

**PARISH FINANCES AND STEWARDSHIP  
MID-YEAR REPORT**

Saint Patrick Parish operates on a fiscal year that runs from 1 July through 30 June. This report offers a concise update on our financial status through the first half of this fiscal year – 1 July 2011 to 31 December 2011.

Our parish's total income from July through December 2011 was \$458,965.

- This represents an overall increase in income of \$31,036 compared to the same period in 2010.
- Our increased income was due to our having received three unexpected major gifts (one bequest from the estate of a parishioner and two individual gifts), totaling \$37,000.
- Total donations received through our weekly offertory collections and Special Monthly Projects collections decreased \$18,348 compared to 2010. This significant decrease bears careful consideration as we sacrifice our treasure in our offertory collections. To remain financially stable, we must reverse this trend.
- Our 2011 Grand Annual Appeal totaled \$108,214 – an increase of \$5,230 over 2010. We are deeply grateful to all who sacrificed to help meet Saint Patrick's goal for the 2011 Grand Annual Appeal.

Our parish's total expenses from July through December 2011 were \$408,879. Our parish operates on a very tight, fully transparent budget. God has blessed Saint Patrick's with leaders and staff who are deeply committed to being responsible stewards of our parish's financial resources.

Half way through this fiscal year, our parish's operating budget had a surplus of \$50,086. This was slightly more than the surplus we expected at this point in the fiscal year. With significantly higher seasonal expenses budgeted for the second half of the fiscal year, we know that we must increase our income through offertory collections in order to balance our budget for the year.

Our parish's offertory income is most significantly strengthened by the dedication of parishioners who make formal stewardship commitments and sacrifice their treasure through ParishPay (our electronic giving service) or weekly use of the envelope system. Our financial security would greatly increase if all parishioners would commit themselves to donating through ParishPay or weekly use of the envelope system.

We are grateful to all who have participated in our 2012 Stewardship Commitment process. It is remarkable to witness the generosity of so many members of our faith community, sacrificing their time, talent, and treasure to help build God's Kingdom in Lawrence. We know that our living the spirituality of stewardship is key to the vitality and growth of our parish. Stewardship commitment materials for 2012 are available in the welcome centers and through the parish office, and are most welcomed at this time.

We are continuously thankful to God for the abundant blessings that He has bestowed on our community. We are particularly grateful to be blessed with so many parishioners who are growing in their relationships with Jesus Christ and are choosing to live their discipleship through Saint Patrick Parish!

– Father Paul and the Parish Finance Council

**ADULT CONFIRMATION**

We are about to begin our Adult Confirmation program! Candidates for Adult Confirmation must be at least 18 years old, be baptized, and have received their First Communion in the Catholic Church. If there are marriage issues, they should be resolved before beginning the program. Please talk to one of the priests if you have an irregular marriage situation or you are not married in the Church. To register for Adult Confirmation classes, please fill out the form below and return it to the parish office, along with a copy of your baptismal certificate. Adults who were baptized at St. Patrick, Sacred Heart, or St. Anne Parishes will not need a certificate, as we have them on file. Classes will be held at the parish office on the Sundays of Lent at 10:00 am, beginning February 26, 2012.

**ADULT CONFIRMATION REGISTRATION**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Baptism (church, city and date): \_\_\_\_\_  
First Holy Communion (church, city and date): \_\_\_\_\_  
Marital Status: \_\_\_\_\_

## LAWRENCE, MA

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### PALMS TO ASHES

Ash Wednesday is on February 22. The ashes with which we are blessed on Ash Wednesday come from the burned palms that we saved from last Palm Sunday. If you have palms at home, you are encouraged to bring them to church next weekend and to place them in the containers in the foyer of the upper church and beneath the large crucifix at the front of the lower church. Your palms will be burned to make our parish's Ash Wednesday ashes!

### ASH WEDNESDAY MASSES

Our schedule for Masses, with the distribution of ashes, for Ash Wednesday, February 22, is:

7:00 am English

5:30 pm English

7:00 pm Spanish

## LENT and LABELS ARE FOR JARS™

Ash Wednesday is February 22! During Lent, you are invited to participate in **Labels Are For Jars**, an effort to help feed hungry people in Lawrence through our parish's Cor Unum Meal Center. **Labels Are For Jars** will offer a daily guide for Lenten reflections, as well as a unique opportunity to help feed some of our neediest brothers and sisters through our Lenten almsgiving.

### LENT

Lent, the period of weeks leading up to Holy Week and Easter, is a unique gift from God. During Lent, we are invited to renew our relationships with God, turn away from sin, and experience reconciliation with God and others.

We traditionally embrace three disciplines during Lent: prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. None of these is an end in itself. Instead, each discipline helps us better focus on God and on living God's love.

### PRAYER

The goal of Lenten prayer is to dedicate more of ourselves to building our relationships with God. To make best use of this Labels Are For Jars Lent Guide, you are invited to set aside some period of time each day during Lent (perhaps half an hour) to communicate with God through reflective prayer. Each day, you are invited to read in your bible the Gospel passage listed in this guide, and then to consider the reflections and questions for the day. You may want to keep notes of your reflections each day.

### FASTING

Through fasting, we recall that God gives us all the gifts we have in life - not just food, but breath, health, speech, thought, love, and every material good. By choosing to deny ourselves some food and drink during Lent, we gain a better perspective on all of the material blessings God gives to us. In addition to observing the Lenten fasting regulations of the Church, each of us chooses particular ways to fast during Lent.

### ALMSGIVING

Almsgiving is our sharing the best of our treasure with people who are in need. All that we are and all that we have are gifts from God. It is tempting to grasp those gifts for ourselves, without considering God or other people. When we sacrifice the best of our gifts for people in need, we become better focused on God and others. We grow closer to God and all of our brothers and sisters by living God's generous love.

**Labels Are For Jars** is a fantastic focus for Lenten almsgiving. **Labels Are For Jars** raises money to provide food for hungry people in Lawrence through the Cor Unum Meal Center. Cor Unum provides free hot meals to hundreds of people every day, 365 days a year. **100% of the alms you contribute to Labels Are For Jars during Lent will help provide food through Cor Unum.**

**Labels** information sheets with Lent Jar wrappers will be available next week in the welcome centers at the exits of the church. **To participate in the Labels Are For Jars Lenten program, all you need is an open heart, the desire to grow in the Lord, and a jar.**

LETTER FROM CARDINAL SEÁN

My Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Allow me this opportunity to share with you important information concerning an alarming and serious matter that negatively impacts the Church in the United States directly, and that strikes at the fundamental right to religious liberty for all citizens of any faith. The federal government, which claims to be “of, by, and for the people,” has just dealt a heavy blow to almost a quarter of those people—the Catholic population—and to the millions more who are served by the Catholic faithful.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) announced recently that almost all employers, including Catholic employers, will be forced to offer their employees’ health coverage that includes sterilization, abortion-inducing drugs, and contraception. Almost all health insurers will be forced to include those “services” in the health policies they write. And almost all individuals will be forced to buy that coverage as a part of their policies. The Church has had to struggle against regulations like those now proposed by HHS in several states. This HHS ruling would expand and intensify a situation which is already very harmful.

In its ruling, the Administration has cast aside the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, denying to Catholics our Nation’s first and most fundamental freedom, that of religious liberty. And as a result, unless the rule is overturned, we Catholics will be compelled and must be prepared either to violate our consciences, or to drop health coverage for our employees (and suffer the penalties for doing so). The administration’s sole concession was to give our institutions one year to comply.

We cannot simply accept this unjust law now proposed at the federal level. People of faith cannot be made second class citizens. We are already joined by our brothers and sisters of all faiths and many others of good will in this important effort to regain our religious freedom. Our parents and grandparents did not come to these shores to help build America’s cities and towns, its infrastructure and institutions, its enterprise and culture, only to have their posterity stripped of their God given rights. In generations past, the Church has always been able to count on the faithful to stand up and protect her sacred rights and duties. I trust she can count on this generation of Catholics to do the same. Our children and grandchildren deserve nothing less.

In order that we make every effort to respond to this proposed restriction on religious liberty I would ask of you two things. First, as a community of faith we must commit ourselves to prayer and fasting that wisdom and justice may prevail, and religious liberty may be restored. Without God, we can do nothing; with God, nothing is impossible. Second, I recommend that you visit the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops website, www.usccb.org/conscience, to learn more about this assault on religious liberty, and how to contact Congress in support of legislation that would reverse the Administration’s decision.

With the assurance of my prayers for you and all your loved ones, I am,

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Cardinal Seán O’Malley, OFM Cap.  
Archbishop of Boston

Why Catholic?

Beginning this Lent, parishes throughout the Archdiocese of Boston will launch Why Catholic?, a process of adult faith formation and evangelization. Through Why Catholic?, participants will tour through sacred scripture and The Catechism of the Catholic Church, allowing us to grow in our understanding of our faith, and building our confidence to share our faith with others.

Why Catholic? follows the same format as the successful ARISE and Lenten Longings programs, which many of us enjoyed in recent years. The first season will be a six-week process, beginning the First Week of Lent. Participants will be guided by excellent written materials through daily reflections at home, and gather in small groups once a week for discussion and faith sharing.

During Lent 2012, Why Catholic? will explore the fourth section of the Catechism, which is focused on Prayer. Participants will explore how we nurture our relationships with God in prayer. We will gain insights into different forms of prayer, look at some difficulties we experience in prayer, and take a deeper look at the Lord’s Prayer.

To register for Why Catholic?, please complete the following form and return it to the parish office via the collection basket or mail. You will be contacted to confirm your group’s first meeting date and time. The Why Catholic? book, which will be used both for this series and a six-week series next fall, costs \$13.

WHY CATHOLIC? REGISTRATION

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Please mark your choices for meeting day/time in order of preference (1st, 2nd, etc.):

- \_\_\_\_\_ Mondays at 10:00 am \_\_\_\_\_ Wednesdays at 7:00 pm
\_\_\_\_\_ Mondays at 7:00 pm \_\_\_\_\_ Thursdays at 7:00 pm
\_\_\_\_\_ Wednesdays at 2:00 pm \_\_\_\_\_ Fridays at 7:00 pm

**MASS INTENTIONS**

Saturday, February 11	
7:00 am	Shirley Matteo
4:00 pm	Wilfred & Noella Faucher
5:30 pm	Reina Antwine
Sunday, February 12	
7:00 am	Celia & George Sumski
9:00 am	Daniel Romanuk
11:00 am	John Lavertue
5:30 pm	People of St. Patrick Parish
Monday, February 13	
7:00 am	John T. Casey
Tuesday, February 14	
7:00 am	A. Patricia Casey
Wednesday, February 15	
7:00 am	Kenneth Gagnon
Thursday, February 16	
7:00 am	Patricia Ellen Casey
Friday, February 17	
7:00 am	Winifred H. Casey
Saturday, February 18	
7:00 am	Amedeo Iannalfo
4:00 pm	Pamela Sheehy
5:30 pm	M/M Michael Petteruti
Sunday, February 19	
7:00 am	People of St. Patrick Parish
9:00 am	Jacqueline Fortier
11:00 am	Catherine Richard
5:30 pm	John Sefton

**Readings for the Week of February 12, 2012**

Sunday:	Lv 13:1-2, 44-46/1 Cor 10:31--11:1/Mk 1:40-45
Monday:	Jas 1:1-11/Mk 8:11-13
Tuesday:	Jas 1:12-18/Mk 8:14-21
Wednesday:	Jas 1:19-27/Mk 8:22-26
Thursday:	Jas 2:1-9/Mk 8:27-33
Friday:	Jas 2:14-24, 26/Mk 8:34--9:1
Saturday:	Jas 3:1-10 /Mk 9:2-13
Next Sunday:	Is 43:18-19, 21-22, 24b-25/2 Cor 1:18-22/Mk 2:1-12

**STEWARDSHIP OF TREASURE**

Offertory February 4-5	\$8,709
Parish goal for weekly offertory	\$11,154

**SPECIAL COLLECTION**

Next weekend's second collection is the Special Monthly Parish Projects Collection.

**OUR LADY'S SODALITY**

Our Lady's Sodality will hold a meeting on Wednesday, February 15, at 6:30 pm in the parish center. There will be a guest speaker on the topic of Lenten Spirituality. All women of the parish are invited to attend.



**STEWARDSHIP**

“Do everything for the glory of God,” Paul tells the Corinthians in today’s second reading.

Indeed, we are all charged with that same task. As Christian disciples, we are called to live in such a way that all we do and say gives glory to the Lord. We recognize that He is the one who has given us the many good gifts we enjoy – our time, our talents, and our treasure. Even our very lives come by way of gift from God, and it is our duty as His disciples to use the many gifts He has given us in such a way that we bear witness to Him.

It is not an easy task, particularly in the world in which we live. We are surrounded by so much relativistic thinking, and engulfed in a culture of selfishness. The secular society tells us that what “I” want to do and when “I” want to do it is all that matters. Yet, we know that there is so much beyond our “here and now” life on Earth. There is so much beyond the “feel-good” mentality of our culture. We are here to know, love, and to serve God, and when we do so, all who come in contact with us will see Christ.

It is a difficult task to be in the world but not of it, and to live for one person and one person only: the Lord. But we know that, when we do, we are richly rewarded. The life of a Christian disciple isn’t an easy one. In fact, just as the Corinthians to whom Paul writes this letter, we are sure to confront constant opposition, but when we live for Christ, giving Him glory in all we do – at home, at work, at school, and elsewhere, we are richly blessed.

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**SUICIDE IS ALWAYS A TRAGEDY**

This week, we will view a prerecorded homily from His Eminence, Cardinal Seán O’Malley on assisted suicide and the dangers that it poses should it become legal in our state. He will talk about the fact that, as Catholics, we have the responsibility to defend the principle that each of us has the right to live each day until the time we are called to eternal life. We will receive prayer cards, brochures and other materials to help us to evangelize ourselves and others about end-of-life care. Many of these materials may be viewed at [www.suicideisalwaysatragedy.org](http://www.suicideisalwaysatragedy.org). Please do all you can to pray and work for the success of this education initiative.

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**  
**We always accept new students!**

**Pre-school through grade eight**

February 12	Class	10:00 – 11:30 am at Lawrence Catholic Academy
February 19	No Classes	School Vacation Week

**Confirmation**

February 12	Morning Class	9:00 – 11:40 am at Lawrence Catholic Academy (includes 9:00 am Mass)
	Evening Class	4:00 - 6:30 pm (includes 5:30 pm Mass)
February 19	No Classes	School Vacation Week