My brothers and sisters,

Each year at this time we present the Financial Report for the past Fiscal Year. It is a difficult report to read and to present this year if we look at numbers alone. St Clare Parish is not meeting our financial obligations. We have seen a decline in Offertory revenue, due in large measure to many generous and long-time members of the parish passing away. We need to address this reality in the near future, and we have a plan to do so. I will be appealing to you and counting on your customary generous response to the Grand Annual Collection and an Increased Offertory Appeal. It has been some time since we have conducted an Increased Offertory Appeal. Meeting the increased costs of just about everything—as you know from your own home and business finances—is a challenge, but I meet it with confidence in your support. We also introduce a new tool this year for your contributions—online giving.

Numbers, however, are not what a parish is about. It is people and their faith in God that are the heart of any parish community. On this front, things are more encouraging. I am impressed by those who come to Mass so faithfully, those who teach in Religious Ed., the Boy Scout leaders, the Holy Name members, all our volunteers, and those who faithfully support the parish by their prayers and love while at home. We can celebrate the strength of the St Clare Parish Community but not ever become complacent.

Remembering those who have gone before us is also important; we hold onto the legacy of three of these treasured souls in particular. CLAIRE CAVANAUGH’s sudden death last Fall was a shock, and we continue to miss Claire’s compassion in directing the bereavement ministry, partnering with Deacon Mike in all aspects of his diaconal service, and her many other acts of service and leadership within the St. Clare community. I never asked anything of Claire that was met with anything less than a generous yes. We continue to process her loss as a parish community although as Mike reminds me she lives on in his faithful service to St. Clare’s.

NICHOLAS “NICK” BONCODDO was a founding member of St. Clare’s. His care and concern for so many, exercised throughout his 101 years, will live on in the new boxes we have in the church for collections for the Food Pantry and other charitable purposes.

MARY MATTHEWS was a constant and loving presence in her family and at St. Clare’s. We will soon be dedicating a new set of funeral vestments for use in the church to comfort those who grieve and to give hope and encouragement—gifts Mary shared so often with so many.

These are but three examples of the many generous, faithful Catholics who are St. Clare’s Parish. I treasure the many ways St. Clare’s gives witness to Jesus Christ in our words, actions, and ministries. Thank you for all your kindness and faith.

In His service and yours,
Fr. Paul Clifford
Collaborative of St. Francis and St. Clare of Assisi Holds Ministry Fairs

In the Fall of 2017, with the support of our pastor and collaborative pastoral council, Ministry Fairs were held at both St. Clare and St. Francis of Assisi parishes. Despite some rainy fall weather, we had good turnouts under the tent after each of the Masses. We had informational tables manned by dedicated volunteers sharing their personal ministry experiences. Many volunteers will tell you they get more rewards out of sharing than they put in.

The Ministry Fairs provided great opportunities for parishioners to learn about the countless ways the Saint Clare and Saint Francis parishes support the faith community through sacramental preparation, participation in Mass, and outreach to those in need—from knitting prayer shawls to teaching religious education, from praying for those on the prayer line to visiting the homebound. So many people commented that they "had no idea" of how many ministries were available to help support the efforts of our collaborative.

Many also learned that there is something for everyone when you are hearing God’s call to serve. There are ministries that can be done behind the scenes at home like cleaning the altar linens to those front and center such as being a Eucharistic Minister. Even though we have not yet seen a huge increase in numbers as far as new volunteers, we did reach our ultimate goal which was to "plant the seeds". If this is a reminder to you about something you wanted to learn about - please contact the parish office for a list of our current ministries or opportunities to share your time and talent. It does take a parish to serve all the members of our faith community. Are you being called?

Written by Lisa Berardinelli
From Deacon Mike

It is hard to believe that come this September, I will be entering my eighteenth (18) year as your Deacon here at St. Clare’s. I am humbled yet privileged to share with you the joys and sorrows of life. It is also hard to believe how life can change ever so quickly. Claire’s sudden death at home, on that October evening from a brain aneurysm, was one of those defining moments in our over 48 years of marriage. As St. Augustine reminds us, “We never lose someone we give back to God.” Claire is still an active part of my ministry as I listen to her guidance within my heart.

As Senior Deacon, I still continue to oversee the Eucharistic Ministers visiting the homebound of our parish. This includes two residential homes, Grove Manor Estates and Alliance Health Center (SNF) both located on Grove Street. St. Clare’s has a wonderful team of dedicated men and women who visit those unable to attend Mass. We also welcome new members for this ministry, as we continue to be “Disciples in Mission.”

We are also blessed to have Bill Needham, a longtime parishioner at St. Clare’s and an accomplished BCAM-TV videographer and producer, who records our 4pm Mass on Saturdays. This enables the homebound to view the Liturgy and stay connected to our parish community. At present the Mass is rebroadcast Sunday at 11am and the next Saturday at 8am. The rebroadcast is on the following cable service channels – Beld (16), Verizon (28) and Comcast/Xfinity (9).

I continue to be actively involved in the Braintree Clergy Association as well as a faith-based representative on the Braintree Partnership on Substance Use. Finally, I still feel humbled and honored to continue to serve here at St. Clare. I will end with one of Claire’s inspirational thoughts, “Never let the things you want make you forget the things that you have.”

Members of the Parish Staff

Pastor
Fr. Paul Clifford

Parochial Vicar
Fr. Shawn Carey

Senior Priest
Fr. Robert Milling

Permanent Deacons
Michael J. Cavanaugh
Joseph MacDonald

Finance & Operations Manager
Rick Timmerman

Religious Education
Debbie Clancy
Coordinator Grades K-5
Anne Marie Tranfaglia
Coordinator Grades 6-8
Ronna Petrilli
Confirmation Program

Director of Music/Volunteer Coordinator
Kathy Clancy

Administrative Assistant
Karen Whitney

Maintenance
Bob Muldoon
Diane Cullinane
The St. Clare Religious Education classes flew by quickly with thanks to our many wonderful volunteer catechists and cooperating families of our students. The atmosphere engulfing our program is energizing and fulfilling to say the least!

Starting off the Fall in the elementary grades, we concentrated on prayers and how to recite the rosary, along with the children sharing their afternoon visiting the residents at Alliance HealthCare in their Halloween costumes—brightening everyone’s day. In grade 2, we kick-started our preparation for receiving the sacrament of First Penance by learning the Act of Contrition and delving into extra studies about sin and God’s wonderful love and forgiveness.

Throughout the months, the children brought in party items to donate to the “Braintree Food Pantry Birthday Box”. Our third graders really shined with their outreach in this project! The children proudly came to class with cake mix, frosting, candles, birthday plates, and napkins. We filled dozens of shopping bags with “fun things”, and many families were able to fully celebrate special days. We plan to continue this ongoing project.

Before we realized it, a few months passed by, and we celebrated the seasons of Advent and Christmas, learning about all the different ways to celebrate Jesus’ birthday, and understanding the true meaning of this holiday. A few of our 4th and 5th grade classes visited Alliance HealthCare and once again entertained the residents with a Christmas Carol Concert. After Christmas break, we were thrilled to experience the beaming faces of 75 relieved children as they confessed all their wrong doings, and received God’s grace in the sacrament of Penance.

The Season of Lent popped in our calendar; First Communion Preparation began and the months of March and April flew by. Maureen Heil of the Propagation of Faith visited our Middle Schoolers with a presentation of her latest mission benefiting the Missionary Childhood Association. Shortly after, our Middle School students collected non-perishables (thanks to their generous parents) and put together 100 brown bag lunches for the residents of Fr. Bill’s Place. To culminate the year, Fr. Paul and Fr. Bob celebrated an evening of “Pizza and Penance” with our 6th, 7th and 8th graders. And the grand finale of our year ended with 75 “saintly” grade 2 students approaching the altar of the Lord in receiving the Holy Eucharist for their first time.

Debbie Clancy and Anne Marie Tranflaglia are both looking forward to another year as great as the past one!
Getting to Know Your Parish Finance Council

Since June of 2014, when the collaborative was established, I have had the pleasure of working with the St. Clare Finance Council. While some of the members have changed we still have three very dedicated members that provide guidance and recommendations to Fr. Paul and me. As we discuss financial concerns of the parish during this upcoming year, we wanted to be sure you were familiar with the finance council members in case you had any questions or concerns.

Rahul Pereira is the newest member of the council. Rahul and his family relocated from San Jose, CA to Braintree in February of 2014 and immediately joined St. Clare to continue to nurture their Catholic faith. Rahul has been in the financial/accounting profession for the last 18 years and was asked to join the council in 2016 by Fr. Paul Clifford. Rahul is married to Maria who is a nurse anesthetist by profession; and they have two beautiful daughters, Chantel who is an altar server at St. Clare and Gianna who will start kindergarten this fall.

John Cusack was appointed to the council around 2013 by Fr. Paul Sughrue. His background is civil engineering and construction management. Frequently John is able to point out an area of maintenance needs and suggest various solutions. His engineering and construction background has been extremely helpful. John and his wife Mary joined the parish in 1975; and they have five adult children and four grandchildren.

Richard Flaherty is our longest serving member with 18 years of experience on the council. He has been working in the finance and accounting field for 33 years and also served as a Trust Fund Commissioner for the Town of Braintree. The last ten years Richard has served as the Director of Finance and Operations for Saint John Seminary.

Fr. Paul and I thank these members of the Finance Council for working with us when adjusting to a collaborative structure. Their knowledge of how things had operated in the past helped us form ideas on how to move forward with the collaborative. Their input and guidance continue to help us in forming new budgets and goals for the parish of St. Clare. Fr. Paul hopes to name a few other individuals to the council during the upcoming year to even further improve the influence of the finance council. As we discuss financial concerns of St. Clare over the upcoming year, we invite you to discuss your concerns with a member of the council.

Submitted: Rick Timmerman, Finance & Operations Manager
Parish Financial Report
July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018

On behalf of Fr. Paul and the Finance Council I am pleased to present this year’s financial report.

I have included a budget vs. actual chart on the accompanying page. You can quickly see that our projected income was nearly $29,000 less than hoped for and our expenses were about $10,000 higher than anticipated. This resulted in a nearly $43,000 net loss. It is obvious that we cannot continue this trend.

The Finance Council has been discussing this problem and will be developing a plan to address this in the upcoming fiscal year.

We only did one large maintenance project this year. We upgraded the altar lighting to LED high efficiency fixtures and bulbs at a cost of $6,645. The previous lights burnt out frequently, and due to the location, were very expensive to replace as we needed a lift to reach them. Our new maintenance manager, Bob Muldoon, was able to get Beld to refund us $4,652 for improving the efficiency, and therefore we did the project for only $1,993. That cost should be offset in a few years by the improved efficiency.

At the end of the year our parish-held bank accounts had $17,192, but we still owed St. Francis over $10,000 for shared collaborative costs - so you can see that we do not have a lot of cash available. Our depository account held at the Archdiocese only has $23,932 which is about $35,000 lower than last year at this time. Our common investment funds have $152,072 which we are trying to keep in reserve for emergencies.

We have instituted an electronic funds deposit program for those who would prefer to donate their weekly offertory or grand annual appeal online. Online Giving can be accomplished in any of the following ways: go to the parish website stclarebraintree.org and click on the green Online Giving box; log onto http:giving.parishsoft.com/stclarebraintree; or if you prefer that we enroll you, contact Karen in the parish office and she will send you an authorization form to complete and return. If you expressed an interest in Online Giving when returning your updated census form, you may have already received this information. We hope many of you will prayerfully reflect on the amount of your offertory and Grand Annual contributions this year; the Parish really needs your help.

If you have any questions on this report you can contact me at Rtimmerman@sfab.org

Submitted by: Rick Timmerman,
Finance & Operations Manager

Monday Evening Rosary

The Collaborative of St. Francis and St. Clare of Assisi started a rosary prayer group this past May. This came about from some discussion during the fall ministry fairs. On the first and third Mondays of the month, women and men from both parishes have gathered in front of the Lady of Fatima statue to recite the Rosary and the Chaplet of Divine Mercy. This group prayer is such a beautiful way to honor our Blessed Mother and ask for her intercession for our personal intentions. Hearing the scriptural rosary helps us to walk through the mysteries with Mary and Jesus as they guide us on our faith journey. The power of prayer has miraculous results; and we hope this will continue and grow as we pray for peace in our hearts, peace in our families, and peace in our world.

Written by Lisa Berardinelli
**St. Clare Parish**

**Parish Operations FY 2017-2018**

**Income**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Actual</th>
<th>Budget</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weekly Offertory</td>
<td>343,848.00</td>
<td>359,030.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shrines, Candles, Flowers</td>
<td>4,519.00</td>
<td>6,800.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sacramental</td>
<td>32,657.00</td>
<td>32,620.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grand Annual</td>
<td>51,960.00</td>
<td>55,000.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Religious Education</td>
<td>25,615.00</td>
<td>26,500.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>427.00</td>
<td>492.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rental</td>
<td>5,867.00</td>
<td>7,000.00</td>
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<td>Catholic Appeal Rebate</td>
<td>12,382.00</td>
<td>18,500.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Market Gain and Other</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Income</strong></td>
<td><strong>498,694.00</strong></td>
<td><strong>527,502.00</strong></td>
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**Expenses**

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<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Actual</th>
<th>Budget</th>
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<tr>
<td>Church &amp; Rectory Staff Compensation</td>
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<td>175,467.00</td>
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<td>Clergy Compensation Assigned and</td>
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<td>Religious Education Compensation</td>
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<td>36,221.00</td>
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<td>Benefits &amp; Payroll Taxes</td>
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<td>Office Supply, Professional Fees, Subscriptions</td>
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<td>Telephone, Utilities, Heat, Water &amp; Property &amp; Liability Insurance</td>
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<td>29,800.00</td>
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<td>Building &amp; Grounds Maintenance/Contracts/ &amp; Supplies</td>
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<td>19,800.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Books/Pamphlets, Missalettes, Pilot</td>
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<td>4,220.00</td>
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<td>Printing, Postage, Weekly Envelopes</td>
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<td>4,948.00</td>
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<td>Household Supplies &amp; Food</td>
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<td>Pastoral/Liturgical Supplies</td>
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<td>Religious Education Program Expenses</td>
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<td>Fundraising, Annual Report</td>
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<td>Meetings, Conferences, Hospitality &amp; Central Ministry Tithe</td>
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<td><strong>Total Expenses</strong></td>
<td><strong>541,543.00</strong></td>
<td><strong>531,126.00</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Net Loss</strong></td>
<td><strong>(42,849.00)</strong></td>
<td><strong>(3,624.00)</strong></td>
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