



Dear parish family,

*“The community of believers was of one heart and mind, and no one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they had everything in common. With great power the apostles bore witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great favor was accorded them all. There was no needy person among them, for those who owned property or houses would sell them, bring the proceeds of the sale, and put them at the feet of the apostles, and they were distributed to each according to need” (Acts of the Apostles 4:32-35).*

Every year this passage, which was proclaimed during the Sacred Liturgy in the early days of Easter, comes to mind when I consider the annual Bishop’s Appeal, now more fittingly called, “The Diocesan Appeal.” The Word of God reminds us that our gifts are not our own, but all good things come from God for the good of all!

I write today to ask you to please consider making a gift to the annual diocesan appeal, if you have not already done so. The Diocese has proposed a goal of \$143,337 for Historic St. Mary’s and to date we have received \$76,510. This is an average donation of \$455 and we will need to average a \$517 donation from everyone who participated in the past if we are able to reach this goal. I suspect the shortfall is largely a result of being closed for so much of the year 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

I am pleased to remind you that Historic St. Mary’s is open and we are happily ministering again to the spiritual needs of the souls in our community. Still, not all have returned due to the ongoing pandemic. I speak from my heart when I tell you that I can only imagine the financial burdens placed on the Diocese of Albany over the course of the past year. With the presence of the Corona Virus, there has no doubt been greater need than ever: charities have been called upon more than usual; anxiety and fear due to the disease have demanded more counsel and support than usual; and the regular work of preaching the Gospel, forming leaders in the faith, and sustaining the Church goes on at the same time.

Thank you to all of you who have sacrificed during these difficult times and already contributed to the appeal. Thanks in advance to you, who will still do so. The appeal is approaching the end, and I am anxious to think that we might have to use precious parish resources to make up the difference between monies received and our goal. But my anxiety is relieved when I remember the generosity that the St. Mary’s community has shown in the past and my abiding sense I have that you can be counted on always.

Of course, you can always call me if you have any concerns about which it would be helpful for me to know. Be assured of my gratitude—I don’t say thank you enough, I’m sure—and my prayers—which I offer constantly for the members of our parish family.

I wish you and your loved ones all good things!

With gratitude and paternal affection,  
Father Flannery