

Dear Parishioners,

I am privileged to write you all again and report to you on the activities of our parish over the past year. I am proud to say that St. Nicholas of Myra is a busy place, and that our work in the vineyard of the Lord continues to bear fruit to eternal life. Since I wrote you last, St. Nicholas has celebrated 16 baptisms, 15 of our children have received Holy Communion for the first time, 29 were confirmed, 3 couples were united in holy wedlock, and we prayed for the repose of 22 souls.

Our sacramental life is the heart and soul of what we do at St. Nicholas, and indeed, access to the sacraments is why a parish exists in the first place. Fr. Nunes and I are so grateful to you to whom we have been privileged to minister. In our celebration of the sacraments, the grace that comes from God is given to His holy people, creating a unique bond with those who receive Him. The sacrifice of the Mass is the highest form of prayer which we can practice. The Lord Jesus desperately wants to be with His people, and on the altar, heaven and earth meet and we catch a glimpse of the divine. There, we have an opportunity to be snatched away from the cares and worries of our world and rest in the love that pours from the Sacred Heart. I urge you to make Sunday Mass a healing remedy and focus of the week.

In addition to the sacraments, St. Nicholas of Myra is fortunate to have so many volunteers who give of themselves in service to our parish. Profound gratitude goes to the Knights of Columbus, the Women's Guild, the Garden Club, the Supper Club, the Book Club, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, the Honduras Mission Possible team, the ushers, sacristans, and catechists who keep the hands of our parish extended in service to others. I encourage you to join in their efforts to imitate the Lord Himself who did not come to be served but to serve.

As no one person is an island, neither is any parish. In our cooperation with Annunciation of the Lord Parish, we have created a high quality religious education program for our young people that, through the witness of our catechists, gives them a deeper relationship with Jesus. We have also been able to work together to expand Mass to 7 days a week, and been able to bolster each other's social gatherings.

Our campus buildings, while sound, experienced some unexpected issues, particularly the plumbing in both buildings and the boiler in the church. These have been addressed, as has the roofing issue over the wheelchair ramp. However, this does mean that the parking lot I had hoped to get repaired will be delayed. Emerging issues such as the eaves over the loading dock and gutters on the parish center are being tackled next before becoming too expensive.

Financially, the last fiscal year has been challenging. As with everyone, the ongoing supply chain issues and increasing inflation have been a problem. Despite these ongoing concerns, your generosity has shone. Thank you for that generous support in this tight economic climate. Our parish pledged \$48,525 to the Catholic Charities Appeal to help those most vulnerable. Last year we received from you a total of \$308,314.01. Our expenses, however, totalled \$324,213.98, a deficit of \$15,899.97. This is an improvement from last year, where the shortfall was \$48,947.96, but is still a hindrance to our ability to do more, especially in the long-term. I ask that you consider prioritizing our parish's future when planning your charitable giving.

To aid our parish in addressing these challenges, I have appointed a finance council made up of parishioners to find ways of improving our fiduciary standing. They will be addressing the parish at Masses in the coming weeks.

St. Nicholas of Myra is committed to fidelity to our mission to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ, to serve our brothers and sisters, especially those in need, and to aid in the sanctification of the world. To aid in those goals, I would ask for your supportive response between October 1 and November 15 for our **Annual Collection**. Enclosed, please find a pledge card and return envelope. Again, your generosity and commitment are greatly appreciated by me and so many more. Thank you.

As always, we continue to offer access to FORMED, an online database of videos, presentations, books, and studies from various apostolates in the Church. FORMED is a beneficial avenue of self-study and enrichment for all Catholics. Access is free of charge, easy, and available on all devices. Visit www.formed.org to access all the material.

Once again, thank you for all that you do and are. You make St. Nicholas of Myra the great parish it is. Fr. Nunes and I are so happy to be with you here and to walk with you toward Jesus. We will continue to serve you to the best of our ability. St. Nicholas of Myra continues to be your home within the wider Church. Please reach us by phone at (508) 822-1425 or at our redesigned website www.stnicholasofmyra.org.

With joyful prayers for you, your families, and loved ones, I am proud to be

Devotedly Yours in Christ,

Rev. David C. Deston, Jr.
Parochial Administrator

Finance Council Membership
St. Nicholas of Myra - N. Dighton

Mr. Brian Brown - Regional Sales Manager - Electronic Components

Mrs. Sue Cordeiro - Retired bookkeeper

Rev. David Deston - Parochial Administrator

Rev. Daniel Nunes - Parochial Vicar

Mr. Brian O'Leary - Instrument & Regulation

Mrs. Colleen Simpson, Chair - CFO St. Vincent de Paul