

FROM FR. JASON



Dear Brothers and Sisters,

We received some great news in the last few days from our Archdiocese! First, we have been granted \$15,000 to do repair work on the curbing/sidewalks that have become uneven or fragmented. This grant comes from the Stewardship Endowment Grant Application (SEGA) that was submitted with the preliminary budget for FY2025. Second, we have received a 2% assessment rate reduction in our Annual Assessment for FY2025 as a result of achieving our 2024 Annual Appeal Stretch Goal in funds collected by June 30, 2024 through parishioner donations! Also, we have paid all FY2024 fiscal obligations by fiscal year-end, making us eligible. Thank you and may God give you 100-fold! Speaking of generosity, here is a great excerpt from ‘A treatise on Charity by St.

Maximus the Confessor.’

“Charity is a right attitude of mind which prefers nothing to the knowledge of God. If a man possesses any strong attachment to the things of this earth, he cannot possess true charity. For anyone who really loves God prefers to know and experience God rather than his creatures. The whole set and longing of his mind is ever directed towards him.

For God is far superior to all his creation, since everything which exists has been made by God and for him. And so, in deserting God, who is beyond compare, for the inferior works of creation, a man shows that he values God, the author of creation, less than creation itself.

The Lord himself reminds us: *Whoever loves me will keep my commandments. And this is my commandment: that you love one another.* So, the man who does not love his neighbor does not obey God’s command. But one who does not obey his command cannot love God. A man is blessed if he can love all men equally. Moreover, if he truly loves God, he must love his neighbor absolutely. Such a man cannot hoard his wealth. Rather, like God himself, he generously gives from his own resources to each man according to his needs.

Since he imitates God’s generosity, the only distinction he draws is the person’s need. He does not distinguish between a good man and a bad one, a just man and one who is unjust. Yet his own goodness of will makes him prefer the man who strives after virtue to the one who is deprived.

A charitable mind is not displayed simply in giving money; it is manifested still more by personal service as well as by the communication of God’s word to others. In fact, if a man’s service towards his brothers is genuine and if he really renounces worldly concerns, he is freed from selfish desires. For he now shares in God’s own knowledge and love. Since he does possess God’s love, he does not experience weariness as he follows the Lord his God. Rather, following the prophet Jeremiah, he withstands every type of reproach and hardship without even harboring an evil thought towards any man.

For Jeremiah warns us: *Do not say: “We are the Lord’s temple.”* Neither should you say: “Faith alone in our Lord Jesus Christ can save me.” By itself faith accomplishes nothing. *For even the devils believe and shudder.*

No, faith must be joined to an active love of God which is expressed in good works. The charitable man is distinguished by sincere and long-suffering service to his fellow man: it also means using things aright.”

Peace,