

# Sacred Heart Catholic Church

*A Franciscan Parish*

---

January 15, 2023

Reverend Fr. Michael P. Jones, OFM  
Pastor, Sacred Heart Church  
518 North Marion Street,  
Tampa, FL 33601

My dear parishioners,

In just a few short weeks, I will be celebrating my first anniversary as pastor here at Sacred Heart. While I've been alongside you all at the parish for the better part of three years, this last year has allowed me the chance to get to know engaged parishioners such as yourself in a much more familial way. Every day, I become more aware of the privilege it is to be a part of a vibrant community of faithful brothers and sisters so committed to serving each other and the larger community around us. When I arrived in 2020, our community was notably different than it is today. Seeing the return of our much-loved fellowship events and the eagerness of everyone to lend a hand and volunteer this last year has the friars even more committed to helping rebuild and enhance our vibrant parish life, bringing us all together in more meaningful ways - to be a true community within the Body of Christ.

That commitment is also exemplified by the ministries at our parish. Thanks to the collaborative efforts of over 20 different ministries and groups, our most recent Giving from the Heart donation drive successfully collected essential items to give to our neighbors in need who were affected by Hurricane Ian. Through our dedicated Faith Formation staff and volunteers, who tirelessly give of themselves to aid in the development of our collective understanding of what it means to be a beacon of Christ's love, we're currently serving over 150 children across several sacramental and educational programs as well as over 24 adult candidates and catechumens who desire to be in full communion with the Catholic Church. We've even been recognized by Catholic Charities twice over the last two years for our parishioners' work in support of the Tampa Hope homeless shelter. It seems everywhere we look, good things are happening in our parish, our diocese and our Church. We have much to be grateful for, to live in such an active Catholic community.

With such an immense outpouring of generosity and dedication to our parish family and the larger community around us, we've demonstrated our mutual need to give and to make a difference in our world. But it doesn't stop with us. It doesn't stop at our parish boundaries. Each year, our parish is asked to take part in a larger diocesan effort called the Catholic Ministry Appeal. The Catholic Ministry Appeal is how we band together to nurture spiritual life, embrace God's call to serve and accompany missionary disciples. The appeal provides for direct support to many different ministries and needs, with pledges and gifts being at the expressed discretion of each of you. Through your participation, impacts can be felt across the diocese as well as our ministries right here at Sacred Heart. For example, did you know the ***Catholic Ministry Appeal*** supports:

- Faith formation for youth and adults, providing opportunities to encounter the Lord.
- Shelter for more than 4,000 people through Catholic Charities' Shelters of Hope.
- Marriage Retreats hosted by the Diocese at our North Campus starting in 2023.
- 106 active priests serving in 79 parishes and missions.

# Sacred Heart Catholic Church

*A Franciscan Parish*

---

Over the coming weeks, you will hear from the friars, lay ministers, staff, and volunteers from our parish advocating on behalf of the ministries they support as part of that mission through the ***Catholic Ministry Appeal***. Brothers and sisters, I ask that each of you reflect on what you hear from our ministries and consider a gift or pledge of support to the appeal. Our goal is to engage with as many parishioners and families as possible about the benefits our ministries provide to both our parish and diocese. With your attention and participation, regardless of your gift amount, we can make a real difference in our Catholic community.

Peace and All Good,



Fr. Michael P. Jones, OFM  
Pastor, Sacred Heart