

Pastor's Report 2017

Glory be to Jesus Christ!

Dear Parishioners,

On November 18, 2017, a number of the members of the parish council attended the Eparchial Stewardship Forum at Bethlehem High School. This was an important and life-giving event for the Eparchy of Saskatoon. At the Forum, there was much discussion about both properties and ensuring that all people in the Eparchy will have access to catechesis and the Sacraments in the future. After the Forum, there was homework to do: Thank you to Theresa Gogol, our parish's administrative assistant, for compiling the statistics about membership and income/expenses in the recent past as well as making projections in these areas for the next fifteen years. Our parish is diminishing in size and the responsibility for paying our parish bills is falling on fewer heads. But, our parish council executive is working hard to reduce costs and to maintain and improve our parish facilities.

Even though Saints Peter and Paul Parish is shrinking, there are a number of reasons to be grateful and have much hope:

- We have the largest Solemn Communion Class in years (15 children!).
- Our parish gets new members each and every year.
- Our Junior Youth group (Gr. 6-8) is bursting with members from all three Saskatoon parishes and beyond; the Junior Youth have excellent leaders and a vibrant program of catechesis and recreation.
- Our Vacation Bible School is an excellent and strong program with tons of children and volunteers.

We need to continue to invest in our young people and look for ways to engage those in high school and our young adults. We do this with programming and by inviting them into the decision-making conversations about our parish.

During the Eparchial Stewardship Forum, Fr. Ivan Nahachewsky presented much information. He began by speaking about the "Circles of Engagement." This graphic describes the Circles.

- "Community" here describes the unchurched and those people who come for Good Friday, Christmas, Easter, and basket blessings.
- "Crowd" means the regular attenders. "Regular" may have different meanings for different people, but this means there is a pattern to one's attendance.
- "Congregation" refers to the active members of the Body of Christ, those engaged in programs.
- The "Committed" are the disciples of Christ.
- "The Core" is the leaders, the unfailing volunteers, those who are "all in."
- Christ would be dot in the middle at the very heart, but Christ is also reaching out in love to all people in all categories.



Where do you fit into these categories? To grow in faith, commitment, and love, Fr. Ivan challenged us all to take one step closer to the centre. I would like to challenge all of you to do the same, because if we are not growing in some way, we are dying. If we continue to grow in faith, commitment, and love, our parish can grow once again, if we are welcoming, vibrant, and caring for and to all.

Yours in Christ, our Redeemer,

Fr. Michael Smolinski, C.Ss.R.