

Saint Bernadette Parish  
Canadensis, PA 18325  
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February 7, 2010

Dear Parishioners,

If the President can make a “State of the Union” speech, and the Governor can make a “State of the State” speech, then the Pastor can at least make a “State of the Parish” presentation. It’s not PowerPoint, but I will attempt to keep it to the point, and all I ask is that you read it, discuss it with fellow parishioners, and provide your reaction.

Probably, the first topic of interest on everyone’s mind is the “Call to Holiness and Mission” directive given by Bishop Martino, January, 2009. From what I can determine Saint Bernadette Church is NOT closing and that the directive is being followed by the Cluster Implementation Committee (BAM) in the sense that the parish this year is working in partnership with Saint Mary of the Mount and Saint Ann (our cluster parishes). This cluster group is working as per the directive toward linkage of the three parishes this coming year 2010, and evaluating if consolidation is something to engage in 2012, in the future, or at all.

Partnership amongst the three parishes has been proceeding quite well with the unification of the CCD program and their CCD instructors; Sacramental preparation for the Eucharist and Confirmation, offices are being centrally located at St. Mary’s (CCD in January, 2010 and the business office later in the Spring 2010), collaboration has taken place by collectively bargaining for heating fuel, an electric supplier and for preventive maintenance needs, spiritual activities, and youth activities. All of these activities are helping to maximize the use and potential of our resources and to be more frugal in our expenses. The parishes have worked at sharing information within the three parishes and organizing social events for parishioners from all the parishes to attend (a covered dish and Mardi Gras to mention two events).

Obviously, this year’s endeavors are moving our three parishes toward being linked together this July, 2010 under a Pastor (presumably Fr. Kopaz) and an Assistant Pastor. This does NOT mean that Saint Bernadette, Saint Mary or Saint Anne is closing; it just means that one pastor will have responsibility for the spiritual welfare of the three parishes. We need to pray for vocations to the priesthood, religious life and permanent diaconate. Also, Saint Bernadette Parish needs to continue to be spiritually and fiscally vibrant.

The Liturgy and Ministries of the parish continue to be active and widespread, and I feel for the size of the parish we do quite well. The Choir, small but powerful, adds a great deal to the richness of the Sunday liturgy and various parishioners have stepped forward to assume cantor responsibilities. The Ladies Guild and the Knights of Columbus do a great deal in support of our parish, social justice within the community, and to assist in building and strengthening the parish community. We are blessed to have a dedicated and prayerful Deacon, Ron Verkon, who gives generously of his time, talent, and treasure – we are all well aware of his gifts. We have many in the parish who offer magnificent service to the parish community and to the community at large. They reflect the Gospel values and we congratulate them. We all realize that as a parish we are not perfect and that we can do more in the way assisting our youth in learning and growing in their faith, in parish outreach to those joining our parish and to those who are homebound, our own spiritual development, and other personal concerns we may have.

Attempting to determine Parish Membership is like trying to eat spaghetti with a spoon. I’ve come to realize that we have parishioners who have homes or visit resorts here mostly in the

summer. We have other parishioners who venture south or west in the winter for a month or several months, but are here most of the year. Some parishioners are registered as parishioners but rarely attend, and others are registered yet attend only on special occasions. Then there is the major core of parishioners who are here throughout the year and actively involved in the parish, and still others who were more active, but in retirement have become less active or homebound. Since arriving in July, 2009 it is still a challenge to recognize names with faces and who is a parishioner and who is visiting the parish. Over the next several months I hope to be better at name-face recognition and to develop a directory of parishioners / families and occupations.

“What’s the bottom line?” (Parish Finances) is another area that most people desire information. To address this area I would like to use some graphs and tables to help illustrate the situation – please consult the page with the graph and tables:

**A:** Parish Total Income/Expenses as Reported to the Diocese each year from 2005 thru 2010.

This graph demonstrates that Income exceeded Expenditures ‘05-07 (2 years) , but we had a deficit ’07-09 (2 years), and a projected deficit this year ’09-10. The bottom line of the graph shows the net income/loss.

**B: Actual** Parish Income/Expenses as Reported to the Diocese July– December, 2009 (1/2 yr)

**C: Projected** Income/Expenses for the current year, Jan.– June, 2010

**D: Projected** Income/Expenses for the current year, July, 2009 – June, 2010

This table gives the actual and projected numbers by budget, reporting category for the current year – the 2<sup>nd</sup> half projections were based on 1st half income/expenses with a conservative attitude for income and liberal attitude for expenses in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half. Please note the net deficit in this table, and also note the reduction in expenses and income for the current year as illustrated in graph A.

The challenge that we face is that during the winter months when parishioners and tourists are away from the area our weekly collection is generally less than \$3,000. Table E indicates the dollar amount of some of our fixed monthly expenses (assessments), and does not indicate variable amounts for other fixed monthly expenses (heat, electric, salaries, etc.). Excluding the cost for heat, electric, salaries, supplies, etc. the weekly collect should consistently be over \$3,000; when we include those expenses our weekly collection should be over \$4,500. We have been blessed during the 1<sup>st</sup> half of the year with \$10,000 from the Ward Bequest, \$7,000 from Bingo, and \$5,000 from the Ladies Guild, and a tremendous reduction in spending – you may have already noticed some of the cost cutting that has taken place.

Many more items could have been included in this report to the parish, but space and time does not make this possible at the moment – I’ve been attempting to formulate this for several months. Yet, we all know that Saint Bernadette’s has the reputation of being a friendly welcoming community – a beautiful church with parishioners who have a positive attitude and outlook. It is a community where parishioners organize, care and lookout for one another. We have areas of concern, doesn’t everyone, some are listed here (not in priority order): parish membership, faith formation of our youth and youth activities, adult spiritual development, marriage and family enrichment, building and grounds maintenance, evangelization programs, financial concerns in meeting our parish and Diocesan obligations, “Call to Holiness and Mission”, but most importantly we have a firm commitment in our faith and in following the Gospel mission of love of God and love of neighbor.

I trust that this has been helpful and I encourage your discussion and response – I am even contemplating an open meeting with the parish to answer questions and clarify any issues or concerns. Thank you for your interest and dedication in and to our Parish.

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	(B) Actual July -Dec 09	(C) Projected Jan -June 10	(D) Projected Year 09-10
<b>Income</b>			
Collections	100,677.31	80,818.00	181,495.31
Religious Education	3,279.00	0.00	3,279.00
Fund/Dev	21,190.15	6,500.00	27,690.15
Other	0.09	3,000.00	3,000.09
			0.00
<b>Total General Income</b>	\$125,146.55	\$90,318.00	215,464.55
Non-Operating	7,854.00	2,500.00	10,354.00
<b>Total Income</b>	133,000.55	92,818.00	225,818.55

	Actual July -Dec 09	Projected Jan -June 10	Projected Year 09-10
<b>Expenses</b>			
Administrative	46,593.70	47,747.98	94,341.68
Rectory	1,837.92	1,950.00	3,787.92
Liturgy	12,014.51	9,930.00	21,944.51
Religious Education	7,285.02	7,900.00	15,185.02
Plant	14,568.14	10,475.00	25,043.14
Fixed	4,890.15	1,500.00	6,390.15
<b>Total General Expenses</b>	87,189.44	79,502.98	166,692.42
Non-Operating	44,057.76	38,703.76	82,761.52
<b>Total Expenses</b>	131,247.20	118,206.74	249,453.94
<b>Net</b>	1753.35	-25,388.74	-23,635.39

E: Fixed Monthly Expense Items

Fixed	Monthly	Expenses
Clergy Salary	\$2,207.00	Fuel
Diocesan Assessment	\$4,431.83	Electric
School Assessment	\$6,033.96	Salaries
		Taxes
		Supplies, etc.
Monthly Total	\$12,672.79	<b>Need @ Week (4)</b> \$3,168.20 left Column only