

BLESSED SACRAMENT



CHURCH

TO PRAISE, TO BLESS, TO PREACH

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

It's time for Blessed Sacrament's 2022 campaign for parish stewardship! No, that is not a typo. We have been gearing up for Choose This Day 2022 for more than a year now. Here's why. Last year, the Archdiocese rolled out its new church management system, ParishStaq, to make administrative functions more coordinated and consistent across all parishes. Our staff started weekly training in early fall of '22, and we have been putting component parts of the system to work since then. We planned to tie Choose This Day 2022 to the expected December roll-out date for the app which all parishes will need to adopt and which will make your experience of the new system significantly easier. It seemed a convenient approach to encourage everyone to update their information and move to the new giving platform. A handful of what were supposed to be "short postponements" later, and the app still almost but not quite ready!

We know the Archdiocese and ParishStaq have had a lot on their plate, but it no longer makes sense to postpone Choose This Day. The app and changeover are coming soon, but we need to Choose This Day today!

As always, I am in awe of this parish's generosity with time, talent, and treasure. Our ministries are growing – existing ministries are gaining vibrancy after the pandemic's lull and brand-new ministries have come to life – all to serve our community. Their success and engagement is due to the dedicated volunteers who serve their fellow parishioners with their vision, planning, management, prayer, and straight-up labor.

In the past nine months, Blessed Sacrament has far surpassed expectations in three fundraising efforts:

- We met our parish goal for the ACA much sooner than in recent years!
- We've raised more than \$600,000 to purchase, move, and install the Ruth and Paul Manz Organ, including the needed structural upgrades to the loft.
- And we still have raised (so far!) enough money at Rosary Sunday to fully support four Dominican student brothers.

These, however, are examples of targeted campaigns. These are separate and distinct from the parish's operating budget, which both keeps the lights on and feeds this community spiritually. Our operating budget is drawn mainly from our collections, and it funds everything from the payroll to the candles on the altar to the insurance premiums to the utilities, naming just a few of the expenses we manage.

Blessed Sacrament always prepares a lean budget, and this fiscal year is no exception. Yet the parish, just like its individual parishioners, must grapple with the effects of inflation and increased costs. We need a weekly average of \$19,456 to meet our 2023-2024 budget. If we don't collect that – and we have not so far – we don't have enough to achieve what we hoped for this year. And a hit to the bottom line is a hit to the heart of parish life: we can't avoid the fixed expenses like payroll, insurance premiums, and utilities; we still must make sure the building is in good repair. So when our collections

flag, we have to scale back on variable expenses like parish events and ministries, which is the last thing we want to do.

We would love to see 100 percent participation in Choose This Day. There are so many ways to give, and the enclosed envelope lays them out. Of course, Blessed Sacrament needs to fund its operating budget, and I ask you Choose This Day to prayerfully consider whether you can give – or give more – financially. Can you pledge a specific amount to give weekly or monthly, so our income is easier to predict? We'll make it as effortless as we can for you – you can work with Debbie or go to the website to set up automatic transfers from your credit card or bank account. And of course, we still do take checks and cash, unlike some of the coffee shops around here!

But money is not our only need, and I ask you to Choose This Day to prayerfully consider whether you can give – or give more – of your time and talent. Perhaps that means engaging in a ministry that has caught your attention. Perhaps that means assisting with liturgies or administration. And I hope that means committing to praying regularly and frequently for Blessed Sacrament, which after all is the most powerful way to help me, your friends in Christ seated with you in the pews, and the whole parish.

As we approach the Advent season, I look forward to sharing with you all in the great feasts of our Lord's incarnation as we celebrate the God who became one of us, the God who is with us, and the God who leads us home rejoicing to eternal life with him. Thank you for your support, thank you for your prayers, and thank you for your commitment to Blessed Sacrament.

In Christ, through Mary,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "F. D. D. M. J., OP". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the initials "OP" at the end.

Pastor