

This weekend is the Annual Catholic Appeal commitment weekend, our exact goal for this year's campaign is \$45,070. It should be noted that any money raised over the pledge goal is returned to the parish as a "rebate" and we have been blessed over the years with generous donors. We plan on using this year's rebate to cover the cost of an important project allowing more accessibility in the sanctuary and around the altar.

Right now, we have no railings to help people up the first step into the sanctuary and the current railings that leads from the sanctuary platform to the tabernacle are not very useful for someone needing assistance to get to the altar. Daprato Rigali has given us a bid for new elbowed railings that assist to the altar platform and then the high altar level as well as railings to assist stepping into the sanctuary from the main church floor. This will be a great help for senior clergy or other ministers with mobility issues. The bid for this work is about as much as we hope to get in the ACA rebate so, please be as generous as you can assured that we will put the proceeds to good local use.

For those wondering, we also have an agreed upon bid and money set aside to have new LED ceiling lights and fixtures installed in the church. I know that there are a number of lights out in the church, we were hoping to have them installed before Christmas, but the contractor had to adjust the size and make specialized fixtures which explains the delays. I don't know exactly when they will be ready, but the project is happening, just so you know.

--- ***"Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you."***

Of all the moral teachings the Lord gave us, loving and praying for those who hate us stands out as a specifically Christ-like thing. It might seem impossible for us to see how we can be as perfect as our Heavenly Father so Jesus gives us a helpful thought at the end of today's Gospel when he states:

***"The measure with which you measure will in return be measured out to you."*** Jesus will treat us the way we treat others. If we demand swift and merciless justice for another, the Lord will give us the same treatment. If we are compassionate, sympathetic, and understanding towards others, the Lord promises us the same. We seem to easily remember the times when we were victims but not so readily the times that we were persecutors, but we have persecuted others. None of us is without sin, on the day of judgment we will find out how many people asked God to remember our offenses towards them, it may be a shocking revelation.

It is a very helpful reflective question to ask ourselves "would I want to be treated the way I treat others?". I asked children in the school recently how they would like to be corrected, while we were discussing the spiritual work of mercy, admonishing the sinner. The children said they would like to be corrected calmly, without angry looks or tones, they would like specific examples of how they could improve, and ultimately, they wanted to know that they were still loved even as they were being corrected.

There is evil in the world, and we have enemies, but Jesus wants us to conquer evil with good. ***"Love your enemies and do good to them...and you will be children of the Most High, for he himself is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked."***

God bless,  
Fr. Mike