



March 10, 2019

- Fr. Tom Wilson, Pastor

THE PERFECT STORM

“The perfect storm” has become the euphemism for multiple factors coming together to create one major incident or crisis. The last six weeks of weather in our area has contributed to a perfect storm I didn’t want to face. At All Saints, we are currently in the most challenging short and long-term financial situation we have experienced since the 2008-2009 stock market and real estate crash. The snow, cold, wind, and general weather conditions have exacerbated our financial challenges with increased snow removal costs. In the long-term, we are running significantly below our budgeted Sunday and Holy Day giving for the fiscal year.

We are not in a crisis yet. At the same time, in order to avert a fiscal crisis that could result in possible radical and painful financial adjustments, the finance council and trustees have recommended that we take the following actions. First, make a one-time appeal for assistance with our much larger than expected winter expenses including snow removal. Second, ask all parishioners, who are able, to increase their Sunday giving to a level they are comfortable with starting now until the end of the June.

The background of our current shortfall consists of the following elements:

- ♦ The record cold and snowfall in January and February took what had been a lower than budgeted expense item in our 2018-2019 budget and completely turned it around. As of February 28, 2019, we are now over budget in our snow removal by \$5,000, with the typically heaviest snowfall month of the year still ahead of us.
- ♦ At the end of January, we were almost \$60,000 below our budgeted Sunday and Holy Day giving for the fiscal year that began on July 1, 2018. Our budgeted increase in revenues was a modest 3% and was primarily going to be used to cover the increased costs of employee health insurance.
- ♦ The dangerous snow, cold and wind in February severely decreased our Mass attendance and resulting collections for the month, taking us from being behind in budgeted revenue from \$60,000 to approximately \$85,000. Since we manage our budgeting very tightly, we simply do not have the flexibility to absorb that significant a variance in our budgeted revenue.

To help address these financial challenges, All Saints staff has been instructed to freeze spending even on currently budgeted items that are not absolutely necessary. I am grateful to our parish and school staff who continue to be excellent stewards of the financial resources entrusted to them in your giving and generosity.

Adding to the current challenge are near term projects on our facilities that have been building up over the last several years. Some of them include major work on the south driveway, modest space alterations to meet the religious education needs of our young children, adding security enhancements to the facility, refinishing pews in the church, and new carpet in the church. Some of these projects are flexible and can be delayed for a while, but others must be done before the start of the next program year in September to meet immediate programming needs. The combination of increased operating expenses associated with winter and not meeting our budgeted revenue makes these challenges even greater.

Thankfully, our long-term debt picture is bright. Many parishioners continue to make regular contributions to our God’s Mission campaign to allow us to make our monthly mortgage payments and then some. Our debt is now below \$500,000, down from \$6.5 million in 2008.

In my eleven years at All Saints, through your generosity, we have never had a short-term financial crisis that required us to reduce the ministries and services we offer. In full disclosure, I must say we are as close to that potential reality than we have ever been. One of the ways we avert crisis and the possible effects of a perfect storm is to let the community know about it as soon as possible, so we can address it quickly.

I encourage you, as you are able, to assist your parish family with a one-time contribution to defray our once in a decade winter expenses and prayerfully consider increasing your regular giving to the parish to alleviate our budget concerns for the rest of the fiscal year.

Thank you for your generosity and continued support of your parish family at All Saints.