

The GOOD STEWARD

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For the Members of St. Jude Catholic Church

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Recession Hits the Parish

by Fr. Tim Church

The parish income has been steadily declining over the last few months. We had initially thought that the recession would pass the parish with little overall effect. While there has been significant unemployment we have countered it with our career alliance program and a great many jobs have been located. There are certainly some who are still looking for employment and we are working with them to find a job.

Nonetheless, the income is the defining indicator for us in terms of our building plans. We have experienced a shortfall over the last three months. Fortunately, we have been accumulating a surplus for several years, in both the Building Trust Fund (which has been paying the mortgage on the new building) and the Operating Fund (which provides funds for our staff, utilities and parish programs).

The shortfall means that we have temporarily suspended our plans to expand our facility. We fully expect this to be a brief pause. Especially since we have gone far enough in our planning process to obtain pricing and have realized that there is a window of opportunity with regard to commercial construction costs. The industry is experiencing a significant slowdown. We would save some 10% on the overall cost

within this window. Equally important is the current mortgage interest rate, which can now only go up. The potential savings could be as much as one million dollars! Assuming that there is a mortgage the savings over the life of the loan is monumental.

Your pastor and finance council have always taken a very conservative approach to our parish finances. We must see a significant improvement in our general financial support of the parish in order to move forward. We are including a pledge card and brochure in this mailing and ask that you prayerfully consider your support of the parish. Please return the pledge card by mid-December.

Of course, we should not be discouraged by these events in our parish. We should remain steadfastly thankful, for what we have is far greater than we could ever hope for. We have friendships that are deep and that can carry us through this time. We have so much more than others and, therefore we should not give in to discouragement. All will be well.

AA Church

CHRISTMAS OUTREACH OPPORTUNITIES IN DECEMBER HOW ST. JUDE PARISHIONERS CAN HELP!

Pick an ornament from the **Giving Tree** in the Parish Hall and help bring Christmas to some of the most economically disadvantaged **families in the area**. Return gifts to the Parish Hall by **December 13th**.

Children's Ministries collects **stuffed animals** to be given to the **Samaritan Inn** and the local **Fire Departments**.

Rainbow Days collects **socks and underwear** for children during the month of December. This year they will be given to a local **elementary school** for the children in need.

We will bundle baskets to be delivered to **Juliette Fowler Senior Home** in East Dallas and the **Veteran's Home** in Bonham. Bring a smile to the senior citizens! Needed are:

- Large print crossword, word search and sudoku puzzles,**
- Large print short story or poetry books**
- Note cards and stamps, address books, lap blankets,**
- sugar free candy, flavored teas, and cookies in Christmas tins.**

The Youth of our Parish will collect the following items needed by the **troops overseas**:

- Black crew-length socks, small packages of baby wipes,**
- Powdered detergent, AA batteries, bags of candy (NOT chocolate).**