

## Treasurer's Report 2011

Last year we presented a budget with a "step up" challenge. The challenge asked that every family in our congregation increase their offering to the next \$250.00 level based on their previous year's tax receipt. Due to unfortunate circumstances, only 40% of our congregation successfully met this challenge. I know and understand that all families have financial limits, - some people have lost their jobs, some have seen pension reductions, and still others are just getting by month to month. However, we praise and thank God that some families were able to do more than was asked of them.

That was last year. Now, as we go forward with our full time Incumbent in place, we have additional challenges for this new year. In the proposed budget you will see a new item under the income area relating to Rectory rental. In order to meet our obligations in 2011, we need to bring in rental income from the rectory and continued rental income from use of Kohner Hall. Ideally, our committed giving to God should be enough to cover all regular expenses, but realistically, we have had to rely on rental income and revenue from Nearly New sales, and Victoria Tea for many years now. The positive side of renting our rectory is that we are making use of it, and allows us to retain ownership. Another positive impact for the community is that we will be able to help the West Island Citizens' Advocacy and allow their CAP program to benefit from our resource.

There are also some areas of risk, such as income flow and lack of stewardship education, that need to be addressed. Did you know that 10% of our families make up 44% of the income of the church? Needless to say if any of these families move away, or is no longer a part of parish, we would have a major income decline in a very short period of time. I am very concerned with "stewardship" and the need to have an effective intense campaign which teaches the concept of "tithing" as well as all other aspects of stewardship. It is very important that the next generation of St Mike's parishioners understand the importance of committed giving and make it an outward representation of their faith and obligation to God. But remember "stewardship" is not just offerings put on the collection plate each Sunday. Stewardship also relates to our time, and how much of it we can give to our church, or other charitable needs. Stewardship also is giving of our talents, perhaps administration, singing, or altar guild. Our treasures, the income that we earn can be attributed to our faith and God's faith returned to us. Please consider the following scripture Matthew 6:25

*<sup>25</sup> "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes?" <sup>26</sup> Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? <sup>27</sup> Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?*

As we move forward, let us be empowered by the Holy Spirit, to give more in all facets of stewardship, to continue to reach out to community, and to continue to grow in our faith. May God continue to bless us and provide for us, and may we continue to be a beacon of light for all who have lost hope, who are broken and who need love, and who look for healing.

Respectfully submitted

Dominick Merle