

A Message from our Pastor

Rev. Philip D. Reifenberg



December 27, 2020

Dear Parishioners of St. John the Baptist,

Thank you for your generous response to our Bust the Deficit Campaign. If you've been following, for the past five weeks we've been reporting our progress in the bulletin. As of the report appearing in last week's bulletin, the Campaign has taken in donations totaling \$63,984. Most of those donations were targeted toward specific activities (Buildings & Grounds and School Technology), but a significant amount was given to the parish in general. Since three-quarters of parish and school expenses go toward salaries and benefits, future donors might want to direct their offerings to help offset something like health insurance premiums (roughly \$13,000 per month) or pension installments (around \$13,000 each quarter).

One of the interesting things to note is the number of contributors. You may recall that when I give periodic reports on our parish's participation in the archdiocese's Catholic Stewardship Appeal, I share the information the Archdiocese provides me: where we are at with respect to our assigned goal and how many people have contributed (both the raw number of contributors and that number as a percentage of the parish's total number of households, each of which is viewed as a potential contributor). In fact, the archdiocese's most recent report, which arrived last week, states that as of December 9th, SJB had contributed or pledged to contribute \$93,152 toward our goal of \$90,125, or 103.36% of our target. And this amount was given by 289 donors (22.18% of our 1,303 households).

Mutatis mutandis, with regard to the Bust the Deficit Campaign, as of December 11th, SJB had received \$64,164 toward our goal of \$85,000, or 75% of our target. This amount was given by 124 donors (9.5% of those same 1,303 households).

As with the Catholic Stewardship Appeal, it would be great to see the percentage of participation in the Bust the Deficit Campaign by our households increase. The broader rate of participation is a good barometer of parish "ownership" of the situation and commitment to resolving it. As I indicated several months ago, we knew as we were drafting the budget for the current fiscal year that we were going to run a huge deficit, one that we would have to draw from our Endowment Fund to address. But the more of the deficit that we can eat away by events like this Bust the Deficit Campaign, the less of a draw we'll have to make against the Endowment Fund. So contributions don't have to be large (the largest to date has been \$7,000). Every little bit helps.

To this point, the archdiocese sent out the following reminder just this past week: "Now is a great time to remind parishioners about the tax benefits of supporting your parish. The CARES Act will allow taxpayers to deduct donations to charity of up to \$300 on their 2020 federal tax return, even though they take the standard deduction. The new law allows all taxpayers to take a charitable deduction even if you do not itemize."

Whether or not you can help "Bust the Deficit" before December 31st – yes, we will gladly accept donations for this purpose in 2021, even after the campaign formally comes to an end! – thank you for supporting SJB. May God bless all of you and your families in the year ahead!

Father Phil