



## ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST Catholic Church & School

November 10, 2020

Dear Parishioners,

Once again, I find myself trying to compose a message to you early in the week – before the news of the week breaks. Last week, it was the outcome of the 2020 Presidential elections; this week it's the release of the long-awaited Vatican report on former Cardinal and Archbishop of Washington, DC Theodore McCarrick's rise to power within the Church in the face of what seem to be widely-known instances of sexual abuse of seminarians. (In later years, he was also accused of sexual abuse of minors, allegations which were deemed credible and for which he was "defrocked," or "laicized," last year.) The report, which was to be released on Tuesday, November 10, was expected to answer the questions: "Who knew what?" and "When did they know it?" If the report names names, it would seem inevitable that it must implicate other members of the hierarchy, both in the United States and in Rome, for facilitating his advance in rank from Bishop to Archbishop to Cardinal as well as his transfer from the Diocese of Metuchen NJ to the Archdiocese of Newark and ultimately to Washington DC, despite his reprehensible behavior.

The report is sure to anger and disappoint: if it hints of cover-up or deals only in vague generalities, it will raise cries of "lack of transparency;" if it does report collusion, it will undermine further the credibility and integrity at the higher levels of the Church's leadership. Either way, it's going to hurt. Hurt all of us, in some part of our heart and soul. If after COVID and presidential politics you have any prayers left, please pray for us all as Church!

On the good news side of the ledger, the Catholic Stewardship Appeal report came out last week. As of October 31, the Archdiocese has taken in pledges for \$8,354,062.12 against its 2020 goal of \$8.1 million. And with more than two months remaining in this year's appeal, both STA and SJB have already surpassed their goals: with its target set at \$90,125, SJB stands at \$92,267, or 102.38% of goal, while STA is at a whopping \$6,873 (129.15%) over its goal of \$23,575 for the year. Well done, good and faithful ones!

But as with the Archdiocese as a whole, where they are reporting 1,900 fewer donors so far this year, SJB has some 75 donors fewer than last year's total and STA is about 20 individuals shy of its 2019 figures. Jenny Mendenhall, the Director of this year's appeal, has indicated that in the next week or two they will be reaching out by mail to those contributors from last year who have not yet participated in the 2020 Appeal. So, if you should happen to receive an official-looking envelope from the Archdiocese in the coming days, consider it a gentle reminder that your participation would be appreciated and every little bit helps.

Father Phil