



St. Paul the Apostle Church

December 2009

Dear Parishioner of St. Paul the Apostle Parish,

In this important twenty-fifth anniversary year of 2009 I urge you to join in St. Paul the Apostle Offertory Renewal Program

In 1984 we were a community of dedicated Catholic Christian believers - no church, no name, no hall or meeting rooms. There was hope based on God's faithfulness.

In 2009 we are an amazing story of growth and achievement. A community of Catholic Christian Believers is still the heart of who we are. You are not part of that story – you **are** that story.

I have personally shared in your joys, hopes, griefs and anxieties. I have had the privilege of participating in the most important and the most ordinary days of your lives. It is my intention to continue to be part of this parish family in the years ahead.

I recommit myself to serving you as your pastor and parishioner of St. Paul the Apostle Parish.

Part of my responsibility is the administration of the parish. In recent years the success in paying down our mortgage has been a visible sign of the faith and commitment of this dedicated Catholic Christian Family that is St. Paul the Apostle Parish. I invite you to join me in the challenges that lie ahead.

I have worked with your Parish Finance Committee to prepare a detailed plan for the years ahead. The "**Offertory Renewal Program**" provides us with great opportunities to envision and shape the future of St. Paul the Apostle Parish, the largest parish in the Archdiocese of Kingston. With your financial support we are able to plan for an exciting future for our parish and the surrounding community. Please take the time to look at, ponder, pray and reflect on the "**Offertory Renewal Program.**" Then talk to your partner, talk to your children and decide on a few steps you can take toward matching your financial resources with the needs of the parish community.

Thank you.

Sincerely In Christ,

Father *Leo-Byrne*.

Pastor

In January 2010, St. Paul the Apostle Parish will begin the fourth year of our **Offertory Renewal Program**. We established this initiative in Advent 2006 so that all parishioners might actively and regularly participate in the financial life of the parish. Please take a few minutes and read over this information.

The **Offertory Renewal Program** is our parish based plan to respond to the real and ongoing financial needs of our parish. In Advent we prepare this information and ask that each parishioner talk about the Offertory Renewal Program at home, prayerfully reflect and then respond at a personally meaningful level. It is also an important time for the Finance Committee to say "**thank you**" to all of the parishioners who have generously and consistently responded to the financial needs of the parish.

It is helpful to remember that the **Offertory Renewal Program** includes both the regular operating expenses of our parish and our mortgage reduction. Some examples of our operating costs include expenses such as a very modest salary for Fr. Byrne, fair salaries for our part time — employees, increasing financial support for the programs and mission of the parish and essential care and maintenance for the building and property.

These are challenging economic times

The past year has been a very difficult financial time in our country. While forecasts are more encouraging for 2010, many uncertainties continue. We do know that the individual financial support has remained strong in 2009, and our parish community can celebrate with gratitude the commitment of our parishioners. The Finance Committee continues to ensure effective stewardship of the contributions received from parishioners. Your contribution through the Offertory Renewal Program provides value and support for your faith community.

As parishioners, we are the foundation of our church - our parish *receives* no money from the government, the larger Roman Catholic Church or anywhere else. Your contributions, as charitable donations, are income tax deductible.

Like every family, our parish has regular "operating" expenses.

In 2009 we significantly reduced our mortgage interest costs and provided for stronger investment in our parish programs and faith community. Together with the Parish Pastoral Council, we began the "Call for Proposals" to encourage new and innovative parish programming.

Distribution of regular "ordinary" monthly expenses 2009

Faith Development, Pastoral Care, Youth	4.8%
Music, Liturgy, Sanctuary	10.7%
Pastor	9.5%
Lay Employees	24.9%
Mortgage Interest	4.0%
Building and Maintenance	32.0%
Archdiocese	14.0%
Distribution of total Monthly Expenses	100%
Monthly Expenses for the parish	\$26,700

A sense of belonging, ownership and responsibility

The **Offertory Renewal Program** is for all parishioners. Perhaps you have joined the parish in 2009 - it would be easy to imagine that no special individual action was needed – that all was under control. Even if you have been a member of the parish for some time, our current positive progress has been possible because individuals and families have made important decisions to financially support the parish. We have approximately 3,200 families registered in our parish, and we know that some only participate at important times in their lives – Baptism, First Communion, Confirmation, weddings and funerals. In our "Call to Action" our Parish Pastoral Council challenged us to respond to the pillar of "Communion" – so that as disciples we provide a welcome and open door to all who come to St. Paul the Apostle. Our parish needs everyone's support in order to do this.

Individuals and families are the financial backbone of St. Paul the Apostle. Regular contributors are parishioners who make a weekly and monthly financial commitment and it **really makes a difference**. Being an envelope holder means that you have made a thoughtful and planned commitment to financially support your parish. We have 955 "envelope" users, including over 200 parishioners who prefer "direct debit". The Offertory Renewal Program means that you have made financial support of your church a key part of your monthly budget. When we sit in the pew and every weekend reach for our wallet or purse for loose toonies or a five-dollar bill, we have not made that commitment. Rather we are asked to respond by making a commitment for a regular individually meaningful contribution. This is a tangible way that we can bring to life our role as disciple in our Kingston community.

After reading over this information, we ask that you complete the enclosed form and return to the parish in the Offertory collection basket during the coming weeks of Advent.

St. Paul the Apostle Parish - a place to come to.

We are alive with activity and celebration. The Ministries for music, readers, hospitality, children, youth and pastoral care help to connect parishioners to the Gospel. As a parish network, we have the vital resources of the Parish Pastoral Council, the Property Management Committee, Alpha, and the RCIA, the seniors who fill the hall on Thursdays, pre-marriage courses, and the health ministry. Many weeknights the parking lot is busy, the church is buzzing with activity, whether it is the Knights of Columbus, Squires, Women's Group or Catholic Women's League. We come together to celebrate Sunday Liturgies with music, prayer and community.

We welcome children, youth, and young families, disabled and able bodied, middle-aged and older adults and retirees. All of these groups appreciate the hospitality and welcome that St. Paul the Apostle provides and our faith community's influence extends well beyond our building.

In 2009 we joyously celebrated our 25th Anniversary. Our parish is a beacon for our Roman Catholic faith in Kingston. Our faith comes to life in the welcome and participation of children, visits with the ill or those in retirement and long-term care homes. Those who need our support in times of stress and loss are welcomed. As a parish, we support these values and we are committed to building and sustaining our faith community. St. Paul the Apostle has a place in our life, a place to come to.

The 2010 Offertory Renewal Program

We ask you to prayerfully reflect upon the value that your parish has in your life and make a commitment to support St. Paul the Apostle Parish for 2010. **We have a sound financial plan and it is working.**

Together, our parish has made successful progress in our financial goals in 2009. The effectiveness of our financial plan is clear when we compare progress from October 2008 to October 2009.

- Our revenue from parishioner contributions averages \$28,100 per month. In spite of difficult financial changes in our country, we have maintained our commitment to this value investment.
- In 2009, we made great progress in reducing our interest costs on our mortgage. The previous 12% of our operating costs going to interest payments in 2008 has been reduced to 4% of our total operating costs in 2009. This allows the Finance Committee to broaden our financial support for the "Call to Action" initiatives approved by the parish.
- January 2009 to October 31st 2009 we repaid \$241,000 on our mortgage compared with \$190,000 repaid for the same period in 2008.
- The outstanding principal on the mortgage at October 31st 2009 was \$419,000 compared with a larger debt of \$735,000 at the end of October, 2008.

These are tremendous accomplishments. This is possible because of many, many hard working and generous parishioners. **Thank you.** However, we must stay the course.

Ask yourself...

- How much do I give to the parish on a weekly or monthly basis -is it too much, too little or just right?
- Do I understand my obligation to provide regular financial support to the parish?
- If I do not attend for one or more Sundays, do I make up the amount that I have not given?

Direct debit is a convenient way to offer your support

- Automatic deduction from your banking account. You decide in advance how much you want to give, based upon your individual financial situation
- Continue to participate in the Offertory Collection by dropping your envelope in the basket noting on the envelope that you are giving via the direct debit.
- The Parish benefits because you are giving whether you are at Mass or away for the weekend
- If you have already signed up for direct debit, this level of support will continue until you direct the parish to make a change.
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Respond to the challenge - commit to a regular contribution. Please see the enclosed

form and return it to the parish office via the Offertory collection basket.