

From the Pastor's Desk:

Thank you to all our parishioners for your warm welcome as I moved from the shoreline to Suffield. You have helped me to feel at home here and made the transition very smooth. In a short period of time, I have come to know so many wonderful people.

Our Annual Report is of necessity about finances and statistics, but the most important part of the report is You. You make Sacred Heart Parish a community of faith where we pray and worship together, receive God's life and healing and forgiveness and strength together, pass on God's word to the next generation, and serve the needs of others through the works of mercy.

Thank you for making Sacred Heart Parish a living temple of the Lord. *May we see the Lord more clearly, follow Him more nearly, and love Him more dearly, day by day.*

Thank you to all our parish groups for being the living stones that build up our parish: our Office Manager, Business Manager, Sextons, our Pastoral Council, Finance Committee, Building Committee and Trustees, our Lectors, Ministers, Ushers and Altar Servers, our Altar Society and Funeral Ministry and Money Counters, our Organist, Soloists, Choirs, and Folk Group, our Religious Education staff and volunteer Teachers and Youth Group Ministry, our Women's Guild and their Bazaar and Fair Trade volunteers, our Social Action/Human Needs Committee and volunteers, our Prison Ministry and our Knights of Columbus Council 6281.

Thank you to the parishioners of St. Joseph Church who have kept the faith during a year of great change and who have joined our new combined parish. Change is never easy and we welcome you to journey forward with us together. We are grateful to the people from St. Joseph who have joined our parish ministries and groups. We will continue to schedule special Masses at St. Joseph Church and to incorporate St. Joseph traditions such as the Prayer to St. Michael, the indoor and outdoor nativity sets, the Christmas Oplatek wafers and the Easter blessing of food, and occasional Polish hymns and social events.

Sacraments - 2017:

Baptism: 9 children were baptized into the Body of Christ. Penance: 16 young people received forgiveness in First Confession. Communion: 14 young people received the Body of Christ in First Communion. Confirmation: 33 teens were confirmed in their faith. Marriage: no weddings in 2017. Funerals: 37 parishioners were called home to the Lord. McDougall-Walker: one adult was baptized and received First Communion.

Parish Statistics:

Our Sunday Mass attendance increased from 418 in 2016 to 688 in 2017.

Our registered parish families increased from 891 in 2016 to 1,000 in 2017.

Capital Improvements:

In the fall of 2017, sealing of cracks in our parking lots was done at a cost of \$8,500.

Looking Ahead to 2018:

Our parish trustees for 2018 are Janet Helmke-Elmore and Marge Osowiecki.

We are beginning to plan for the refurbishing of the church - interior painting, new carpeting, refinishing pews, updating the PA system, installing LED lighting, updating the restrooms and the lobby area, installing electric votive candles. More information will be printed as the plans come together.