

LAST WEEK'S INCOME

Our Lady of Lourdes Church		Saint Joseph's Church	
Envelopes	\$1,112.00	Envelopes	\$787.00
Youth	8.00	Youth	2.00
Plate	<u>71.80</u>	Plate	<u>70.00</u>
TOTAL	\$1,191.80	TOTAL	\$859.00
Religious Retirement	\$68.00	Religious Retirement	\$10.00

BREAD FOR THE WORLD AND COVENANT CHURCHES

In October 1972, a small group of Catholics and Protestants met to reflect on how persons of faith could be mobilized to influence United States policies that address the causes of hunger and poverty. Under the leadership of several clergy, the group began to test the idea in the spring of 1974 organizing under the title, *Bread for the World*, to act as citizen advocates for people in need. By the end of that year 500 people had joined the ranks. Presently, there are thousands who have joined in what is now a nationwide movement. Among the number are the pastor and several priests of our diocese.

Specifically what we do as members is to act as a collective Christian voice urging our nation's decision makers to end hunger and poverty at home and abroad. By changing policies, programs and conditions that allow hunger and poverty to persist, the enrolled members of *Bread for the World* help far beyond our local communities.

In the Diocese of Ogdensburg a critical situation exists for our farmers. If you have traveled in rural areas of the North Country, you have no doubt observed many abandoned farms. These farms were mainly dairy farms that folded because of the low price the owners were getting for the milk they produced. Consumers have noticed the sky rocketing prices for milk in our grocery stores, but our farmers have not experienced an increase in what they are getting for the milk they produce but less than the previous year.

In mid-December the Senate passed its version of the farm bill that failed to make farm support programs fairer. *Bread for the World* is continuing to campaign for a change in the final farm bill that will be voted on early in 2010. The future of farming in the North Country is critical. For example, the pastor received a Christmas card from a cousin who operates a farm in Lewis County. In her note she stated that the farm economy was hit hard this year with revenues way below the cost of production. Her husband's and her future in farming are questionable.

Last week at our Pastoral Advisory Council Meetings the pastor proposed that our two parishes join *Bread for the World Covenant Churches* in the United States to work for not only the farming crisis in the North Country but also the unemployed hungry at home and in the Third World. Covenant churches have a history of being special partners with *Bread for the World* in food distribution and ending hunger. They understand this to be central to Christian mission with a promise of prayer and contacting sources, specifically legislators, to end this problem in their community, nation, and world. Both councils voted to join this covenant. What *Bread for the World* is doing to address these problems will be periodically mentioned in our parish bulletin.

WE NEED NOT FEEL GUILTY

Two weeks ago part of the parish bulletin was devoted to a study of religion in America. In the study it was revealed that 31% of those who were raised as Catholics have left the Church. Many of those may be members of your own family or close associates of yours who mean so much to you. As promised, attached to your bulletin today is a pamphlet that should help you to dispel any guilt you might experience because of their loss of faith or need to practice their religion. There are many positive steps suggested to take to help them return to the Catholic Church.

FLOWER MEMORIALS

Next week's bulletin will list the names of those memorialized and their donors.