

STEWARDSHIP REPORT
(Data as of 1.24.09)

I am sorry I cannot be with you today. I am coaching Harvard Business School students on getting careers in this difficult climate. I hope you will join me in prayers throughout the year for those who are in search of work or worried they may be searching in the near future.

Thank you to Mary Green for delivering this report in my absence. Friends, you have certainly answered our call to step up and give with love and compassion rather than fear and anxiety. To date we have come close to 90% of last year's end result of \$257,000. We sit at \$227,500 in pledges. At the last Vestry meeting our pledge goal was set at \$245,000. There are about 30 pledges that have not come in at this time. Several people who contacted me about a delayed pledge are working on a matching gift. Others are trying to gather funds. I just wanted to share my great appreciation for this kind of creative thinking. Others didn't receive a card in a timely fashion. To you all, an apology and thanks for bearing with me. To date 89 pledges have arrived. The majority have increased or held steady in total amount given. Many of you who decreased wrote lovely notes and shared interest in reviewing finances mid-year. Our thoughts are with you and our appreciation for all you were able to do is manifold.

So many of you have shown real concern for St. Mary's solvency and appreciation for the place and people that make up our lovely parish. It is a pleasure to be part of this campaign. It has strengthened my faith and reminded me that I can only do this kind of work with the great support of others: Mary Green, my mentor, saved me in times of busy-ness. Mike Stevens, our treasurer; Norman Budge, our outside accountant and the essential Denise Flanagan, our church secretary, all keep the administrative side rolling. Our dedicated Stewardship Committee (Paul Pyzowski, Mike Stevens, Jeffrey Hughes and Elisabeth Comer) coach and guide the process along with the Vestry. And special thanks to Jeff Hughes and Tom Holtey for sharing so eloquently on giving. Finally, Peter has again provided invaluable guidance and counsel, helping us to maintain the appropriate spiritual perspective on the fundraising process. Thank you, one and all!

To dig a bit deeper into the details, last year at this time 111 pledges had arrived. So, we do need at least 25 more of you to make a pledge. Some of you who are new may never have pledged before. I just wanted to share that this is a great time to make a commitment – we appreciate your being here and welcome your participation in funding the many aspects of the ministry that make St. Mary's a welcoming place. To begin, share an amount with the church that is comfortable. I started to pledge by thinking about a corresponding secular activity that gave my family similar comfort and pleasure. For instance what would a yoga class for me and my husband and a full-year class at the Rec Center for two older kids plus an hour of weekly babysitting cost? It's hard to value the psychic benefits monetarily, but I often give extra just because I derive so much more from going to church than holding a yoga pose for 15 minutes!

An additional 20 to 30 pledges totaling \$20,000-\$25,000 would make an enormous difference to St. Mary's. To give you a point of comparison as you consider what you pledge: about 1/3 of us give below \$1,000, 1/3 give \$1,000-3,000 and 1/3 give \$3,000+, including a number of gifts of \$10,000 and more. The confluence of all these contributions really helps St. Mary's to thrive. So, I'd hope that some of you would give in each of those categories as we close the gap toward the roughly \$20,000 more we need to operate St. Mary's in 2009.

Respectfully submitted,

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