FATHER ANTON'S WORDS OF WISDOM: School is out and everyone is thinking about summer. After an unusually warm spring, we now look forward to rest and relaxation on those hot days of summer. Things slow down a bit in our little parish; the kitchen takes a well-deserved break in the hopes that others who are not able to help on a regular basis can assist with the annual clean up. BBQ's are monthly, and everyone comes out to have a good time. The Choir takes a break, and there are no meetings. However, we still have Sunday Mass. It is important to remember to keep up your spiritual nourishment even when on holidays.

There's always a church somewhere. It is also important to remember that even though you may not be here every Sunday during the summer months, our expenses don't change. We still have hydro, water, maintenance and salaries to be met, and it can get very difficult if our members don't make a commitment to supporting St. John's full time. Times are tough for everyone, and only you know what you can really afford to give, but nonetheless, everyone who considers themselves members of a parish have an obligation to contribute to both its spiritual and financial support. Jesus shares with us the blessings of giving from our abundance, and sometimes from the little we have. My experience as a pastor has shown me those who contribute to charity most are those who have the least. Perhaps; because they have not forgotten hard times and understand that, "material things" aren't the answer when we are looking for satisfaction or a sense of purpose in life. There's a little joke that comes to mind when talking on this topic, although it's hilarious; it also has a good message. "Joe Yapshyshyn dies unexpectedly and knocks on the pearly gates hoping to get in. St. Peter is surprised since he's not on the list. St. Peter goes to God and explains the situation, so God says "Ask Joe if he ever did anything for anyone other than himself in his lifetime." Peter goes back and asks him. Joe answers "Not really, you see I was always busy trying to get ahead, so I had no time for others." St. Peter goes back to God and tells Him. God says "Go and ask him if he ever darkened the door of a church, and if he did why?" Peter goes back to ask Joe. Joe answers: "I went to Church every Sunday, what would people think? It made me look good even though I was never sure about this religion stuff." St. Peter goes back to God and reports what Joe said. "I see," said God, "Go ask Him if in all those years he went to Church if he ever gave a donation." Peter goes back and asks Joe. After a long pause, with a sigh of relief Joe says "I remember once I gave $5.00!" Peter goes back and says to God: "He said he remembers giving $5.00 once." God thought for a moment and replied: "Issue him a refund and tell him to go to hell."

Although this is a great joke, it reminds us that priorities are so important. Your parish cannot exist without your support, both materially, and spiritually. Money does not a Church make, yet without it we cannot exist. As you enjoy your summer give some thought to St. John's so we don't have scramble over the summer months to make ends meet. You'll feel good in knowing you are helping, and we will be grateful that we can continue to be here to serve your needs. Enjoy your summer everyone, LIVE, LOVE, LAUGH AND PLAY, PLEASE DON'T FORGET TO PRAY.

Let us pray: *Dear Jesus, you have shared with us many stories about giving to Your Father. Help me to understand that what I give to God comes back to me in more ways than I can imagine. I thank you for my parish. Even though I may not attend services as often as I should, I really do care about it. During this summer, bless my family and friends that all may experience a joyful time, with much opportunity for relaxation. Remind me Lord, when I forget to talk to you, that you enjoy my company. I will respond, because I enjoy yours. I will slow down and listen for you in the breeze, and feel the warmth of your love in the rays of the sun. I will celebrate our life together. Amen.*