

December, 2023

We celebrated the beautiful Feast of Thanksgiving with our families and friends and now we are getting ready to celebrate the great **Feast of Incarnation** once again where we remember how God became man to live with us and among us. I wish you a wonderful season preparing for Christmas to welcome the Lord into our humble lives. I thank you all for your prayers and support for my home visit and reunion with my children in India. Thanks to your prayers, I had safe journeys and heartwarming visits with all my loved ones.

This month, I want to focus my letter on the financial state of our parish and your stewardship support that help our parish to grow and serve the needs of our community. Please find the summary of the Statement of Revenues & Expenses of the financial year 2022-2023 of our parish at the back of this letter. Also find the explanation notes from Bernie for the details of our financial situation on the back of the attached green sheet (for the Memorial Flowers). As I was preparing this letter, the gospel reading of this Monday struck me. "I tell you truly, this poor widow put in more than all the rest; for those others have all made offerings from their surplus wealth, but she, from her poverty, has offered her whole livelihood" (Luke 21:3-4). Our parish is maintained by the offerings of each one of you and it is coming from your sacrifices like this widow in the gospel as she gave to God not from her abundance but from her livelihood. Just like Jesus praised her, I thank you for your sacrifices for the church and God.

Like most churches, we too struggle with the drop in the **stewardship contributions** as your resources also gets diminished. This year there was a drop of 10% in our annual membership support from the previous year. We tried our best to reduce the expenses to balance our budget. If this trend continues, we will find it difficult in the future. Therefore, I humbly encourage you to support our church, however small the amount be. Most of our stewardship comes from the 30% of households who are generous. If the rest can also make an offering, even if it is a small amount, it will make a big difference. If you have not given regularly in the past, please call the parish office to find out how to sign up for our WeShare online giving program, or give more regularly in the collection basket.

Another way we can support the church is to remember the church needs for our future when you prepare **your will**. Please consider putting the name of our church as an additional beneficiary in your will. Another way to generate income of for our parish is to use our **Parish Center** for our various family events and parties. We have a great place to gather and celebrate together and you will be indirectly supporting the revenues of the church.

I thank sincerely our Finance Council, especially Bernie Hintzke, our chair, who helped to organize our finances more transparently and use our money as good stewards for the benefit of the church.

Thanking you all for your generosity and care of our church,

Fr. Matthew Perumpil, MI

Pastor