

On Monday of this past week I went to the dentist – one of my teeth had fallen out as I bit down on a pizza crust. It was a crowned tooth. I figured the tooth could just be cemented back in. Well, I was in the dentist chair for 3 hours and the dentist was constantly drilling. Well you can imagine what the next 24 hours felt like. But as I read today's really heavy Gospel I suddenly felt grateful for my experience. Somehow the pain gave me an awareness that all this is temporary, that God has something wonderful for us. The pain was a strange route to all of this but it worked.

A little over 11 years ago Bishop Hubbard called me up and asked me to retire and return to St. Patrick's where I had served for 17 ½ years to become Chaplain of the Blessed Sacrament Shrine Church of Our Lady of the Americas. I was delighted because I had come to love this Church and our congregation so much. I am grateful to be with you.

Today I feel responsible to let you know how we are doing as a parish community. We are providing you with a copy of the Stewardship Financial Report and the results are amazing. This year, this Covid year, we had a surprising surplus of 61,000 dollars! I want to say thank you over and over again.

There are many reasons for this increase. Until quite recently we were unable to replace our full time Pastoral Associate, Sr. Grace. We also had an open office position. On top of that you were especially generous in giving for the Christmas and Easter offertory.

I have a number of concerns for the coming year. I would like to tell you a few. The ceiling in the area above the choir loft is showing signs of deterioration and one of the windows behind the Altar is leaking.

We have three new very gifted staff members. They are all part time but so good. Alejandra Saucedo is our Pastoral Associate; Confessor Franco is our Director of Religious Education and Michael Fredette a parishioner of Blessed Sacrament is our Administrative Assistant. They really fit the bill.

We're hoping to get our Advisory Council and our Financial Council in operation very soon. We are also hoping to form a building committee because the Church building is very precious to us.

Finally, I'm hoping we can grow both our English speaking community and our Spanish speaking community. We are looking forward to celebrating the Feast of Christ the King next Sunday and on the following Sunday the First Sunday of Advent.

The best is yet to be! Thank you again and again for your generosity.