



## FALLING BELL-TOWER DEBRIS AND ONE SMALL STEP FOR A PARISHIONER



The bell still tolls at Our Holy Redeemer, but 108 years of “southern exposure” has taken its toll on the tower from whence it tolls. Seven weeks now have passed since falling bell tower debris forced the closure of the south entrance to Our Holy Redeemer Church and its *Perpetual Adoration Chapel* entrance. A subsequent \$1,750.00 inspection of the tower’s interior/exterior, and a follow-up \$2,000.00 “fly by drone inspection” has prompted the Parish to seek professional appraisals and proposals (a&p’s) for our bell tower-repair needs. Two such a&p’s have been received and a third is expected

shortly. Once those a&p’s have been reviewed, and a course of action is agreed upon by both Parish and Diocesan personnel, Our Holy Redeemer parishioners (along with friends of Our Holy Redeemer and Perpetual Adoration Chapel key holders) will be notified of the necessary costs involved to secure safe access to our “absolutely beautiful church”. (And while some people might say it is “putting the cart before the horse”, the Spirit of Generosity has already moved members of the faithful to donate to the cause. **If you would like to get in the cart and/or mount the horse, please contact the Rectory!**)

On 25 November 2018, with an eye out on the unknown future’s horizon, our Parish kicked off our “*One Small Step for a Parishioner, One Giant Leap for a Parish*” campaign. At that time, I asked each of the four thousand (4000) registered families of the Parish to commit themselves to a weekly increase in financial giving to their Parish. This requested weekly increase was not the “25 Cents More A Week” that marks the annual remembrance of my 25 June 2008 arrival in Freeport, but a substantial weekly increase designed to help the Parish better prepare for the future with all of its “surprises”: such as **falling debris from the bell tower** of our “absolutely beautiful church”.

**The response to that request was as follows:**

- 478/4000 registered families replied;
- 222 registered families replied that they would increase their weekly financial offering;
- **202 non registered families** replied that they would increase their weekly financial offering;

Of those combined 424 registered and non-registered family responses:

- 99 of those families pledged an increase and have kept their promise;
- **47 families have actually been contributing more than they promised!**
- 140 families pledged an increase and have not kept their pledged promise.
- 138 families did not register a contribution over the next 14 weeks after the program;
- 54 registered families replied that they were planning to give the same weekly amount.

**I thank all of you** who replied that you would increase your weekly offering. **I thank all of you** who have kept your promise to increase your weekly offering. **And I thank all of you** who are giving more than you promised to give! Your sacrifices will help to make sure that the bell that tolls from our bell tower will continue to toll for everyone; even if everyone doesn't answer that bell when it tolls.

If you answer the bell when it calls you *home* for Sunday Mass: **thank you**. If you however, in answering that call have yet to answer the call to increase your financial offering on a weekly basis, I am pleading with you to please do so today. It is very unlikely that anything less than a 100% favourable response to this plea will open the doors to our south entrance and those leading to and through our Perpetual Adoration Chapel. And that prospect (as you can read from the following letter I received from a **recent college graduate** and Our Holy Redeemer Parishioner) is taking its toll on many of our sisters and brothers.

Hi Father,



I hope all is well! I have been home for a few weeks now in Freeport and I've been upset to see the Perpetual Adoration Chapel closed. I am curious as to why it is closed and what can be done about it.

My grandmother suggested that there was a problem with the steps (since I'm not here I'm not always in the loop). I hope that is the case and that it will be reopened quickly.

If there is another reason, such as a shortage of people able to stay with the Blessed Sacrament I will happily volunteer (although I will only be in Freeport for a short time) and persuade others to pray in the Chapel.

In the meantime until the Chapel reopens, whatever the reason, is it possible to keep the Church itself open longer to provide a place to pray with the Blessed Sacrament in the Tabernacle? I stopped by in the late afternoon another day this week and was disappointed that the doors were locked. I realize that there may be an issue of having people to be at the Church, but I wonder if volunteers could be found. I am sure that many are feeling the loss of the Chapel and are looking for a place to pray. Furthermore, I believe it is important to keep our doors open as much as possible so that all may encounter Christ.

Please let me know if the Chapel will be reopening soon, or if there is something else that can be done. I am sure there are many things to take into consideration here and if there is any way I can be of help in this regard I am hopeful that you will let me know.

Best,

Margaret Moore

When (re)considering this plea remember for whom the bell tolls: it tolls for you!

