

August 15, 2026

A Letter from the Pastor

Peace be with you! I hope everyone's summer is going well. These past few months have been fairly busy here at the collaborative office. We continue to pray for Kathi Ryan Flynn's healing, and we pray for her eventual return to the office, happy and healthy. She is extremely grateful for your prayers and good wishes. Last Friday was our Finance and Operations Manager Tony Domenici's last day. He starts his new job this week. We wish him the best and are so grateful for all the good work he has done here. Anna Cote and Amy McLaughlin are taking their well-deserved vacations and this week John Morton returned from his honeymoon. Hopefully, things will settle down in the next few weeks. I thought I would take this opportunity to fill you in on some of the things that we are working on, as well as give you some updates on our buildings and finances.

Many of you may be wondering about the status of the MPB school building. As you know, we have been actively looking for a tenant and have a few very promising prospects. We were very close to potentially leasing it last November but just about that time, Archbishop Henning put a moratorium on any leases or rentals of church property throughout the archdiocese. His reasoning — which I respect — is that he wants to meet with each pastor personally before any long-term leases or rentals are signed. Since many leases are in the 30 to 50-year range (some are even longer), he wants to make sure we are not leasing property that the parishes might need in the next several years. Since he must meet with dozens of pastors and he has a very busy schedule, the soonest he could meet with me was July 15th. He had to postpone this meeting at the last minute and has rescheduled it for the end of August. I pray that it will go off as scheduled. His ultimate decision on rental/leasing of church property does not just affect MPB. We have been actively attempting to lease the unused portions of the St. Anne school building but, as with MPB, this has been put on hold, too. I will update you promptly after I meet with him later in the month. In the meantime, if you have any questions, please let me know.

Regarding the finances of the three parishes, I would like to share the following with you. 1) We have been seeing positive trends that are encouraging. The Catholic Appeal was very successful (as of today, at least two parishes will receive a rebate) and we have seen an increase in on-line giving as well. Thank you for your generous support. Offertory has remained steady with slight increases in many cases. 2) Several parishioners have let me know that they have updated their will to put a bequest in place for their church. We hope to offer a collaborative-wide gathering in November in conjunction with our local funeral homes to answer any questions you might have about making a bequest and how you might put it in place. 3) As we do every October, we will be giving you an updated report on the parish finances as well as a copy of the budget for the next year. I would like to prepare you that it is stark. If you have been reading our yearly budget, you will know that the parishes, to varying degrees, have been financially strapped for quite some time. Not being able to accept new rentals for almost a year has only exacerbated the financial stress. You can be sure that I will express our deep concern about this to the archbishop. That being said, I would encourage us to not panic but remain hopeful for the future. People out there are looking for hope, the hope that

only Jesus can bring. We need to have this hope and not be afraid to express it. It is what attracts people to the church and makes them want to be a part of it. It is what will build us up for the future and make us a strong community of faith.

Finally, I would like to give you an update on the restructuring of the staff. Going forward, the Finance and Operations position will no longer exist. The Operations aspect of the job will be melded into an existing position. Finance will now be a part-time position. I feel this will streamline the operations of the parish, as well as save the parishes a substantial amount of money. All other positions will remain as they are. I am grateful to our wonderful staff for their hard work and patience as we face the challenges ahead. It's a privilege to work with people who not only have great skills, but who have great faith in Jesus. It makes all the difference.

As we look ahead to this fall, we are excited about many of the happenings in our parishes. Our youth and adult Faith Formation programs will return as well as our yearly St. Anne Parish Christmas Bazaar and Craft Fair on Saturday, November 14. Stay tuned to our bulletin and website for these and all other parish events. Father Charles and I will keep you all remembered in prayer during these last few weeks of summer.

Peace,

Fr. Joe Mazzone