

## State of the Parish 2022

Dear Parishioners,

March 2023

It's time for me to share the annual Gesu "State of the Parish" for the past fiscal year. Well, actually this report is quite a bit late from when I usually would provide this information. I think with the parish twinning, the very successful Living Christ Campaign, the addition of new staff and some personal Oblate commitments, time just got away from me. It has been a very busy year, but I still wanted to share with you what I think are some highlights from last year and the yearly financial report.

I believe that the twinning of Gesu with St. Pius X has gone well. It has caused some adjustments, even some challenges, but overall, I think that both parishes are healthier because of this move. We have combined our RCIA and CCD programs, had a joint celebration of Confirmation for our 8<sup>th</sup> graders and had a joint mission in October that was spearheaded by a team from both parishes. We had combined Advent dinners with penance services, and now have combined Soup Suppers and Lenten devotions on Friday evenings. There have been joint events in the Sullivan Center and the 50+ clubs have been combined too. No doubt more sharing of resources and programs will take place as we move into the future. Rather than force this sharing, I want it to happen "organically" – when the time is right, it will present itself.

A truly wonderful highlight of the past year was the addition of my brother Oblate, Fr. Craig, to our parish staff. He has already shown himself to be enthusiastic, energetic and extremely competent in every aspect of pastoral ministry that he has been involved with so far. In addition, he is an absolute delight to live with. As schedules permit, we share dinner together and so enjoy talking about the parish and about all of YOU!

Another highlight of the past year has been the addition of our new Director of Music and Liturgy, Drew Smith. When I interviewed Drew, he “blew me away” with his musical skills, both on the piano and organ and his vocal ability too. Fortunately, he is not shy about sharing his talents with us. The concert he did at Christmas time with Ramona Collins was a great introduction to the Christmas season. When I introduced Drew to the choir members, I told them to be prepared, they might think of him as their son. I, on the other hand, thought that he could be my grandson! But he hasn’t disappointed us and his love of liturgy and music is evident each weekend. Drew also does a lot of “behind the scenes” liturgical work preparing for Mass and ceremonies and keeps the sacristy “ship shape” – work that I formally was doing myself. We are certainly lucky to have him.

Our parish staff continues to do a great job keeping the parish running smoothly. I certainly appreciate them. And our various parish committees keep a watchful eye on many aspects of parish life. They are a great asset to me and to the parish. I appreciate their dedication and commitment in the many ways they serve.

Financially, it was a very good year for the parish and school operations, driven by a 21% increase in school tuition and fees. This was due to a relatively high level of enrollment in the school and the state increased the Ed Choice rate that they provide for qualifying students. Our principal, Mr. Gonzales and faculty continue to have high expectations for our students and hold them to that standard. While you don’t see our students at Mass on a typical weekend, I can assure you that our Catholic traditions and values are being maintained every day. I see Gesu School as a valued ministry of our parish and an opportunity to evangelize others to the Catholic Church.

This past year our weekly offertory contributions were up about 5% compared to the previous year, but still lower than pre-Covid levels. Unfortunately, we have seen a bigger than expected decline so far this year – perhaps due to the change in Mass times or the general state of the economy. If possible, perhaps you could consider an increase in your current contributions to Gesu to help us offset inflation.

This past year we have had over \$100,000 of projects completed – complete Sullivan Center renovation, brickwork on the church and school, the church bells fixed again, church pews refinished and more. With a campus large and growing older each year, something always seems to be on the horizon that needs attention. We did have a surprise gas leak which brought an unexpected \$50,000 expense in the current fiscal year too. (When did you ever see a gas leak that was not a surprise?)

And, as you would expect, we incurred \$262,000 of unrealized losses on our endowment investments due to the downturn in the stock market.

All this being said, we ended the year with a net loss of nearly \$18,000 for our past fiscal year. As I've mentioned in the past, please consider converting your weekly giving to electric on-line giving. It assures a steady source of income to the parish and may even be more convenient for you. Information on how to sign up as an electronic contributor is regularly in the bulletin for your convenience. Or you can call the office and we will be glad to help you.

From a balance sheet perspective, our cash position is in good shape, our endowments are down (hopefully temporarily) due to the decline in the stock market and we thankfully have no debt.

All of this information is reflected on the financial sheets accompanying this report. If you have any questions, don't hesitate to call the rectory and we'll get you the information you are requesting. (Note: The figures on the financial statements are for the fiscal year which ended June 30, 2022).

When all is said and done, Gesu is in good shape, spiritually, socially and financially and it is because of each one of YOU. Your commitment to our parish and your contribution, in whatever form that may be, helps to make our parish a community of faith. When we pray together each weekend at Mass we become one, one in the Lord and together we take Jesus out to the world as members of Gesu. Thanks to each and every one of you for your commitment to our parish. We wouldn't be the same without you.

The Oblates of St. Francis de Sales have made a commitment to Gesu for the long haul. I hope you have too.

God Bless You and God Bless Gesu.

Fr. Marty  
Pastor