



While we were enjoying unseasonably cool weather this past Sunday through Tuesday, many up north experienced their first snowfall of the year as well as a hearty “Nor’easter” in New England. We certainly paid our dues this summer suffering never ending sweltering temperatures. It is now our turn to bask in “paradise” while enjoying comfortable temperatures the remainder of the winter season. It is our pleasure to welcome our seasonal residents and visitors back to “paradise.” We are excited to spend a spiritual and fun filled season with you all.

Thank you so much to everyone that gave so very generously to the 2nd collection last weekend for World Missions. The collection totaled \$10,214.00. This is amazing considering that the prior year only \$388.00 was collected for the same cause. Offerings from

Catholics in the United States, on World Mission Sunday and throughout the year, are combined with offerings to the Propagation of the Faith from Catholics worldwide. Mission dioceses - about 1,000 at this time - receive regular annual assistance from the funds collected. In addition, these mission dioceses submit requests to the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples for assistance, among other needs, for catechetical programs, seminaries, the work of Religious Communities, for communication and transportation needs, and for the building of chapels and churches. These needs are matched with the funds gathered in each year. The world's national directors of the Propagation of the Faith vote on these requests, matching the funds available with the greatest needs. These funds are then distributed to Mission (Arch) Dioceses throughout the world. This General Fund of support is then distributed in its entirety each year.

Did you know that the Knights of Columbus have a special section reserved for Brother Knights and their spouses in the Memorial Garden? There were originally 70 spaces reserved and as of this past week, only 20 remained. If you are a Brother Knight and would like to purchase a space in this reserved section of the Memorial Garden, Please contact me at your earliest convenience.

Since many of our parishioners are retired and relying on social security as a portion of their retirement income or in some cases the sole source of retirement income, I thought I would include the following which outlines the details of the upcoming changes for 2010. Please understand that this is for informational purposes only and does not reflect any political view or affiliation.

NO SSI INCREASE FOR 2010

The Social Security Administration (and the IRS) leave benefits and retirement plan contribution limits unchanged.

SSI will remain flat for the first year since 1975. Social Security benefits are keyed to inflation. So what happens when year-over-year inflation becomes negative? No cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) occurs to increase your Social Security income. On October 15, the Social Security Administration announced that there would be no COLA for 2010. (The 2009 SSI COLA was 5.8%, the largest boost since 1992.)

“What do you mean, negative inflation?” That’s the question some SSI recipients are asking. Aren’t prices seemingly going up at the grocery store every day – and going up everywhere else? Unfortunately, the federal government doesn’t measure consumer inflation with a price check on aisle six. It uses the Consumer Price Index (CPI), which is really an estimation of the average prices of consumer products we buy. There is also core CPI, which excludes food and energy costs.

From September 2008 to September 2009, overall CPI fell by 1.3%. Across that span, overall food prices actually fell 0.2% and prices on dairy products and fruits and vegetables respectively dropped 9.5% and 6.4%. Food prices only account for about a seventh of CPI, and rents actually constitute about 40% of the “prices” measured by core CPI. In September, rents fell in the United States for the first time since 1992. (We also have a decline in retail gasoline prices from last fall to this fall.)

With year-over-year inflation negative, the SSA has no logical reason for a COLA. Yet roughly two-thirds of America’s seniors live on less than \$20,000 a year, some entirely on SSI.

Another stimulus check? President Obama is urging Congress to authorize one-time \$250 stimulus payments to Social Security and Supplemental Security income recipients, veterans, railroad retirees and government retirees. That \$250 would equal about 2% of the average annual SSI benefit for a retiree. These checks would be mailed sometime in 2010 to about 57 million people. Recipients could not qualify for multiple checks.

Retirement plan contribution limits will stay the same. These are also inflation-indexed. On October 15, the Internal Revenue Service chimed in with a statement that 401(k) contribution limits will remain at \$16,500 for 2010. The maximum contribution limits for other types of defined-contribution and defined-benefit retirement plans will also remain the same for 2010. While we’re referencing the IRS, some other important figures aren’t changing next year. The standard deduction will remain at \$11,400 and \$5,700 for joint and single filers; it will go up \$50 to \$8,400 next year for heads of household. The yearly gift tax exclusion will stay at \$13,000 for 2010, and the value of a personal exemption will remain at \$3,650.

No COLA ... but more purchasing power? A former deputy Social Security commissioner who now works for the conservative American Enterprise Institute contends that the average retiree will actually have \$725 more in purchasing power in 2010 thanks to falling prices and the freeze in Medicare Part B premiums (which will not increase in 2010 for most Social Security recipients). A senior policy analyst for the non-partisan Center on Budget and Policy Priorities told the *Christian Science Monitor* that if Social Security income was wholly determined by consumer prices, SSI recipients would have their checks cut by 2.1% next year.

Thank you to Guy Almeling (Financial Advisor) for his input in the preceding article.

What would Scott’s Corner be without a constant “pitch” for the Catholic Faith Appeal? It is evident that our seasonal residents and visitors have returned from all places north. As you will see from the collection summary, we are going to need a small miracle in order to meet our CFA goal for 2009. We still have time on our side but it is waning with less than three months to go. If you are able to make a substantial gift to the appeal, I would ask that you do so. Not meeting our goal will have a very detrimental effect on our annual operating budget. If this were to happen, we would have to allocate funds appropriated for other ministries to the CFA in order to pay our assessment. If you are such a seasonal resident or visitor and/or if you would like to make an additional one time gift to the CFA, please make your check payable to the Catholic Faith Appeal with St. John the Evangelist in the memo line. We need your help in order to meet our goal! Thank you once again for your continued support of the CFA.

Apparently our temporary Florida Catholic Cover on the front page of the bulletin threw some of you for a loop this past weekend. This was not a mistake but rather an attempt to highlight a great publication and hopefully encourage those of you that do not currently subscribe to do so. Many of you may have also noticed that you are currently receiving the Florida Catholic at home. I arranged to have the newspaper delivered to a random sample of our households in the hope that you would also subscribe. By subscribing, you will offset our annual obligation to the Florida Catholic. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

In His work together,

Scott Schlossberg, MBA
General Manager