



# STELLA MARIS PARISH

OUR LADY "STAR OF THE SEA"™

Dear Fellow Parishioners of Stella Maris Parish,

Someone asked me recently about my Stella Maris Parish legacy. I have not been thinking about my legacy much but believe I have prepared well for one to be established. Stella Maris Parish is very alive with God's love and community service. The Stella Maris Parish of June 2019 has surpassed all my expectations. Our parish has vibrant, meaningful and helpful prayer/worship, faith formation, service, administration, maintenance, stewardship and even an endowment for the future. We are attempting to grow in our understanding of, commitment to and service of Jesus Christ as we listen to the Holy Spirit inspiring us to live the love of God, the Father. Embracing our mission and vision is empowering us to be better disciples while making more disciples. Stella Maris Parish makes a big difference in the northern Door County community and positively affects many people who visit us from around the country and the world. I am truly amazed at what this parish has become, does and continually seeks for the future.

My concern is that we continue to move forward with what we have begun and do not backtrack at all. It is so easy to become complacent. It is so easy to take what we have for granted. It is so easy to think that we have done all that we need to do and stop. We have only just begun to be what we are called to be as a parish. Although our parish has come together well as one in Jesus Christ and needs to continue to find ways to embrace greater unity, we must remember why we are one. Our great oneness witnesses to the world Jesus Christ desire that the whole world be one in him. Although we have improved our ministry and service to others, we must remember what our service is meant to accomplish. We are always meant to be Jesus' love for all people so that they, as much as possible, know the unconditional and perfect love of God. Although our faith formation has improved, we must understand why we are forming ourselves. We are constantly trying to become better formed ourselves so that we can form others in the faith.

With all those hopes in mind; my legacy would best be served if Stella Maris continues to go forward stronger than ever and better equipped to accomplish its mission of uniting people in the love of God while making them disciples. Accomplishing the parish mission and vision can only be done with good stewardship. As I leave, our parish stewardship is very good but that cannot change. Everyone in this parish needs to be as committed as possible to responding to God's grace with 1. the gratitude of prayer/worship, 2. the spiritual growth of formation through study and other human interaction 3. the goodness of a life lived following Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit, 4. the utilization of our gifts and talents for the benefit of the church and 5. the generous sharing of our financial resources with the parish to accomplish its mission.

With the passing of time, practicing good parish stewardship will be more difficult with fewer people in church and less commitment from those who are there so that makes good stewardship more essential than ever. If we truly believe in Jesus Christ, supporting Stella Maris Parish to make sure that it continues to flourish is very important. I hope that long after I leave Stella Maris Parish, there is not only a strong parish community united in the unconditional love of God but also a growing spirit of evangelization which helps the parishioners individually and together to bring more people to God while building the kingdom and transforming the world. It is not easy, but it is worthwhile. Please make your stewardship commitment to Stella Maris Parish with the form which is provided so that we do not have to call you and remind you. Thanks. Best wishes and prayers.

In Christ's love, Reverend David C. Ruby, pastor