



St. Pius X Catholic Church

7800 Halprin Drive, Norfolk, VA 23518

Telephone (757)583-0291 Fax (757)583-0293

February 2, 2019

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The custom of accepting Mass offerings is a long-standing practice in the Western Church. In the ancient Church, the faithful brought gifts to the Sunday assembly, especially the bread and wine for the Eucharist, and the excess was distributed to the Church's ministers and to the poor. By the eighth century, gifts of money were often substituted and their chief purpose was the support of the clergy. There also developed the practice of votive Masses, which were offered for the intentions (*vota*) of a group or individual. These practices eventually merged into the custom of a priest accepting a single stipend for each Mass in return for remembering a special intention.

After doing some research, we have discovered that our current policies regarding Mass intentions and offerings is not in keeping with Canon (Church) Law, (revised in 1983). Canon Law requires that a priest accept only one offering per Mass (Canon 948), and that only one intention may be designated for each Mass. On Sundays and Holy Days, one of the Sunday Masses must be designated solely for the intentions of the parish (*Missa pro populo*).

With this in mind, **effective February 2, 2019, the following will be the policy for Mass intentions and stipends at St. Pius X:**

- **Only one Mass intention and offering (customarily \$10.00) will be accepted per Mass.**
- **On weekends and holy days of obligation, one Mass will be designated solely for the intentions of the parish, and no offering will be accepted for that Mass.**

Any offerings and intentions which have been collected to date under our current practice will be honored; there is no need to reschedule those Masses.

We understand that there are certain dates (e.g., birthdays, anniversaries of loved ones – especially those who have died), and concerns that you want to honor in a tangible way. To assist with this, we encourage you to write these in the **Book of Intentions** at the church entrance (under the image of St. Joseph), where others may see them and include them in their prayer. The intentions in this book, as well as the private intentions placed in our **Prayer Box**, will always be remembered generally in the Universal Prayer at weekend Masses.

We realize that this represents a change from our past practices. We hope that everyone understands that this change is not arbitrary, but reflects the intention of Canon Law, to which – of course – we are bound. Please be respectful of our staff and other parishioners as you come forward to schedule votive Masses, as I have instructed them to follow this policy.

Sincerely,

(Rev.) Nixon Negparanon
Pastor