

My Dear Parishioners,

This weekend marks the beginning of the Annual Catholic Appeal. The 2017 theme is "Live in Faith - Give in Love". Many of you may have already been contacted about this year's Campaign and once again many of you have responded beautifully and generously.

**The Case Component for the 2017 Campaign includes the following:**

**Vocation Support:** Presently we have 45 seminarians at either the college or post college four year major seminary. God willing, at least ten will be ordained this year. \$2,100,000 is earmarked for vocation support, which would include scholarships for our seminarians; and the Support of the Vocation Office, The Cathedral House of Formation for College Students; the Saint John Paul House of Discernment for men still pondering a vocation to the Diocesan priesthood and Cathedral High School in Queens.

**Faith Formation:** \$2,000,000 will be committed to this work which includes Diaconal Formation, Catechist training, The Catholic Youth Organization, Pre-Cana Marriage preparation and Faith Formation. In our parish we have benefitted from several of these programs. We share a Youth Minister, Mr. David James, with St. Margaret's Parish in Middle Village and Our Lady, Queen of Martyrs. Deacon Dobbins was trained for service in our Diocese. Though now "retired" Deacon Ed. Smolinski served this parish for over three decades.

**Catholic Charities:** \$1,100,000 will be earmarked for Catholic Charities and the funds will assist programs for the aged, a Center for Pregnant Women, Child Care services, and Parish & Community Services.

**Catholic Migration Office:** \$700,000 will be utilized in this area. All of us are the children or grandchildren of immigrants. Though with much less organization in the past, it was often the Catholic Church that was the first refuge for many of ancestors as they entered their new land. That tradition continues by providing English as a second language programs, legal services and pastoral, labor and housing services.

**Care For Retired Priests:** \$600,000 will be earmarked for the care of our older and infirm priests. While most priests never fully retire but continue to assist, as needed, in various parishes. When the late Monsignor Langelier retired as pastor in his seventy-first year, he continued to serve us in this parish. The intent of Father John Cremins was the same though he was severely hampered by health problems. Many of our retired priest have special needs: illness, inability to care for themselves, intensive physical therapy, wheel-chair restrictions which prevent them from living in most rectories, various forms of senile dementia or Alzheimer's Disease. These funds will go to assisting them.

**Catholic Schools Assistance:** \$500,000 will be utilized to provide scholarships, which range from \$500.00 to \$2,700.00

**Chaplaincies:** Our Diocese is fortunate that most of our Catholic High Schools have chaplains and there are also twenty-two Catholic hospital chaplains in the Diocese. The Diocese also provides chaplains for the public colleges in Brooklyn and Queens as well as for the prisons located in the Diocese.

**Parish Assistance Program:** \$500,000 will be utilized here. These funds assist parishes in economically poorer areas to provide for their clergy, make deferred maintenance ,and pay for utilities and Faith Formation Programs .

The Annual Catholic Appeal might be compared to the household ordinary expenses while the *Generation of Faith* meets the demands of extraordinary expenses. The latter is akin to paying for groceries and the rent, maintenance or mortgage; whereas the former can be compared to the replacement of a roof or the repairs on the furnace.

Every year I acknowledge that the means of each parish family differ. I know that and I respect that; nonetheless, everyone is invited to make some contribution to this Appeal. We have benefitted by its programs and even the programs that do not impact us, do extend the mission of Christ to our brothers and sisters in Faith. On the weekend of March 25th/26th we will have the "In-Pew" element of the Appeal. All are asked to prayerfully consider a commitment, especially folks who may not have made a substantial contribution to the "Generations in Faith" Campaign. No gift is too big or too small!

With thanks,  
Monsignor John A. McGuirl