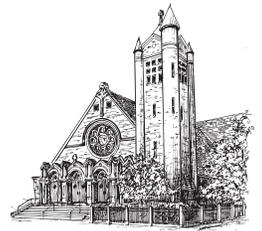




NATIVITY OF OUR LORD & SAINT GABRIEL PARISH



STATE OF PARISH LETTER 2022

Dear Friends,

It is with enormous gratitude that I compose a message to accompany this annual report of parish activity and finances. Parishioners have begun returning to Mass and other parish activities, and I perceive a positive spirit in the air. Financial support for our mission and ministry has been sufficient for us to keep our head above water. A year ago, we thought that COVID was receding for good and that we were out of the woods. As it turned out, illnesses spiked again and again, and we suffered through continued months of restrictions, mitigations, distancing, and fear. And so, while things are looking much better again, I hesitate to presume that things are back to normal for good... but I sure hope they are.

I am grateful to our small, but hard-working staff: **Kathy Bailey** and **Wanda Dybas** in the offices, **Joe Hermle** and **Tim Smith** handling our maintenance, **Kim Osowiec** directing “operations” (which basically means handling the business aspects of the parish). I am grateful to **Ann Rubich** for her years overseeing our Religious Education and Sacramental preparation programs and wish her well as she moves on to the next phase of her life and hands that torch to **Marian Strok**. The presence of **Deacon (now Father) Colm Mitchell** during his final year of preparation for priesthood was a great help, and we continue to pray for him in his new assignment in Palos Heights. **Deacon Erik Ziemys** does baptism prep and preaches at Nativity. We are blessed to have the talented **Carl DeSanti**, who plays and sings at all of our liturgies, and **Kenned MacIver**, who both cantors and directs our wonderful, dedicated **9:30 Mass Choir**. I want to also mention **Greg Krajewski**, who generously serves as cantor at our 8am Sunday Mass. **Jenni Simental** came on last year to handle Marketing and Development for our Schools and Communications and Outreach for the parish.

In addition to the financial report, you will find statistics about parishioner count, sacraments, our schools and our religious education program. Despite having two fairly large campuses, at present we are a small parish. Looking backward will not serve us, and so I choose to look ahead. We are counting on the efforts of our **Evangelization Team**, led by **Deacon Rob Morris** to help us with what I imagine will be a slow but steady return to growth. (Rob also preaches, baptizes, oversees St Gabriel servers and coordinates some social justice outreach) The work of the E-Team has been behind the scenes this past year and will remain so for the next three or four months. But in the New Year we can expect to see the development of a program designed to draw adults into a deeper relationship with Christ and the Church, leading to what in Church circles they are calling, “**intentional discipleship.**”

At Nativity of Our Lord and Saint Gabriel parish I am encouraged by our support of the Women’s Center, PORT ministries, and the many causes supported through “second collection” envelopes. We are increasing involvement in Special Religious Development (SPRED), making sandwiches for the homeless, reaching out to those in need during the holidays through the Giving Tree... As our parish continues the journey of revitalization, I hope to see us undertake more initiatives that involve hands-on opportunities for serving others. I am proud of our support for first responders in law enforcement and firefighting, and for those serving in the military. Our primary ministries for now are our educational and catechetical ministries, as well as liturgical ministry. I am especially grateful to our dedicated Lectors and Extraordinary Ministers of Communion, as well as to our Altar Servers (I am working to grow our Altar Server corps with young people who attend Mass faithfully even when they are not scheduled to serve).

Saint Gabriel Catholic School and **Bridgeport Catholic Academy** - our parish schools - under the leadership of principal, **Mr. Dan Flaherty** and assistant principals, **Mrs. Juliann Jurisic** and **Mrs. Katie Thompson** - have distinct personalities. While we work to increase collaboration and share resources, I think that our best plan moving forward is to leverage the individual strengths and traditions of each in an effort to provide options for our families. I have been truly impressed by the warmth and positive spirit found in our schoolhouses. And let’s face it: our teachers and staff who worked through the pandemic are heroes.

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As we continue to work with children, we accept the fact that, as a Church, we have missed the boat over the years by putting so much attention on children's faith formation while the adults were left un-engaged. In fact, it is sometimes pointed out that while Jesus used to play with the children and teach the adults, in parishes we often flip that: we teach the children and play with the adults. Social events and community-building are obviously important (The **St. Patrick's Day Corned Beef Dinner** was a great success, and a **concert by Carl and Kenned** is set for October)... but how many of our adults have taken part in serious soul-development activity through parish offerings? How many adults would say that their relationship with the Lord and commitment to the faith have been enhanced by their parish? Until we start seeing large harvests of adult souls, then the cultivation of our young people is like trying to farm a field of gravel or thorn bushes.

If Catholicism were just about Mass and the sacraments, we would not need a parish; we would just need a church (or two churches). A parish thrives when its adults can say that they have a personal relationship with Jesus, when they have familiarity with the Bible, a meaningful prayer life, an understanding of at least the basics of the catechism and a commitment to the mission of Jesus.

You may have seen the First Communion and Confirmation candidates turning in cards showing that they've attended weekend Mass. However, I suspect it is going to be four or five years of working with parents before we start seeing numbers increase of those who keep coming to Mass after their First Communion and Confirmation. The way for us to sustain the participation of adults and children we work with is to help them to experience a personal relationship with Jesus, a thorough understanding of the catechism and a love for Christ in the Eucharist.

Some friends visiting last year made the comment, "you can tell this is an Irish parish- the statue of Saint Patrick is larger than the statue of Jesus!" While I see an increasingly diverse group of people when I look out into the pews, the missionary spirit of Saint Patrick will continue to fuel our outreach and mission. We can beg his intercession as we seek to replicate his success.

Our united parish is just three years old. I have been here as pastor for two years... and this time has been spent mostly managing COVID, adjusting some of our parish administration, and starting to get to know people. But I feel that this was all in preparation to getting to the starting line of renewal. We are not starting from scratch: we have an infrastructure in place and committed parishioners who have inherited a proud tradition and a combined 296 years of Catholic presence and mission in our neighborhoods. And we have the Holy Spirit. We just need to re-tool for a broader mission. And we laborers need to be trained for the new job... myself included.

May God bless our parish as we boldly pursue our evangelization initiatives, and may God bless you and your families for your faithfulness and generosity!



Rev. James F. Hurlbert
Pastor

Amount Given 7/1/21– 6/30/22	# of Recorded Contributors	% of Households	% of Recorded Contributors	% of Total Given (recorded)
\$1-10/week	412	32%	58%	14%
\$10-20/week	130	10%	19%	19%
\$20-30/week	72	5%	10%	17%
>\$30/week	86	7%	13%	50%
TOTAL RECORDED DONORS	700		100%	100%
\$0 in recorded Contribution	615	46%		
TOTAL Households	1315	100%		

WEEKLY STEWARDSHIP GIVING

I ask parishioners with jobs to make a weekly financial commitment of the **value of their first hour of work on Monday mornings** as their Stewardship Offering to support the mission and ministry of the parish. This means that a minimum of \$15/week (for those who earn minimum wage) would a responsible level of support. Our additional fundraisers can be fun ways to augment this, but as disciples we are called to respond in gratitude by making sacrificial financial support for our parish ("tithing") a priority.



OUR SCHOOLS



Our Parish Educational Ministry had another successful year despite the continuing challenges posed by the pandemic. Our staff and our parents and families all worked together to continue to provide a safe and supportive environment in which our students could thrive.

The faculty and staff of both Bridgeport Catholic Academy and Saint Gabriel Catholic School were once again the real champions of our efforts. They navigated challenges both expected and unexpected with professionalism and grace and humor.

We are excited to share that the upcoming year will see the return of many social opportunities that were postponed or cancelled out of our concern for the safety of everyone in our communities. Special thanks need to be given to the leadership of the School Board, the BCA Home & School Association and the SGCS Family & School Association. Over the last two years they re-imagined and invented successful fund-raising opportunities at both campuses, but they are equally excited to see the return in full force of Rock the Block at BCA, the Golf Outing at SGCS and numerous and sundry other opportunities for us to gather together.

The teachers and staff will be able to work even more closely across the two campuses and take advantage of the strengths of each school without losing our grasp on what makes each building a uniquely wonderful community. Our students are preparing for and celebrating the Sacraments together. Our Assistant Principals share common meeting time and plan more opportunities for us to work and learn and pray together. Our teachers will meet more regularly as grade level bands to improve upon our already wonderful programs. We continue to take great pride in each individual school as an institution of faith, service and academic excellence.

Respectfully,

Daniel Flaherty
Principal, Bridgeport Catholic Academy & St. Gabriel Catholic School



**NATIVITY OF OUR LORD &
SAINT GABRIEL PARISH**



We have not been able to have visitors in our schools the past couple years due to restrictions caused by the pandemic. Now that we can welcome everyone again we would like to welcome family, friends, alumni, parishioners and everyone else to come and visit our schools. Join us for mass then after take a tour of our schools and see what each location has to offer.

**Bridgeport Catholic
Academy**

Sunday, October 16th

**after 11 am mass
12:00 pm - 1:30pm**

**OPEN
HOUSES**

**All are
welcome
to join**

**St. Gabriel
Catholic School**

Sunday, October 2nd

**after 9:30 am mass
10:30 am - 12:00 pm**

BRIDGEPORT CATHOLIC ACADEMY NATIVITY OF OUR LORD & SAINT GABRIEL PARISH

CHASE THE ACE RAFFLE!

**DRAWINGS ON THURSDAYS AT 8PM
\$5 TICKETS, OR BUY 5 GET 1 FREE**



The Chase the Ace is a Weekly drawing. If the Ace of Spades card is not drawn the JACKPOT carries over (progressive). However, to be eligible for the next drawing, NEW TICKETS MUST BE PURCHASED for each weekly drawing.

Tickets are \$5, or BUY 5 Tickets and receive 1 Ticket FREE!

If your ticket is drawn and your winning card is the Ace of Spades, you will win 50% of the Jackpot and the raffle will end. If your ticket is drawn and it's a Joker, you will receive 10% of the Jackpot total, the game will end, and the remaining Jackpot amount will roll over to a new Chase the Ace raffle. All Raffle Winners will be contacted by BCA-NOLSGP within 15 business days of the drawing.

Prizes for other cards

- Joker Card pays 10% of the Current Jackpot
- Any Suit Cards numbered 2 through 10 win \$25.00
- Kings and Jacks win \$50.00
- Ace of Diamonds, Clubs or Hearts win \$100.00

50% of the Jackpot goes to the winner. The other 50% splits between Bridgeport Catholic Academy and Nativity of Our Lord & St. Gabriel Parish Elevator Fund.

You can purchase tickets online at
www.goraisedough.com/buy/1180
or by scanning the qr code to the right



Thank you very much for your support, we greatly appreciate your generosity!

**Parish Advisory Councils
2022-2023**

Parish Council

Maureen Bracken
Sean Bruen
Jane Christensen
Michelle Conte
John Czubaja
Steve Ensworth
Jeanne Farnan
Carrie Hermle
Ann McBroom
John O'Brien
Carol O'Connell
Carrie Petrulis
Lori Serpico

Finance Council

Bill Babuskow
Sharon Cordin Becker
Alex Deutsch
Sean Heneghan
Mary Ann Mahon-Huels
Colleen Hughes
Jan McDonough
Joy Vanek

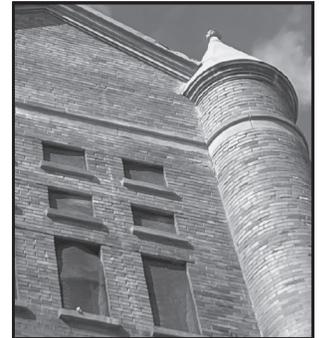
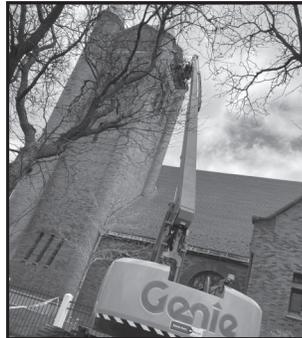
Unified School Board

Elizabeth Bruen
Leanne Costas
Pat Arlowe
Sharon Cordin
Rich Goodwin
Dennis Guisti
Trinity Haynes
Michael Hermle
Angelica Hernandez
Jean Johnson
Cathy Lacy
Tim Ligue
Nicole Lyons
Casey McKenzie
George Morris
Lisa Morris
Christina Moy
Peggy Shew

Capital Improvement Projects

St. Gabriel Church

After being wrapped in protective cloth for eight years, work to restore the St. Gabriel bell tower was finally begun this past April. In addition, repairs to the St. Gabriel vestibule allowed us to re-open the section that had been cordoned off for two years.



Nativity of Our Lord Church

We are beginning fundraising to provide elevator access to Nativity of Our Lord church soon, in addition to planning for replacing its roof.

Parish and School Fundraising Events

St Patrick's Day Corned Beef dinner	Trivia Night Derby Night
Carl and Kenned Concert Pancake Breakfasts	Restaurant Nights Little League
Rock The Block Golf Outing	Chase the Ace Queen of Hearts
Comedy Night	and more to come

Some Statistics for the Fiscal Year 2022:

Registered Parish Households: 1318 representing 2486 individuals	First Communion: (children): 51
Baptisms: (infant): 46 (adult/children over 7): 1	Weddings: 22 Funerals: 67
Confirmations: (children): 51 (adult): 2	Number of students enrolled: St. Gabriel Catholic School: 180 Bridgeport Catholic Academy: 250
Adults received into the Catholic Church: 1	Number of children attending the Religious Education Program: 98

Average total weekly Sunday Mass attendance : 422
(counted in October 2022)

FINANCIALS

Thanks to the generosity of our parishioners we kept our heads “above water” on the church side the last fiscal year. Enabling us to be in the black was the fact that we did not fill some staffing needs for which we had budgeted. The archdiocesan assessment (diocesan “tax” (10%) and priests’ health and retirement “tax” (3.5%)) was high because it was based on the pre-COVID / pre-Renew My Church ordinary income from FY2019. This years’ assessment is to be significantly lower (it is based on FY2021 income, which was substantially less). On the schools side: the deficit for Saint Gabriel Catholic School was covered by the Archdiocese, per the three-year management agreement that expires at the end of the current fiscal year. The deficit of Bridgeport Catholic Academy was covered by BCA savings. Fully funding our educational mission will remain a challenge as long as tuition rates are set significantly below what it actually costs to run the schools.

	Church & Religious Education	St. Gabriel Catholic School	Bridgeport Catholic Academy
Sunday/Holy Day Collections	\$ 452,357		
Christmas Collection	\$ 35,408		
Easter Collection	\$ 25,344		
Other Collections	\$ 3,481		
Tuition & Fees	\$ 8,897	\$ 668,380	\$ 1,069,455
Fundraising	\$ 33,569	\$ 221,782	\$ 130,305
Outside Funding Sources		\$ 173,440	\$ 46,750
Stipends/Stole Fees	\$ 62,416		
Other Income	\$ 1,277	\$ 8,928	\$ 3,771
TOTAL	\$ 622,748	\$ 1,072,531	\$ 1,250,281
Salaries/Benefits	\$ 228,713	\$ 893,821	\$ 1,154,217
Utilities	\$ 64,010	\$ 59,349	\$ 52,196
Maintenance	\$ 41,291	\$ 76,131	\$ 70,872
Operations/Admin Expense	\$ 32,890	\$ 18,638	\$ 28,629
Liturgical Costs	\$ 27,609		
Faith Formation/Books & Supplies	\$ 16,223	\$ 31,028	\$ 65,108
Insurance	\$ 58,464	\$ 52,443	\$ 54,935
Arch Assessments	\$ 96,268	\$ 5,841	\$ 7,821
Other Expenses	\$ 14,793	\$ 9,988	\$ 11,765
TOTAL EXPENSE	\$ 580,261	\$ 1,147,239	\$ 1,445,543
NET INCOME (LOSS)	\$ 42,487	\$ (74,708)	\$ (195,262)
OTHER SIGNIFICANT EVENTS:			
Sale of Property @ St. Gabriel	\$ 105,671		
Capital Collections	\$ 145,572		
Food Pantry Collections	\$ 10,670		
Baby Bottle Collection	\$ 6,784		
Religious Retirement	\$ 1,045		
Priests Retirement	\$ 1,087		
Propogation of the Faith (Missions)	\$ 861		
Catholic Campagin for Human Development	\$ 818		
Catholic Charities	\$ 842		
Ukraine	\$ 719		
2021-2022 Annual Catholic Appeal	\$ 22,245	Goal: \$17,554	

END OF YEAR BALANCES	Parish	St. Gabriel Catholic School	Bridgeport Catholic Academy
Operating Accounts	\$ 109,381	\$ 76,632	\$ 47,677
Savings Accounts	\$ 75,594		\$ 49,766
Elevator Fund	\$ 24,500		
Bell Tower Fund	\$ 233,782		
Building Fund Accounts	\$ 21,917		\$ 32,050
Archdiocese Bank Savings	\$ 21,785		\$ 256,331
“To Teach Who Christ Is Savings”	\$ 37,360		
Auxiliary Accounts		\$ 34,286	\$ 52,318
	\$ 524,319	\$ 110,918	\$ 438,142