

ENDINGS AND BEGINNINGS

Each year brings with it a number of endings and beginnings, not all in synch with each other. There are calendar years and school years, fiscal years and, in the Church, liturgical years. We come to the end of one of those this weekend with the Solemnity of Christ the King and begin a new liturgical year, the Year of Mark, with the First Sunday of Advent next week. The new liturgical year will allow us to look at Jesus' life from the perspective of the first Gospel writer and to appreciate once again this shortest version of Jesus' ministry which always invites us to focus on the gift of life Jesus offers us through his dying and rising.

But the other year that you're invited to consider today is the parish fiscal year which came to an end on June 30th. In the following pages of today's bulletin you'll find the Annual Financial Report that we're required to file with the Archdiocese and present to you each year, along with some important notes that I hope you'll read. Those notes are significant because spread sheets aren't everyone's cup of tea (myself included) and the notes help to highlight and/or explain the financial picture of our parish that might not be immediately evident when looking at all those numbers.

Much of the negative side of the report relates to the challenges of maintaining the school for the 2016-17 school year. As I've said before, although the closing of the school was a sad and difficult moment in the life of the parish, it was unavoidable due to declining enrollment and the depletion of church savings over the previous five years. But hopefully we're moving beyond that challenging time and entering a new chapter in parish life where we can replenish our savings, upgrade parish facilities, strengthen existing ministries and develop new ones.

While our *To Teach Who Christ Is* capital campaign was extremely successful thanks to your generosity, those funds must first be used for the remaining capital improvements identified in our campaign case statement: handicapped accessible meeting space, refurbished washrooms in the school and a new sound system in the church. Within the next few weeks, the meeting space and washroom plans should be completed and you'll be invited to view those before we solicit bids for those two projects. The funds that remain will go into parish savings to ensure that we have the healthy "rainy day" account – something that any homeowner can appreciate.

What's vital right now is to maintain and grow our **operating account** which pays for bills, maintenance and salaries and comes directly from your **weekly offerings**. Those regular offerings decreased by more than 3% last year, and only you can reverse that trend. So as you read this report, please consider doing whatever you can to help our parish grow and thrive in this fiscal year, this new liturgical year, and throughout 2018 and beyond.

Fr. Bob