

## A Note from Fr. Keith, Our Pastor

Dear Parishioners,

Jesus prayed with the Psalms from memory. His mother and foster father, Joseph and Mary, taught him these sacred scriptures according to the Jewish custom. Perhaps, when Jesus was older, he would have remembered, “Good will comes to those who are generous and lend freely” (Psalm 112:5) as he watched a poor widow give generously at the temple offering. This moment in the life of Christ reminds me of something an old, wise priest taught us in the seminary, “We cannot outdo God in generosity, but it is good to try.”

The Season of Advent and Christmas is a time of generosity. We give and receive gifts to celebrate the birth of Jesus. This special time of year is when many people donate to charitable causes, especially as the year ends before tax season. Our generosity is inspired by the most generous act in history: the Crucifixion and Resurrection of Christ. The self-gift of Jesus transforms our charitable contributions into spiritual, Christian action.

Every calendar year has 52 Sundays. As Catholics we mark each Sunday, the Lord’s Day or Sabbath, with the celebration of Mass. In a practical sense, our entire parish is able to be a community of faith, a family of many families, because your generous contributions allow us to operate. And, spiritually, the parish is centered on the worship of God and care for others. Indeed, how could we do these essential things in life without a home to gather together? Like any home, such as your own, we want to provide a safe and welcoming space for people to live out their faith in communion with God and our brothers and sisters in Christ.

With all these truths in mind, I invite you to participate in our first annual 53rd Sunday Collection. The charitable contributions and donations received will be deposited to a restricted fund to address the deteriorated condition of our parking lots. The estimated cost for Phase I will be \$500,000 due to decades of deferred maintenance and neglect. **We were able to already allocate \$102,000 toward this goal from the CMAA rebates. We are hoping for a generous response of \$150,000 from this collection.** Any donations given to the 53rd Sunday Collection will help us repay a loan from the Diocese to begin the project next year.

You may participate in the 53rd Sunday Collection in several ways: by using the enclosed envelope with this letter, donating online through our parish website ([stjamesge.org](http://stjamesge.org)), or with the envelopes in each pew in the Church. This invitation is open from this Sunday until January 8th. In your personal charity, please prayerfully consider donating to this necessary project to help restore the condition of our spiritual home by remembering to give to your family of many families during this holiday season.

In gratitude,



Fr. Keith Wolfe  
Pastor