

Catholic Review sponsors parish gun turn-in initiative, seeks donor support

Previous gun turn-ins at St. Gregory the Great netted more than 100 guns. About a year ago, the program lost the sponsor that had provided funds to furnish cash rewards to get the guns off the street.

The Catholic Review stepped in this summer to provide a grant to restart the program, and asked its readers to contribute to the program.

Parish staff members and volunteers accept weapons for four hours on a Saturday, a few times a year at St. Gregory the Great Church, 1542 N. Gilmore St. in West Baltimore.

The process is anonymous, with no questions asked. Monsignor Nalepa and parish staff or volunteers take in the guns, making sure they are unloaded, and in working condition.

The program offers a \$100 reward for each working automatic or semi-automatic handgun or assault rifle, and a \$50 reward for any other working gun turned in. At the conclusion, guns are turned over to Baltimore City Police, who log each gun and eventually check each weapon to see if it has been used in a crime. Any gun that must be kept as evidence is secured; the rest are destroyed.

The next turn-in day has not yet been scheduled, but Monsignor Damien G. Nalepa, St. Gregory's pastor, is hoping for a date in November.

For more information on turning in a gun, contact the parish at 410-523-0061.

Tax-deductible donations to support the effort can be sent to: The Cathedral Foundation Inc., Attn: Catholic Review Gun Buy-Back, P.O. Box 777, Baltimore, MD 21203.