



ST. BENEDICT CATHOLIC CHURCH

1419 ST. BENEDICT ST., DULUTH, MN 55811

SUMMARY OF COMMENTS on the 2018 YEAR-END STEWARDSHIP REPORT

Given on September 15-16 at Masses by Fr. Joel Hastings

When it comes down to it – the people of St. Benedict Parish have proven very generous. The vast majority (79%) of our parishioners contribute at a much higher rate than a typical parish (50%). That is a credit to you, to your faith, and to your faith community.

The parish has experienced a great deal of change – the number of people in the pews is less with changes in Mass times, religious education format, and the embracing of the noon Latin Mass. The Latin Mass has brought some new faces to the Parish and we are still in a time of early growth for those who are drawn to this liturgy. Leadership in the Parish has evaluated our new reality and recognizes that the change has run its course and now is the time to talk about building up the parish and our faith community.

The power of your contributions has sustained this parish. We have a vision and great hope for our future. The Gathering Space completed in 2007 is an example of your past generosity which continues to bear great fruit. People still express to me how the building addition has brought greater life and community to our parish.

In the present moment we have a vision to do more.

- Our Want to Evangelize: The ChristLife series, which is already having a positive effect in our parish, would only be more effective with funding for childcare, meals, and additional resources.

- Our Opportunity to Acquire Adjacent Property: The residential property next to Walgreens to the east of the Rectory has come up for sale. Our vision, as part of our long-term strategic site plan, includes acquisition of this property. We will be able to open up the landscape to Arrowhead Road and through a proper sign and entrance increase our presence to this neighborhood.
- Our Need to Restore the Building Fund: With the boiler replacement completed in 2016 the amount of funds available for maintenance of the building and grounds has been reduced. This fund pays for larger projects and provides a reserve should there be unanticipated repairs.
- Our Support for Stella Maris Academy: In addition to praying for its success, St. Benedict is called to give meaningful financial support to Stella Maris as one of the Duluth parishes which benefits from the presence of a Catholic school in our City.

Our parish has been blessed with educated, faith-filled, professional leaders committed to new models of dynamic faith formation, vibrant youth ministry, and reverent worship. We have maintained these ministries with a flat operating budget. To continue our current ministries and to expand these ministries we need your financial support to increase parish annual giving by \$60,000.

Our response above all is to trust in Jesus Christ. Our parish stands strong in the midst of the larger Church crisis. We are positioned to be a sign of hope to many, both within and outside this parish.

So that we might continue in the good work that has already begun; so that we might be a sign of hope in our community; so that we always look forward, above all else, to the end goal of heaven - mindful that our life on earth is given to us as a stewardship, I invite you to a continued commitment to prayer, to continued faithfulness to Sunday, and to the opportunities of daily Mass and Eucharistic Adoration.

I am committed to lead our parish and staff as good stewards of your gifts. And with your cooperation in building up the Church, invite your continued material support and humbly ask you to consider making an increase in your annual giving.