Our Lady of Good Counsel Parish
Methuen and Lawrence Massachusetts
FY 2015 Annual Financial Report

Very Reverend Christopher J. Casey, V.F. Pastor
Reverend Mr. Steven Murphy, Deacon
Finance Council Members:
  Ms. Susan Fink
  Mr. John LoConte
  Mr. William Wallace
Business Manager: Ms. Pearl Ouellette
Dear Parishioners,

I am pleased to present to you this Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2015 for Our Lady of Good Counsel Parish. The fiscal year began July 1, 2014 and ended June 30, 2015. Every year in the fall I work with the Parish Finance Council and the business office to prepare this summary of our income and expenses.

The major things impacting the parish this year was that the school was rented by the City of Lawrence. This is a tremendous help to us as even when empty the building needs to be heated, and now the City pays for all of the utilities of the school. The population served by the school is Kindergarten, so we had to do more work to get the building ready for them. The city itself did extensive renovations to the interior of the school. As per the agreement already in place when I came to OLGC, the rent is shared with the Lawrence Catholic Academy. We give them half of the rent payments we receive after we recoup our expenses. One of those major expenses was a loan we took out from the archdiocese to prepare the building for the children. This loan was 89,000. The loan was paid back out of the rent.

The parish can take great pride in being one of the co-founding parishes of the Lawrence Catholic Academy. The school is doing well, with over 480 students currently enrolled. I modified the previous agreement for financial support from the parish, so this year we gave LCA 40,000, half of the amount of the previous years. The children do get a firm foundation in the Catholic faith at school, and we can see this donation as an investment in the future of the Church in the Merrimack Valley.

The report gives you a sense of where we stand as a parish. Obviously the picture is not as pretty as we would like. I am continuing to take efforts personally and throughout the parish to reduce our expenses. It is the goal of myself and the Parish Finance Council to address our chronic shortfalls and to have a balanced budget. This we hope to accomplish by working with the Development Office at the Archdiocese to look at income enhancements and by making cuts that will aid our fiscal health while not disrupting parish life and our ability to serve you the parishioners and to care for our parish buildings.

Obviously most of our income comes from you and your generosity. I thank you for doing what you can to support the parish. Your support of the weekly offertory taken up in the first collection, and your response to the quarterly Grand Annual requests are critically important for the parish. Please know that what you do is appreciated, and always bring your giving to the Lord in your prayer. The first thing you do with your contribution is to honor our God. Consider what Jesus taught in Matthew 6:3-4: “But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right is doing, so that your almsgiving may be secret. And your Father who sees in secret will repay you.” The Bible has much more to say on alms giving, but there is no doubt that we are taught that to give the first fruits to God never goes unnoticed or unrewarded. Consider Proverbs 3:3-4: “Let not kindness and fidelity leave you; bind them around your neck; then will you win favor and good esteem before God and man.”

I never cease to give thanks to Almighty God for you! It is an honor to serve you. I am grateful to the many people to help to lead this parish, especially the staff, members of the Parish Finance Council and the Parish Pastoral Council. So many others volunteer to make this parish come to life. Thank you for your continued support of the parish, and for your prayers for our success and for me as your priest. Be assured of my prayers for you, your families, and your special intentions.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Very Reverend Christopher J. Casey, V.F.
Our Lady of Good Counsel Parish Income was $703,390; the difference between income and expenses was made up by using $108,000 from our Investment Fund and Savings.

Our Lady of Good Counsel Parish Expenses were $804,113; the difference between income and expenses was made up by using $108,000 from our Investment Fund and Savings.
Janua Coeli means Gate of Heaven. This is a close up of one of the windows of Our Lady of Good Counsel Parish at St. Theresa Church. Interestingly above one of the front doors of the Church are the words "Porta Coeli" which also can be interpreted as Gate of Heaven or Door (portal) to Heaven. Both remind us of the connection of the Holy Mass to Heaven. Thanks be to God!

Here is a close up of the centerpiece:

:"How awesome is this place!
This is none other than the
house of God, and this is the
gate of heaven." Genesis 28:17