

ST. JOSEPH PARISH AND SCHOOL – MARCH 10, 2019

Dear Parishioners and Families,

The Ash Wednesday services both morning and evening filled St. Joseph Church. This is very heartening to a priest. Despite the personal failures of ordained ministers, the faith of the people of God remains strong. I thank you for your loyalty to the Lord expressed so clearly in your active participation on Ash Wednesday.

Triumphs and failures are the grist of life. During Lent there is more emphasis on our failures than on our successes. Ash Wednesday recognizes that we all must say at times to one another and certainly to God, 'I'm sorry.' That expression, I'm sorry, needs to be paired with the other expression, 'Thank you.' May I express my deep appreciation for the members of the parish who so generously contribute their time and talent for the growth of St. Joseph Parish and School.

The third expression of Pope Francis that needs to be said often is 'May I.' May I have a bit of your time so we can journey together. I see this response so clearly in the team work of the Fish Fry, the preparation for the Parish Festival, and the daily work done so unstintingly by our teachers and staff.

The Bishop's Appeal and the Diocese of Jeremie, Haiti

The beginning of Lent brings the Bishop's Appeal to each one of us. While there is a monetary goal for our parish there is a further goal presented by the Bishop. May all people participate. "Participation may occur in the form of a financial gift, or through a commitment to pray for our Diocesan Church throughout the year, or by volunteering within a parish or Diocesan Ministry." On the contribution envelopes that you will find in the pews this week you will find a place to check the type or types of participation you offer.

In the bulletin this week you will again find a thank you note from Bishop Gontrand, S.J., the Bishop of the Diocese of Haiti. Recently the parish sent him a \$7,000 check. You will see his response and the pictures of the street children he is trying to help. I would ask you to consider a gift to Haiti, or a gift to the Bishop's Appeal as one way to fulfill your Lenten Sacrifice.

If you have not received a request in the mail for the annual Bishop's Appel, take an envelope from the pew and make the commitment of a gift, a prayer, or a volunteer service or all three. Drop the envelope in the collection and we will send it to the Bishop's Appeal. You can also make a gift to Haiti by using the pink envelopes in your parish envelopes.

Each priest of the diocese was asked by the Bishop to make a personal gift. My gift to both the Bishop's Appeal and Haiti came through your generosity. As a Jesuit I receive no salary from the parish. People give me gifts at times for services rendered, although this is never necessary. Accordingly, from your generosity I have given \$2,500 to the Bishop's Appeal and \$2,000 to the Diocese of Jeremie. I thank all of you for making this possible by your generosity.

Fr. Tom Acker, S.J.
March 10, 2019