



The Catholic Community of
Saint Christopher
Stewardship Report

2010-2011



ST. CHRISTOPHER PARISH VISION AND MISSION

Vision

We, the Catholic Community of Saint Christopher, are a family of faith following in the footsteps of Jesus Christ. Central to our journey is the celebration of sacrament and word. Guiding us on our journey is a lifelong faith formation, a vibrant laity and staff inclusive of all people, and a quality liturgy that encourages the participation of all.

We envision our parish as a growing faith community that will:

- extend hospitality and service to meet the needs of those within and outside our traditional boundaries;
- encourage leadership and involvement of lay members with ever-increasing diversity;
- provide and support a dedicated staff;
- foster the growth of small faith communities;
- promote continuation of lifelong faith formation.

We will strive to be a model Catholic Christian parish in the Speedway community and beyond.

Mission

The mission of Saint Christopher Parish is to participate in Christ's mission of evangelization by witnessing and sharing in the mission of Jesus who calls us to love God with our whole heart and to love neighbor, even as God loves us.

Saint Christopher's participation in this mission is expressed:

- through our communal celebration of the sacraments and formation by the Word of God;
- through many ministries, especially through the authenticity of our daily living;
- through seeking the challenge of new ministries whenever and wherever greater needs emerge;
- through inviting all to share their gifts in reaching out and working lovingly among people;
- through witnessing the truth that God is with us as we serve at the parish, deanery and Archdiocesan level.

We attempt to carry out our mission through the five areas of ministry in the parish: Christian Service, Faith Formation, Liturgical, Parish Life, and Resources and Development.



**ST. CHRISTOPHER PASTORAL TEAM AND COUNCIL FOR
THE STEWARDSHIP OF PASTORAL ACTIVITIES
2010-2011**

PASTORAL TEAM

Mr. Fred Benedetto
Maintenance

Mrs. Rose McCullough
Receptionist

Mrs. Mary Blake
Business Manager

Sr. Kathleen Morrissey O.P.
Pastoral Associate

Mrs. Janice Burger
Minister to the Sick

Mr. Steve Quinnette
Maintenance Manager

Mrs. Beth Crouch
Parish Secretary

Mr. Vincent Schurger
School Principal

Sr. Mary Ann DeFazio, S.P.
Director of Faith Formation

Ms. Sharon Spencer
Administrative Assistant

Mrs. Debra Guenin
School Secretary

Mr. Tom Steiner
Youth Ministry Director

Mr. Tom McTamney
Director of Music

Mrs. Virginia Urbaszewski
Accounting Assistant

Fr. Dave Lawler
Associate Pastor

Mr. William Szolek-Van Valkenburgh
Pastoral Associate

Mrs. Holly McClara
Accounting Assistant

Fr. Michael Welch
Pastor

COUNCIL FOR THE STEWARDSHIP OF PASTORAL ACTIVITIES

Thomas Nash
Chairperson

Cheryl Bilsland
Vice-Chairperson

Katie Patterson
Secretary

MEMBERS:

Megan Bickel

Tom Glithero

Neil Schaefer

Terry Brahm

Helen Morlock

Bill Szolek-Van Valkenburgh

Gina Sanchez-Gibau

Goerge Pontones

Father Mike Welch

**Inside
This Issue**

St. Christopher Parish Vision
and Mission..... 2

A Letter from
Fr. Mike 5

Parish Demographics
Chart 6

Council for the
Stewardship of
Pastoral Activities. 7

Christian Service
Commission.....7-9

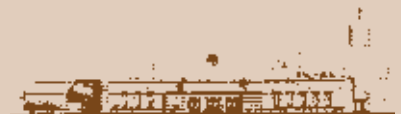
Faith Formation
Commission.....9-16

Liturgical
Commission.....16-17

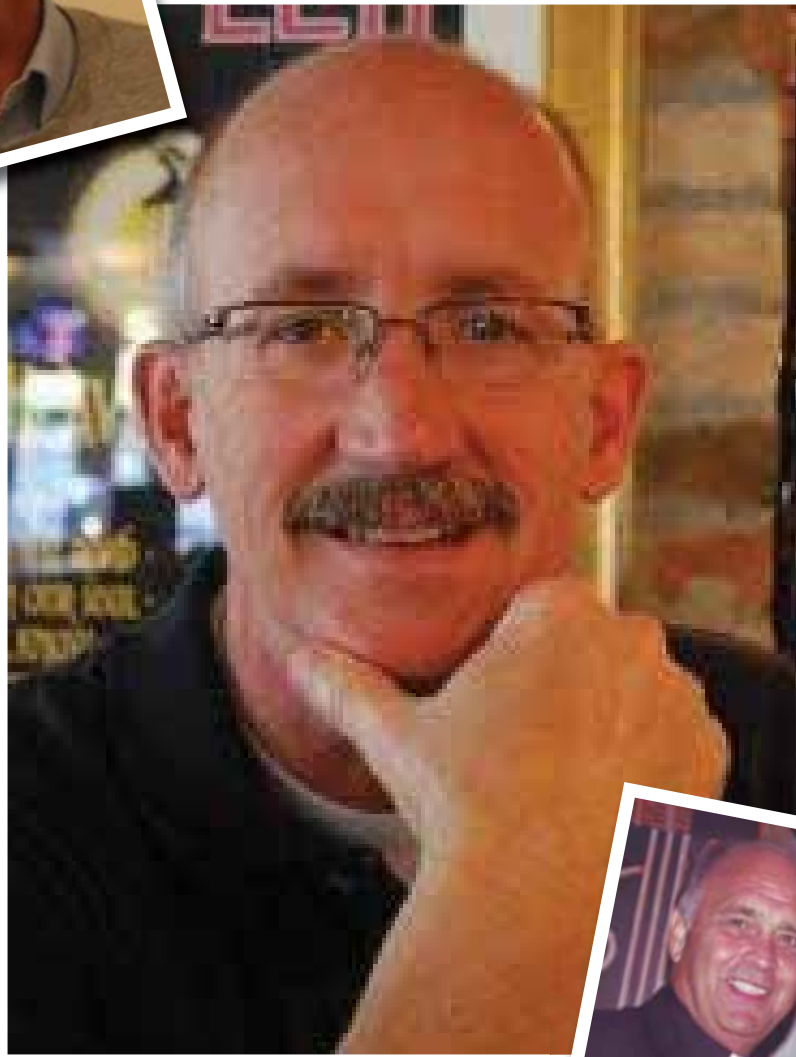
Parish Life
Commission.....17-18

Resources and
Development
Commission.....18-21

St. Christopher Parish
Annual Financial
Report 2008-2009.....22-23



The Catholic Community of
St. Christopher
5301 W. 16th St.
Indianapolis, IN 46224
317.241.6314



In Memory of Larry Hurt

We say to you, Larry: thank you. Thank you for being our teacher. Thank you for being our mentor and our champion. Thank you for being our friend, Larry. You loved tenderly. You acted justly. You walked humbly with God.

A Letter from Fr. Mike

October, 2011

Dear Parishioners:

It was Charles Dickens who once wrote: "it was the best of times; it was the worst of times." In many ways I feel the phrase reflects our parish this past year. As you are aware, in July Mr. Larry Hurt suddenly died while having cantor practice. Larry had been our Liturgy Director for close to thirty years. The prayerfulness and quality of our liturgy is a direct result of the ministry of Larry. I will never forget when the parish was fortunate to have Fr. Gene Walsh, a noted liturgist, come to the parish for a weekend. Larry was able to sit next to Fr. Walsh during dinner. Their conversation was remarkable. If anyone could challenge Larry, it was Fr. Walsh.

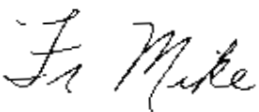
With Larry's death, all of us were concerned about what would happen with the music program. His legacy, however, continues. The cantors and the choir with leadership from within took charge of the program. A team was formed to carry us through the year as we discern how to find a new director. The member's generosity and willingness has kept the program intact. If I may say this, Larry and I shared a vision that the Eucharist was the keystone of the parish. If we celebrated the Lord's presence on Sunday well, all of our ministries would be blessed.

Larry left us much too soon! However, our faith tells us that he is still present with us especially as we gather around the Table of the Lord each Sunday. To me, he was not just the Liturgy Director, but also a friend. We must not forget what he gave to this community.

On the practical side, the parish has fared well this past year. With the present economy, finances are a challenge. However, we were again able to hold our own but only with using the funds from bingo and the festival for ordinary expenses. We "cleaned up" our census records. Hence we have 142 less members and 40 less families. We began as a parish of about 250 parishioners in 1937. We now are a community of 6,372. Our demographics tell us that we are aging. Our median age is 39. The number of infant baptisms this past year was 63, an increase of 16 from last year. Children baptized between the ages of 7 and 17 were 13, an increase of 4. Nine adults came into the church. The number of those who passed on to the Lord was 30.

Thank you for sharing the gift of yourself in this community. I invite you in the pages that follow to read of the ministry that we attempt to accomplish at St. Christopher's. Better yet, invite others to become part of us to share in the work of the Lord. To all of you, again, I wish to say thank you, most sincerely, for your support, prayers, and financial generosity to our community.

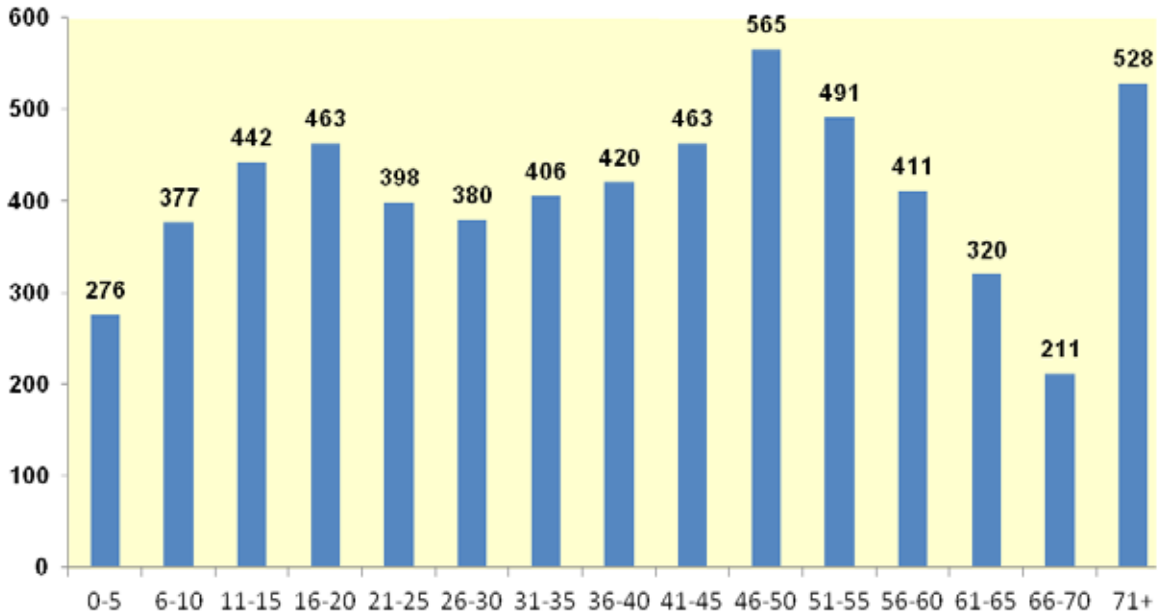
In Christ's peace,



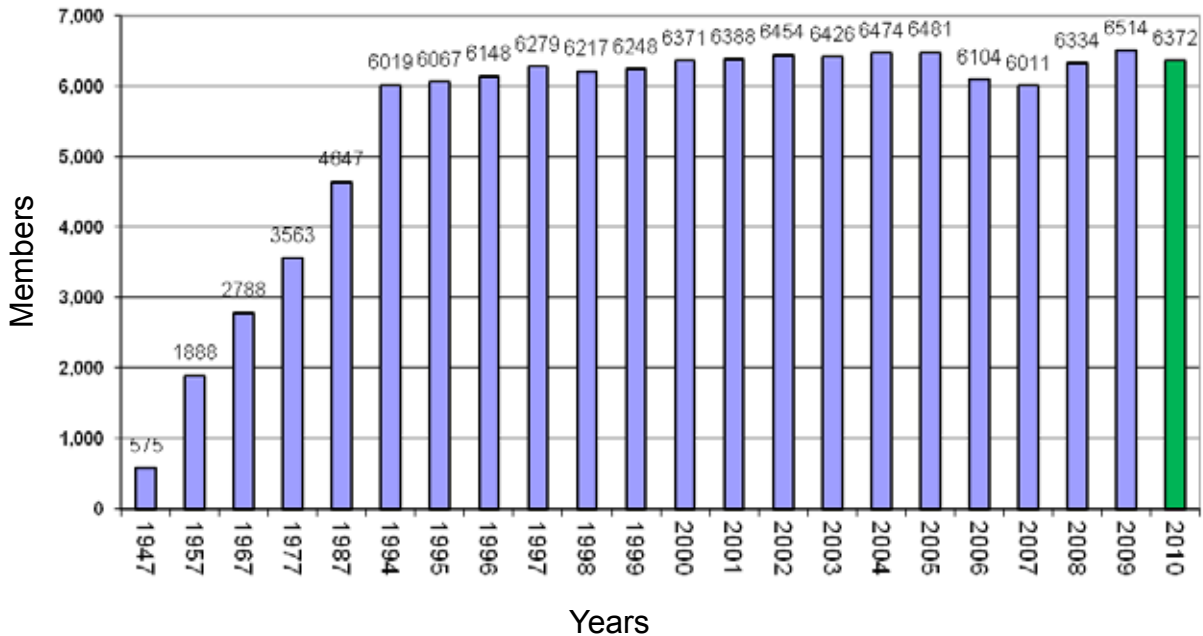
Reverend Michael Welch
Pastor

Parish Demographics Charts

Age Group 2011



Total Members



COUNCIL FOR THE STEWARDSHIP OF PASTORAL ACTIVITIES 2010-2011 REPORT

The **Council for the Stewardship of Pastoral Activities** is a representative group of ten parishioners who serve as the central consultative body for the parish. In addition to acting as conversation partners among parishioners, Council members serve in an advisory capacity to assist the pastor in discerning parish priorities and overseeing parish goals. The Council also reviews the annual parish budget.

The following parishioners served on the 2010-2011 Parish Council:

Chairperson: Tom Nash
Vice-Chair: Cheryl Bilsland*
Secretary: Katie Patterson

Members:

Megan Bickel	Helen Morlock
Terry Brahm	George Pontones
Gina Sanchez-Gibau*	Neil Schaefer*
Tom Glithero	Fr. Mike Welch

**Denotes new members who were discerned in June 2010*

Ex-officio members of the Council included staff representative Bill Szolek-Van Valkenburgh and Finance Chairman Jim McMechan. The St. Christopher Parish Council meeting agenda is set by members of the Executive Council, which consists of the Pastor, Staff Representative, Council Chairperson, Vice-Chair, and Secretary. With the exceptions of July and December, the Council meets on the third Thursday of each month at 7:00 pm.

During this past year, the Council continued to provide support to the four major initiatives identified during the *Holy Conversations* strategic planning process conducted by our parish in 2007-08. Those include: Adequate Staffing, Lay Leadership, Faith Formation, and Campus Expansion. Champions of each of these initiatives kept Council members abreast of their progress throughout the year. The ongoing development and implementation of the Strategic Initiatives will continue to be a major focus of the Council during the upcoming year.

As our parish approaches its 75th Anniversary in 2012, Council members will continue to thoughtfully and prayerfully engage in conversations around who we are as a parish and where the Holy Spirit might be leading us. To that end, Council members will work to become increasingly visible to the Parish community as a whole.

CHRISTIAN SERVICE

Bus Drivers

Each weekend, volunteer drivers bring parishioners to the Sunday 8:30 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. liturgies. The eleven dedicated volunteers provide many of St. Christopher's elderly parishioners an opportunity to attend Sunday Eucharist.

St. Vincent dePaul

The **Distribution Center**, located at 1201 E. Maryland St., collects and distributes to the needy in the Archdiocese appliances, household items, furniture, bedding and clothing free of charge. Volunteers donate their time and talents---some an hour or two a week, others almost full-time. Others donate their extra furniture and appliances. If you have an interest in working at the **Distribution Center**, volunteers are needed for these jobs.

St. Vincent de Paul also operates its **Client Choice Food Pantry** located at 3001 E. 30th Street between Keystone and Sherman. Food is distributed at no charge to 3,000 families weekly. Shoppers can shop on one of four days during the week or on Saturday, but we need help on all days. Our need for volunteers at the **Food Pantry** is dire.

Reflect for a moment on these facts regarding the local Society of St. Vincent de Paul and St. Christopher Parish. During the past year:

- ♦ The **Beggars for the Poor** Group provided food, toiletry items and clothing to about 1,000 homeless people in Indianapolis.
- ♦ During the past 12 months the **SVdP** Help Line took 250 calls from families in need living within the St. Christopher Parish boundaries. Since the Society "*serves those in need regardless of creed, ethnic or social background, health, gender or political opinions,*" we don't know if they were members of



the parish or not because we didn't ask. The point is, they were helped in their need. They received furniture, appliances, house wear items, and clothing. We now collect about 125 beds per year from St. Christopher parishioners and deliver them to people who need a bed.

- ♦ During the same period, members of St. Christopher Parish volunteered 2,000+ hours of their time for the Saint Christopher Food Pantry, Beggars for the Poor, the Distribution Center or Indianapolis Food Pantry. This includes the hours spent making home visits to verify the need for appliances, furniture or bedding. To those who have volunteered, our sincerest thanks. We could use more of you.
- ♦ Thanksgiving and Christmas baskets were supplied to 75 families.

The St. Christopher Conference of **SVdP** meets as a group every Thursday at 7:00 p.m. in the lower level of the church.

St. Christopher Food Pantry

The **St Christopher's Food Pantry** receives a weekly order from **Gleanors Food Bank** while receiving a monthly allocation of food items from **Gleanors** as well. In addition to **Gleanors**, the pantry receives a monthly allotment plus makes numerous visits to pick up food from **Midwest Food Bank** during the month.



Volunteers from St. Christopher go to **Midwest Food Bank** one day a month and help with work there. In addition, the parishioners have been wonderful in donating much food to the pantry. Patrons are allowed to use the pantry twice a month. Many patrons are served every month with delicious and nutritious food, some of it fresh from the gardens.

Funeral Meals

Dedicated women and men coordinate, prepare and serve a lunch for members of the deceased parishioner's family. St. Christopher has over 150 members coordinating, preparing, and serving these meals.

Ministry to the Sick and Shut-Ins

St. Christopher's **Eucharistic Ministers** visit six nursing/retirement facilities and many homebound individuals. A Communion Service or Mass is held weekly at the Harrison, Westside Garden Plaza, and Eagle Valley. A Mass is held twice each month at Lakeview Manor. A Eucharistic Minister visits the homebound once a week.

Greeting cards are sent to the ill, shut-ins, and those who have lost a loved one. Follow-up phone



calls are made to parishioners recently released from hospitals. During Christmas and Easter small gifts of remembrance are delivered to those in nursing/retirement homes and to homebound parishioners. Our Youth Ministry often contribute craft items.

The Parent-Teacher-Partnership of our parish school delivers an early Christmas dinner to all those we serve in this ministry.

Giving Tree

Giving Tree is a parish response in providing for the needs of families with children at Christmas. We had 48 families with 158 children, Catholic Charities Christmas Store, along with three Indiana Manor group homes for developmentally disabled adults, who received the benefits of this ministry in 2010. The **Giving Tree** is also a liaison for private donors to aid St. Christopher parishioners in need. We help people within our parish boundaries and Holy Angels Parish. Many parishioners assist with financial donations, gifts of clothing and toys, as well as shopping and wrapping the gifts.



Shawl Knitting Ministry

Women gather to create shawls and lap blankets for people in need of prayers or support. Many of these shawls and blankets are given to parishioners as well as relatives, friends and nursing home patients who may also be in need of our prayerful support. Baptismal blankets are also knitted and crocheted and are given at the time of baptism.

In addition to the shawls and blankets, many winter hats were knitted and given out for the adults and/or children who came to our food pantry.



Substance Addiction Ministry (SAM)

The SAM team provides a safe, confidential place for parishioners to call for help and referral for individuals or families that are afflicted with addiction. Their ministry is to increase awareness of addiction through education to various ministries and groups of people in the parish and in the community. This group also sponsors evenings of education for the parish and the Westside community.

FAITH FORMATION COMMISSION

RCIA

Our **RCIA** process began in early September and lasted until the first week of May, running a total of seven months. On Saturday evening, April 3, 2010, at the Easter Vigil, two (2) Catechumens (non-baptized adults) were baptized and five (5) Candidates (baptized Christians of another faith) made a Profession of Faith and one adult Catholic received the Sacrament of Confirmation.

The **Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults** provides the practical and theological background that a person needs to become a member of the Catholic community. The program affords participants the opportunity to ask many of the practical questions they have always asked themselves. The process emphasizes the role of

the Sacraments and how they serve as the source and summit of the Church's life as well as the meaning and the history of the Liturgy. The RCIA process also introduced the members to different prayer styles, the experience of participating in retreats, and a strong awareness of what it is to be a part of the St. Christopher community.



Share & Explore

Share & Explore is a time during Lent when a person may have the desire to explore an aspect of their faith. It also is an opportunity to take 'another look' at a topic because someone may have been away or even feel alienated from the Church. The gatherings are a process that may take one or several times to become reacquainted with the different concerned topics of the seeker.

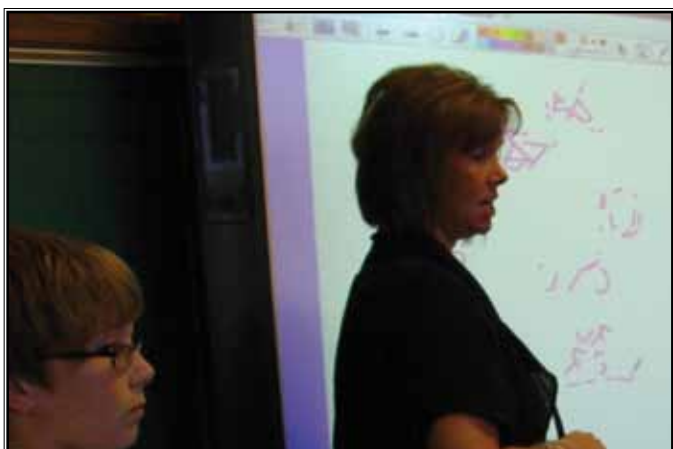
Explorations in Faith

This is the book discussion group that gathers once a month to talk about a particular book. The women all come with a perspective on the faith and values shared in the month's selection.

School

St. Christopher School has an enrollment of 206 students in Pre-K through grade 6. They are served by 14 teachers and 3 support staff. The school offers physical education, music, art, library, and computer instruction for students. After Care, a program offered during after school hours, is available to assist parents in their busy schedules. We also offer a number of after school enrichment activities which include pottery, Mad Science, and guitar and piano lessons. Beginning this school year, St. Christopher will be assisted by Cardinal Ritter to begin a band program for students that are interested in grades 5 and 6.





Students are tested several times a year (DIBELS for Kindergarten and First Grade students; NWEA Map test for students in grades two through six), so that faculty can continue to monitor improvement. RTI, which stands for Response to Intervention, is an initiative being used by all schools to address the needs of students who struggle in a particular area. **St. Christopher School** students benefit by this program by having frequent, small group interventions.

The State of Indiana uses a growth model that charts student performance in one of four quadrants: lower growth/lower achievement, higher growth/lower achievement, lower growth/higher achievement, and higher growth/higher achievement. **St. Christopher School** students' scores placed them in the higher growth/higher achievement category with more than 90% of the students scoring well above the proficiency level. St. Christopher School continues to maintain its accreditation status. As an Archdiocesan school, the school is Freeway Accredited. Under this program St. Christopher will continue to maintain a 90% or higher ISTEP pass rating.

As part of the School Improvement Plan for Accreditation, the school also has a goal of having all students demonstrate reverence while actively participating at Mass and other church activities. Additionally, students at **St. Christopher School** will work to improve reading. The focus of this goal will be on reading fluency, vocabulary, phonics, phonemic awareness, and comprehension.

The 2010-2011 **St. Christopher School** began a four-year plan to work with a consulting group called Catholic School Management (CSM). This group consults with St. Christopher School and 14 other archdiocesan schools chosen for this project. The primary focus of the group is growth and development. During the last two years the staff and school families focused on creating a strategic plan and improving enrollment and school communications. We will continue these efforts along with other improvements.

The Third Source Income Group continues to bring in revenue for the school. All monies raised by this group join the parish subsidy and the parent tuition payment to help keep the cost of Catholic school at an affordable rate. This group, which is primarily operated by parent volunteers, includes Scrip, the Golf Outing,

and the Auction. The 2010 auction, a Celebration of Gifts, was a fun-filled night. The 2011 Auction will be held again at the Columbia Club.

The Parent Teacher Partnership (PTP) also provides much in terms of other St. Christopher needs. The group helps provide many hours of service in terms of volunteering, tutoring, and fundraising. The fundraising efforts pay the transportation fees for student field trips. These include the Challenger Center, the Symphony, and J.A. Biztown. The PTP also sponsors family and parish-attended events such as Breakfast with Santa, 55 and Over Christmas Luncheon, school pep rallies, and some of the Catholic Schools Week events.

St. Christopher School continues to be blessed as a school of strong faith, high academic standards, and strong community.

Jr. High Youth Ministry

Jr. High Youth Ministry had another successful year with 65 youth participating in various events. Some of the highlights of this program were: September, we learned to pray through guided meditation; October, we had our Fear Factor night that youth always love; November, we made Advent wreaths for families and hosted the West Deanery Retreat. About 90 youth and adults attended and lead this retreat from our deanery. In December, members of the group visited with residents of the Harrison and played Christmas Bingo while enjoying snacks of punch and cookies along with leading the residents in singing Christmas carols. January we attended a Youth Rally hosted by St. Barnabas in the South Deanery at Roncalli High School which ended with a “Leo” concert. In February, the youth went to the Jr. High Youth Rally in Columbus, Indiana. In April, our youth wrote their own prayers to the Stations of the Cross and led their parents in the



Stations of the Cross after a dinner with a “Hispanic Theme” prepared by the youth. To wrap up the year, our Group went on a trip to the Belle of Louisville that is held every year by the New Albany Deanery and a great time was had by all 600, 6-8th graders from the Archdiocese.

Confirmation

Thirty-four young men and women made up last year’s class. The candidates completed 30 hours of instruction and another 40 hours of community service over the course of the program. Tom Steiner, Director of Youth Ministry, really enjoyed this year’s Confirmation class because he had a chance to have dinner with each of them over the course of preparation for Confirmation. He said it was interesting to get to know them a little bit better through the Confirmation





process. Many of the service projects happened in our own parish by serving the 55 and Over dinner and the Gift Sorting project at Christmas time. In March, the candidates and leaders made a day-long retreat here at St. Christopher. The day was very relaxing and offered a nice opportunity for growth, reflection, fun, and bonding. The group was confirmed on April 4, 2011. Please keep our candidates in your prayers that they will continue this wonderful commitment to their Catholic faith.



High School Youth Ministry

During the last year our High School Youth Group had several “fun” nights here at the St. Christopher Parish. One of the neat additions to this year’s opportunities at St. Christopher was the addition of the “loft” (the old St. Christopher Church Choir Loft) which was converted into a space for our youth. One of our most memorable service opportunities this last year was helping clean up after the Easter Vigil. After they were finished, they went to Steak-n-Shake and enjoyed a fun evening over milk shakes. The highlight of the summer was our first ever trip to an Indians game. It was enjoyed by everyone and the students wanted to know when they could do it again.

Continuing Catholic Development (CCD)

This is the program of religious education for St. Christopher’s children who attend public schools. Enrollment is open to children from three years of age to sixth grade and is held on Sunday mornings through the academic year. Our CCD program has been blessed



with an all-volunteer staff of dedicated catechists and assistants, many of whom have been teaching for several years. The catechists use materials and textbooks from Benziger's Faith First religious education program. Prayer and other activities are included to enhance the lessons.

The **Parent Advisory Team (PAT)** meets monthly while the students are in class. This group of parents offers advice, input and support to the Pastoral Associate for Religious Formation. They also coordinated and directed a program of **CCD for Parents**, ran the Lemon Shake-up booth at the parish festival, and held an appreciation dinner for the catechists.

First Reconciliation and First Eucharist

These sacraments are ordinarily received by children in the second grade. All preparations are directed by the Pastoral Associate for Faith Formation, assisted by the school teachers and CCD catechists. The process is focused on the family, and each family receives sets of sacramental preparation books to be used at home. This year the children made small felt figures representing themselves. These figures were then placed on a special banner made to celebrate their reception of the sacrament of Reconciliation. As part of their preparation for Eucharist, the families participated in a workshop during which they decorated a ceramic blessing cup.



Children's Baptism

A preparation program is held twice a year for families wishing to have older children baptized. These meetings are ordinarily held in late fall and spring, and are conducted with both the parents and children (toddlers through elementary school age). Registration for Children's Baptism may be made by contacting the Pastoral Associate for Religious Formation.



Vacation Bible School

During a week in June, 30 children and approximately 30 adult and teen volunteers participated in the **Shake It Up** vacation Bible school. Each day lasted from 9:00 until Noon, and included learning songs, doing crafts, playing games in the gym or outside, enjoying a snack, and learning a new Bible story. A new feature this year was that the children became chefs! Each day they prepared their own snacks in the kitchen. They made such treats as mini pizzas, quesadillas, frozen fruit pops and mini pies...they even made their own yummy ice cream! It was a wonderful week and everyone's looking forward to VBS next year!



Kids' Night Out

This year there was a special event for children right before Christmas: **Kids' Night Out**. Children came to the cafeteria after the Saturday evening liturgy and were treated to a pizza supper and time for lots of games and crafts. This was a chance for children in both the parish school and CCD programs to get together and make new friends...and it gave the parents an evening to go to dinner or take care of their Christmas shopping. We also invited members of Speedway's police and fire departments to join us, and the children gave them gifts to say "thank you" for all they do to keep us safe. Approximately 85 children attended, and there were many adult and teen volunteers who made sure this was a fun evening.



Adult Faith Corner

This program for adult faith formation meets every Sunday morning from 9:30 until 10:20 in the Damascus Room. Videos, books (such as the new catechism) and pamphlets (such as "Catholic Updates") are used to generate conversation on a variety of topics related to Catholic spirituality and theology. Fr. Dave Lawler also made several informative presentations to the group.

Men's Saturday Scripture Study

The **Men's Saturday Scripture Study** offered lectionary-based prayer and reflection meetings on Saturday mornings. The Saturday group meets on the 1st and 3rd Saturday of the month (except for July when they meet on the 2nd and 4th Saturday).

Scripture Studies

Scripture Study at St. Christopher met once a week during the majority of the school year in 2010-2011. The Year 4 class concentrated on the Wisdom Literature of the Old Testament as well as the Catholic Epistles, Hebrews and the Gospel of Matthew. The Year 1 studied the first books of the Old Testament, Genesis through 2 Kings. The focus of the Study is on the historical, literary, and theological aspects of the texts.

Participants found that in reading and studying the biblical texts that they received insights that nourished their personal prayer as well as enriched their understandings of Liturgy and Sacramental life. In addition, participants learned interpretive skills (exegesis) as outlined in *Dei Verbum* and the Catechism of the Catholic Church to assist them in a lifelong study and love of Scripture. And, perhaps, most enjoyable of all, participants developed connections with the other individuals in the class.

In 2010-2011, 16 people participated in Year 4 and 25 in Year 1 of the study. Participants included parishioners as well as individuals from other parishes and congregations. In 2011-2012, the Scripture Study will include one Year 2 class which will focus on the majority of the New Testament.

Scripture Sharings

Scripture Sharings for the Sunday readings of Advent and Lent were held weekly after a morning Mass during these liturgical seasons. As the gatherings began in prayer, participants then had the opportunity to understand fully the meaning of the readings. Reflective time was also given to share how the specific readings may apply and speak to each person's life.

Centering Prayer

Centering Prayer group meets weekly for prayer and spiritual discussion. **Centering Prayer** is a method of prayer designed to facilitate the development of contemplative prayer. This method enables one to open their heart to the presence and action of God within. Once a month the group participates in *Lectio Divina*. This is Latin for "spiritual reading" of the Scriptures and is a traditional Christian practice of prayer. In this practice of praying with the Scriptures, one is called to listen, reflect and pray over God's Word and its personal meaning for the individual.

Christ Renews His Parish (“CRHP”)

This was the first year for these spiritual renewal weekends. This retreat was for women, held in the Fall on Saturday and Sunday on our parish grounds. The weekend was designed to help individuals continue to grow spiritually with their relationship with God as well as others in their faith community. The retreat fosters discipleship, bearing God’s Word, love, and service to others. A visiting team from Fort Wayne, IN along with St. Christopher’s Pastoral Associate facilitated the woman’s retreat. Participants then were encouraged to discern to be the next team that will be the acting retreat team for the following autumn weekend at St. Christopher’s.



DVD Series & Discussion

This first series, *Following the MYSTICS Through the Narrow Gate* was warmly and excitedly received by many participants. The series ran for eight weeks, concentrating on the Mystics throughout our Church History that have assisted in shaping our Christian spirituality and prayer life. The authors of the series were a theologian as well as a national spiritual retreat master and psychologist. The weekly meetings helped the spiritual traveler to discover anew the footprints of God in their lived experience as well as a guidance for ongoing surrender to the mystery of God.

A Blue Christmas Evening – A Light in the Darkness

This service was held at St. Christopher’s during the week before Christmas. Though the Advent season is a joy-filled and awesome season, it can be an emotionally difficult time for many people. This can be due at times to loneliness, any type of losses or death, as well as financial problems or serious health concerns. The gathering is a time for prayer, listening to Scriptures and song, as well as having quiet time to ponder over the reflective talks. In addition to having the evening be a time of reverencing one’s emotional feelings of concerns, the service held hope, encouragement and proclaimed confidence and trust that God is here with his guidance, strength, and love.

Marriage Preparation

The Marriage Preparation program consisted of meeting with the pastoral staff for an interview and selection of a wedding date. After the meeting, the engaged couples meet with one of the volunteer sponsor couples to take a marriage inventory survey and discuss the results. The engaged couples participated in a Tobit retreat sponsored by the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. A total of twelve couples were prepared for marriage at St. Christopher. Of these couples, seven celebrated their wedding liturgies at St. Christopher while another five couple’s weddings were at other churches.

LITURGICAL COMMISSION

Choir and Instrumentalists

Members of the St. Christopher Music Ministry seek to live the Gospel and carry out the vision of the parish through involvement in a variety of musical ministries during the Sunday Eucharist and beyond. Many choir members, cantors, keyboard players, and handbell players prepare for Sundays, feasts, and seasons through weekly rehearsals, group prayer, and involvement in local and national associations. The volunteer group strives as volunteers to achieve and maintain a high level of musical quality while continually working to improve their effectiveness when praying with the Sunday assembly.

Environment

Members of the St. Christopher Community experienced in flower arranging, live plant care, space

design, sewing and construction share their talents as they beautify our worship space. They do this by creating the environment for the celebration of Eucharist. Discussion, planning, creating materials, and decorating occur throughout the liturgical year.

Eucharistic Ministers

Three persons became new **Eucharistic Ministers** in the spring of the year 2011, bringing the total number to approximately 120 who serve in this ministry. Several of them take the Eucharist to more than 130 of our parishioners who are homebound or in care facilities.

Thirteen persons also serve as presiders at Communion Services, which are Scripture Services based on the daily readings and the distribution of Holy Communion.

Opportunities are provided for **Eucharistic Ministers** to continue their faith development. Those who take Communion to the sick are given Scripture reflection booklets to assist them in sharing Scripture with the shut-ins.

Lectors

St. Christopher currently has 35 lectors in the Ministry of the Word. Twelve lectors read every weekend at the six Masses. It is the lectors' responsibility to proclaim the Word of God during Sunday and special liturgies. Their task is to draw the assembly into Scripture and to bring out its meaning through interpretation and intonation. In order to accomplish this, lectors spend time in careful preparation, developing a warm and living love for Scripture.

Hospitality

Hospitality Ministers welcome parishioners and visitors in Emmaus Way as the community gathers for Sunday Eucharist. They provide a welcoming spirit for parishioners as well as visitors. This spirit is a reflection of the spirit of the St. Christopher community.

Sacristy Linens

Seven parishioners take responsibility for washing the linens that are used at Sunday and weekday liturgies. Approximately 50 pieces are washed and ironed weekly. Another group of parishioners make the baptismal garments given to infants at their baptisms. There were 63 infants baptized this past year.

Servers

Young people in grades five and older serve Mass on Sundays, weekdays, at funerals and weddings. Because of their efforts our liturgies are more meaningful and prayerful. We have a fine group of servers in this ministry and we appreciate them.

Ushers

A group of men and women of the parish serve as Ushers at the weekend and Holy Day liturgies to make parishioners and visitors feel welcome. Ushers provide seating when required, take up the collection, and distribute bulletins after Mass. Ushers also ensure the well being of all in attendance at Mass.

PARISH LIFE COMMISSION

Coffee and Doughnuts

Coffee and Doughnuts was hosted during the months from October to June. These events occurred on the first Sunday of the month after the 8:30 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. liturgies. Each group not only provided the refreshments but was also available to talk about their particular ministry and greet potential members.

New Parishioner Registration

Starting in the month of September and running through the month of June, new parishioner registrations were held in the Emmaus Way on the first Sunday of each month. The volunteers of this ministry registered new parishioners after each Mass. Each new registrant received a Directory of Ministry booklet and was given information on how to become involved in the community of St. Christopher.

Athletics

Our students participate in organized sports primarily through the Catholic Youth Organization ("CYO"). This gives our student athletes an opportunity to participate against other parish teams in the Archdiocese. More than 100 St. Christopher students and students enrolled in our CCD program participated in sports programs during the 2010-2011 school year. Our grade school girls played both fall and spring kickball. There were also three girls' basketball teams during the fall and winter months and three volleyball teams in the late winter months. Our boys in grades four, five and six were organized into four winter basketball teams. Co-ed youth opportunities

included teams participating in soccer, cross-country, track, and chess. Our grade schools boys in Grades 3 through 6 played football and participated in wrestling on the St. Michael School teams.

St. Christopher annually hosts a boys' pre-season basketball tournament which includes teams from several archdiocesan schools. This past year, we also sponsored three boys' high school basketball teams participating at freshman-sophomore and junior-senior grade levels. In addition to our CYO participation, the parish athletic department offered a basketball program for third grade boys and girls in a spring league with other Westside Catholic Schools. The open gym hours in the Parish Activity Center offer children and adults the time for recreation, the ability to develop their skills, and a chance to interact with others. Our facility has been in operation for eleven years.

The Communicator

Two issues of The Communicator, the parish newsletter, were published to help inform the community of various events and offerings, ministry news, and liturgy schedules. It is also the communication vehicle for the Council for the Stewardship of Pastoral Activities. For the fifth year in a row we have attached a magnetic calendar to the Advent issue. The calendar is to help all parishioners remember significant dates and days of the liturgical year.

Christopher Tours

These tours run annually in September and the trips are an all day adventure. A bus load of men and women have gone to a variety of excursions including visiting the oldest church in Indiana in Vincennes as well as the St. Meinrad Monastery in St. Meinrad, IN. In September of 2010, the tour took a day trip to La Comedia Dinner Theatre in Springboro, Ohio, where they were entertained by the classic blockbuster of Irving Berlin's *White Christmas*.

55 and Over

Every third Thursday of the month from September to May, the "**55 and Over**" group meet for lunch in the cafeteria. The cafeteria staff graciously prepares a delicious meal for those who attend. In addition to the meal there is a program and/or a speaker that provides information and/or entertainment for 50 - 65 women and men following lunch.



Reception Committee

The **Reception Committee** provides a reception after the Easter Vigil for everyone in attendance to welcome those who are received into the Church. This group of volunteers prepares and serves the food as well as creates a festive atmosphere for this annual celebration. Besides hosting a reception for the Easter Vigil, this committee also prepares for celebrations that mark specific milestones in our parish community.

Social and Support

This group meets every fourth Wednesday of the month during the year for a luncheon at a nearby restaurant. Though this group was originally initiated for supporting women who may be widows, it also includes a social time inclusive of someone who is single or divorced.

RESOURCES AND DEVELOPMENT

Volunteer Project Committee

The Volunteer Project Committee completed its third year of operations. This committee was formed as one of the initiatives identified by the strategic planning process that concluded in 2008. The goal of this initiative is to assist with the improvement of overall parish staffing through volunteer support. Highlights of the Volunteer Project Committee's progress in the last year include the following:

- ♦ Developed the Serving and Small Groups (Ministries) Components of the Automated Church Systems (ACS) software made available through the grant awarded to St. Christopher through the Center of Congregations. This grant supported upgrades to the parish and school websites that integrate with the data management system currently used by the parish. These upgrades provide enhanced and convenient communication of volunteer needs to allow direct communication between ministry leaders and ministry participants.

- ♦ Added a web-training video developed by Mr. Bill Fike to highlight the features of the new website and Access ACS.
- ♦ Provided follow up with volunteer interests from the intention cards from the Christ Our Hope campaign.
- ♦ Monitored the volunteer email box and responded to requests for assistance and messages from parishioners wishing to volunteer.
- ♦ Contacted newly registered parishioners to invite them to become involved in the life of the parish through ministry participation.
- ♦ Conducted quarterly meetings of the committee to assess the progress of the initiative and to adjust the goals of the committee's focus to meet ongoing needs.

Finance

The many services, activities, and programs in our parish depend on a comprehensive relationship between staff and volunteers coupled with achieving a financial budget in excess of \$2.3 million. When capital improvements are included, the overall operational cost of St. Christopher's exceeds \$2.4 million. The Finance Commission oversees the coordination of budgets from all our ministries and recommends controls in order that our planned expenses do not exceed our actual income.

The fiscal year, which ended June 30, 2011, was challenging. The drastic downturn in the economy that began in September, 2008, coupled with increased costs for the basic essentials such as gasoline, food and clothing continues to be reflected in our Sunday contributions. We concluded the year with Sunday and Holyday collections \$27,794 under budget. With the shortfall in Sunday and Holy Day collections, the parish and school staff was conscientious in controlling expenses. As a result, we ended the year with a surplus of \$44,149 in operations. In addition, there were no major capital improvement projects during the past year. Therefore, we netted an increase of \$43,969 in our Improvement Fund.

Despite the volatility in the stock market, the snapshot of our total net assets reflected an increase of \$417,233 as of June 30, 2011. The majority increase came about from the recovery of \$336,410 of the market value of

our endowments. Additionally as we enter our final year of the Legacy of Our Mission Campaign, we received \$65,359 from pledges.

Finally, in the monthly envelopes we have included an envelope for our five Endowments. This is the seventh year in which the envelope was included in the monthly envelope packet. Last year \$34,407 was donated to the funds that were either equally distributed among the five funds, or, if designated, to the designated fund. This was a decrease of 2% in contributions over the last fiscal year. Hopefully, parishioners will continue to contribute to the endowments. Our hope is that the endowments will continue to grow and help assure our financial stability.

Friday Night Bingo

This past year Bingo earned \$78,656. As in the past years these funds, along with the net proceeds of our annual festival, have been set aside for the maintenance and upgrades to our facilities. However, in recent years we have used part of these funds for the normal operating expenses of the parish. The Building and Grounds section of this report discusses how part of the funds have been used to upgrade our facilities.

Bingo is a project of the parish. School parents serve in the operation of the kitchen for food service. During the year over 5,000 hours of volunteer time is donated.

St. Christopher Mid-Summer Festival

The **Saint Christopher Mid-Summer Festival** is one of the oldest festivals in the State of Indiana. Since July 10th, 1941, our annual festival has been known as "The Festival that is Tops in Food." During our three-day event, we served over two tons of hand-battered fish, representing about 15,000 fish sandwiches. At St. Christopher, we take great pride in preparing right in our kitchen nearly all the food served. Our made-from-scratch pork barbecue and coney sauce are made from recipes dating back to the 1940's. In addition to the food that is served, we offer a wide variety of amusement rides, children's games, bingo, Monte Carlo, and the ever-popular Horse Race Wheel.

The St. Christopher Mid-Summer Festival is the fourth largest annual event held in Speedway. In order to continue our tradition of excellence, it takes a blending of more than 1,000 parish volunteers. Profits from the annual festival, along with that of Friday Night Bingo, have been used to upgrade our facilities

as described in the Building and Grounds section. The Festival netted a total of \$51,393. Despite the decrease in expenses, the festival's net revenue declined 17.8% from the previous year.



Building and Grounds

As in the past year, we continued to make relatively minor improvements. The total amount spent was \$79,956.

- ♦ **School Improvements:** Promethian Boards were purchased for the classrooms. In addition, the blinds were replaced in the school.
- ♦ **Parish Activity Center:** Repairs were made to the air conditioner.
- ♦ **Church:** This past year, we incurred two weather-related incidents that resulted in significant damage to our building – a lightning strike during the summer and an ice storm this past winter. Both of these occurrences caused significant damage to our church. While we have insurance, we have a sizeable deductible. In addition, the sound system was enhanced.
- ♦ **Office:** We upgraded the security system in the office.
- ♦ **Grounds:** Sidewalks were repaired and a tree was removed from the north side of the property.

All of this work is made possible through three sources: the **Friday Night Bingo**, the **Festival**, and the **Wish List**.

Legacy for our Mission

The **Legacy for Our Mission Campaign** began in 2005. It is a comprehensive, archdiocesan-wide initiative designed to generate funds to strengthen our parish as well as archdiocesan ministries. The parish graciously has pledged \$1,280,722.46.

As of June 30, 2010, we have received 89% or \$1,133,448 of our pledged amounts. Thank you for all your generous contributions as we wind down the Legacy for our Mission Campaign.

Mission Collections

Not included in the above figures, are the outreach collections for the missions. St. Christopher has remained very generous to the work of the universal church. This past year was exceptional in the amount given to the mission ministry. Despite the economy, St. Christopher contributed a total of \$50,955 to nine collections, a 12% decrease. In addition, the **Religious Retirement Collection** was \$6,296 and the **Priestly Vocation Fund** netted \$4,028.

Outreach Funds

St. Vincent dePaul continued with the fifth Sunday donations. In addition, the community supported the food pantry with their donations. The pantry aided approximately 1,800 people this past year.

A number of our parishioners and some non-parishioners contribute to meet the needs of our members. This year approximately \$20,999 was contributed and used for these special needs. Thanks to the generous donations, we were able to eliminate the prior year deficit as we continue to have an ever growing need.

Another fund that has been established is the **Sr. Marie Wolf Outreach**. Most of the funds have been given through the choir concerts that have taken place.

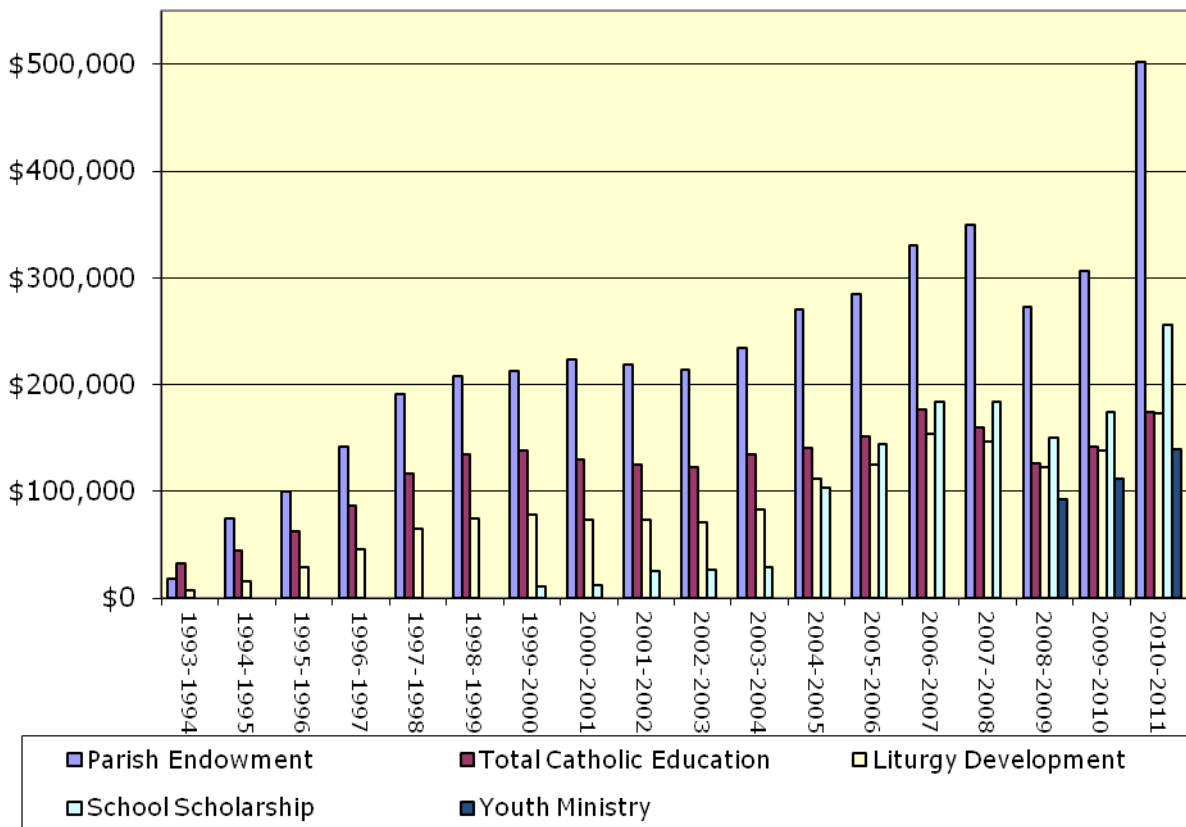
Endowments

Endowment funds play an important role in providing a stable source of funding to the operating budget. The archdiocesan endowment spending policy provides that 5% of the 12-month average of the market value of the endowment be allocated to the operating budget, thereby carefully balancing the need for current support with future needs. The objective of the policy is to maintain the real purchasing power of the endowment over time.

The market value of our five endowments at the end of this fiscal year was \$1,245,365. As the stock market continued its volatility, the market value of our endowments ended the year higher than the past year. We began our endowments in 1993-1994. The original value of the first three endowments listed below at that time was \$58,850. The four funds are: the **Saint Christopher Parish Endowment**, \$502,816; the **Saint Christopher Total Catholic Education Endowment**, \$174,591; the **D. Vincent Welch Endowment for Liturgy Development**, \$172,834; the **School Scholarship Endowment**, \$255,744; the **Saint Christopher Youth Endowment**, \$139,381.

The increase in these funds comes from four sources: investment earnings, donations, memorials, and bequests from parishioners and friends. The parish through the endowment envelope contributed \$34,407 this past year. Over \$50,000 endowment earnings was allocated as part of the operating budget. It is our hope that these funds will continue to grow and that the monies generated from them will help us be more financially stable in the future. This past year the four endowments decreased in value by one percent. This was due to the stock market decrease. The following chart indicated the progress of these funds over the past fourteen years.

PARISH ENDOWMENTS

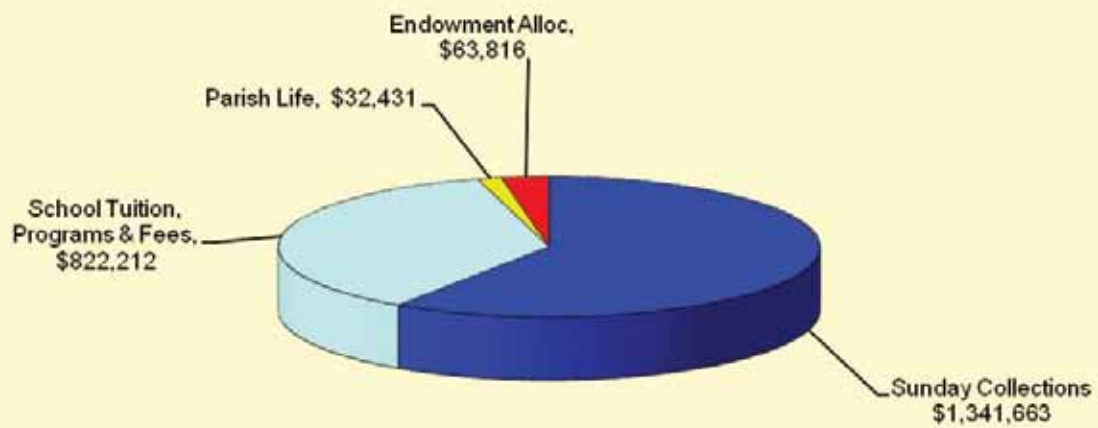


Christ our Hope

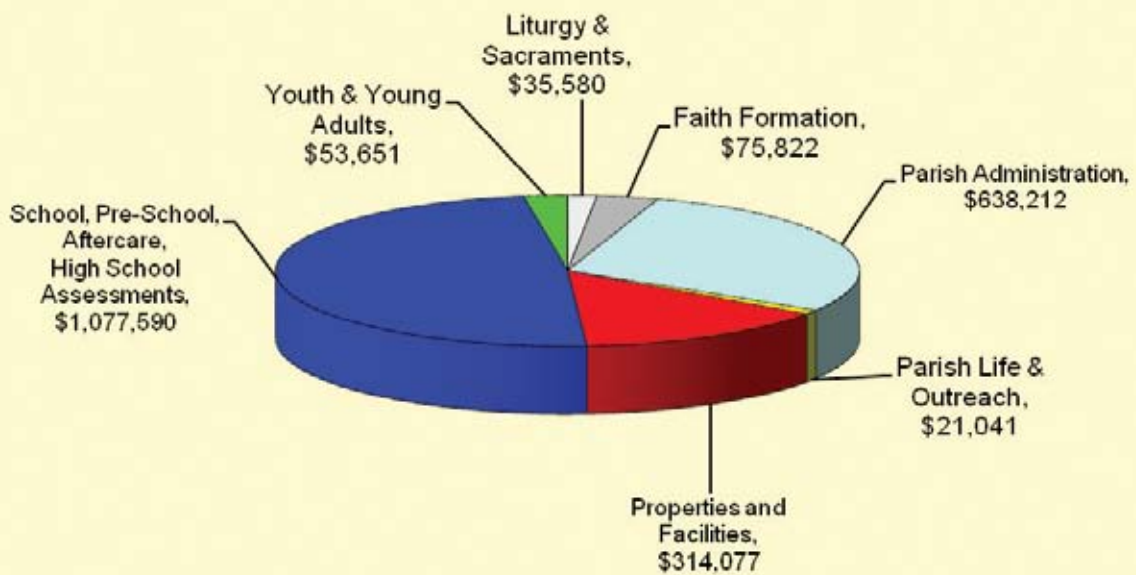
The Archdiocesan Annual Appeal titled **Christ our Hope** was again held this past November. The goal the parish was challenged to reach was \$128,328, the same as last year. We pledged \$125,874. The amount received was \$112,787.

St. Christopher Parish Annual Financial Report 2010-2011

OPERATING FUND	Budget 2010-2011	Actual 2010-2011	Budget 2011-2012
REVENUES			
Sunday Collections	1,341,663	1,372,650	1,382,650
School Tuition, Programs & Fees	822,212	798,950	816,370
Parish Life	32,431	29,400	26,950
Endowment Allocations and Other Income from Capital Sources	63,816	62,000	62,000
Support from Festival and Bingo		125,000	125,000
TOTAL REVENUES	\$ 2,260,122	\$ 2,388,000	\$ 2,412,970
EXPENSES			
Liturgy & Sacraments	35,580	45,799	40,085
Faith Formation	75,822	88,075	85,791
Parish Administration	638,212	694,142	699,883
Parish Life & Outreach	21,041	28,395	28,895
Properties and Facilities	314,077	347,691	359,673
School, Pre-School & Aftercare	1,077,590	1,113,448	1,122,249
Youth & Young Adults	53,651	70,450	71,339
Parish Repairs and Improvements			
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 2,215,973	\$ 2,388,000	\$ 2,407,915
Net Surplus (Deficit)	\$ 44,149		\$ 5,055
IMPROVEMENT FUND			
Sources of Capital Funds			
Festival (net)	45,269	50,000	50,000
Bingo (net)	78,656	59,250	59,250
TOTAL	\$ 123,925	\$ 109,250	\$ 109,250
Use of Capital Funds			
Improvements	79,956	42,000	42,000
Support of Annual Budget		125,000	125,000
TOTAL	\$ 79,956	167,000	167,000
Net Source (Use) of Funds	\$ 43,969	\$ (57,750)	\$ (57,750)



Operating Income Revenue 2010-2011



Expenses 2010-2011



The Catholic Community of St. Christopher
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We, as the Catholic Community of Saint Christopher, seek and work towards a deeper spiritual life.

We do this through our awareness that we are called as a community and as individuals to be the presence (sacrament) of Jesus Christ.

We continue to deepen our relationship with Jesus Christ and one another through our lifelong celebration of the sacraments, lived out and expressed in service to others.

Through continual reflection on who we are called to be, how we celebrate, and why we serve, we deepen our spiritual life.