



# Saint Mary – Stony Hill

*Founded in 1847*

November 1, 2024  
Solemnity of All Saints

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

As we begin this month traditionally dedicated to acknowledging all for which we should be thankful, I am pleased and grateful to share with you the parish's Annual Stewardship Report for the fiscal year 2023-2024. Once again, I believe this report represents a robust faith community.

A parish's vitality can be measured in many ways. Foremost, a parish should be a place where its members are encouraged to grow in their faith in and experience of Jesus Christ. We continue to aspire to prayerful and inspiring liturgies and opportunities for growth in faith (Parish Monthly Gatherings, Eucharistic adoration, Advent and Lent companions); more than 30 volunteer catechists and aides give of their time and their own faith-experience each week sharing our Catholic faith with our children; we now have a thriving ministry to our seventh graders through high-schoolers; currently, five adults are in the processing of entering the Catholic Church or receiving First Eucharist and Confirmation (OCIA).

*"This is how all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another"* (Jn 13:35). Last year, St. Mary's continued its long tradition of outreach beyond our parish boundaries to those in need: from assistance to women choosing life for their children (Center for Great Expectation, Life Choices) and those lacking food and other basic needs (Somerset County Food Bank), to support for those grieving the loss of a loved one, to aid to victims of natural disasters, to collections of food, toys, winter coats and other clothing items for those living on the peripheries. Our Knights of Columbus Council deserves special praise for their contributions to many of these efforts.

In terms of our financial health: St. Mary's ended the fiscal year with \$\$69,525 in revenue over expenses. Contributing to this outcome were increases in our weekly collection (7.1% ) and our Christmas (12.5%), and Easter collections (28.6%), along with a generous bequest and one-time gifts. Bequests and special gifts are always a critical element in keeping the Parish in the "black." I know that many parishes emphasize the importance of remembering the parish with a planned gift in gratitude for graces received through their parish over the years. Perhaps you might want to consider St. Mary's in your will after all family and loved ones have been taken care of.

Of course, our physical plant continues to age and, as you know, we face the replacement of HVAC systems in the church and the office/classroom areas of the Parish Center. Please know that we are working diligently to ensure we avail ourselves of competitive bids and programs that offer rebates and financing. There will undoubtedly be unanticipated expenses over the next twelve months.

I am most grateful for your commitment to St. Mary's, whether it be through your time, talent, treasure, or all three. I once again pledge that the parish staff and I will be good stewards of your thoughtfulness and generosity. May Our Lord, through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, our patroness, abundantly bless you and all you love.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Rev. Msgr. William Benwell  
Pastor

225 Mountain Boulevard • Watchung, New Jersey 07069-6298

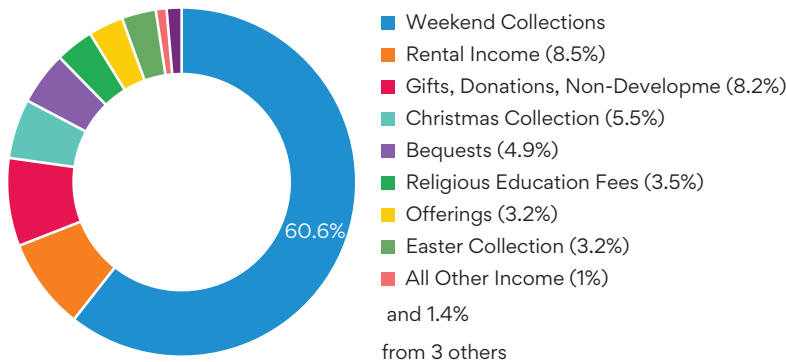
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# Financial Summary for Fiscal Year 2023-2024

	RESULT		TREND
A SUMMARY	2023/2024	2022/2023	vs 2022/2023
Parish Revenue	\$1,018,554	\$934,348	▲ 9%
Parish Expense	\$947,629	\$914,074	▲ 3.7%
Net Operating Income	\$70,925	\$20,274	▲ 249.8%
B COLLECTIONS			
Weekend Collections	\$617,058	\$576,247	▲ 7.1%
Christmas Collection - Church	\$56,144	\$49,911	▲ 12.5%
Easter Collection - Church	\$32,293	\$25,110	▲ 28.6%
Holy Day Collections	\$7,560	\$7,640	▼ -1%
Religious Education Fees	\$30,101	\$26,165	▲ 15%
C OTHER INCOME			
Rental of Facilities	\$86,353	\$86,207	▲ 0.2%
Gifts/Special Donations	\$83,595	\$82,812	▲ 0.9%
Bequests - Church	\$50,238	\$7,653	▲ 556.4%
Offerings - Church	\$33,059	\$36,034	▼ -8.3%
Religious Education Fees - Church	\$36,001	\$32,665	▲ 10.2%
Bishop Appeal/Bulletin Rebate	\$8,708	\$26,324	▼ -66.9%
Interest Income	\$9,951	\$7,485	▲ 32.9%
Other Parish Income	\$1,448	\$0	▲ \$1,448
D OPERATING			
Clergy & Lay Salary & Benefits	\$467,293	\$474,921	▼ -1.6%
Diocesan Assessment Payments	\$120,900	\$115,400	▲ 4.8%
Contract Services: Office & Maintenance	\$99,168	\$88,788	▲ 11.7%
Office Expense	\$17,956	\$22,379	▼ -19.8%
Other Operating Expenses	\$38,825	\$44,148	▼ -12.1%
Utilities: Church	\$69,780	\$68,461	▲ 1.9%
Liturgy and Worship - Church	\$43,006	\$37,443	▲ 14.9%
Charities and Social Concerns	\$7,032	\$6,812	▲ 3.2%
Insurance	\$17,289	\$17,120	▲ 1%
Religious Education	\$46,223	\$13,215	▲ 249.8%
Repairs & Maintenance	\$20,156	\$25,385	▼ -20.6%
E PARISH METRICS			
Average Weekly Collections	\$12,099	\$11,299	▲ 7.1%

# Revenue/Expense Overview: FY 2023 to 2024

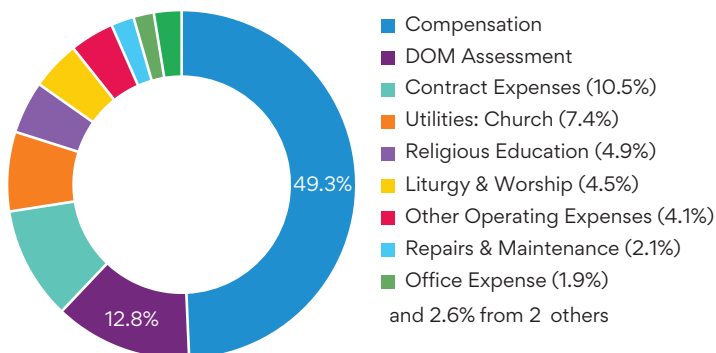
## Income Mix: Fiscal Year



## Operating Revenue Overview - \$1,018,554

- Collections are 70% of parish revenue
- Special donations, bequests & offerings (including candle offertory) are 16.3% of parish revenue.
- Rental income is 8.5% of parish revenue.
- The parish received a \$8,708 rebate for our over-goal Bishop's Appeal efforts.
- \$36,001 or 3.5% of parish revenue is collected in Religious Education fees.

## Expense Mix: Fiscal Year



## Operating Expense Overview - \$947,629

- Compensation includes clergy & clergy-related expenses and benefits, lay salaries & benefits, and taxes.
- The Diocesan Assessment is \$120,900
- Liturgy and Worship of \$43,006 or 4.5% is the daily and weekend liturgies cost.
- Religious Education Expenses include the cost associated with the BOLD Youth Ministry program, which has been funded by a generous donor.

Note: Major Renovations are NOT included in the calculation of Net Operating Income; these expenses are capitalized. Net Operating Income represents the parish's operating income and expenses.

# July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024

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## Statistics

- 985 Registered Parishioners, including 53 new families
- 30 Baptisms, infant baptisms, 2 Adult baptisms
- 35 First Reconciliation/First Communion
- 25 Confirmations of children, 3 Adults
- 7 Weddings
- 31 Funerals
- 223 Faith Formation students; 35 catechists
- OCIA: 2 Adults Baptized & 3 Adults fully received into the faith (included above)
- Eucharistic Ministers: 60 involved in liturgical ministries (Eucharistic Ministers, readers, music ministry, ushers)
- 83 teens participated in BOLD youth Ministry events: 26 events for Middle School Nights, High School nights, overnight weekend retreats, service camp, and high school trip to Steubenville, Ohio
- 142 Works of Mercy completed by 7th & 8th Grade Confirmation Candidates
- 12 monthly Holy Hours with Eucharistic Adoration; 17+ hours of Adoration following daily Mass
- 350+ live-streamed Masses (weekdays and Sundays)
- 15,772 reached via Facebook and 4,032 page and profile visits
- Pets were blessed on the feast of St. Francis of Assisi

## Community Outreach

- "Adopt a Family" for Christmas by Seniors Group
- Christmas presents for local children collected through our Religious Education Program
- Clothing drive for Ozanam Men's Homeless Shelter, New Brunswick
- Covenant Committee Blood Drive
- Baby clothing collection for Life Choices/Phillipsburg by Seniors Group
- Baby Shower for Center for Great Expectations
- KOC Baby Bottle Boomerang for Center for Great Expectations
- KOC Discount Dining Cards fundraiser for Somerset County Food Bank
- Monthly food collection for SHIP and Somerset County Food Bank
- Winter clothing drive for Franciscan Ministries, Newark

## Ministries & Organizations, Activities & Initiatives

- Bereavement Ministry
- Catechists
- Choir
- Collection Counters
- Finance Council
- Folk Music Ministry (9 am)
- Knights of Columbus
- Liturgical: Eucharistic Ministers & Readers, Ushers, Altar Servers
- Pastoral Council
- Parish Monthly Gatherings Ministry Team
- St. Mary-Wilson Memorial Covenant Committee
- Seniors Group
- Serviceworx
- Advent/Christmas Concert
- Coffee Bagels and Donuts Sunday
- Parish Picnic
- Parish Retreat Day
- Parish Monthly Gatherings: 45 adult parishioners participated in formation and community building
- Replacement of AEDs, HVAC in Murray Hall, and Alarm System
- Weekly Senior Group Gatherings/twice a month during the summer
- Weekly Communion to homebound and Brandywine Assisted Living