

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

Announcement: Calling all men of the parish!! We are in need of 30-40 able-bodied volunteers to help unload the Christmas trees which will arrive this Wednesday, November 25th at 2:00 pm. We are blessed to be able to have the St. Pius Men's Club Christmas Tree Lot. It is not only a source of financial support but a great way to bring our community together. Given this very challenging year, bringing cheer and hope to others is especially important!! Please reach out to John Torres, Men's Club President at mensclub@pius.org or me if you can help out on the 25th! Thanks as always for your generosity.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the over 1,500 faithful who participated in our First Friday Holy Hour for vocations on November 6th. I am grateful to Father Edgardo for leading us in prayer. St. Pius X parishioners and other faithful joined us via Facebook and YouTube. This is made possible through your generous financial support allowing us to purchase the audio and visual materials. I am also grateful to Raul Velez, John Philpott and Ryan Herbst who continue to support this ministry. Parish staff members Cathy Yee and Tony Eiras as well as parishioner Timmy Yee have been invaluable in providing support for livestreaming weekday Masses and special liturgies. Given the digital age in which we live, this mode of communication is a great tool for evangelization and reaching a broader range of the faithful. Our Sunday 9:30 am Mass is viewed as far away as Ireland!

I would also like to thank members of our Parish Finance Council who spoke at Masses this past Sunday. The presentations by Kathy Martel, Tom Cortopassi and Steve Philpott were positively received. Please take the opportunity to read our annual financial report which was compiled by Operations Manager Judy Giacometti and Accounts Manager Debbie Castelli in consultation with Finance Council Chair Donna Schreiber. Also, Cathy Yee created an easy-to-follow color graph schema outlining the financials.

As the holiday seasons of Thanksgiving and Christmas beckon, I would like to highlight the incredible generosity of our community in supporting those who are hungry. The holidays are a very difficult time for many people, and the care and attention we express to them is so important. One of the ways in which we as a community do this is through a very dignified and respectful program of providing holiday food baskets at both Thanksgiving and Christmas. I asked Rick Boitano to offer a reflection on the tremendous outreach of our St. Vincent de Paul Society, made possible by the financial generosity and support you render as parishioners. Rick wrote, "The members of the St. Pius Conference of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul would like to thank our fellow parishioners for their continued generosity and support. Your continued kindness allows us to provide food, rental assistance and other basic necessities to the marginalized and forgotten individuals and families of our parish community. As we approach the coming holiday season and continue to struggle with the effects of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, the support of our parish family becomes even more critical.

As a result of the ongoing pandemic, many of those we serve have lost their jobs and are in desperate need of assistance. Families have had to make the difficult decision of whether to pay the rent and the utility bill, or purchase food. Many of the homes we visit are multi-generational and are calling us for the first time. The Society of SVdeP serves as a safety net for these families and individuals who have nowhere else to turn. With the generous support of our St. Pius parishioners, since the pandemic shutdown in mid-March, we have been able to make **106 home visits, providing assistance to 155 adults and 93 children. This includes the distribution of approximately 8,000 pounds of both fresh and non-perishable food items. We have been able to provide \$23,000 in rental assistance in conjunction with the SVdeP of San Mateo County District Office, helping to keep many families in their homes.**

Now, as we approach the holiday season, we are again asking for your help. As a volunteer organization, our ability to help others is dependent upon the kindness of our fellow parishioners. **As we approach the November 29th fifth Sunday collection dedicated to the charitable works of the SVdeP Society, we sincerely thank you for your past generosity and again respectfully ask for your support. Please be assured that your donation will help make a difference in the life of a family or individual in need. ‘That which you do for the least of my brethren, you do for me.’**

Today the Church celebrates the Feast of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe. Christ the King Sunday reminds us that the kingship of Jesus was firmly rooted in service, forgiveness, mercy and meeting those who came to him for healing within the context of their lives and circumstances. In the first reading from the Prophet Ezekiel, the LORD speaks of being a shepherd who tends and cares for his flock with love and compassion. “The lost I will seek out, the strayed I will bring back, the injured I will bind up, the sick I will heal.” This mirrors the life of Jesus Christ the Good Shepherd. The action of the Lord speaks of love for and service towards our brothers and sisters. This applies most emphatically to those who are in distress of any kind. This is reflected in concrete actions which take place in the everyday routine of life. As I have noted on innumerable occasions, our parish family has a long history of generosity and passion for serving those who are most vulnerable and that legacy continues today!!!

Matthew’s Gospel today reminds us of our Christian duty to service and how we will be judged for the effort - or lack thereof - that we rendered to our brothers and sisters. In her book *Interior Castle*, St. Teresa reflects on this life of charity. She wrote, “Here the Lord asks only two things of us: love for his Majesty and love for our neighbour. It is for these two virtues that we must strive, and if we attain them perfectly we are doing his will. The surest sign that we are keeping these two commandments is, I think, that we should really love our neighbour; for we cannot be sure if we are loving God, although we may have good reason for believing that we are, but we can know quite well if we are loving our neighbour. And be certain that, the farther advanced you find you are in this, the greater the love you will have for God.”

On behalf of Father Edgardo and Father Coleman and our entire parish staff, I wish you and your loved ones a blessed and safe Thanksgiving Day and holiday. May this be a time of reflecting and celebrating all the good gifts God has given us day by day. May our gratitude be a sign of light, love and the kingdom of God alive in our hearts.

–Fr. Tom