

## Being Faithful Stewards of our Resources

Our people of OLM have been very generous in responding to the weekly collections, the many special collections, the Embracing Our Mission Capital Campaign and the Archbishop's Annual Appeal. Our people's faith-filled generosity continues to grow.

Pope Francis and Archbishop Lori have given us, the Church, the challenge and the mandate to be Missionary Disciples. Sharing the Gospel with others is to be our Number One Priority. Everything we do in the parish has to be aimed toward this goal. **Everything.** Everything from worship to education, from socials and fundraisers to outreach to the poor, from finances to planning - all have to be aimed at making us better Disciples and better Missionaries.

This new view of what it means to be Roman Catholic is not just a program for a few years. No, it is our only job description until Jesus Returns!

Let's talk practically. In order to be better Missionary Disciples we need more financial support. Where do we get this? Most of our parishioners are giving as much as they are able, and some, even more. We do not have any savings that would help us do much more ministry that we already are.

Financially we are in bad shape. Our weekly collections, as generous as they are, are only able to help us make it month to month with very little money left over. Lately we even have had to dip into our savings to keep up with our monthly bills.

Our single biggest expenses are the insurance, utilities, maintenance and repairing of our buildings and properties. Throughout the Archdiocese most parishes expend upon their properties is sixteen per-cent of their budget. At Our Lady of the Mountains it is forty-six percent! This means that **forty six cents of every dollar** you place in the collection basket goes to our buildings.

We cannot go on this way. Some of our buildings are not used or under-used. Ideally we want to sell them to charitable or social agency to further their mission and help meet the needs of our community. If no such organization comes forth we will show the properties to developers who may want to purchase them and develop them for housing or another worthy cause.

These properties and buildings would no longer be a drain on our precious resources. The money gained from the sale could be used to further our education and evangelization efforts and make repairs on the buildings we want to keep.

We have had extensive engineering studies done to all of our properties and each of our buildings. We have a rough estimate what it will cost to repair each one to make it safe and healthy.

Our first set of buildings and properties which we have permission to sell:

St. Patrick, Cumberland: the rectory and the garage building,  
(and possibly the convent)

Saints Peter and Paul: the former convent, the activities building  
and parcels of the property

St. Patrick, Mount Savage: the social building

The picnic grounds on Mason Road

This does not preclude that in the future other buildings and properties will also be considered for repurposing, re-use or sale.

By disbursing ourselves of some of our buildings we will be cutting our expenses. The savings will be used to combine our Sunday Faith Formation Classes into one building. This building will not only be used for Religious Formation but also for Evangelization and outreach services to our local community.

How do we Roman Catholics in Mountain Maryland want to grow in our faith and share it with others. What will we need to be and what will we need to do to accomplish it? We will need to let go of some of our properties and several of our buildings in order to become better Disciples and better Missionaries

Let us continue to pray to Mary, Our Lady of the Mountains and to St. Joseph, the patron of the Universal Church. May the Holy Spirit help us read the signs of the time by the light of faith so that we may better become alive and thriving disciples who are not ashamed to make sacrifices necessary to share the "Good News of Jesus Christ in Mountain Maryland."

Sincerely Yours In Christ,

Fr. Greg and the Pastoral Team