

In Difficult Times, Together We Will Make a Difference

Dear Friends,

During the last few years we have all experienced the direct or indirect effects of an ailing economy. As a result, many of us have looked at ways to decrease our costs to make ends meet. Our parish struggles to do the same, and the members of the Finance Council and Pastoral Team work diligently to be good stewards of your money.

A year ago when planning the current year's budget, we increased necessary expenses based on Diocesan guidelines. Our anticipated income was increased accordingly to balance the budget. Although our actual costs have come in quite close to that projected, our income has fallen short leaving us with a harsh reality: If our offertory stays at our current weekly average, our deficit may be over \$20,000 by the end of June. Though we have a small cash reserve, we do not have nearly enough to cover this shortfall. We are calling upon your generosity to increase your giving over the next several weeks. With the help of many, our burden will lighten and become manageable.

This shortfall, of course, also creates a dilemma in planning the budget for fiscal year 2009-2010. We have struggled to maintain existing programs and staff, as well as cover the day to day operations of the parish. The steps taken are:

1. Freezing the salaries of our staff at current levels, as required by the Diocese.
2. Reviewing every expense line and reducing each as much as is realistically feasible based on current expenditures.
3. Eliminating one of two part time positions in Youth Ministry.
4. Removing \$4,000 from our budget for Campus Ministry and relying instead on the two grants received each year to fully fund our Campus Ministry program.

The Diocese of Helena has also asked each parish to develop a contingency plan if further reductions are needed.

We, as the Finance Council, do not see much room left to reduce normal operational costs. Without increased financial support from the

members of our parish, the only remaining alternatives are to cut hours, staff, or programs. These are not options that any of us want to consider. We have a dedicated pastoral team that works hard to keep this vibrant parish going, and the programs offer opportunities for spiritual and social growth to all age groups of our community. We are truly blessed.

The **Good News** is that meeting our budget goal can be accomplished, but only if we all take an active part. There are approximately 800 families registered at Christ the King. If each family were to give only **\$1 more per week**, our giving would increase by a total of \$35,000 (10% of budget) and we could meet our existing needs. Granted, this is a significant amount and, if the burden is shouldered by only a few, it is most likely unattainable. However, with the help of many our burden will lighten and become manageable.

We ask every parishioner to prayerfully consider if this amount is within your budget. If you are able, please consider increasing your giving accordingly. We are part of a wonderful community at Christ the King. Help to continue ministering to the needs of our faith family.

More Good News is that parishioners are faithfully meeting their commitments to our Capital Campaign. Please continue that support. If you are not familiar with the campaign and would like information, talk to one of our pastoral team.

Thank you for your faithful stewardship to our Catholic community of Christ the King!

Yours in Christ,

Your Finance Council and Pastoral Team

THANK YOU! CTK IS A VIBRANT AND ALIVE PARISH BECAUSE OF YOU!

- We are working diligently to be good stewards of all that you share with your parish. Times are tight and we are facing a budget shortfall.
- If each household were to give \$1.00 more per week, we will meet our existing needs now and next year.