



May 18, 2014

My Dear Parishioners,

As you may have heard, the Archdiocese of New York has adopted a Regional School system to help take the financial burden away from parishes that cannot afford to maintain a school any longer. To avoid closures, the Archdiocese has approved a plan by which all parishes assume some sharing of the responsibilities for the financial support of our Catholic Schools.

For a few years, St. Catharine's School was the beneficiary of Archdiocesan support to keep it open, although the school was ultimately closed as a result of its declining enrollment. The new *sharing of responsibility* system provides that each parish will be asked to pay a different amount according to its annual income – the assessment for St. Catharine of Alexandria parish for the next fiscal year is approximately \$78,000.00.

While this past year has shown a surplus for us, the inauguration of this new assessment, as well as, our loss of income from the closure of the chapel at Rockland Psychiatric leave us in a projected “break even” position for next year. With the inclusion of scheduled preventive maintenance projects, as well as, unforeseen repairs to our facilities we are in the position of trying to maintain our status of being in the “black” instead of the “red.”

I have consulted both with our Finance Council and our Parish Council and we conclude that a request for help from our parishioners is warranted. That request comes in the form of a monthly second collection for Catholic Religious Education on the last Sunday of each month. The collection would begin on the last Sunday in June. No one enjoys second collections but almost all of our second collections are mandated, with the proceeds sent to the Archdiocese for the particular cause. St. Catharine's derives no financial benefit from them.

We ask that you consider this collection as an additional sacrificial gift to your parish. It will not only help to cover our new assessment but will also help us to meet the needs of our own Religious Education program here whose expenses exceed the amount we charge our families.

We would ask that your gift in this collection equal your ordinary contribution to the first collection on Sundays. This would help us greatly in meeting the expenses discussed. The parish pays the assessments, so the collection revenue would go to the parish itself.

We know that these are difficult times and are grateful for the generosity you already show to your parish. Please accept my personal thanks for your continued support of St. Catharine's and its many fine programs and be assured of my prayers and thanks for your generous support.

Sincerely in the Lord,

Rev. Msgr. Francis J. McAree
Pastor