

Today is **Commitment Sunday** for the Annual Catholic Appeal. I am deeply grateful to Doug and Lisa Sackman, Gerardo and Herlinda Vallejo for their excellent presentations last weekend. They gave concise explanations of the programs supported by the Appeal: formation of seminarians, care for retired and infirm priests and sisters, youth ministry, care for homeless and other needy people in our society. I was particularly touched by Doug's example of the homeless couple he encountered in the course of his work.

Doug and Lisa, Gerardo and Herlinda also mentioned the needs in our parish that we could address with a rebate. We have work to do on our parish buildings. On Tuesday and Wednesday, some members of the **Building Commission** did a walk-through **inspection of our parish hall and church**. The group included Leonard Bickler, who supervised the construction of these buildings back in the 70's. The basic structure of the buildings is sound, but they require some repair and maintenance. Bill King made a list of the needs in the hall and church which we will discuss in our May 19 Building Commission meeting and at the **Parish Council** meeting the following evening. We can address some needs with parish volunteers (fortunately, we have a lot of guys who do construction work). Other needs will require parish funds. Particularly neuralgic is the condition of the bathrooms in parish hall. The picture below shows the corrosion and deterioration in the men's restroom.

Your complete support of the Annual Catholic Appeal could lead to a **rebate** that we can use for **parish improvements**. We have a lot of needs – and a lot of dreams. Different families in our parish have hosted “Meet and Greet” evenings where parishioners have shared with me their dreams for St. Mary of the Valley. Many of the dreams center on our parish hall and kitchen. The Building Commission and Parish Council will be helping me to prioritize those dreams and to make them a reality. A rebate from the Annual Catholic Appeal will be a great boost in realizing those dreams. In that light, I want to thank all those who turned in your commitment envelope last weekend – and those who have filled out your envelope for Commitment Sunday. **If you have not yet returned a commitment pledge, please do so today.** You can place it in the Sunday collection or bring it to the parish office.

This week we are realizing one small dream: to have a **card access system** that will enable us to have better control and accountability in the use of our hall, kitchen and storage room. The picture shows Clay (a local locksmith) preparing the hall entrance door for the card access system.

We are in a time of great sacramental grace. Last weekend we had the baptism of Simone Miller on Saturday evening, and on Sunday morning three young people (Del, Kristal and Emily) received the sacraments of Baptism and Eucharist. On May 16, at the 9:30 Mass, and on May 30, at the noon Mass, a good number of our children will make their **First Communion**. We ask the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary for these children – and for all the families of our parish. At our Masses next Sunday we will crown Mary.

As we honor our common mother – the Blessed Virgin Mary – we also pray for our earthly mothers, whether living or deceased. Next Saturday evening our Hispanic youth will present a “**Festival de Madres**” and on Sunday morning, our Knights of Columbus will have a special **Mother’s Day Breakfast**. Please plan on attending. It is one of the nicest things a person can do for their mom. As spiritual father of St. Mary of the Valley, I want all our moms to know how much we love them and appreciate their sacrifices.





Baptism of Simone, April 24, Parents: Marc & Gisella, Godparents: Leo & Grisel



Baptism & First Communion: Del, Kristal & Emily, April 25

