

Parish of The Transfiguration
St. Dorothy and St. Thomas Churches
11 Harnden Street
Wilmington, MA 01887-3519

October 12, 2021

Dear Parishioners and Friends,

My name is Fr. Ron Coyne. I am temporarily at the Parish of the Transfiguration (St. Thomas and St. Dorothy Churches) while you await the appointment of a new pastor. It is a privilege to be in Wilmington/South Tewksbury and be able to witness the vibrant faith community you have. I am aware of the wonderful history of the Catholic Church in your town.

Most Catholic parishes have a tradition in the month of October of holding the Grand Annual Collection. It is a once-a-year appeal asking parishioners to go above and beyond their weekly and/or monthly offering. I remember growing up in Roslindale/West Roxbury (Holy Name Parish) and my own parents contributing to their Grand Annual every year. As you may know, the weekly Offertory Collection taken up at Mass is used to pay parish expenses, e.g., salaries, bills, office expenses, heating, air conditioning, etc. The Offertory collection determines the future of a parish. It would be equal to what a Catholic high school tuition is for that school.

But Catholic parishes and Catholic high schools must seek out further financial support to remain viable and strive to provide opportunities for more parishioners and students. That is why the most successful hire fund raisers and development directors. They have to subsidize their offertory and tuition.

I personally believe that each of us is generous by birth, and we all decide which charities we will support and what our priorities are, i.e., if I love to play golf I can afford it, if having a pet is a priority I can afford it, if I like to gamble, I'll set money aside, if I like a nice car I will sacrifice elsewhere, if a vacation is a priority I will save for it. I respect those choices and we all make them.

I'm asking you to consider making your parish one of your priorities if you have not already done so. Many of our families are very supportive and generous. They are always there when we need them. The pandemic had deeply affected many peoples' lives and relationship with the Church. Some of our parishioners who do not feel comfortable returning to celebrate their faith at Church continue to donate on-line or send in their offertory envelopes. Others may not realize that even though they are not able to join us physically, the parish still relies on their weekly donations to remain viable. We ask every one of our families to make a conscious decision to participate in the 2021 Grand Annual Collection. As you may recall, due to the Parish Repair Fund we had last year, we did not have a Grand Annual Collection. We asked all parishioners who could help to contribute to the Repair Fund. With your generosity, we raised over \$170,000 and were able to address all the repairs except for the Church doors. Unfortunately, an unseen problem, replacing the roof of the rectory, took priority and the door project has been postponed. Going forward, we will have the Grand Annual Collection return this year. We want to do all we can to guarantee that future generations may have the privilege of celebrating their faith and centering their spiritual lives here in the Catholic Churches of Wilmington/South Tewksbury.

For those who are not sure what would be a reasonable amount for this request, we suggest \$300 per household, knowing some may be able and willing to increase that amount, while others may be struggling financially at this time and may contribute less.

Enjoy life,



Fr. Ron Coyne