

St Ignatius Parish

September 8, 2023



With our summer now a plethora of wonderful memories, we, God's people, gather to worship God with fresh enthusiasm and joy. September is a month of new beginnings. We look forward to fall experiences of Sunday worship together, coffee and donuts, Sunday School, school days, regular Friday and Saturday reconciliation times, gatherings of Parish Pastoral Council, board meetings, and RCI candidates, planning for other celebrations like a baptism at our 11 am September 17th Mass, Festival of Friends, and then Advent, and Christmas (only 108 days away).



OUR SUNDAY SCHOOL and OUR ST IGNATIUS SCHOOL: COVID put a damper on our Parish church being able to assist parents in training their children in the faith. We could only have classes for the three initiation sacraments. We now offer Sunday School for all grades. It is important that children not only be enrolled in those three classes (preparation for 1st Communion, for the sacrament of reconciliation, and for the sacrament of Confirmation) but for all grades so that they will continue to grow in their knowledge and love of our precious faith. Some children may have missed receiving the initiations Sacraments (Communion, Reconciliation, Confirmation). It is important for them to enroll in the appropriate classes and prepare to receive them. Sunday school is a good opportunity!

I am happy to report that our St Ignatius Parish School is fully subscribed. Principal Pistawka tells me that the only class that still has openings for new students is the grade 8 class.

PARISH TRUSTEES AND FINANCE COUNCIL: We are in the process of renewing our structures in the parish. We are grateful that a few people volunteered. We hope to get the new positions filled during September.

MAINTENANCE: Thanks to our fine staff and our operations manager, Bob Pistawka, many projects were completed in the last few months. Bob and Abraham Salvador worked hard to get one of our new reconciliation rooms completed. The ceiling, floor tiles, baseboards, door were all done in house by the two of them!

Triple glass windows were installed in all the upper windows of the church in early August to help with fuel costs over time. (It will take another two years to complete the rest of the lower church windows!). The little courtyard on the west side of the offices has been levelled with the AC units set on a new firm foundation. The plan is to create an outdoor classroom for our school. Close attention has been needed for keeping snow and water controlled to minimize damage to our buildings. Maintenance is constant and we are fortunate that Bob keeps vigilant with his staff to keep our plant operational and repaired. Thanks to a Manitoba Arts, Culture and Sport Community Fund grant and the wonderfully successful golf tournament fundraiser last week, the school basketball court and area east of our school were re-paved just last week!



SPIRITUAL EDUCATION CENTRE: The fruit of a year's discernment and consultation is a new name and logo for the Education Centre. St. Ignatius Spiritual Education Centre re-opens on Sept, 11. It will continue to support all the current prayer groups and ministries, including this year's group of Spiritual Exercises aspirants.

Thanks to the Government of Manitoba Green Team Fund grant that enabled the employment of two students this summer, we have successfully digitally catalogued 3000 books for use in a self check out automated system.

ORGAN: After six months of use, the motor on our pipe organ seized again! We are in the process of determining our options in restoring it.

OUR DEBT: As I reported in the past few Reflections of the Pastor, we have a considerable debt. We were doing well until COVID struck. But since then we have accumulated a debt to the Archdiocese of over \$400,000.00 arising from shortfalls in our Sharing God's Gifts Appeals and our Archdiocesan Assessments dating back to 2020. It is a great concern. Our new accountant and our operations manager have been able to provide us with a very clear picture of our financial situation. It is evident that our current regular weekly revenue is not sufficient to pay our regular costs and pay off our debt. Summer is particularly a stressful time for our finances. The Archdiocese has asked for a plan for how we are going to manage our debt. We have a huge aging plant. We can only cut so many costs. Our weekly collections have not returned to their pre COVID amounts. We face a big challenge. The question that must be asked is whether our Parish is financially viable.



St Ignatius Parish community has faced many challenges in its more than one hundred years' existence. This one is very serious but not new. We are blessed in having a faithful and solid community with a tradition of enthusiasm and generosity. My faith is that God will continue to be with us in this challenge. While we trust that "God will provide" we will need to work together to assist God.

Prayers for all!

R. Frank Albright, S.J.



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Praise My Soul, the King of Heaven-arr. Duane Funderburk
Festival of Worship 2013
Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels, Los Angeles

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T07DnPyFURQ>