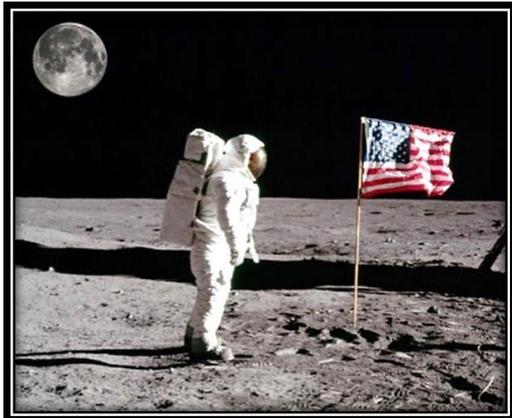




ONE SMALL STEP FOR A PARISHIONER (AN EXPRESSION OF GRATITUDE)



On 25 November 2018, “*One Small Step for a Parishioner; One Giant Leap for a Parish*” became the “mantra” for our current Stewardship Appeal. It was my hope that remembrance of the 20 July 1969 lunar landing evoked by those words, would inspire parishioners of Our Holy Redeemer to take our Parish where we have never gone before in weekly financial contributions: \$20,000/week in the year 2020.

We may not have “yet” *landed* there (\$20,000/week in 2020), but I am happy to report (again) that we have seen (thanks be to God) a \$2,000 increase in our Sunday first-offertory. Thank you for doing your part to help *fuel* that increase. Your sacrificial giving is more than just “one small step for a parishioner.” It is **an expression of gratitude** for Our Holy Redeemer’s sacrifice that does not guarantee to boldly take us to \$20,000/week in 2020 (or to the moon for that matter), but it does guarantee to boldly take us where Our Holy Redeemer has gone before: Heaven!

Heaven – not the moon – is the *manifest destiny* (Remember that from your school days; days when the virtue of the American people and her institutions were universally admired and the mission to spread that virtue was seen as part of the “work of God”/Opus Dei Himself?) of every human person created according to the image and likeness of God. And while it is good that man made it to the moon and planted the American flag (with all that it stands for and all that we stand for) on its surface, it is the Cross planted in “what is called the Place of the Skull, in Hebrew, Golgotha” (Saint John XIX:17), that allows man to reach his manifest destiny: Heaven!

Time spent at the Cross has fueled the “small steps” (expressions of gratitude) people have taken to Heaven for centuries. And just as truly as it happened in the distant past – leading people to Heaven through the Priesthood (Saint John Marie Vianney), Religious Life (Saint Teresa of Calcutta), Married Life (Saint Gianna), and the Single Life (Saint Joseph Moscati) – it is happening right here in Freeport today! Yes, the small steps of parishioners have increased our weekly financial offering, but they have also led parishioners like Alan Guiteau (Father Pierre Toussaint) to the Priesthood and Meaghan Baldwin (Sister Marie Meaghan, PVM) to Religious Life. The small steps of parishioners formed a Young Lector Society and two Emmaus Groups. The small steps of parishioners moved the Grover Family to allow *Our Holy Redeemer to leave the house, sit down by the water, and speak to the people* (cf. Saint Matthew XVII:1) on Woodcleft Avenue for the for the ninth consecutive year. The small steps of parishioners have dramatically increased membership in our Youth Choir and our Sunday Night Altar Guild. The small steps of parishioners have almost doubled daily Mass attendance on Ashless Wednesdays and those small steps are increasing Sunday Mass attendance as well!!!

Spend time at the Cross and I am convinced you will be so moved by how much you are loved, that you will spend the rest of time expressing gratitude with the small steps that will take you to Heaven.

