

ST. JOSEPH PARISH AND SCHOOL – FEBRUARY 11, 2018

Dear Parishioners and Families,

The Season of Lent is upon us. The ministry of John the Baptist was a baptism for the forgiveness of sins. John was to prepare the way by helping people clean their closet and be open to the message that Jesus would bring. Jesus comes with a message more advanced. Jesus tells the people to look ahead because the Kingdom of God is near. Using a different analogy, John the Baptist has scraped the old paint and Jesus asks us to paint with new colors.

Clearly, if your closet is full, cluttered, and full of distractions, you may not be able to hear the message of Jesus. Or, one must get rid of the loose paint in order to put a lasting new coat on the walls. Jesus tells us to advance by actions that are fitted to the Kingdom of Heaven.

The Annual Bishop's Appeal

The Annual Bishop's Appeal in support of Catholic Charities serving our Diocese has begun. Many of you have received a request letter in the mail. I am not certain how the mailing lists were generated from Youngstown. However it is most important for our solidarity with the Youngstown Diocese that as many families as possible contribute to this Diocesan Appeal.

St. Joseph Parish has 511 active parishioners, i.e., parishioners and their families who attend St. Joseph Church regularly. There are another 229 parishioners who are inactive. They probably attend the church once or twice a year. Our full registration is then 730 families.

May I encourage each family to make a contribution to the Bishop's Appeal. In the pews are envelopes that can be filled out for this appeal. If you have received a direct mailing, the envelope is unnecessary for you. However, the envelope may be used by those who have not received a direct mailing.

The goal of St. Joseph Parish for this 2018 Annual Bishop's Appeal is \$31,730. We have always met our goal. However, the goal has been met with less than 50% of our active parishioners contributing. In the Spirit of Lent, let me request that of the 511 active parishioners, we try to reach close to the 100% level.

Consider putting a contribution in one of those envelopes if you have not been solicited through the mail. Everyone can contribute a little. The priests are all asked to give a leadership gift, and I have done so in a four figure donation made up of the smaller gifts that I have been given personally.

Rectory/Office House Painted

Tom and Steven Marchand with their crew have completed painting the office space of the rectory on the first floor. The entire first floor, except for my office, is most presentable and attractive. The two working offices are congenial and inviting. A large reception room (living room) is fitted for small meetings such as Parish Council and Finance Committee. I will also be using this room for Immigration Toward the Catholic Faith this Saturday. When the weather becomes more suitable, we will have an open house of the first floor for people to see the improvements in the 1887 building.