prayers and best wishes. Council member **Jim Holm**, who knows our parish and its finances well, takes over as chair. Let's keep the Finance Council and Business Manager, Pam Erwin, in our prayers as they face real challenges ahead.

Sacramental Life

Each August parishes share with the Archdiocese statistics on sacramental life. Take a look at this summary - believe it or not, the **63 Cathedral weddings** this past year do not include the many couples we prepare for marriage elsewhere. The hours that Fr. John and I spend each week with engaged couples are so rewarding - we love it! And even after 24 years at St. Matthew's, baptism requests and surprise visits from 'my couples,' often with children in tow, are still a delight. Be assured that our sacramentally and spiritually vibrant parish adds so much to your priests' lives!

	2016-17	2017-18	2018 -19
Baptisms	125	125	112
Marriages	84	69	63
Funerals	12	12	12
First Communions	36	33	12
Confirmations	129	139	152

Financial Health

Our financial picture, unfortunately, is not as vibrant, though with God all things are possible!

To summarize from the **Collections chart** below, **our major income sources this past year were consistently down from the previous year** - the weekly offertory, the monthly second collection for Cathedral maintenance, Christmas and Easter collections, and our Christmas Friends of the Cathedral appeal.

Collections

<i>Collections</i>	<i>2017 -18</i>	<i>2018 -19</i>	<i>change</i>
Offertory	\$ 1,094,972	\$ 965,212	-12%
Building Fund	79,260	71,280	-10%
Devotions	88,393	76,140	-14%
Christmas	55,100	43,502	-21%
Christmas Flowers	5,764	4,067	-29%
Christmas Friends	56,838	37,063	-35%
Easter	44,167	40,798	-8%
Easter Flowers	4,169	4,283	+3%
Total	\$ 1,428,663	\$ 1,242,345	-13%

Income and Expenses

<i>Income 2018-19</i>	
Collections	\$ 1,242,345
Other Revenues	1,231,057
Total	2,473,402
<i>Expenses 2018-19</i>	
Parish Life and Worship	\$ 657,343
Rectory & Clergy	221,192
Religious Education	139,798
Social Concerns	116,249
Administration	394,511
Physical Plant	683,464
Parish Other	229,542
Total	\$ 2,442,099
	\$ 31,303

While **the past year's income declined, expenses went up**, particularly amounts due the Archdiocese. In response we enacted substantial expense cuts to balance the budget, and ended the year with a small surplus (1.3% of actual expenses). See the **Income and Expenses chart** above, which lists the past year's figures from the **2018-2019 financial statement** recently approved by the Finance Council.

The **declines in the offertory collection and other income sources are continuing**. The Finance Council and the Parish Council's Stewardship Committee have been tasked with addressing the income decline. Without a reversal of the downward trend, we will run a large deficit this year. The Finance Council recently approved our **2019-2020 budget**, which totals \$2,733,992, reflecting a **projected deficit of \$91,563**. Note that these figures emerged after several rounds of additional expense cuts during the 2019-2020 budget process.

Participation in the Abundance of God

While the Finance Council and Stewardship Committee take up their work, a reminder - just as grace is a participation in the life of God, so stewardship is a participation *by all of us* in His abundance. **Just as we receive from God's abundance, so we must give from it.**

Here's a fact: **over the course of a year, only one-third of our parishioners give an identifiable offertory gift.** If the rest of our households would give even \$5 weekly, we could erase our deficit. I ask you - please assess what you can afford to give and **enroll in Faith Direct**, our e-giving program. Currently, 795 parishioners already give through Faith Direct. Thank you for considering the use of this lifeline between you and the body of our parish community! An enrollment form can be found in each week's parish bulletin. You also may visit www.faithdirect.net (our Church code is DC284).

A Taste of What's Coming up at St. Matthew's

Below are a few late summer and early fall highlights.



Health & Wellness Fair, Sunday, September 15 - Free blood pressure, cholesterol, HIV/AIDS and vision screenings are among this year's offerings, from **9:30am to 3:30pm** in the North and East Conference Rooms. The fair also will offer educational information in English and Spanish to help promote good health for you and your loved ones.

Great Organ Dedicatory Recital & Reception, Friday, September 20 - Our Great Organ Inaugural Concert Series begins on the Vigil of the Feast of St. Matthew with a **7:30pm** recital by Nathan Laube, one of the finest young organists in the world. Join us for the recital and reception following. Pick up a copy of the full Inaugural Concert series schedule at the rectory or at the Cathedral main entrance.



Parish Patronal Feast, September 21 - 22 - We celebrate the **Feast of St. Matthew**, our parish patronal saint and patron saint of civil servants, at the 8am and 12:10pm Masses on Saturday, September 21 (his actual feastday), and on Sunday, September 22 at the 11:30am and 1pm Masses. A **special blessing for civil servants** will be given at the 11:30am Sunday Mass. Join us for **hospitality receptions** after the 8:30am, 10am (Latin), 11:30am and 1pm (Spanish) Masses!



Bilingual Mass for Migrants and Refugees, Sunday, September 29 - **Bishop Mario Dorsonville** will celebrate the **1pm** Mass at the Cathedral - a special bilingual Mass in prayer for migrants and refugees on World Day of Migrants and Refugees 2019. Please invite your colleagues, family and friends to join us in prayer for this cause.

"Healing our Church" Series, starts Sunday,

September 29 - Franz Kuo and Theresa Prymuszewski will lead this 6-session series by RENEW International that responds to the sexual abuse crisis in the Church and aims to help the faithful with the healing process. Sessions meet Sundays at 3pm in the East Conference Room. Preregister with Theresa Prymuszewski at 202-587-5139.



Guest Speaker - Author and Survivor of Clergy Sexual Abuse, Thursday, October 20 - Teresa Pitt Green, author of "Veronica's Veil: Spiritual Companionship for Survivors of Abuse," will speak at the Cathedral at 7pm. Ms. Green addressed the U. S. Conference of Catholic Bishops at their annual meeting in November 2018.

Call for Adopt-a-Family Christmas Sponsors - Last year 66 needy families, 100+ guests of our Homeless Ministry, L'Arche community residents, and children from DC General family shelter received Christmas gifts through this communal effort. To "adopt" a family or individual this year, contact Norma Canedo or Fr. John Benson at the rectory at 202-347-3215.

Wow - so much is happening! Please be with us when and where you can. See you in and 'round the Cathedral!

I look forward to our working and praying and building an even better parish community.

Stay Connected and Spread the Word!

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360° Virtual Tour tour.stmatthewscathedral.org

Sincerely yours in Christ,



Rev. Msgr. W. Ronald Jameson
Rector

PS – If you have an email address, will you please consider receiving my letter by email in the future? If so, please notify Ana Triareau of our staff at atriareau@stmatthewscathedral.org, or call the rectory at 202-347-3215 and leave a message with our receptionist, including your name, phone number and email address. Thank you!