



St. Mary's Parish Family
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Dear Parishioner,

October 5, 2011

The flooding that we experienced this year will be etched forever in our memories. Some in our community lost their homes or business, others had significant damage to their property, and many were displaced. Countless hours were spent filling and hauling sandbags, moving belongings, making and sharing food, doing child care, and, when the waters subsided, cleaning and removing debris not only here in our Bismarck-Mandan area, but also up in Minot. Countless prayers as well as financial gifts were also shared. All of us have been affected in one way or another.

Through it all our natural response was to reach out and help. We couldn't just sit back and do nothing, could we? But that's nothing new to us. That's our way of life as followers of Christ. It's our life here in our parish. We share our skills, abilities, and talents, our time, and our monetary gifts for the good not only of our parish but also for our wider community.

Every year at this time we have our stewardship renewal effort. This year I've chosen for our theme "Aflame with the love of Jesus we reach out..." It's based on one of the prayers (August 15th) from the new Roman Missal we'll start using shortly. Because our love of and for Christ fills our hearts to overflowing we naturally have to reach-out and share – our time, our talents, and our treasures – just as He did.

Even though it may seem not much has changed from last year it's still important to make this deliberate and conscious acknowledgement of how we reach out. And don't be afraid to go just a bit further in the sharing of your blessings. That's how we continue to grow both individually and as a parish family. If you would be so kind as to return the *Commitment Form* by **November 1st**, it would be very much appreciated.

I pray that together "aflame with the love of Jesus we reach out..." and continue to grow as a parish family.

Blessings,

(Rev.) Gene Lindemann

Pastor