



RECTOR'S LETTER

Dear friends in Christ,

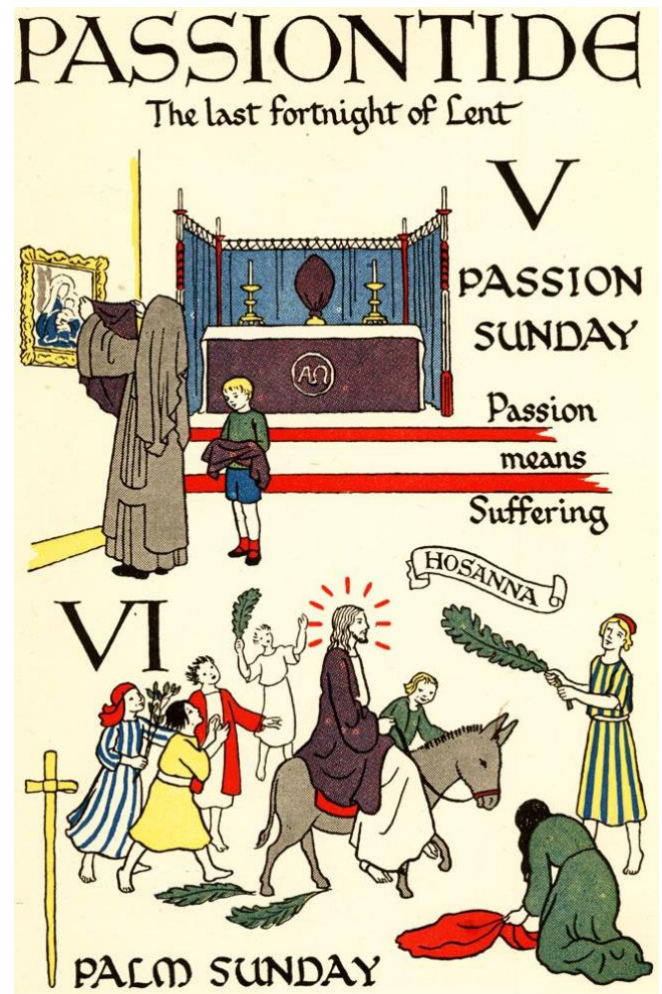
We find ourselves wandering through various journeys: traveling through the forty days of Lent; navigating a state-wide vaccination effort; and exploring what our lives might look like in a post-pandemic world. Many of us are journeying through this time while not being able to see our family and friends, or to take part in activities that bring us relief, or to visit those holy places that keep us grounded. It can sometimes feel as if we're traveling on an empty gas tank.



While none of us knows when our pandemic will come to an end, or what that will actually look like, our journey there can be guided either by fear or by hope. As Christians, we are encouraged to choose hope, because we know how the Story ends: we know that the greatest evils and obstacles of this world were not capable of preventing the resurrection of Christ. Therefore, we can boldly trust that we too will rise out of our current circumstances.

During this pandemic, I have seen signs of resurrection pop up. I have seen hope take flesh in the 25+ parishioners who have received their COVID vaccine; in the resilience of our parish children and youth,

who have navigated through new online school and in-person models; and in your generous giving to assist the most vulnerable among us. Yes, there have been many things to cause alarm and concern this past year, but we also have witnessed God's grace and love at work in this world; and we will continue to see God's grace and love at work throughout



this Lent and Eastertide.

By the end of March, we will have gone from the second week in Lent to observing Palm Sunday. But before we reach Holy Week,

there are some rich opportunities taking place in our parish: our Lenten Learning Series; our Corned Beef and Cabbage Dinner; and mass for the feast of the Annunciation to the Blessed Virgin Mary. By the time we arrive at Palm Sunday, I pray that you will be prepared to enter our Holy Week observances and Easter celebration.

At this time, I do not know if we'll be permitted to gather in church by Easter. However, we are currently working on, weather permitting, an outdoor Easter Day mass. Details are still being sorted out, but expect to hear from me about this sometime in mid- to late March. While our long journey through Coronatide might linger into the Easter season, let us never forget the message of hope found in Christ's glorious resurrection. Soon, we will be together again proclaiming Jesus' resurrection and giving praise to Almighty God.

Lenten Blessings, ~*Father Carlos* †

FROM THE DEACON'S PERCH



"Build an altar within yourself, and there have Jesus on the altar of your heart. Speak to Him often while you are doing your work. Speak to Him of His

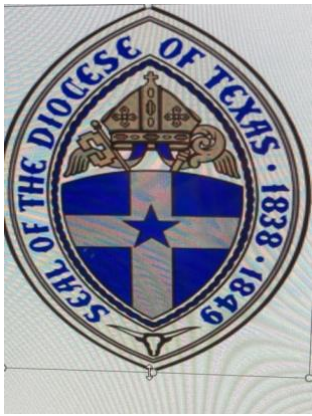
holy love, of His holy sufferings, and of the sorrows of holy Mary." —St. Paul of the Cross

As we enter deeper into Lent, I find myself strangely alienated from my church family. I miss all of you, and not seeing many of you draws me into a kind of sadness, loneliness, and isolation. That said, I saw this quotation in one of the many daily email offerings I receive, and one on which I have been meditating and praying. I thought about it in relation to what Jesus may have gone through in the garden or in prison. The altar in my heart keeps asking why this Passion could not have happened differently, instead of his being humiliated, spat upon, beaten, and stripped of his clothing. Watching "The Passion of the Christ" movie by Mel Gibson in 2004 changed my life and how I look at the life of Jesus Christ.

Within this altar in my heart, I have many conversations, and there is a grief unlike any other I've experienced. I have lost family members, beloved pets, and many friends, but as time goes by, I have learned to live with it and to move on—but not with this altar in my heart and the life of this man, Jesus. I find myself sitting, walking, just looking at the image of him in my mind. Usually after reading one of the 40 days of Lent scriptures, I ponder and feel awed by it all. It has been 17 years since the movie was released, and as each year goes by, I find my heart and mind dwelling deeper in Jesus. Sometimes I wonder if I ever will gain understanding—maybe not the need to understand as much as to feel the love he has for me and for the world. I am also helped by praying more

intently. I do the stations of the cross on Friday, and while it feels different to be in the church alone walking the stations, I realize I am doing it for all of us as a church family. I know our Father sees us pray in secret, he knows our prayers, and he will reward us. So for the remainder of Lent, put the altar of Christ in your heart. Pray to him in secret and let Christ know what's in your heart—and don't be surprised at what you experience from God in return.

Now, on to deacon news: we as a church family have been very busy in the community as well as nationally. As you see from these



photographs, we helped the Diocese of Texas in storm relief; we assisted PAWS by purchasing a brick for a new path; and we continued our assistance to the food bank.

We also fed the Undine Fire Dept with pizza last



month; they really were appreciative.

Lately we have gotten involved with the Youth Center and purchased many items for them. Fr. Carlos and the director may be starting a joint project after COVID separation; he will apprise you of that later in the year.

Please support the Corned Beef Dinner. We profit by volume, and we hope many meals will be purchased. Consider inviting a neighbor or friends to buy a dinner. The date is **March 20, 2021**.

One last note: if any of you needs a ride for a COVID shot, please call (814-883-0430), and I can take you to your appointment.

May the blessing and peace of Christ be with you all. ~Dcn. Alex



Lulu and Baylee keep close tabs on Deacon Alex.

MEETING GOD IN MARK: A LENTEN LEARNING SERIES



Meeting God in Mark is five-week learning series based on Archbishop Rowan Williams' book by the same title. Throughout the series we will discover anew the Gospel of Mark as we explore in depth the history, theology, and vision of this text. More information, including the Zoom link, will appear in our weekly news blast. Below is an outline of our course:

- March 3: Who was Mark?
- March 10: Secrets and Miracles
- March 17: Speaking in Parables
- March 24: A Lifelong Passion

You can purchase Archbishop Rowan Williams' book on Amazon:
<https://amzn.to/3ovxy8x>

HOLY WEEK AT SAINT JOHN'S



Holy Week is best experienced in its fullness, day by day. We invite you to enter into the richness of this week, allowing the powerful liturgies to enter deeply into your body, mind, and soul. Services will be livestreamed on our Facebook and YouTube pages.

CORNED BEEF AND CABBAGE DINNER FUNDRAISER

Our Corned Beef and Cabbage Dinner is back! This will be our first parish fundraising dinner in over a year; all proceeds go to support our parish budget.



Please make sure to spread the word on Facebook and social media. If you're not able to attend our dinner, please consider making a donation. We're glad to be working with Thrivent Financial on this fundraiser. They are generously providing us with seed money and hosting our giving page at no cost.:

<https://thrivent.cotribute.co/events/489471/detail?src=crowd-fundraise-active-charity-mailto-185>



THE ANNUNCIATION TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY ✠

Thursday, March 25, 6:30 p.m.



“The angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth. And he came to the Virgin Mary and said, ‘Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you.’” - *Luke 1:26, 28*

We will celebrate the Annunciation to the Blessed Virgin Mary on its proper feast day, **Thursday, March 25**, at 6:30 p.m. Our evening mass will include sung propers, hymns, and a choral anthem provided by our parish choir. This mass will be livestreamed on our Facebook and YouTube pages.

SUNDAY SCHOOL UPDATE

During this past year, our Sunday school classes were unable to meet due to the COVID-19 virus. Fr. Carlos and Miss Ellen planned several things to keep families connected to our church. First, we offered Zoom conferences with families who wanted

them, then we offered outdoor lunch on a Sunday afternoon for individual families. Next, families could sign up for a home visit and a church worship outside their home.

In addition, we sent care packages to our students with projects to keep them connected to church events. We want our Sunday school families to know that we're thinking of them even though we cannot meet in person.



A special thanks to Sydney, Gwen, and Matt for giving the main Sunday school room a fresh coat of paint. We look forward to getting

back to our church program soon.



VESTRY NEWS

The vestry met via Zoom on February 10. Most of the meeting time was spent in a presentation by Canon Chris Streeter, who discussed the Diocesan *Shaped by Faith*

Initiative. This project was created by Bishop Scanlan for all churches in our diocese. Many will face insurmountable financial hardships and even closure in the next few years. As a pre-emptive measure, the purpose is to explore where we are as parishes and to plan for the future. Eight potential models were reviewed. We at St. John's benefit from our physical location and from great wisdom among our people. It is important that we capitalize on those for the future. Contact Fr. Carlos or any vestry member if you have questions or comments.

The annual parochial report was reviewed and approved for submission to the diocesan office.

Treasurer's Report:

Income exceeded expenses; no unusual expenses.

Sr. Warden's Report:

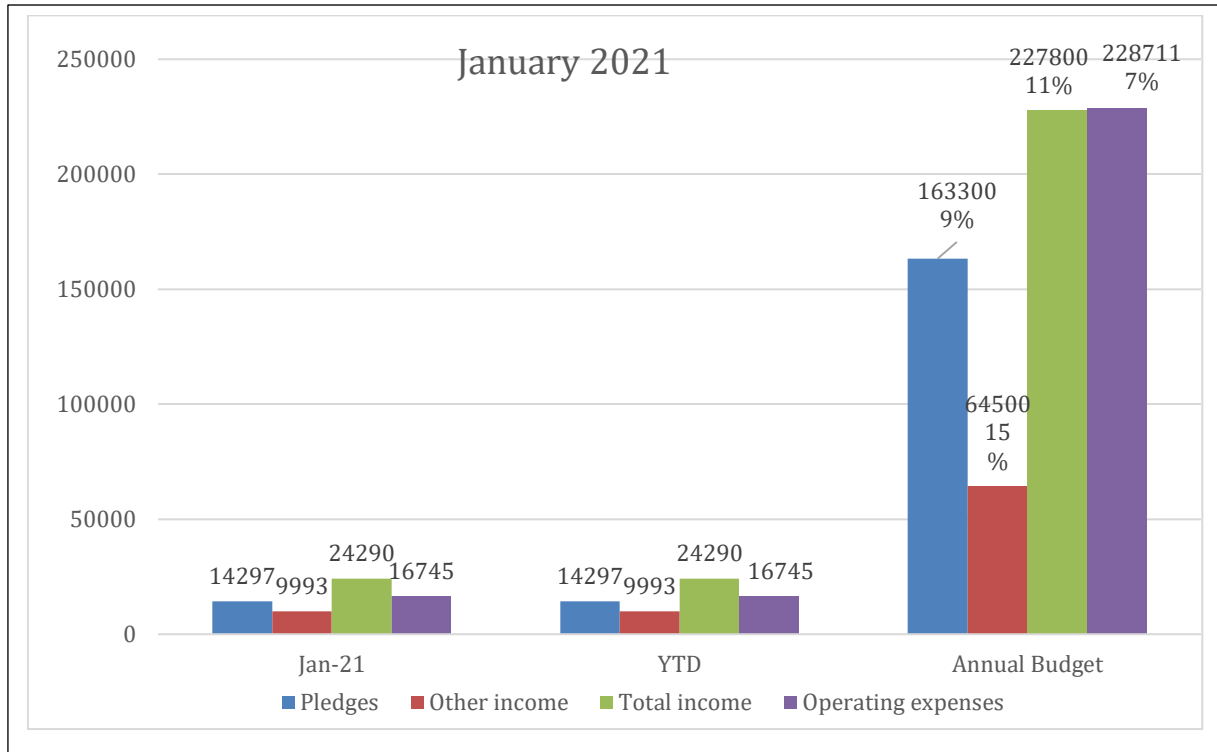
Replaced equipment and wiring in the church buildings for efficient internet streaming.

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

March 2	Anne Lucas
March 9	Kay McClellan
March 10	Mary K. Jones
March 13	Rebecca Clayton
March 22	Michael Fitzgerald
March 23	Jonathan Preston
March 29	Alex Dyakiw

FINANCIAL (JANUARY 2021)

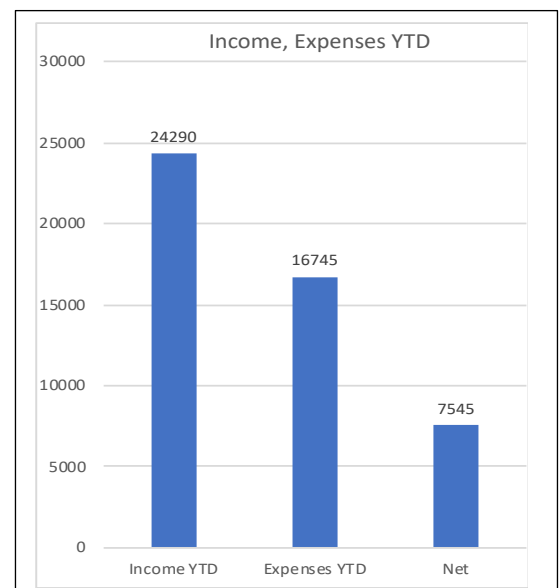
	Jan-21	YTD	Annual Budget	YTD % of Budget
Pledges	14297	14297	163300	9%
Other income	9993	9993	64500	15%
Total income	24290	24290	227800	11%
Operating expenses	16745	16745	228711	7%
Net	7545	7545		



	Income YTD	Expenses YTD	Net
	24290	16745	7545

Numbers do not include investments, savings, or checking acct balance.

Vestry Members: Larry Roberson (Sr. Warden), Matt Perkins (Jr. Warden), John Fusco, Carol Fyfe, Debra Cree, Susan Christy, Peggy Jackson, Thomas Quigley, David King, Charlotte Zmyslo



March 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3 9:30 am Parish Requiem via Facebook 7:00 pm Lenten Learning Series	4 2:30 pm Bellefonte Elementary Good News Club	5	6
7 Third Sunday in Lent Parish Mass 10:00 am on Facebook Live & YouTube	8	9	10 9:30 am Low Mass via Facebook 4:00 pm CYSB ART Program 7:00 pm Lenten Learning Series	11 2:30 pm Bellefonte Elementary Good News Club	12	13
14 Fourth Sunday in Lent: Laetare Sunday Parish Mass 10:00 am on Facebook Live & YouTube	15	16	17 9:30 am Low Mass via Facebook 4:00 pm CCYSB ART Program 7:00 pm Lenten Learning Series	18 2:30 pm Bellefonte Elementary Good News Club	19	20 3:00 – 6:00 pm Corned Beef and Cabbage Fundraiser
21 Fifth Sunday in Lent Parish Mass 10:00 am on Facebook Live & YouTube	22	23	24 9:30 am Low Mass on Facebook Live 4:00 pm CCYSB ART Program 7:00 pm Lenten Learning Series	25 2:30 pm Bellefonte Elementary Good News Club 6:30 pm Sung Mass for The Annunciation	26	27
28 Palm Sunday Parish Mass 10:00 am on Facebook Live & YouTube	29	30	31 9:30 am Low Mass on Facebook Live 4:00 pm CCYSB			