

September 30, 2018

From Fr. Jim . . .



About the Gospel: Does God really want a dismembered Body of Christ? The church has always taught and believed that the examples in today's Gospel to cut off the sinful part of the body is hyperbole or exaggeration to make a point. The point that Jesus wants to make is that no sin is too big to dissuade us in our search for God. Christ calls us not to allow prestige, wealth, or instant gratification to desensitize us to God's presence in our lives or diminish God's love we cherish in family and friends. Faith demands that we "let go" or detach ourselves from anything that keeps us from doing God's will and living fully a life of grace, from anything that makes us less than what God has created us to be. Especially this includes selfishness, self-centeredness, prejudices, and vengeance, attitudes, bad habits, wrongful actions, gossip that divide our families and destroy our relationships. After all, Jesus came to establish God's kingdom and reign on earth, to free us from sin, and to give us the freedom of the children of God to live with grace and to choose life, to attach ourselves to God's will and God's ways.

About the Parish Budget: Recently in a parish bulletin, we published, like we do every year at this time, a Financial Summary of the last fiscal year. I just want to point out to all of you something of significance that has not occurred here at St Leo's for many, many years. At least it has not happened in the eleven years that I have been with you. Did you notice that the parish is in the black? Our assets are more than our deficits. Our income is greater than our expenses. Not by much, but nonetheless, we finally did it! Each year, we have been getting closer and moving in the right direction but last year we finally came out a little ahead or close to even depending on how you look at it. It is great to see the fruits of our planning to tell our story, to be a welcoming community, to be a Eucharistic community that prays well and lives the spiritual and corporal works of mercy, to share our mission with others and to grow in numbers. Our Mass attendance has been strong, and collections have increased. Others have seen what we are doing and want to help us. We need everyone to keep being the parish that God wants us to be. So, Thank you! Thank You! Thank You! Let's keep up the good work! Praise God!

Prayer for Immigrants: The following prayer was written by Fr, Dan Hartnett S.J.

God of love and compassion: may we always recognize your spirit in the refugee family seeking safety from violence; in the immigrant worker, bringing food to our tables; in the asylum- seekers, seeking asylum for their families; in the unaccompanied child, traveling in a dangerous world. Give us hearts that no longer turn deaf to their voices in times of need; give us eyes to recognize a moment of grace instead of threat. Give us hands that reach out in welcome but also in work, for a world of justice until all homelands are safe and secure. Bless us Lord.