

NEW FUN EVENT TO ENCOURAGE OUR PARISHIONERS TO SIGN UP FOR ELECTRONIC FUND TRANSFERS. RECEIVE AN EARTH FRIENDLY, INSULATED GROCERY TOTE AND POSSIBLY WIN ONE OF TWO ***iPad 2's*** **TO BE RAFFLED OFF FOR SIGNING UP!**

Did you know? Church Importance Expressed as High Among Families, But Regular Attendance Falling

Regular (weekly) church attendance is changing. With family, sports, work and travel schedules more demanding than in the past, when weekends were essentially “free time”, church attendance is moving more to “every other Sunday” at the home parish, with a growing trend to “once a month”. “Snow birds”, “Church Gypsies”, Vacations, Work and Family Obligations, and Severe Weather Events, all have an impact on our faithful parishioners’ ability to maintain regular attendance and support. This doesn’t include the far greater majority of occasional church goers, for whom Mass and church is important, but not a regular commitment, save Christmas, Easter, Funerals, Weddings, Baptisms, Sacraments, etc.

Obviously, for our church to make a commitment to “be there for us” always, we all need to make a commitment to support our church, so that it can be there. **Two weeks ago, the Archbishop sent a letter to all churches informing them of the regional planning that would begin the consolidation of Mass schedules, co-joining of parishes, and closing of church institutions, in the face of decreasing clergy, parish and school registration, and financial support.**

Happily, there is a solution: It is actually an old idea. Parishioners “played catch up” with their weekly offerings, when returning to church after being away, or even ill. (When my grandmother could no longer come to church, she still maintained a small stack of envelopes, to give to the priest when he brought her monthly communion. She was proud, in that way, to still be sustaining her beloved church, even when she could not be there.) You probably have similar stories in your own family, of such personal dedication to a home parish. **I encourage you to sign up for Electronic Fund Transfer (EFT), or, Online Bill Pay through your own bank, which provides us with a reliable Offertory income.**

To encourage participation, we are running a fun ‘sign up event this month’. Here’s how it works:

- During the weekend of November 19-20, pick up an EFT form after Mass (leave your name, phone & email) or bring the completed form you received with the Stewardship letter. You will receive a sturdy, reusable, collapsible, insulated and zippered grocery tote bag of handsome forest green imprinted with our *St. John Catholic Church* and the logo “*What would Nature Do?*” If you intend to use your bank’s online bill-pay feature, please leave your name, phone & email and take a tote bag.
- Two drawings will be held in January, one for new EFT/online bill-pay users and one for current EFT/online bill-pay users. The deadline to submit a new EFT form is January 6th. Once we have verified the automatic donations, names will be drawn for the Apple iPad 2, one winner in each category. (If you prefer, Prize winners may select the newest Kindle DX in place of the iPad 2, winner’s choice!)

Your regular support sustains all our programs. I am very, personally grateful to you. My grandmother, and maybe *yours*, would be proud of you!

Fr. Bowen