

To my brothers and sisters of St. Francis of Assisi Parish,

People constantly tell me that we are a wonderful parish. I would agree. There is a special spirit of welcome, hospitality, and joy that is very present here at St. Francis Parish. Along with our enlivened spirit, we are also a very generous community. During Covid, when I asked for help, you came through. When we need volunteers, you are right there to lend a helping hand.

With the introduction of this new stewardship program, I am asking if we can take our parish to the next level. Stewardship is about getting more people involved in the life and activities of our parish. We will grow our parish community by more outreach to our young people, to those who recently moved to the area, and to those who stopped coming to church altogether. The Joy of the Gospel is our message. Stewardship will help us proclaim that message even louder.

Our stewardship program is entitled *The Joy of Sharing the Gospel*. The goal is to create an even more dynamic parish where we can attach names to strangers' faces, where more people enjoy our social events, and our prayerful celebration continue to be joyful and inspiring. With this stewardship program I am asking everyone who enjoys St. Francis of Assisi Parish as their spiritual home to contribute something – be it their time, talent, and treasure - according to their ability.

Now we are focusing on “treasure” to help support the mission and ministries of our parish. In a few months we will enter the second phase and invite everyone to consider how they share their time and talent to ensure that St. Francis continues to be a vibrant parish and a place of inspiration and joy.

I humbly ask you to consider raising your weekly donation by 13% to help us bridge our financial operating gap.

Give what you can; there will be no hard feelings if you cannot increase your weekly gift. Everyone will continue to be most welcome at St. Francis. Finances should never keep anyone away. Please know that whatever you contribute, I am grateful for your generosity.

May God continue to bless you and your families with Peace and All Good.



Fr. Francis Di Spigno, OFM
Pastor



Connect with Us

Fr. Francis Di Spigno, OFM
Pastor
609-494-8813

Marie Maslanka
Parish Secretary
609-494-8813

Making your Commitment

Fill out the enclosed Commitment Card and bring it to Mass next weekend

or

scan this QR code with your smartphone to fill out your Commitment Card online.



Fulfilling your New Commitment

Three simple and secure ways to do so:



Sign up for **Online Giving** or update your current online gift amount at <https://www.stfrancisparishlbi.org/donate>.



Use your **offering envelope** and bring it to Mass each Sunday or mail it to the parish office.



Explore using **tax advantaged charitable gifts** such as IRA Distributions, Gifts of Stock, or remembering the parish in your will. Contact the parish office at 609-494-8813.



The Joy of Sharing the Gospel

ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI
PARISH AND CENTER
LONG BEACH ISLAND, NJ

The Best Time to Commit to Stewardship is...



...when a Parish is in a strong position; and we believe that is where SFA is today. Our spiritual life and ministries are healthy, our Offertory is within reach of supporting our day-to-day operations, and our Endowment will enable us to make capital improvements on our buildings that we have put off for years. And...

- We are a vital, welcoming and inclusive Parish, thanks to our **Franciscan heritage**. Our Friars deliver sermons that challenge us, even the much-appreciated short ones at daily Mass.
- We are proud of our **Music Ministry**, our Cantors, Instrumentalists, and our 3 choirs, **Adult, Young Adult, and Children** who total 85 members. Together, they create music that inspires us every weekend!
- We maintain and open **3 additional churches** for our seasonal visitors, joyfully greeting over **3,000 additional worshippers weekly** with 12 additional Masses for a total of **16 every weekend**.
- We support **42 ministries** with almost **1,000 volunteers**, who run the Festival of the Sea, our Fish Fry and Spaghetti Dinners, Care Ministries, visiting the sick, Interfaith Health and Support Services, Blessing of the Animals, Bible Studies, Cornerstone Retreats, and so much more.
- Let's not forget the commitment of hundreds of **Eucharistic Ministers, Lectors and Ushers**.
- We salute our loyal **employees** from our secretarial staff to those who handle the maintenance, finances, all the sacramental programs, and the bulletin.
- We support the **St. Francis Community Center**: its Counseling, Senior, and Children Services, Family Support (**Food Pantry**), Education and Career Services, and Recreation and Aquatics (**Healthy Bones**).

Today, we are asking for a 13% Offertory increase. In late Summer, we will be seeking volunteers for all ministries, *the second phase of this Stewardship journey*. Based on your generosity in the past, we are confident that Stewardship will succeed in getting more people more involved in the joyful life of our Parish.

-Your Parish Finance Council

Stewardship is About Education and Ownership

Historically, over 70% of our operating budget comes from the Offertory collection. The balance comes from ministry and programs, donations, and fundraisers.

OFFERTORY	
Average for the Past 2 Years	Needed for FY 2023-2024 (*13% increase)
\$1,809,990/year	\$2,053,125/year
\$34,809/week	\$39,483/week
\$22.85/household/week	\$25.92/household/week

*We estimate 1,523 households which include parishioners who do not use envelopes or online giving. The 13% increase would have been closer to 19%, but we removed Capital Expenses from the Operating Budget for 2023/34 and will fund them from the Endowment.

Stewardship is About Sharing God's Gifts

We know that many households cannot afford an "average weekly amount" of approximately \$26 to support our parish and some can and will continue to give more. So, to be fair to all, we humbly ask everyone to consider a 13% increase in weekly giving. See following guide:

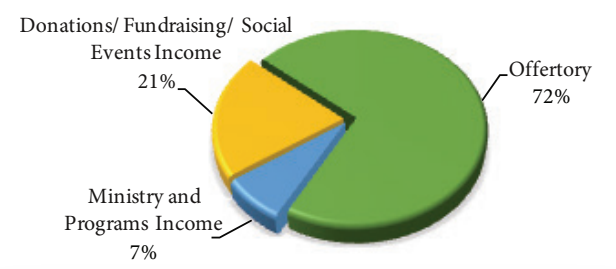
For the 1 st and 2 nd Collections	
Current Giving Levels (weekly)	Suggested New Giving Levels (weekly)
\$5.00	\$6.00 - 7.00
\$10.00	\$11.00 - 15.00
\$15.00	\$17.00 - 20.00
\$20.00	\$23.00 - 25.00
\$25.00	\$28.00 - 30.00
\$50.00	\$57.00 - 60.00
\$100.00	\$113.00 - 115.00

**2023/2024 Proposed
Income & Expense Report**

Proposed Operating Income

Offertory	\$2,053,125.00
Ministry and Programs Income	\$210,779.00
Donations/ Fundraising/ Social Events Income	\$587,536.00

Total Operating Income \$2,851,440.00



Proposed Operating Expenses

Salary and Benefits	\$1,458,158.00
General Operating and Fundraising Expense	\$856,392.00
Ministry and Programs Expense	\$197,415.00
Facilities Expense	\$427,498.00

Subtotal \$2,939,463.00

Capital Improvements moved to the Endowment \$ (90,000.00)

Total Operating Expense \$2,849,463.00

