

December 13, 2009

We are publishing in this issue the Financial Report of the Diocese of Gary for the fiscal year which ended June 30, 2009. As in the past, this report covers our diocesan-wide programs. Parishes are expected to give an accounting of their own finances separately in their parish bulletins.

McGladrey and Pullen LLP conducted a full audit of all diocesan finances and gave an unqualified audit opinion. This means that the diocesan books, records, and accounting practices are conducted in full accordance with generally accepted accounting practices.

Each year, an audit committee of the Diocesan Finance Council and the full Council study our audit. The Diocesan Finance Council, which consists of one priest and seven lay people, meets quarterly to oversee our financial policies and procedures, the diocesan budget, the annual audit, and investments.

The mission of the Church in our diocese is supported by three primary sources: the parish quota, your generosity in the annual Catholic Services Appeal, and the earnings from diocesan endowments and reserves.

You have been extraordinarily generous in these challenging financial times. Surely your generosity reflects the practice of good stewardship on your part. I give thanks to God for your faith and pray that you will be rewarded with a grateful and joyful heart. By the grace of God, your sacrifices will be used for ministries to touch the hearts, minds, and spirits of people, young and old, in ways that we will never fully know.

I try to be a good steward of the resources the people of God make available to the Church to continue the mission of Jesus. I use many consultative groups which help me stay focused on the mission which Jesus entrusted to us.

We list these consultative groups with their particular focus and membership in our diocesan directory, which you received in the second week of September, beginning on page 61.

The Diocesan Finance Council gives the final approval for the diocesan budget after the proposed budget, goals, and objectives of each diocesan program office are reviewed by the Program and Budget Review Committee. This committee reviews written materials submitted by the coordinators of all our ministries and then interviews the department heads to determine whether their stated goals and objectives address the needs of our parishes and schools where our faith is celebrated, nurtured, and lived.

I think it is important to keep this financial accountability of the resources you have so generously given to continue the work of Jesus in perspective. This report does not tell the whole story of how we, the disciples of Jesus, carry out His mission in our day. It doesn't speak about the way each one of us on a daily basis strives to allow the Lord to use our time and talents to build the Body of Christ and to bring more peace, love, truth, and justice into our families, schools, workplaces, neighborhoods, and world.

Neither does this report make mention of our faith-filled gatherings for the most sacred act of worship every Sunday and weekday, wherein each one of us strives to give glory to God through full active, conscious participation. The report doesn't speak about the numbers of young and old who seek to grow in faith through participation in our Catholic schools, religious education, youth, and adult faith formation programs. It doesn't tell of the numbers of sick and aged persons visited or cared for nor the numbers of people helped through Catholic Charities, St. Vincent de Paul Societies, at the rectory doorstep, or by any number of us when we encounter Jesus in those in need.

However, this report does speak to the seriousness with which we take our Baptism and seek to be significant collaborators with the Lord and His Church to accomplish the common mission entrusted to us all. We strive to do together, with our common resources, what no one parish nor individual can do alone. We strive to attain the unity and charity for which Jesus prayed at the Last Supper. As the beautiful hymn goes: “We are one body, the Body of Christ. We do not stand alone.” Together we do His work and strive for our common goal.