

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

**I have good news and bad news.** The good news first! As you know, I walked in the Crop Walk last Sunday and for two weeks I placed large glass jars at the church doors and invited you to sponsor my walk. Your generous contributions amounted to **\$2,331!** Thank you very much for your support! And the bad news... It's almost time to put up the Christmas Giving Trees at the doors of the church. This past spring when the Easter Giving Trees were up, a number of gift cards and some cash gifts in envelopes were stolen from the Giving Tree returns. We estimate that the value of the stolen gift cards was close to \$1,000. There's no way of knowing how much cash was taken. From now on, we will not put out the boxes in which parishioners have customarily returned cash, checks and gift cards. If you choose to support the Giving Tree effort in this way, we'll ask you to put your contribution in a clearly marked envelope and drop it in the collection when the baskets are passed during Mass. The offertory collection is deposited in a drop safe right after it is taken up and will thus be safely secured until the collection is counted and the Giving Tree donations can be handed over to our parish Service and Justice Committee.

**We are in need of some new ministers of the Eucharist** to help in distributing communion at our weekend masses. When I ask for you to consider this ministry, many respond with statements like, "I'm not worthy" or "I'm not holy enough." Well, that's true! Neither am I worthy or holy enough for the task of sharing the Body and Blood of Christ with other parishioners. In fact, NO ONE is "worthy" of this ministry; none of us is holy enough! Indeed, no one is perfect: we are all sinners. And it's from among us sinners that the Lord calls some to serve in particular ways. So, we're not looking for perfect people to distribute communion, we're looking for good Catholic people who worship with us regularly, who believe in the Eucharist, who depend on God's mercy and who want to serve their neighbor at the Lord's table. Might that be you? We will have a training session on Monday night, November 5 at 7:00 p.m. in the church. Coming to this session will not obligate you to become a minister. Come if you're interested, curious or have questions. **NOTE CHANGE IN DATE:** We had originally scheduled this session for this week but we need to **change** the date to **Monday, November 5 at 7:00 p.m.**

Thursday of the coming week, November 1, is a Holy Day of obligation: **ALL SAINTS DAY.** We will celebrate **Mass on All Saints Day at 9:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m.** As is our custom, one which many appreciate, we will sing the beautiful Litany of the Saints at both of these liturgies! November is called the *Month of All Souls*, a special time to remember and pray for those who have died. Beginning on November 1, there will be a memorial book on a table in front of the altar in which you're invited to write the names of deceased family members and friends - for whom the parish will pray in November. You will also see on display in the church several large "scrolls" on which will be written the names of all those who, in the past year, were buried from our church and whom we'll also remember in our prayer in November."

#### ***A Prayer from my blog:***

I can't begin to count all the pardons, second chances, clean slates, fresh starts and new beginnings you've offered me, Lord, in my lifetime, this year, last month, just yesterday - and since I woke up this morning! There is no end to your mercy, to your patience, your indulgence, generosity and love... *Your mercy is never exhausted, Lord, your compassion is never spent: your kindness is renewed each morning...* Help me never take for granted, Lord, the love and mercy you offer me over and over again - regardless of how and how often I've failed you... So, this day, Lord, open up my heart and soul, my eyes, my ears, my mind, my awareness and my imagination... Open me wide to all the ways you'll offer me today your pardon, a second chance, a clean slate, a fresh start and a new beginning... And as you have freely given me the grace of starting over, help me be free in offering all my patience and my pardon... Amen.