

Mass Parts 22/52: *Collection*



During the Preparation of the Gifts, we are all singing the Offertory hymn and desperately digging through purses to find the envelope. The ushers are passing around the collection baskets and the kids are fighting over who gets to throw it in. In spite of the confusion sometimes surrounding extra envelopes and second collections, the collection is a vital part of the life of the parish. With few savings accounts and interest, the daily operations of the church are almost completely reliant on the collection. The collection covers our employees' salaries, all the parish activities, CCD, Youth Ministry, maintenance on the buildings, insurance, heating, and the lights. While it is never comfortable talking about money, it is vital for our functioning.

Taking a collection goes back to the very beginnings of the Church. St. Paul frequently mentions taking up a collection for the support of the Jerusalem Church (Acts 13; 20:1-5; Rom 15:26; 1 Cor 16:1-4; 2 Cor 8-9; Gal 2:10); and the early church was known for sharing all of their wealth in common (Acts 4:32-35). The scariest example is of Ananias and Sapphira hiding part of their profit and then lying to the apostles about what they kept in reserve (Acts 5:1-11); which resulted in their untimely deaths. The story is more about lying than not donating, but shows us the generosity of the rest of the community.

The collection has been low the past few years in terms of what we need for daily operations. We have been dipping into savings and relying on gifts. Each week, the collection is reported in the bulletin with the needed amount for comparison. While the numbers of people attending has gone up a little along with a small increase in income, it is still not much. We are looking at the age of the school and its condition and deciding what to do for the future. While the church and rectory are in great shape, the offices in the old convent are also aging. We continue to try to cut spending and revise the budget so that we continue our mission of bringing the faith to the Ohio River Valley.

-Fr. Kopp

Next Week: Silent Priest Preparation Prayers