

NOTES FROM FR. SEÁN

September 13, 2020

In Today's Gospel

Peter thought he was being pretty generous. When he asked Jesus how many times he should forgive his brothers, he suggested, "As many as seven times?". I am sure this seemed very generous to Peter; it certainly seems generous to me. In the Scripture, the number seven typically represents perfection, the fullness of God's creation. But even this fullness is not enough. Jesus multiplies that fullness telling Peter "not seven times but seventy-seven times." (Mt 18:22)

It can be difficult for us to forgive one another. God's forgiveness of us is so complete that it can be difficult for us to comprehend. In today's gospel, Jesus shows us that his forgiveness is full and complete. He calls on us to forgive each other as God forgives us.

CSA 2020

The Church is the Body of Christ. As members of the body, we are called to support each other. Within the Archdiocese of Detroit (AOD), the primary means of supporting one another is through the missionary activities supported by the Catholic Services Appeal (CSA). Every year we are asked to reflect on how we can support the Body of Christ through our financial generosity. The vast majority of the money raised through CSA stays right here in Southeast Michigan. This money supports the missionary activities of the Archdiocese within our communities.

Like many families, the missionary activities supported by CSA have been hard-hit by the financial crisis brought on by COVID-19. The annual CSA campaign usually kicks off in May. This year, because of COVID-19, the campaign was put on hold. The need, however, has not been put on hold. If anything, there is even greater need this year than in the past.

This week, we are beginning the CSA campaign for 2020. Recognizing the financial hardship that many people are going through, the AOD has reevaluated our CSA goals for this year. Each year, the CSA goal for a parish is calculated as a percentage of the average Sunday offertory and Christmas collections for the last three years. This calculation is fair and straightforward. Our CSA goal is set based on what parishioners have given in the past.

This year, they are using the same formula to calculate our goal; however, our final goal has been reduced an additional 15%. Our CSA goal for 2020 is \$14,950 for St. Richard and \$55,470 for St. Mary. Although St. Mary has recently been successful in reaching its CSA goal, last year, because of COVID-19, we were unable to have our final push to meet our goal, and we fell \$10,000 short of reaching our goal. This year I am challenging all St. Mary parishioners to not only meet our goal for this year but to make up the shortage from last year. Although our official goal is \$55,470, I would like us not only to reach a goal

of \$65,470 but to exceed that goal. It is important to remember that 100% of CSA donations that exceed our goal are returned to the parish.

This year, the CSA campaign is being run differently than in the past. Many of you have already received a letter from Archbishop Vigneron outlining the goals of CSA. Unfortunately, due to a mistake by the printers, parishes that requested bilingual letters only receive letters in Spanish. We will be sending out newsletters to St. Mary parishioners because of this error. Included with the letter was a pledge card and a return envelope. You can make your contribution by filling out this card and returning it to the Archdiocese in the envelope provided. If you do not trust the mail, you may return your pledge cards and checks to the parish. They will be hand-delivered to the Archdiocese. All checks for CSA donations should be made out to ARCHDIOCESE of DETROIT - CSA. Please do not make out checks to the parish.

The safest and easiest way to make donations to CSA is through online giving. This is similar to the online giving that many of us already use to donate to the parish. If you are a member of St. Richard, go to the website strichard.aodcsa.org. If you do not already have an account, click CREATE NEW ACCOUNT, and follow the instructions.

St. Mary parishioners should go to the website, osvonlinegiving.com/4333, and sign into their existing CSA account or create a new account if you have not used this platform for CSA in the past. Although this online giving portal may be similar to the one you already use for offertory donations to the parish, these are separate accounts set up specifically for CSA. When you sign in, make sure that it has the correct parish name in the upper right-hand corner of the screen. We will have links to the proper websites on the St. Mary website and our Facebook pages.

I know that this is a difficult time for many of us. We have all been financially stretched due to the pandemic, but without your generosity, the missionary work of the Archdiocese cannot go on. Although some of the money raised through CSA goes to support the national and international missionary work of the Church, the vast majority of your money stays right here in Southeast Michigan. Please be generous.