

St. Mary Parish 2010–2011 Annual Report

(July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2011)



“Love is patient, love is kind. It is not jealous, (love) is not pompous, it is not inflated, it is not rude, it does not seek its own interests, it is not quick-tempered, it does not brood over injury, it does not rejoice over wrongdoing but rejoices with the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.”

—1 Corinthians 13:4–8

Love Is Patient, Love Is Kind

Dear Parish Family,

We are all familiar with this scripture quote from St. Paul. Heard often at Masses celebrating the sacrament of Marriage, the quotation is equally appropriate as guidance for how we treat all those we meet.

At this time in our parish life, we have a wonderful opportunity to live St. Paul’s words. Some parishioners from St. Joseph Parish in Woburn have found a new home here at St. Mary’s. May we welcome these newest members of our parish family with the love St. Paul professes.

We are one faith community, traveling together on a spiritual journey, striving to grow in grace, to become closer to God and to the people God wants us to be.

Included in this annual report is information on how, together, we have progressed on that journey over the past year. With my wonderful staff—priests and laity alike—I am pleased to walk with you. Thank you again for being a wonderful faith community and for helping the staff to grow by your example and faith.

Fr. Dick

Our Ministries

Love...Believes All Things Our Prayer Life

It was love that led to Christ’s sacrifice on the cross for us, and it is love that is at the heart of our prayer life, the Liturgy, and our faith.

- After many months of renovation, the church was finally ready to once again receive parishioners. We re-opened the “new” St. Mary’s with the celebration of a Sunday Mass on September 27 dedicated to the spirit of the St. Mary Parish Family.
- In 2000, Pope John Paul II announced that revisions would be made to the Roman Missal, used during the Liturgy. Those

revisions are now ready. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops created an extensive program designed to prepare parishes to implement the changes, which will take place at Masses the first weekend in Advent. We bought the program, and Jane O’Keefe, director of ministries, has been reviewing it. See The Future section at the end of this report for highlights of what is to come over the next few months.

- In June 2011, we welcomed members of St. Joseph Parish in Woburn to our St. Mary’s family. After St. Joseph’s closed, parishioners had the choice of worshiping at several different parishes. We are pleased that, in part as the result of our long-standing relationship with St. Joseph’s, many parishioners have chosen to come to us. We know all parishioners want to offer heartfelt thanks to Fr. LeBlanc for his many years of service. We have purchased an outdoor statue of St. Joseph so that we can create a spot for prayer near the baptistry. **continued on page 2**

- This past year we made preparations to honor two parishioners who have died but who will always be remembered for their commitment to St. Mary's. We are dedicating the Angel Island, which overlooks the church and school, to Frank Brennan. A member of our Finance Committee for many years, Frank gave tirelessly of his time, talent and treasure. We miss him but know he is with God.
- Ruth Stevens was involved in many ministries but is probably best known for her tireless work with the Altar Guild. We will be dedicating the labyrinth in the meditation garden to Ruth. The garden will provide a wonderful way for parishioners to be inspired by all she did. We also want to express our thanks to Kathy McCarthy and Phyllis Esterbrook for taking on many of the duties Ruth performed.
- At St. Mary Parish in 2010–2011, we officiated over 89 Baptisms, 153 First Holy Communions, 72 Confirmations, 10 Marriages and 72 Funerals.

Love...Rejoices With the Truth **Faith Formation and Communication**

Learning and talking about our faith allows us to spread Christ's love to others.

- In November 2010, we began using a company called Constant Contact, an electronic-marketing service, to communicate more effectively with parishioners. Through this service, we have been able to send e-mail updates. Communicating through e-mail is faster, allows us to connect with everyone at once and saves postage. We still continue to mail items to parishioners who have not signed up for e-mail, however, we encourage all who use e-mail to provide their addresses. The feedback has been great. Most people have told us they applaud the parish for going green.
- We put our own touches on the Archdiocese of Boston's Catholics Come Home program. We added pictures to our banners, which we hung at entrances to the church. Our thanks to all who encouraged someone to attend Mass, providing the opportunity for family and friends to reconnect to the Church.
- Our Adult CCD Program continued to be a success. We held several sessions throughout the year and were pleased to welcome many adults at each. This is a wonderful opportunity for parishioners to come together to continue their education in the faith.
- During Lent and shortly after Easter, we held a seven-week Bible Study, led by our pastoral associate, Melissa Behrle. On average, 20 people attended each lesson. According to Melissa, one of the main takeaways for her was how everyone in the group was able to learn from one another. "The insights everyone brought to the study became an inspiration to me," she said. We plan to expand the study in the coming year, doing a series in the fall and again in the spring.

- Our 2011 Bible Camp, called "Kyrie Kingdom," took place in June and was built around the theme of the Knights of the Roundtable and Robin Hood solving their differences to bring peace to God's kingdom. Participants included 135 children and 60 teen counselors.

Love...Bears All Things **Community Outreach**

As we give thanks for our blessings, we also seek to improve the lives of those experiencing times of difficulty.

- In July 2010, 36 members of St. Mary's Youth Ministry traveled to Washington, D.C., to take part in Catholic Service and Leadership Week. The high-schoolers worked at a nursing home, women's shelter and daycare facility. In addition to cleaning, painting and building, the young people helped run a barbecue at the nursing home.
- During the year, we collected food and funds for a variety of organizations, including the Council of Social Concern in Woburn, Little Brothers of St. Francis, Little Sisters of the Poor, Italian Home for Children, Mission of Deeds, St. Francis House, our sister parish in Peru, a Native American reservation in Arizona, and our Ugandan project.
- Our Christian Ministry provided food gift cards and funds to pay utility bills for our local neighbors in need. Each year, the ministry sets aside \$5,000 for this purpose.
- Reaching out to others does not always require our physical presence. Members of our parish who are homebound were able to give of themselves through prayer. Individuals who had written intentions in the prayer book on the altar were recipients of the prayers said by this group of parishioners.
- Once a month, a group of 15 parishioners, including adults and teens, visited Cor Unum Meals Center in Lawrence to serve a meal. Cor Unum serves approximately 500 people a day.



Friends from our sister parish in Peru

Financial Report

This section discusses our parish finances from July 1, 2010, to June 30, 2011.

Income

Total revenue for the fiscal year was up 4%, from \$931,468 to \$971,567, and once again, we ended the fiscal year with a small profit, \$14,618.

Our Increased Offertory Campaign continues to yield encouraging results. Offertory and Grand Annual, which form the foundation of our parish's recurring weekly and monthly revenue, increased more than 6%, from \$754,276 to \$803,110. Offertory collections are especially critical to our ability to manage the day-to-day operation of our parish and our many ministries. We are aware of the sacrifices that our parishioners make to honor their financial commitments to St. Mary's in these very difficult economic times. We are blessed to have such a generous parish family, and we thank you for your continued generosity.

Electronic giving appears to have played an important role in stabilizing our revenue base. We first implemented our Online Giving Program in June 2010, and by the end of the program's first year, we had almost reached our goal of 100 participating families. We hope to increase the number of participants over the coming year.

Operating Expenses

Operating expenses for fiscal 2011 increased almost 4%, from \$922,950 in fiscal 2010 to \$956,949 in fiscal 2011. After taking into account increases and decreases among various expense categories compared to the prior fiscal year, most of the \$33,999 increase in our operating expenses can be attributed to higher religious-education expenses. These were more than offset, however, by an increase of almost \$46,000 in religious-education revenue.

Nevertheless, we looked closely at each expense category and undertook several cost-saving methods. We established a method for tracking inventory more carefully, enabling us to be more efficient in our ordering practices. We also made greater use of electronic communication, cutting more

than \$17,000 from our printing and postage costs. After two years of awarding no raises, the Finance Committee approved a 3% across-the-board raise effective July 1, 2011, for all parish employees (effective September 1 for school personnel). Because of the effect of year-over-year compounding, the 3% increase has less of an impact on our budget than had the committee approved several earlier, smaller raises. Several staff positions were also eliminated. The cost of benefits, however, has increased with the escalating cost of health insurance, which means there will be no or only modest improvement in our overall Compensation and Benefits expense categories.

Capital Budget

Capital income and expenditures have been combined with the Operations budget for the past few years. With our capital campaign, *Grateful for Our Past, Planning for Our Future*, winding down, it is now time to report these categories separately. Below is a chart of capital funds received and expended for capital projects. We are on track to receive 98% of funds pledged. This is out of a total of \$2,700,000 pledged. We are humbled by such generosity in this difficult economy and are very grateful for your heartfelt response to your parish's call for help.

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St Mary Fiscal Year 2011

	2008–2009 Actual	2009–2010 Actual	2010–2011 Actual
REVENUE			
Offertory	\$431,300	\$464,731	\$516,320
Grand Annual	282,595	289,545	286,790
Sacramental	6,810	6,745	6,520
Religious Education	78,530	79,250	125,006
Gifts and Bequests	40,013	73,576	12,009
Other Income	12,865	17,621	24,922
Total Revenue	\$852,113	\$931,468	\$971,567
EXPENSES			
Compensation	\$439,081	\$428,923	\$416,912
Benefits and payroll taxes	82,739	85,626	102,223
Religious Education Costs	102,948	100,516	131,360
Liturgical Supplies	48,093	57,088	67,074
Books and Pamphlets	4,383	5,836	6,495
Weekly Envelopes	7,661	4,787	2,611
Postage, Printing and Supplies	39,191	42,408	25,248
Utilities and Occupancy Costs	46,894	55,961	58,801
Property and Liability Insurance	11,335	11,712	13,793
Maintenance and Repairs	45,413	52,174	69,155
Transfers to the School	15,000	48,000	48,000
Other	12,445	29,919	15,277
Total Expenses:	\$855,183	\$922,950	\$956,949
NET INCOME			
Total Revenue	\$852,113	\$931,468	\$971,567
Total Expenses	\$855,183	\$922,950	\$956,949
Net Income (Loss)	\$(3,070)	\$8,518	\$14,618

Financial Report (continued from page 3)

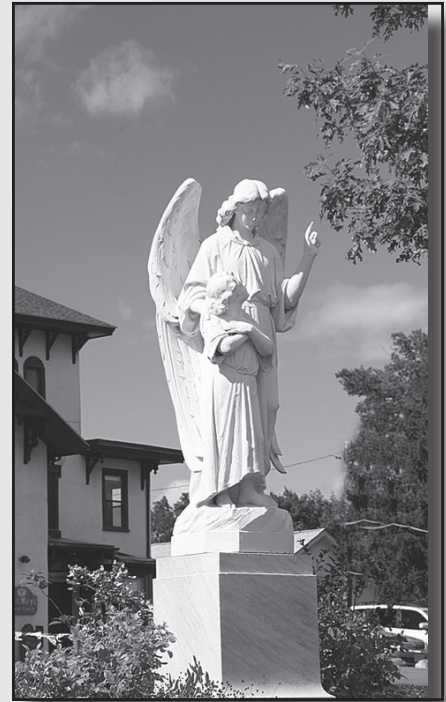
Capital Campaign (As of June 30)

Fiscal Year	Campaign Pledges	Capital Projects	Balance
	Honored	Undertaken	
2008	\$752,170	\$528,145	
2009	\$813,048	\$620,811	
2010	\$631,654	\$628,303	
2011	\$223,102	\$587,166	
Total	\$2,419,974	\$2,364,425	\$55,549

In fiscal 2011, we continued with the renovations made possible by your contributions to the capital campaign. Work conducted included painting and carpeting in the parish center, roof repair on the rectory, new carpeting and pews in the upper church and extensive masonry work on the school.

Parish Savings

As of June 30, 2011, the parish had \$164,723 in savings compared to \$197,833 at June 30, 2010. Savings consist of funds in our checking account and short-term financial instruments. Our goal, as prudent stewards, is to have at least three months' operating cash in reserve, the minimum recommended by the Archdiocese of Boston. To meet our goal, our cash balance should be 30% higher. Our hope is that our Increased Offertory Campaign will result in sustained higher giving so that we can replenish our savings account.



The Angel Island

The Future

Love...Hopes All Things

With the bounty of love we have for one another, we cannot help but be filled with hope for the future.

- Our 2011–2012 fiscal year began July 1, and while we continue to place emphasis on our aging parish buildings, we also are addressing our daily operating needs. Continuing our ministries and spreading the Gospel message of Jesus Christ requires a great deal of support from our faith community. You have demonstrated that support in your generosity toward the capital campaign, *Grateful for Our Past, Planning for Our Future*. Now, we ask that you evaluate your current financial commitment to the Offertory and Grand Annual and increase your gifts if at all possible. The Finance

Committee has delivered a balanced budget for both the school and the parish for fiscal year 2011–2012. However, in order to balance our budget, we need additional income. We also ask that you keep your parish in mind as you do your estate planning. A bequest to your parish will continue your generosity for many years to come.

- As we mentioned earlier, we are preparing to implement the changes of the new Roman Missal, which take effect the first week of Advent. Most of the changes affect the priest celebrating the Mass, but members of the congregation and lay ministers will also see changes. For example, the music will include more chanting. We will hold a train-the-trainers session in September, which will train the heads of the various ministries who will then train others. Look for bulletin announcements beginning in September.

- We're implementing an exciting change to our Religious Education Program this fall. We'll be starting the school year with a series of mini retreats for different age groups run by Jesse Manibusan of "2 by 2" Ministries. Jesse uses music and storytelling to inspire young people to live in Christ. The retreats will take place October 2–4.

- One of the traditions of St. Joseph's Parish was the monthly pancake breakfast. We are happy to say that it is now a tradition at St. Mary's. Beginning this fall, we will be inviting all parishioners to join us for this opportunity to meet members of our parish family.

Together, through love, we are bringing each other to a greater spiritual understanding and a better way of life.