

2010 Treasure Appeal Witness Talk by Michael Ricci

Good evening/ morning. A few years ago during our 50th jubilee celebration, many of us put together puzzles of the beautiful mosaic that adorns the wall behind the altar. Today, I would like to share some thoughts on how you and I are really the pieces of the puzzle; the puzzle that makes up this great parish.

When fully assembled, the St. Dominic puzzle allows us to Seek, Know, and Become Christ, each for the sake of all. When building a puzzle, one idea is to start with the corners. For us, those corners are: Proclaiming the Word of Christ, Practicing the Worship of Christ, and Performing the Service of Christ. The fourth corner is YOU and your stewardship.

Stewardship is an offering of thanksgiving for all God has so generously given us. It is the sharing of our time, our talent, and our treasure.

My family has received many blessings from God. One of the ways we say thank you to God and the people of St. Dominic is through the gift of time and talent. I serve as a member of the Parish Finance Committee. As a family, we also say thank you through our gift of treasure by fulfilling our pledge to the annual stewardship appeal.

My family is not alone in giving to St. Dominic. Many of you share your time, talent, and treasure and are vital parts of our puzzle. On behalf of all the parishioners, thank you.

Each year, the Parish Council, Finance Committee, and Parish Staff work together to determine the financial needs that will allow us to offer the programs and services that make up the St. Dominic puzzle. It takes over \$3 million to run this Parish. Our budget is funded through program fees, school tuition, and your generous stewardship.

As with all budgets, you contain costs where you can, but some expenses continue to rise. Utilities, necessary repairs, and general maintenance of this campus are expected to increase in the coming year.

Sometimes when budgeting you have an opportunity that is too good to pass up. For us, we have been blessed by having Fr. Sean assigned to help us in our mission. While he would probably work for food, there is a cost incurred to have him here and I would offer he is well worth it.

Finally, when budgeting, you have ideas on what you would like to do if the monies are available. Last year, we froze wages of the Parish Staff, School Staff and Teachers. They are an integral part of the puzzle and are greatly appreciated. If funds are available, we would like to consider a modest increase.

Our puzzle is not complete unless we have all of the pieces. There are over 2000 pieces in our puzzle. We are asking every parishioner to complete a commitment card (hold card up). This will help identify you as an active member of the Parish, a piece of the puzzle. The card also defines the amount of treasure you are willing to provide. The pledged amount plays a critical role in the decisions made by the Parish Staff, Parish Council, and Finance Committee for the 2010 year.

To build the puzzle, we are seeking an increase in stewardship of 4.5% or roughly \$77,500 annually. This will help us maintain our financial strength and to offer the programs and services that support Proclaiming of the Word of Christ, Practicing the Worship of Christ, and Performing the Service of Christ.

The economy has affected everyone to various degrees. While, everyone has a different ability to contribute, we all share the responsibility.

If you have not given in the past, please consider a pledge this year. Even a small amount helps to build the puzzle.

If you have been generous in the past...thank you. Would you consider increasing your gift by the hoped for amount or more?

The Stewardship Campaign culminates on Commitment weekend, November 14th and 15th. During Mass, we will be called to the altar to bring our individual pieces of the puzzle. Together, we share in the beautiful expression of presenting our collective gift to God and St. Dominic Parish.

In the near future, you will receive a mailing announcing the campaign, detailing this year's appeal, and your commitment card. Please take a moment to review the material. Once again, thank you for your past support and your gifts of time, talent, and treasure. Thank you in advance for your generous participation in this year's campaign.

At this time, the ministers of hospitality will distribute a Little Burgundy Book. Please take one per household to assure that there are enough throughout the weekend. Any extras will be available in the narthex next weekend. .

As a gift to you, the Little Burgundy book provides daily reflections as you prayerfully consider your gift of treasure over the next four weeks. Please join your fellow parishioners in using this book to pray daily for the success of our annual treasure campaign.

We wish to offer a special word of thanks to the parish member who has very generously underwritten the cost of making the little burgundy books available for our parishioners during this important annual campaign.

Thank you for listening and for being a corner piece of the St. Dominic puzzle.