

Campaign Talk from the Pulpit, November 6 - 7, 2010

By Tom Heinz

A few months back, I was contacted by Jack Jungbauer to attend a committee meeting of the Partnership Council. The campaign committee had already been active for a several months, and a lot of planning had already been done, so I was feeling a bit like an outsider. Despite that, by the end of the meeting, I was invited in to lead one of the campaign subcommittees. And, while I said I would, this looked like a big commitment; I left wondering what I'd just gotten myself into.

The thoughts I'm about to share are for those of you who might feel that this campaign is being done to you, rather than for you. I suspect I would have been feeling that way but for my involvement on the campaign.

My Parish. I'm Catholic. I love being Catholic. I really do love the Eucharist. There is no other place for me but the Church, and for me, St. Mary's is where I have chosen, week after week, year after year, to live out my Christian walk as a Catholic. St. Mary's is my parish.

My Commitment. No one is going to tell me how much to pledge. No one can. But, the more I learn about St. Mary's and gain an "insiders" perspective, and the more I think about our mission, first and foremost to be centered on the Eucharist (Christ), the more I'm drawn to look at what I really ought to give. I didn't feel that way

about the first two campaigns. What's different? Maybe it's working with other members of this parish who have been giving time and talent selflessly for months, working hard--really hard--to solve our financial problem. What else? The more I think about what happens to an organization under stress, the more I realize how much I really do care about the health of this parish. That's making me ask myself one thing: not what can I give, but what should I give? I confess, I could have given more during the first two campaigns; I should have, but today that's water under the bridge. My involvement with the campaign has given me a head start thinking, and praying, about what I should give. Making money decisions seems to always take longer than I expect, so I'm thinking now about how much I should give. My decision. My commitment.

Our Future. What do we want to be? What could we be with less debt? It seems like I've been paying a mortgage for my entire adult life, but an end is in sight because I make my payments. But I'd rather not have to. I'd rather give more to my kids, especially as they embark on their own adult lives. I want to be generous to my grandkids when they come along (God willing). That's more doable post-mortgage. I believe St. Mary's community - you and me – that we want to be "post-mortgage". Our future is better and brighter out from under our debt. The good news for us, is that we all can, if we choose to, make a difference here, in our parish, through our commitment to our future.