

Capital Campaign Kick-off

Last week Fr. David's sermon included the story of stone soup which is about a group of hungry travelers who set a pot of water to boiling and put a stone in it. The villagers nearby come along, curious about what they're cooking and then offer to add some of their own ingredients. They end up with a wonderful soup and enough to share with everyone.

I like to think of our building project as our own wonderful stone soup cooking here right now. Its enticing aroma pervades the entire community, inviting lots of people, including those who were unable to sit at our table before, to come and share our soup. Just recently the concert committee was approached by an organization who wants to sponsor a concert geared for individuals with special needs and they want to have it here because of the facilities that St. John's can now provide. I think sometimes it's all too easy for us to lose sight of the far-reaching impact this project will have.

Unlike the travelers in the story, we did not depend on the villagers to help us. We did it ourselves by contributing our own ingredients and watching the soup as it cooked. Our soup is designed to feed a lot of people for a long time which means we must replenish the ingredients to keep the soup simmering.

Many of us have already put a lot of meat and potatoes into this soup. Your vestry and capital campaign committee have added over \$150,000 worth of fresh ingredients because we believe in investing in the future of this parish. It is a priority in our lives. Some of us have been reluctant. We worried that the soup wouldn't taste the same as the one we grew up with or maybe we were skeptical about some of the ingredients but now that we've been sampling it for a few months, we must admit it taste pretty good. Or maybe we were afraid the soup would use too many ingredients and deplete the pantry. The one way to make sure that doesn't happen is to contribute what we can from the abundance of our own pantries.

I think at some level we all realize that this project was desperately needed, not only to sustain the parish but to adequately serve those who are most in need. Every parishioner and every guest benefits from this space, regardless of whether we helped to build it. I firmly believe that like the villagers in the story, each one of us has something we can contribute to the soup. Yes, we need lots of meat and potatoes, (and a few pieces of filet mignon!) but even the smallest pinch of seasoning will enhance the flavor.

As we enter the season of Lent and think about giving something up or making a sacrifice, I would suggest that we search our pantries, share the ingredients that we have and keep this soup simmering knowing we are feeding not just ourselves, but the hungry generations who will come after us.