

# A Report to the Parish Concerning Parish Finances

*Finance Report for the Period: July 1, 2007 – June 30, 2008*

Dear Friends,

The American people seem right now to be standing on a mountain ridge, looking one way and then the other, trying to decide in which direction to move. Can you see yourself on that mountain ridge?

Looking in one direction we see hope and the energy that flows from hope. Regardless of whom each person may have voted for, the whole country seems energized by the election of the first African-American as president. We hope that President-elect Obama may be the beginning of a new day, a new chapter in our national history.

Look in the other direction and you see fear. We are obviously in the grip of an economic downturn that has almost no historical precedent and which augurs difficult times ahead. Fear drains energy. According to some commentators, a good part of the present economic crisis is purely a matter of psychology. Expecting the worst, we are reacting as if the worst had already happened. Fear does that.

Our position on the mountain ridge shows us both hope and fear. Which route down off the mountain of indecision will the American people take? Which road will we as a parish take?

Standing on this mountain ridge I write to you today, and will speak at all the Masses this weekend, on the financial Stewardship of our parish. I want to report to you what has happened in the financial area this past year, and what we have to look forward to. Should I speak the language of hope or fear?

I absolutely refuse to allow us to be mastered by fear. Jesus himself tells us “Do not be afraid,” and he says it over and over again, to each one of us in our own unique life situation. I will speak of hope.

First, let us take a quick overview of the parish itself. Our parish now shows a census of almost 1900 households, up a bit in the past few years. According to our current count, it looks to me like our weekly Mass attendance is somewhere between 1350 and 1450 men, women and children. You can do the math and see that this number is far below what we would like to see. Sadly, the number is within the general parameters of national statistics of Mass-going today. Looking at the other side of the coin, those who are counted among the Eucharistic Assembly at St. Peter’s on an average Sunday are people of faith and



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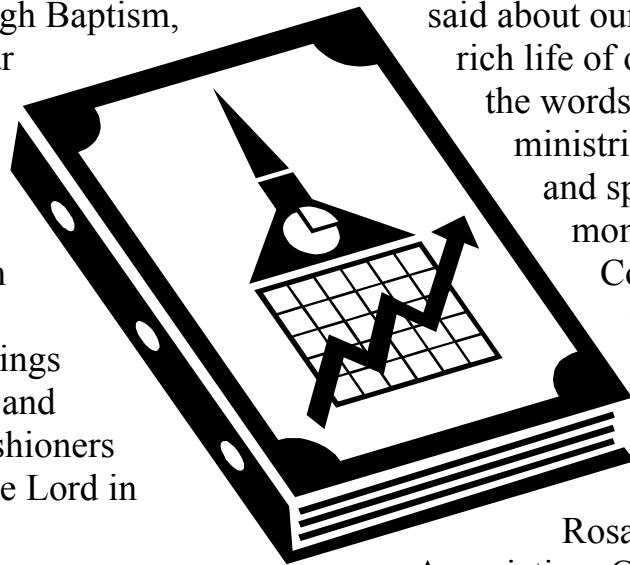
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devotion, striving to live Christ's life in their homes and in their parish. It is to you that the parish turns, thanking you for your faithful stewardship of time, talent and treasure, and asking that you devote yourselves with ever more love to the mission of Christ.

And the work of Christ is being done. In this past year, through his sacraments, the Lord Jesus brought 38 infants into the new life of grace through Baptism, 110 children to the altar to receive Holy Communion for the first time, and 95 young teens to be confirmed in their faith through the gift of the Holy Spirit. Ten weddings took place at our altar, and 70 of our beloved parishioners were commended to the Lord in Funeral Masses.

The work of our parish is done in large part through almost 50 ministries active here, and whose work is guided by the Pastoral Council of Ministries. A wonderful Pastoral Staff includes priests and deacons and professional lay ministers, and provides leadership and coordination to all those who work in ministry. Certainly among the ministries, that of Religious Education is the giant in numbers of those serving and those served. More than 70 catechists teach between 700 and 800 students in grades 1 through 8 and the sacramental preparation programs that prepare all children for the sacraments of First Holy Communion, first

Reconciliation, and Confirmation. We are proud to co-sponsor Saint Peter Academy, our parish Catholic school, along with Queen of Peace in Maywood. This year our enrollment is about 190 children, grades K through 8, served by a professional and dedicated faculty led by Sr. Barbara Takacs, who along with Sr. Jean Guida, are members of the Filippini Order of sisters.



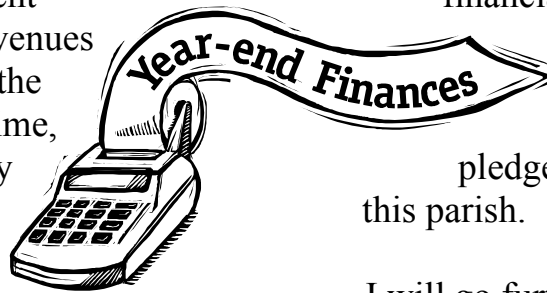
There is so much more that could be said about our ministries and about the rich life of our parish community. Just the words and titles of projects and ministries remind you of wonderful and spiritually enriching moments in this past year:

Cornerstone, Small Christian Communities, food drives, Habitat for Humanity, Art Auction, Parish Festival Mass and Festival Picnic, Holy Week, Rosary Society, Home School Association, Children's Choir and Children's Liturgy of the Word. Do you remember?

You certainly understand that to sustain this level of activity and to extend Christ's charity beyond the boundaries of our parish (which is part of our mission), we need to be supported by faithful stewardship of treasure by parishioners like you, who make abiding commitments to give a percentage of their income to their parish so that the work of Christ might be done. In this past fiscal year, ending June 30, 2008, for which we now offer you a report, you have indeed supported your parish in doing the work of Christ.

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I ask you to turn to the table on the back page and review our financial position. Allow me to make some observations here. The most important indicator of continuing fiscal health is the increase we saw in Sunday collections (up 3%) and the 8% increase in last year's Christmas collection. A bequest from a devoted parishioner strengthened our reserves, and the rental from Catholic Charities of the former convent assisted us. Overall, total revenues increased by \$131,600 from the previous year. At the same time, expenses increased overall by \$124,300 in the same year. Led by increases that you are familiar with from running your own homes (utilities up 17%; property insurance up 12%), we were also able to provide modest pay increases to our employees and add a new staff position for Adult Formation (Chris Black now serves in this capacity; her position in Religious Ed is now held by new staff member, Carol Lee Murray). We ended the year in the black, with a small surplus of \$32,788. You will notice that our total expenses (just for the parish, not the school) were \$1,227,770. And you provided that! All out of generosity! You are the most wonderful parishioners! I am so proud to have served as your pastor for 15 years now.



and then collections fell in October by about \$2,000. Where do we go from here? People are cutting back on non-essentials, even when not directly affected by the current downturn. Will your church contributions, the gift of your stewardship, fall into the category of "non-essentials"? I ask you to do the opposite. Do not be afraid. Step out in faith and give of your time, talent, and yes, your treasure, your financial resources. Use courage and hope as you determine again this year how much you will pledge to the work of Christ in this parish.

I will go further and ask you to consider giving a little more, if you are able, to enable us to reach out and help those who are in trouble. Let me know about people who are hitting a rough spot and don't be embarrassed to ask. If we can help, we will. We may have to go through some rough times in the months ahead. But that doesn't mean that any one of us should have to do so alone.

Yours in the love of the Lord,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Msgr. Robert Stipe". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

But where will we go from here? The smell of fear is in the air. I have begun tracking our collections on a monthly basis, compared to last year. We saw an increase in the months of August and September,

**ST. PETER THE APOSTLE CHURCH**  
**FINANCIAL SUMMARY**  
*FOR THE YEARS ENDED JUNE 30, 2008 & 2007*

**JUNE 30, 2008**      **JUNE 30, 2007**

**REVENUES**

SUNDAY, CHRISTMAS, AND EASTER COLLECTIONS	844,136	817,604
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION	89,266	85,138
ARCHBISHOPS ANNUAL APPEAL REBATE	27,595	25,598
FUNDRAISING NET OF EXPENSES	20,290	16,470
DONATIONS, GIFTS, AND BEQUESTS	123,386	34,253
DIOCESAN ASSESSMENT COLLECTION	93,916	90,332
CANDLE REVENUES	4,054	6,073
INTEREST INCOME	17,427	15,896
OTHER REVENUES	7,700	7,240

**TOTAL REVENUE**      **\$1,227,770**      **\$1,098,604**

**EXPENSES**

SALARIES, BENEFITS, PENSION COSTS, & PAYROLL TAXES	519,743	483,155
BUILDING, UTILITIES, AND EQUIPMENT COSTS	205,665	198,547
PROFESSIONAL AND CONTRACTED SERVICES	48,768	46,068
ARCHDIOCESAN ASSESSMENTS	92,064	82,344
LITURGICAL, OFFICE, AND RESIDENCE SUPPLIES	61,243	55,840
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION EXCLUDING SALARIES	93,380	90,125
SCHOOL SUBSIDY EXPENSE	43,641	43,160
PARISH LIFE AND SOCIAL CONCERN EXPENSES	59,348	50,431
OTHER EXPENSES	71,130	23,420

**TOTAL EXPENSE**      **\$1,194,982**      **\$1,073,090**

***SURPLUS***      **\$32,788**      **\$25,514**