

Dear San Jose Family,

You know it is coming; in the same way that you know that Thanksgiving marks the start of a busy and hectic whirlwind end of the year. This time of year, also, you know that something will be coming from the church about Stewardship and Giving. Here it is. But, it will be short and to the point.

Often we have produced an entire packet with the theological rationale for giving. Often we have plumbed the depth of the financials to focus on the need. And we may do both again. But this year; as I said, it is short and to the point. As a parish we have, I believe, grown to the point where we can simply and honestly say where we stand. Here is where we stand. We need **two** things from you.

**First**, though the first half of the year started with terrific energy in giving, putting us ahead of budget for the first several months—in late Summer we lost momentum and have gotten behind (about \$15,000, as of the last reports). Therefore we need you to finish strong in your giving until year-end. That is especially true for our non-pledging givers, who enjoy the ministry and fellowship of this parish, but often participate only *slightly* in the costs of San Jose. I am asking all of you to dig deep and finish strong. Or, to be theological, reflect in your own life a response to the sacrificial love of God in Christ.

**Second**, consider pledging for the first time, or increasing your pledge next year. Far fewer Christians, all across the world, pledge. The research says it's all about economic fears, fears about commitment, or fears about the health of the institutional church. But, what are you afraid of at San Jose? We are a healthy, growing, accepting, learning, loving, caring, community of friends and believers. It really doesn't get much better than this.

Pledging enables our Vestry leadership to at least have a guess at where we stand and make wise decisions in budgeting and planning. If you can pledge, or if you do pledge, we are grateful.

If you cannot quite get there, to a real commitment of your heart (and your wallet) to our ministry; how about an intermediate step? Sign up for regular e-giving. It's easy. It works great. And it offers you perfect flexibility. Set up a monthly or weekly amount; but you can always adjust it—with just a few clicks of the mouse. Many people are starting to do this at San Jose.

Lastly, I just want to say a word about the **people** who your dollars support in ministry. Our Church Staff—Youth Minister, Children's Minister, Music Minister, Hospitality, and Administrative Support (Emily, Melissa, Bill, Katie, Susan, and Sue) are without peer in the church. In partnership with our incredible Day School staff, they are working hard every minute to help you and your family in your walk of faith here. Finally, the blessing it is to have Fr. Gee and his ministry with us at San Jose is immeasurable. He is unflappable and indispensable.

None of us can share their gifts of ministry, however, unless all of us support them. We have long said that, around here, we are **working, praying, and giving** as our collective response to the blessings of God. This year-end, lets go three for three.

Every Blessing!