

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

November 30, 2007

By now you should have received a letter from me and the Parish Finance Council regarding parish finances in general and the Grand Annual Collection. As I hope you understand from the letter, please know that our present fiscal situation is the first time in three years that we have a decent *foundation* from which to grow. As it is in your own home so it is in the parish: we need that foundation as security and we need funds above and beyond that for development and expansion. Your help is critical. We cannot rely on a minority of parish households to support the parish for the majority. Enclosed in the mailing is also a flyer designed to help you consider what you will pledge for parish support into the next year. Please give this form your serious and prayerful consideration and be as generous as you can be.



As you know, I've been writing a blog online since mid-July. Sometime this week my blog will pass the 10,000-visitor mark and I'm grateful for all who faithfully log on to my site: *A Concord Pastor Comments*. My readers are from the local area and all over the US and I've had visitors from all the continents as well, some on a regular basis. (While I never know the identity of those who visit my blog, I do get a report of the locations from which they log on.) What do I write about? Well, here's a sampling of some of the topics I've posted and/or addressed in the last two weeks:

- A pastoral letter from the Bishop of Tulsa, OK on response to the plight of immigrants
- The history of Advent
- 14 installments of a month long series of reflections for November, the Month of All Souls
- Background on Matthew's gospel which we'll be reading on Sundays beginning on Dec. 2
- The Pope's statement on World Aids Day
- The Archdiocese of Boston and financial transparency
- The patron saint of pawn shops (yes, there is one!) and other "saint of the day" stories
- Comment on a new toy for children: an at-home ATM for kids
- Text of Canadian archbishop's apology for the harm done by clergy sexual abuse
- Comment on the 23 new cardinals, in particular the one from Iraq
- President James Madison on the limits of the authority of the branches of government
- What I'm thankful for this Thanksgiving...
- The US Bishops' statement on the challenge of being a young Catholic
- Two prayers for Thanksgiving Day
- Catholics and cremation
- The story of sexual abuse by Catholic clergy in Alaska
- A note on our parish Frozen Turkey drive
- A poem by Robert Frost
- Archbishop Harry Flynn on the problem of sexual abuse in the US at large
- Weekly information on the Sunday readings; texts of my homilies
- and more!

If you'd like to visit, go to [ConcordPastor.blogspot.com](http://ConcordPastor.blogspot.com)



Beginning this weekend we will make two small changes in our weekend worship. When the gifts are brought forward and the altar prepared, we will pour the wine into all four vessels we will

use at Communion time. This will make for greater reverence for the Precious Blood later in the Mass and will make the transition from the Eucharistic Prayer into the Communion rite smoother. Beginning this weekend the Lectors will read the intercessions at the time of the Prayers of the Faithful.



One of our parishioners will be going on a work retreat to Fond des Blancs, Haiti shortly after Christmas. This trip is being sponsored by the St. Boniface Haiti Foundation which has been providing medical care and humanitarian aid to this impoverished region of the world since 1983. The hospital, built through St. Boniface funds in 2001, serves a wide area where good medical care was almost non-existent, and the people's ability to afford it is even scarcer. Many patients walk for hours to reach the critical care they need for themselves and their children. The hospital relies heavily upon the generosity of donations, and the following medical supplies are always needed:

**Over-the-Counter Medications**

Acetaminophen (Tylenol), Ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil), cold remedies, antihistamines (Benedryl), Prenatal vitamins with iron, adult and children's vitamins with iron, antacid tablets, topical creams (including cortisone, antibacterial, and fungal), vaginal creams, and low dose (81 mg.) aspirin.

**Related items**

Bandages, (including BandAids, sterile gauze pads, Ace bandages, etc), unused IV tubing, catheters, and powdered infant formula.

There will be baskets at both entrances to the church after weekend masses for you to place your items. Donations will need to be received by **December 30<sup>th</sup>**. Thank you very much for your support to help bring basic health care to these deserving people.



We are looking for new volunteers to compile our monthly prayer line. This involves allowing your phone number to be published for people to call; compiling and typing the prayer requests monthly; emailing/delivering the final copy to the parish office to be duplicated and placed in the bulletin. Can you take on this responsibility? Please call the office at 978-369-7442



This Sunday night we will begin our seasonal celebration of Evening Prayer. We'll offer this beautiful prayer at 7:00 p.m. on the four Sundays of Advent (Dec 2, 9, 16, 23), on Holy Family Sunday (Dec 30), and on Epiphany (Jan 6).

Evening Prayer begins in darkness with praise of the Paschal Candle and the lighting of individual tapers. After a hymn, a thanksgiving and psalms are sung. A scripture reading and brief reflection lead us to singing Mary's Song of Praise: the Magnificat. Then a sung Prayer of the Faithful and the Lord's Prayer and a blessing to send us home.

Those who join us for Evening Prayer continually remark on the beauty and peacefulness of this liturgy. Evening Prayer lasts about 40 minutes. Especially in this busy season before Christmas, a little peace, prayer and quiet might be just what you need. I know I do...

Sincerely,  
Fr. Fleming

## **CHRISTMAS MASS SCHEDULE**

**Monday, December 24, Mass at:**

**4:00 p.m., 6:30 p.m.**

**Tuesday, December 25, Mass at:**

**Midnight, 8:00 a.m., 10:30 a.m.**