

## Epiphany

Thank you all for the financial support that you give St. Anthony's. Over the past year we have paid our bills each week, which is new for us. We have offered our staff a small wage increase to appreciate their work. We have purchased new lighting to reduce our electrical bills. We have done all this because you have been generous. You received gifts from God, and you give them back in gratitude.

We need your help in the upcoming year. I know that you enjoy giving, and that you appreciate the work of the people who bring this parish to life.

As in past years, we received assistance from outside sources. Visitation Parish and St. Thomas More Parish here in Kansas City both make annual pledges to us. We also receive a pledge from the Diocesan Parish-Based Ministry grant. Individuals outside the parish regularly send us a check to help us help others. All these sources combined promise us nearly \$40,000 a year, and they all deliver. Their pledge helps us plan. We cannot pay our bills without their help.

Again this year I am asking you to make a pledge to St. Anthony's. Let us know what you think you can give during 2016. Your pledge helps us plan how much to save and spend, and to submit a budget to the diocesan finance office.

I urge you again this year to use your contribution envelopes. The money counters and the finance council have all noticed that envelope usage increased during 2015, and this is an excellent sign of financial health. When you use your envelopes, you express your care about the parish, and we can send you an end-of-the-year report that may help you with your taxes.

If you are not receiving envelopes, it probably means that you are not registered with us. We have registration cards in the back of the church. Please fill one out today. During the past year we have done a better job of cleaning our roster. We used to receive dozens of mailings back because of inaccurate addresses. We have eliminated those addresses to give us a better picture of who is in the parish. Again, if you are not receiving envelopes, it may mean that we do not have you in the roster. Your membership makes a difference in the services you can give and the privileges you receive.

Our annual pledge Sunday will be in two weeks, so please think about how much you will be able to contribute to St. Anthony's during the coming year.

On the Epiphany we recall the visit of the magi to the Christ child. We associate this day with gifts. However it has another significance, and that is the manifestation - or epiphany - of Jesus to the nations of the world, symbolized by the magi coming from the East. In today's second reading St. Paul tells the Ephesians that he has received an epiphany, a revelation of who God is. He tells that epiphany to the nations of the world, so that everyone may know that Christ offers them salvation.

When you give to St. Anthony's you imitate both aspects of the Epiphany. You imitate the gifts of the magi, and you share the revelation that you have received. Christ was born for you, and you want others to hear that news as well.

Next week you'll hear from a member of our parish, and pledge cards will be available for you. Thank you in advance for your gifts to St. Anthony's.