

Oct. 21-22, 2017

Thoughts from the pastor,

This weekend is our parish stewardship sign-up. Once a year we encourage you to take a look at what the parish means to you. We ask that each family fill out one of the forms that you will find in pews. This is one of the main ways we have of keeping our files up-to-date. Since it is hard to keep track of 1300 families, we depend on your cooperation. You might have a new e-mail address, which would mean you would no longer get one of my informative emails. You might have added or subtracted a person from your household. If you have a young person moving out of your house who wants to stay connected with the parish, they need to register in the parish.

This is also a chance to look at how you spend your time. If it is all spent binge watching TV series you might want to look at some of the opportunities to participate in parish life. Every week there are things in the bulletin that are ways of helping out your neighbor as Jesus asks us to do. A new one that is being offered is to volunteer an evening each month or two in helping serve dinners at Siena/Francis House. Their dinner is served between 5-7pm each evening. It might drive you crazy seeing all the guys on the islands at major intersections in Omaha. Like me, you might wonder if they are legitimate in needing help or are playing the system. Yet you feel guilty not doing anything to help those who are truly in need. Helping with these meals is a way of solving that. You really help those in need and you are working with people who are getting to know them and trying to help them find a way out of their difficulties.

Another part of this stewardship drive is to look at your financial contributions to the parish. As I have mentioned many times before, the people in this parish are very generous. That is one of the reasons we have so many requests to help with different projects. As an example we just had the olive-wood sales this past weekend. The weekend before that we had Cross International. I have requests like this come to me every week, but most of them I deny because it would get overwhelming, just as some of the snail mail requests you get from missionary and other charitable groups. We can't help them all.

But one thing that we have is our parish family. By being a part of a parish like SEAS your impact makes a bigger difference. Working together we can make things happen that simply couldn't be accomplished any other way. The help we have given Fr. John Zotoglo is a good example of that. For that strength from unity to be a reality we need to keep our parish going. Most of you received the yearend financial report that I put out in the bulletin and by email. You hopefully noticed that we had to take about \$50,000 out of savings again this year. That has happened even though we are one of those lucky parishes that aren't paying off a mortgage. Ours is paid off. But we have had major repairs on our roof and on some of our air-conditioning units. To pay those bills we had to dip into savings but we are trying to pay that back by our second collections after communion. We are getting closer to paying back the roof amount. Then we can start paying back the amount for the air-conditioning. I just feel blessed that these didn't come when we were still paying the mortgage. I am sure that there will be a new problem each year. A church is just like a house. You keep having new things to deal with. So the question we ask each year is what can you do in terms of helping this parish remain strong?

God bless you,
Fr. Frank