



November 20, 2022

Dear Parishioners and Friends

We are entering the joyous seasons of Thanksgiving and Christmas, and we have to think about how good God is in making us his children. What a great gift. St. Agnes is getting ready to celebrate the 150th Anniversary of its existence, and we are grateful to God, who has watched over us through many years of history, but now we are struggling through this time when the number of people attending the Church is half of what it was before COVID.

We receive approximately **\$500,000 annually** in collections from the basket and online, which is low considering our expenses. We have half the people coming to the Church now than in the days before COVID, and fewer people make it harder to get financial support. We receive one-time donations from time to time, but we need more to sustain us financially. We have very few weddings, baptisms, or funerals, so we receive hardly any income from those events.

Our operating cost is **\$1,200,000 annually**, so the **\$500,000** we receive from collections does not cover our expenses. We owe the Archdiocese **\$23,000** a month, and when we cannot pay, they remind us of our obligation to them. The Archdiocese does not support us when we run out of money. In short, we are in a very precarious situation because of COVID and because many parishioners do not grasp what it means to run a parish like St. Agnes. People give gifts of \$2 or \$3 in the collection, and there is no way a parish can function on that small amount of support. I am being blunt, but I must share our reality with you.

On **January 21**, the Feast of St. Agnes, we begin celebrating the **150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Year**, and we ask you to be generous and help us to be here for another 150 years. For St. Agnes to continue for the next 150 years, we need parishioners or former parishioners who can envision St. Agnes being part of your community for the next 100 to 150 years and the importance of offering Mass, Confessions and guidance to hundreds of people. With your support, St. Agnes will be here to serve people for years to come in many different ways.

Thanks to the intercession of St. Agnes, we have reached so many souls over the years, and as we approach Christmas, let us ask Our Lord to help us continue to get many more women and men. May Our Lady, Our Mother, and St. Joseph, the Father of Jesus, guide us to continue this great evangelization.

*Fr. Michael J. Barrett*