

March 2025
Pastor's Report

Parish Vitality: Listed below is an update of our efforts this past month and moving forward to help accomplish some of the goals pertaining to our parish's vitality.

1) Service to Others:

- a. Our Lenten Parish Almsgiving Project this year will be offered in support of St. Vincent DePaul and the Dubuque Rescue Mission.
- b. The parish sponsored Renewal Day for Persons with Disabilities which was originally scheduled to be held in March has been moved to later this year sometime in the Fall.

2) Sense of Belonging:

- a. Still no word on completion of our Parish Pictorial Directory (we did not see the miracle we were hoping for in February--pray we will see a miracle in March.)

3) The Mass:

- a. We will be offering Bible Study and Reflection on the upcoming Scripture readings on Monday evenings during Lent at 7:30 pm at Holy Ghost Paraclete Hall.

Parish events and program updates:

- We have completed the 1st stage of updating our parish census. There were about 850 informational letters sent out with about 100 returned. We will continue this month with some follow-up responses before we conclude this process. It is important that we update our census periodically as throughout the years, people move, switch parishes, or stop attending Mass altogether. We simply need to update our census information and possibly address any needs or concerns some may have regarding their involvement.
- Preparations are progressing well for our Christian Experience Weekend Retreats (CEW). The Women's CEW is scheduled for the weekend of March 7, and the men's is scheduled for the weekend of March 14-16. Let's keep our retreat directors and team in our prayers this month.
- We are grateful for a couple of restricted memorial donations to cover the expenses for some new server albs at Sacred Heart Church. May God bless these families for their generosity, and we continue to keep their deceased loved ones in our prayers.

- We are still holding our own regarding parish finances. January and February are traditionally tough months as we pay some of our bi-annual bills for insurance, but thus far we remain on par with our budget. Thanks again to the efforts of our parish Finance Council, Jeff Jochum our Director of Parish Finances, and to all our parishioners who have made regular contributions and special donations to the parish.
- We are blessed to have a number from our parish who will be receiving sacraments in the coming months. 1st Communion this year will be celebrated at Holy Ghost Church on May 4th at 9:30 am Mass. Confirmation will be celebrated at the Cathedral May 10th at 6:00 pm Mass. Additionally, we have 4 individuals going through our OCIA program. One of whom will be received into the Church at the Easter Vigil, and three who are baptized Catholic and receive the sacrament of adult Confirmation once they have completed their instruction and preparation. Let's keep them in our prayers in the coming months.

The Lenten Season begins on March 5th with Ash Wednesday. This year, as in past years, we will be offering several faith enrichment services and opportunities. There is a parish *Lenten Flyer* available at the various church sites which list these events. I encourage all to take a flyer and attend as many of these events as possible. For the Lenten Season, as we know, is a time where we are invited to take our spiritual life more seriously, to form life-giving habits and abandon self-destructive habits, and to discover anew the abundant life Jesus invites us to at Easter.

My prayers for a blessed March and a blessed Lenten Season.

Sincerely in Christ,

Fr. Steve