

Hoping Against Hope! (Renovations Part III)
*“Abraham believed, hoping against hope, that he
would become ‘the father of many nations...’ (Ro 4:18)*

This scripture quote is from our second reading this weekend. Like Abraham, I am *hoping against hope* – not to be the father of many nations, but to be the spiritual father of this local faith community. So why am I hoping against hope? Sometimes when a pastor is leading a parish through an expansion and renovations, the perception could be that the priority is money. I am hoping against hope, that you know different. Everything we accomplish is for the spiritual welfare of our parish community. Yet it is also the pastor’s obligation to be fiscally responsible and report needs accordingly.

I thank God everyday for everyone who is supporting our projects. I realize that many have sacrificed greatly by making financial pledges payable over three years. Others could not make a donation but have pledged their prayers for success. It is because of goodwill like this that our pledge total is \$ 2,864,908. Thank you for believing that dreams can come true.

As much as we should be grateful, our fundraising thermometer outside of church is deceiving. Many who drive by think the campaign is over. Unfortunately, this is not the case. **WE STILL NEED TO RAISE \$820,000.** For this reason we have adjusted the thermometer to reflect pledge amount still needed to complete the projects. A credit line and mortgage will be extended to us by the Archdiocese. Notwithstanding, our challenge is to reduce the amount to be borrowed. This in turn will result in nominal versus significant interest payments. The following are some ways that parishioners may help:

- The nucleus of our parish community is extremely generous and supportive, but those who do not come to church regularly need to be invited to help us. Will you please be an Ambassador and solicit your neighbor’s support for our building fund?
- Some parishioners who paid their pledges in full may be capable and willing to increase their donations. Should this be so, please know that your kindness would be experienced as a blessing from heaven above and an answer to a prayer.
- Some parishioners made a pledge payable over three years and may be capable of paying it off sooner. If you are in a position to do so, please know that this will help with cash flow and reduce interest debt.
- We are increasing our efforts in the area of grant writing and have met with minimal success. The number of charities petitioning for foundation funds creates a very competitive environment. Parishioner may know foundation board members, or work for companies that may consider a gift for our school expansion. Please contact the rectory if you do.
- It has come to my attention that my initial solicitation letter may have offended some parishioners. Our fund raising firm strongly recommended stating a specific dollar “*ask amount*” for consideration. This is typical nowadays in parish capital campaigns, but St. Agnes has not had a capital campaign since our founding days. I apologize if anyone was offended. Please know that we respect the right of our parishioners to pledge whatever is right for you. Every gift, regardless of size is appreciated. I often think about the Widow’s Mite – some of our smaller donations are greater in value because they come from those who have less. If any parishioner was offended please let me know. I would welcome the opportunity to meet with you and apologize in person.

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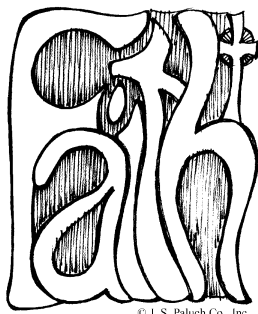
Pastor's Column (Continued)

As we move forward in faith, we often experience both successes and challenges. In fact they often go hand in hand. For example, success in the capital campaign adversely affected our parish ordinary income. Christmas and Easter collections were down, as were weekend collections (as compared to the prior fiscal year). Combine this reality with skyrocketing increases in gas and electric, snow removal, workers benefits and insurance costs, and there you have the challenge at hand. This experience is helping me to better understand and appreciate the sacrifices that our parishioners make to support Saint Agnes Church. I know that many of our seniors are living on fixed incomes. Raising a family with children is also not easy. We are always balancing the feat of doing more with less. This paradox of doing more with less is the same with our charitable intent. So many worthy charities compete for limited funds. And here I am asking you to consider doing more for our building fund. The bottom line is that you can do only what your means will allow you to do. For those who have been financially blessed by God, I pray that you will share your blessings with your parish family, and help us meet our goals to improve our church and school.

Returning to my opening statement, I am hoping against hope that this column is not interpreted as... "Here he goes again talking about money!" Unfortunately, informing parishioners about parish finances has this effect. As pastor, my number one priority will always be the spiritual formation and welfare of our faith community, and that is why we are improving our facilities. Thank you.

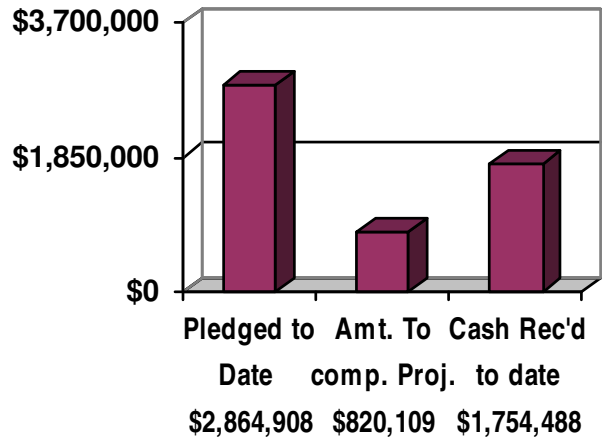
Respectfully yours in Christ,

Fr. Jim
Pastor



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■ Campaign Progress - Phase I



Total Cost of Project: \$3,685,017

Memorial incentives. Anyone who donates \$3,000 or more will be entitled to one memorial listing, in a decorative display, to be displayed in a public location, at a future date.

The following memorials are available for substantial donations (other larger memorial naming rights have already been secured):

- Church Organ \$100,000
- Tabernacle & Marble Base 50,000
- Marble Baptismal Font 50,000
- Marble Pulpit 50,000
- School Classroom 50,000
- Parish Multi-Purpose Room 100,000
- Parish Conference Room 75,000
- Parish Meeting Room 50,000

If you are interested in a memorial or would like further information, please contact the Rectory at (732) 388-7852.



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**STEWARDSHIP
&
FAITH**

**Time, Talent, Treasure.
Putting God First?**

In today's Gospel, Jesus says to Matthew, "Follow Me." And Matthew got up and followed Him. Are we willing to obey and follow Jesus? Are we good stewards of God's gifts? Do we give back?

Your Stewardship in Treasure
last week was **\$11,170.00.**
Thank you.

READINGS FOR THE WEEK

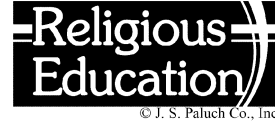


- Monday: 2 Cor 1:1-7; Mt 5:1-12
- Tuesday: 2 Cor 1:18-22; Mt 5:13-16
- Wednesday: 2 Cor 3:4-11; Mt 5:17-19
- Thursday: 2 Cor 3:15 -- 4:1, 3-6; Mt 5:20-26
- Friday: 2 Cor 4:7-15; Mt 5:27-32
- Saturday: Acts 11:21b-26; 13:1-3; Mt 5:33-37
- Sunday: Ex 19:2-6a; Ps 100; Rom 5:6-11; Mt 9:36 -- 10:8

GOD'S GLORY

Nature is too thin a screen; the glory of the omnipresent God bursts through everywhere.

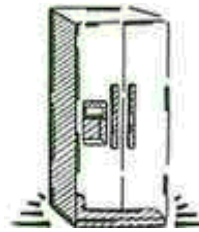
--Ralph Waldo Emerson



**ATTENTION RELIGIOUS
EDUCATION PARENTS**

Hurry!!! Time is running out!!!! Registration and re-registration has been in progress since March. Due to the increasing numbers and scheduling of classes, we ask that you register your children as soon as possible. Questions?? Please call the Religious Education Office at (732) 388-2560.

CLASSIFIEDS



Parish/School Kitchen in need of new or used refrigerator. If anyone could help acquire one for us, please contact the Rectory at (732) 388-7852 or the school at (732) 381-0850. Thanks!

Have a Good Summer!



Please remember the needs of your church before you go your way. Your support given before you leave will make this a good summer for everyone!

Thank you and may God Bless you with a Happy and Safe Vacation!

Sinners

We are sinners, but we do not know how great. He alone knows Who died for our sins.

- John Cardinal Newman

THE TENTS ARE COMING!!! Celebrating our Catholic Faith

Good News International is sponsoring its Ninth Annual Celebrating Our Faith Tenth Revival, which will take place Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday, June 26th through the 28th at St. Veronica Church, 4215 US Hwy 9 North, in Howell, New Jersey. Each night will begin at 6:30 p.m. with the Rosary, followed by music, preaching and lots of other great stuff like display booths, liturgy, clowns, food. Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, etc.

This year our exciting speakers include: Fr. Bill Halbing, internationally known Bible teacher and Pastor; Alex Jones, former Pentecostal Pastor, now Catholic convert; Chris Padgett, lead singer of the Christian band, Scarecrow and Tinmen; and Bishop John Smith of the Trenton Diocese. Music will again be provided by Refuge, the ministry from the Cathedral of St. Francis, Diocese of Metuchen.

Come celebrate who we are in Jesus Christ. Never been to a tent revival? You don't know what you are missing!! For more information, please call 1-800-430-0586.

STEWARDSHIP CLASSIFIED



We are in need of someone to take sandwiches to the Soup Kitchen on the 3rd Tuesday of every month beginning June 21st. If anyone is interested, please call the Rectory at (732) 388-7852 or Jane DeVito at (908) 654-1432. Thank you.

Send a City Child to Camp

The Eddie Gray Camp Fund is seeking funds to send inner city children to Summer Camp. Some camps are able to give us discounted prices. We have to pay at least \$75 per child for a 10-day overnight session. Donations of any amount will be gladly accepted for this purpose. Children will be selected through St. Joseph Social Service Center, the Elizabethport Presbyterian Center and other non-profit agencies in Elizabeth. Please make checks payable to the Eddie Gray Camp Fund, and mail them to:

Sister Jacinta Fernandes O.S.B.
812 Rebecca Place
Elizabeth, NJ 07201

Thank you for providing a healthy and happy experience for our children. We are grateful for all your support now, and in the past.

Catholic Charities' Immigration Assistance Program To Do Free Consultations

On Monday, June 20, 2005, the Immigration Assistance and Refugee Resettlement Programs of Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Newark will be holding an open house in honor of World Refugee Day. All persons with immigration questions are invited to attend and speak with a staff attorney or accredited immigration counselor. The usual consultation fee will be waived that day.

The open house will be held at the Bishop Francis Center for Immigration Services at 976 Broad Street in downtown Newark from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. The United Nations has designated June 20 every year as World Refugee Day.
Contact: Terri Tiberi - 973-733-3516



Mount St. Mary House of Prayer, Watchung, will offer the following program. To register please call (908) 753-2091 or email: msmhope@att.net

SIX-DAY RETREAT

An experience of personal prayer based on Scripture. Daily spiritual direction. Adaptable to the needs and desires of each individual. Atmosphere of prayerful quiet.

June 24-July 1 (\$315/week)
Begins 7 p.m. on opening day;
concludes at 11 a.m.



SATURDAY, JUNE 4, 2005

5:30 Angelina & Alexander Blumette - Dorinda & Joseph Loprete

SUNDAY, JUNE 5, 2005

7:30 Patrick & Cecilia Cosgrove - Cecilia Cosgrove
 9:00 Julia Rose Ianucci - The Lomeli Family
 10:30 John & Lucia Zambolla - Daughter, Mary Turi
 12:00 People of the Parish

MONDAY, JUNE 6, 2005

7:00 Roman Granrath - John Smith
 9:00 Lucy Vincenti - Jo & Charles Vincenti

TUESDAY, JUNE 7, 2005

7:00 Deceased Members of Szmerna & Karczewski Families - Family
 9:00 Frances Samperi - Mr. & Mrs. Valentino Scipioni, Jr.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 8, 2005

7:00 Betty Kordowski - Sr. Claire Ouimet
 9:00 Joanne Stumbers - Scripture Sharing Group

THURSDAY, JUNE 9, 2005

7:00 John DeFilippo - William Magee & Sons
 9:00 Elizabeth Magerkurth - John & Barbara Greve

FRIDAY, JUNE 10, 2005

7:00 Louis Melillo & Family - Family
 9:00 John & Lucia Zambolla - Daughter, Mary Turi

SATURDAY, JUNE 11, 2005

8:30 Richard A. Verrastro, Thomas Foster, Frank Costello, Jane Scharpen, Jean Paul Cadorette
 5:30 Walter Hurley - Bernice Hurley

SUNDAY

JUNE 5

1:30 PM Baptism

TUESDAY

JUNE 7

7:00 PM Golf Meeting - 8th Grade Classroom

7:30 PM Liturgy Meeting - Sacristy

WEDNESDAY

JUNE 8

7:30 PM RCIA Inquiry - Chapel

THURSDAY

JUNE 9

6:30 PM Girl Scouts - Awards Ceremony

6:30 PM Rosary Society End of Year Party - Gran Centurions

7:30 PM Adult Choir

FRIDAY

JUNE 10

9:00 AM Mass - School

7:30 PM Graduation Ceremony - Church

SATURDAY

JUNE 11

8:30 AM Memorial Mass



TRAVELING MADONNA - Statue of Our Lady of Fatima will be in the home of Maria Yost during the week of June 5th.



SANCTUARY LAMP will burn in memory of George Bell during the week of June 5th at the request of the Bell Family.



PLEASE PRAY FOR

Those Who Have Died

Theodore A. Skorupski, Cecilia Chieco

Those Who Are Sick

Aileen Sasala, Florence Iasello, Mary Zelanko, George Heindel, Joe & Irene Margeton, Ann & Michael Dudek, Frank LaVerda, Alvera Martin, Anna Manigold, Ann Lesko, Irene Sisko, Noel Stevenson, Leilla DiLeone, Michael Denora, Mary Morelli, Anthony Szablowski, Robert Szabo Jr., Louise Venezio, Jean Williams, Mary Lawrence, Ann Miller, Wayne Tribble, Linda Ruth, Vincent Flanagan, Barbara Rygiel, Anna Reichenstein, Gene Andre, Henry Latch, Nora Coletta, Thaddeus Zbikowski Sr., Vickie Tomasco, Mary Marrin, Maria Conforti, Mary Scott, Alice Triano, Barbara Guinta, Alice Bartlomiejczyk, Ronald Francisco, John Cardoso, George Stanka, Earl Miller, Margaret Shea, Barbara Steinberg, Hank Kaczka, George Finger, Edward Alfano, Robert McKeon, Michael Newman, Andre Kovacs, Patrick Miller

Atlantic City Bus Trip

WHEN: June 16, 2005

TO: Caesar's

TIME: 11:30 AM Coffee & Buns

LEAVE: 12:30 PM From Gran Centurions Parking Lot. Please park in back of lot.

COST: \$22.00

For reservations call:

Tony 388-2315

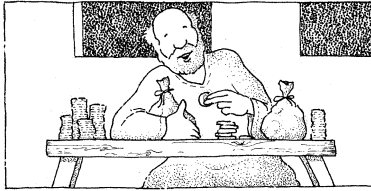
Joe 381-3395

**WE WILL BE RUNNING 2 BUSES.
PLEASE CALL EARLY TO RESERVE
A SEAT. BRING A FRIEND.**

**Tenth Sunday in Ordinary Time
June 5, 2005**

I did not come to call the
righteous but sinners.

– *Matthew 9:13*



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