Dear sisters and brothers,

 I want to share with you our fiscal year-end financials (July 2019 - June 2020) and a general update on our finances.

 This past year has been a year of unexpected and unprecedented events. Not a surprising statement. It is probably also no surprise to you that our finances have been substantially affected from having to cancel all public Masses for over two months, *as well as being affected by this prolonged time of dealing with a pandemic.*

 *We ended our 2019-20 fiscal year $91,511 in the red*. Most of this was because of the decreased giving from March-June. Our staff worked hard, encouraging everyone who could to switch to online giving, which helps keep consistency to your tithing and support. Many of you switched to online giving. ***I thank you deeply for this****.* I encourage everyone who is able to take a moment and sign up for online giving through our website.

 Many of you are also making the extra effort to send in or drop off your offering to the parish while you remain away from Mass. **THANK YOU!**Our Sunday offertory is still (since July) under what we budgeted for this new fiscal year, though much better than when we had no public Masses.

 **A tremendous blessing, as I hope you know by now, was receiving a PPP Loan from the CARES Act of $337,800.** We are awaiting final clarification from the government on the specifics of forgiveness (they haven’t finalized things on their end), but we anticipate having *nearly all, or all, of this amount forgiven.* Please pray that the entire amount will be forgiven.

 We need to make new efforts *right now* to reach out to everyone at our parish to build one another up, and encourage one another. God does not want us to give into fear or discouragement. This includes trusting in Him with our finances.

 I have begun a series of videos for this purpose, and we will be working on other ways to keep our hearts and hands open in generous love for God and one another. These pandemic days have proven to me that our parish has a strong core of parishioners whose love for God, His Church and our parish has translated into a greater sacrifice than before. Do you know that while the number of households giving each week is down from last year (by a third); our overall income shortage is only12%. This means those who are giving are giving more!! Wow. May their witness be an inspiration to the rest of us.

 And remember: Jesus extolled the poor widow, not because she gave the most money but *for the greatness of her gift*. She gave more than those who gave more (money) because her gift was a sacrifice from her need while their gift was from their excess––money they didn’t need anyways. Such times as these can make us saints!

 Brothers and sisters, there is no more important organization in the world than the Catholic Church. Our work is not only eternally significant for every person, but the founder is God. It is here that Jesus is present. If we go through times of suffering trusting in Christ, it will lead to greater freedom and abundant life.

 I am hopeful that this time of challenge and change can be a time of renewal, a time for new and better ways of doing things here at St. Robert. This will only happen with you. We need you! You and the gift of yourself are essential for us to carry out our mission. And Jesus promises us that the gift of ourselves is what leads us to heaven. I ask you to join me in being open to how God is inviting you to become evermore His child through encountering Jesus *by growing in generous, sacrificial love.*

 May God bless you and your family abundantly throughout the year. **Fr. Jon**