



Saint Mary
CATHOLIC CHURCH

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October 30, 2023

Congratulations! Because of good financial support from many of you, in the last two years we have grown many of our ministries in a beautiful and healthy way, initiated a massive structural repair project on our church building, and paid off the loan for our Parish Life Center. Well done!

Which reminds me that when our life on earth is complete, we want to hear God say: Well done. Well done, good and faithful one. Are we one of the faithful ones? Our faithfulness is measured by how well we share what we have, including our finances. God trusts us to do that, so how we respond demonstrates our degree of faith in him. And when we do so, we demonstrate to the Lord, and others, that God is the priority in our lives.

Sometimes we may tend to think that our financial giving to the church is a small matter that does not need our attention. We might think it is a small matter, but it is actually a great responsibility. If you are one of the top 20% who keep our parish going strong financially, thank you for that! If you are not, won't you please consider taking the next step in your financial giving?

Jesus reminds us regularly that all we have is a gift from God which the Lord entrusts us to invest in others. Remember the parable of the Master, the Talents (A Talent is a coin.), and the Master's servants (Matthew 25:14–30). We will hear that parable again the weekend of November 19. The servants are entrusted with the Master's possessions. That's us!

When you financially invest in your parish, the way the Lord asks us to, you touch tens of thousands of lives across Okaloosa County and beyond as people visit from around our country every weekend. Every weekend visitors comment on how impressed they are by our worship, ministries, hospitality, and faithfulness. Well done.

Giving is truly a beautiful spiritual experience because we are always blessed way beyond what we give. I, or you, cannot out give the Lord.

As we head into Thanksgiving season, it is a great time to show God how grateful we are for all he gives us. When you do, God will bless you many times greater. I know that is true from my personal experience, and based on what many others tell me too.

Please look over the enclosed "Take the Next Step" chart. Then seriously and prayerfully consider, "Can I take that next step?" For example, if you are presently giving 3%, consider 3.5%, or even 4%, or higher if you are so inclined. I will, and I invite you too as well. If you want God to bless your finances, put God first in your finances. That's how it works.

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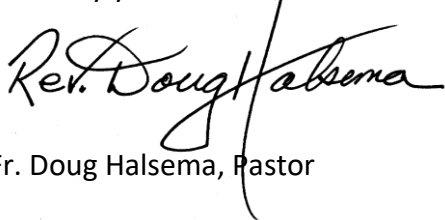
Electronic Funds Transfer, is the best way to give your gift to Saint Mary parish because there are fewer charges involved than when you use cash, check, or credit card. Your hard-earned finances go much farther when you use Electronic Funds Transfer.

Please complete the enclosed commitment card and bring it to Mass on Sunday or drop it off at the parish office Monday – Thursday, 9:00am-3:00pm. We ask you to return your card please by the weekend of November 18th/19th.

It is a very exciting time to be an active participant here at Saint Mary. I personally, and greatly, appreciate your help. Thank you.

I pray the Lord will be able to say to you: Well done. Well done, good and faithful one.

Sincerely yours in Christ.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rev. Doug Halsema". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Fr. Doug Halsema, Pastor