

Dear friends of St. Clement,

You can find, attached to this letter, our financial report for the year; as usual let me add a few comments.

Our church building is almost eighty years old and in need of repairs; we will have to address first the situation with the roof that we have been patching again and again over the years, but now needs to be replaced. As you all could see, we were forced to intervene on the steeple, which was fractured and dangerous. The work was completed, and the tower is now structurally safe again. Unfortunately, those urgent repairs created a debt of \$ 170,000 with the Archdiocese of Boston.

Thanks to the generosity of the Iannuzzi family, this year we were able to give our church a new, gas-burning heating system, which is more efficient, reduces emissions, and separates the high school building heating system from the church. Hopefully, this improves the chances to find a partner for the use of that building, which could make the high school a needed source of income, instead of a center of cost, as it is presently.

Our parish has been struggling as you know. The closing of our school drained our capital reserves; moreover, maintaining two empty buildings weighs on our budget for a third of the parish expenses. Following the policies of the Archdiocese of Boston, our two school buildings have been on the market for lease for three years now, but even though several parties manifested interest, we have not yet come to any agreement.

Since the Fraternity of St. Charles has been at St. Clement, we have been gifted with generous people of faith who understand the difficulties of a changing culture and environment and want to do their best to keep our parish as a beacon of faith, hope, and Christian life in our neighborhood. As I am writing this letter, we are launching a capital campaign to restore our church building and hopefully to offset the debt we have for the urgent repair of our steeple.

I would like to acknowledge and thank each one of you who are taking seriously this challenge of being a community of faith, a parish, building God's Church in such difficult times. This letter is concerned mostly with money and finances, but beyond these mundane issues, we can hopefully see the hand of Christ who lives among us and guides us as people of God.

Let me be bold and challenge myself and each one of us to build together, as our forefathers and mothers did before us, to give Medford and Somerville a place where Christ can be met today and in the future. Please help us, economically, if you can afford it; with your time, ideas, and energy, if you are able; with your prayer, always. Thank you all, dear friends in Christ.

Fr. Stefano Colombo fscb

Parish Administrator