

My name is Tom Bigos. I am one of the members of the Finance committee and I've been asked to speak to you today and provide to you a summary of our parish finances. Our fiscal year ends on June 30, so I will be addressing the activities for the year ending June 30, 2016.

About this time, last year, I gave you a financial update and it may have been a little disconcerting, because I said that we spent nearly \$200k more than we received in contributions and gifts in that 12 month timeframe. Recall, we were undertaking several large projects at the time, including the organ installation, the air conditioning, the bathrooms in the church and the parish center, and classroom improvements. We had saved substantial funds leading into that 2014 fiscal year and as a result, all projects came in under budget and were fully paid for thanks to your generosity.

Our major project activity slowed a bit during this past year, the year ending June 30, 2016. This gave us a chance to catch our breath and to begin reviewing the needs of our parish center. While the bathroom and classroom improvements in 2014 were certainly welcome and necessary, there was much more that needed to be

reviewed and prioritized to make our parish center more welcoming to all.

In March of 2016 a team of parishioners representing ministries who utilize the kitchen was formed. Their job was to review that space and to come up with a design that would improve the appliances, the layout and the overall functionality of the kitchen. In addition to the obvious visible changes (the commercial refrigerator, freezer, and increased work space), there were also changes needed to the drain and septic system. As a result of all those improvements, we were issued a food service permit by the town and county and will be inspected on an annual basis.

While improvements/maintenance to our physical plant is important, and does consume a significant portion of our budget, it is important to recognize some of our other activities. Activities that are funded through your weekly contributions.

Our parish continues to provide support to our St. Vincent DePaul society. Through your contributions, both directly to St. Vincent DePaul and through the church, the society has been able to provide food and financial assistance and Christmas gifts to many families.

Many parishioners and catechists attend the annual Diocesan Spring Enrichment program and we continue to provide local programs designed to enrich our adult faith community.

Our parish also continues to provide support to the Joan Nicole Prince home, the Dominican Spiritual Life Center and a number of other charities, both local and abroad. We support the local Catholic High Schools, both directly and through our Diocesan school assessment and our own Faith Formation program continues to grow and receives nearly \$300k of financial support through your weekly contributions.

We also support the local community, as your generosity through the Bethlehem Trees provides well over 1000 Christmas gifts to those who would otherwise have to do without. Our Parish hall continues to be available for blood drives, elections, meetings and receptions.

Our church space has also been the venue for many musical events, opening our church community to the local community.

While many of these activities do require our financial assistance, they could not exist without the many many hours generously donated by all our volunteers.

What would we do without the catechists who tirelessly work with our youth, or the pastoral care ministers who bring Eucharist to the homebound, or the summertime classroom painters, or the ground cleanup crews, or the snow plowers and shovelers, or all the MANY OTHER people involved in our many ministries?

Just look around at a weekend liturgy and see how many people are involved as they help to make every liturgy a special one.

And, in just a couple of weeks, over 450 of our parish family will travel to 19 locations in the area to participate in our first EVER Parish Morning of Service.

Time Talent and Treasure are truly alive here at Immaculate Conception.

So, how did we do in the 2015 fiscal year? Including all the kitchen related costs, we experienced a positive cash flow last year. Weekly offertory contributions increased again, and nearly half the cost of the kitchen renovation was covered by donations designated for that project. The additional utility cost to run the air conditioning units during this hot summer was much lower than had been projected, and total expenses did not increase, despite a slight increase in salaries and benefits. The insert in the bulletin will provide more specific details.

The end result of the past 3 years is that we were able to complete all the church and parish center renovations and pay all our bills without the need for a specific building campaign.

While much has been accomplished in this timeframe, there is still more that needs to be done.

We are currently looking at the possibility of improvements to the hall, which has not been touched since it was built nearly 50 years ago and a means of providing an easier connection between the kitchen and the flicker room.

Last year I ended this talk with a passage from Proverbs which said to “Honor the Lord with your Wealth”.

Today’s readings and the psalm tells us that the Lord hears the cry of the poor. We are all blessed with good fortune, some more than others, but nevertheless, we too hear the cry of the poor, in every collection taken in church and in every offering of our time and talent. It helps the poor, both in our own parish family and elsewhere. The increase in offertory giving for the 3rd year in a row is a testament to your resolve to serve.

We in the finance committee will continue to act as good stewards of the resources entrusted to us so that our parish will continue to grow and will serve not only our parish family, but will serve all those in need.

Thank you so much for your attention. Your love for this parish is evident, through your attendance at weekend and daily mass, through your selfless volunteering and through your continued generosity. On behalf of Fr. Jerry and the other members of the finance committee, I thank you.