

The Twenty-Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time September 25, 2022

Each of us bear some responsibility to share out time, talents, and treasure in order to continue the mission of Jesus in the various ministries of the Church.

The most common ways we see here in the parish is volunteering our time to serve on various committees in the cluster such as the Parish Council, the faith Formation Commission, teaching Religious Education, helping with funeral dinners, and so forth.

Some ways that we can share our talents in the cluster is to help lead the music ministry in each parish. We have young people who sing in the various choirs at school and do not help with the singing in their own parish. We have young people who play musical instruments at school in the band and orchestra and do not help with the music in their own parishes. We also need readers and Eucharistic ministers at all the parishes, among other things.

Some ways we can offer our treasure to help the parishes is through the use of the tithing envelopes and by giving to the needs of your particular parish. There are always repairs needed in each parish to keep the air conditioning running, or the heat on, replacing flooring so people don't trip and fall, and so on.

Today the focus of my talk is on the appeal entitled ArchdioceseOne. It is a special appeal to raise funds from throughout the archdiocese for needs of the archdiocese.

One of the areas of need is the Seminarian Education Endowment Fund. Once a young man indicates his openness to become a priest for the Archdiocese it is no small matter. Since his life of service would be to the entire diocese it is just and proper that the archdiocese should pay for his education. Because the number of seminarians has increased as well as the cost of educating these students has

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increased it is creating difficulty in finding funding. Currently all of our seminarians are studying at Mundelein College near Chicago.

A second area of need is to fund the Priest Pension Plan for our retired priests. Part of the compensation that is provided to our priests is the promise of a monthly stipend and health care when they retire. This is right and just because their salary is too small for them to put too much away in savings. And as a priest's social security is based on their income that too will be small. Even though a retired priest receives the same stipend as an active priest, he must now pay for things he never did before, such as room and board, rent, property taxes, etc. The retirement benefits for our retired priests are paid out of a fund called the Priest Pension Plan, which is presently not fully funded. There was a campaign done in 1998 for the Priest Pension Plan and it was successful, but priests are living longer, and healthcare costs continue to increase as you well know.

A third area of need is repairs and upgrading to the Cathedral of St. Raphael in Dubuque. I don't know how many of you have been to the Cathedral, there are cliffs behind it and a bowl-shaped parking lot which unfortunately seems to funnel the water from the lot into the basement of the Cathedral and the rectory. Both suffer water damage at the foundation but also the roof needs to be worked on. There is much water damage inside the Cathedral as well. In addition, they need to upgrade the heating and air conditioning as well as the elevator, and also to provide greater handicapped access. It's true that the Cathedral is a parish church, and they don't have the number of parishioners they once had, but they are doing their part in making pledges and making donations, but it is also the mother church of the archdiocese. Ordinations are held there as well as the Chrism Mass during Holy Week. They are doing their part; we need to help them.

The fourth area of need is helping Catholic Charities provide and expand legal services for immigrants. These are not just those coming from Mexico and places further south, but also for immigrants from Burma, the Ukraine, the Middle East, and Africa. In the past five years we have seen an increase in immigration from

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many different places. Catholic Charities Legal Services provides legal education, advocacy, and direct legal services for those unable to afford such help.

Your sacrificial gift can be designated to one or more of the four needs areas. Or you can leave it to the discretion of the archbishop as to where it would help best. The amounts listed in the appeal information aren't intended to be a goal for how much to donate but to show that it is possible to achieve our goal.

Some of our 185K Catholics maybe can't afford much, and some can afford more. If every one of our 185K Catholics in the Archdiocese made a sacrificial gift, we could reach our goal if every one gave the equivalent of the tank of gas each year for 5 years.

Remember: The Bible teaches our giving should be done freely and cheerfully, and that we will reap as sacrificially as we sow.

Pray for the spiritual and material success of our special appeal. And prayerfully consider making a sacrificial gift to our special appeal. Please, and thank you.