

“Honoring our Past and Planning for our Future”

March 14, 2011

Dear Parishioner(s),

I hope this letter finds you well and refreshed as winter slowly gives way to spring. I always enjoy this annual time of transition: from the penitential season of Lent to the glory of Easter! Transformation happens on a variety of levels: from the interior changes we make to more closely align our lives with our Lord, to the exterior changes we make as a community when we plan for our future. We have been talking and planning these past two years for possible changes in our worship and faith formation (school) spaces. We are now ready to move from planning to action!

It is with great excitement that I write to personally invite you to one of two upcoming “Town Hall” meetings where you’ll be able to share your thoughts on these future changes: Tuesday, March 22nd at 7:00pm and Sunday, March 27th at 12:45pm. At these meetings we’ll lay out two dynamic options as we update our worship space to reflect a more sacramental appearance and completely renovate our school building to address issues of safety, security, proper storage and environmental upgrades—the first real changes to our school building in more than 30 years. This building is also heavily used by our parish Sunday faith formation program.

Included with this mailing are three double-sided sheets, labeled 1 through 6. They refer to “Option A” and “Option B.” In a nutshell, concerning our school space:

- “Option A” is a completely-integrated parish and school building, resulting in 5,400 square feet of new flexible-use faith formation space. It includes relocating the current Miki center classrooms into the existing stage and chair storage room. This concept results in a courtyard centered around Psalm 23, with various aspects of the courtyard witnessing to our Lord as the Good Shepherd. This option includes the construction of preschool space, two new classrooms and a combination computer room and library. Sheet 1 depicts the “big picture,” while sheet 3 offers more specific detail.
- “Option B” is a scaled down version of the above project. It also addresses the issues of safety and security, yet does not offer the additional flexible-use faith formation space, and moves storage to the basement crawl space and individual classrooms. It retains the Miki Center classrooms and the courtyard is much smaller in scope. This option also includes new preschool space and a relocated music room. Sheet 2 depicts the “big picture,” while sheet 4 offers more specific detail.

The renovation of our worship space remains the same in both options. Please refer to sheet 5 for specific detail. The conceptual design for our worship space envisions an expanded foyer that also serves as sacred transition space, relocating the Adoration

Chapel to the current room behind the altar and remodeling the current Adoration Chapel to accommodate a Marian Shrine, choir storage room, working sacristy and reconciliation room. The current wall behind the altar would be replaced with a glass wall that allows the tabernacle to be viewed from all locations in the church and encourages interaction between the two spaces. The Stations of the Cross are lowered and recessed into the wall in a way that offers greater interaction with the person/people praying the Stations, while offering a witness value to the outside world.

Obviously, to arrive at this exciting point in our planning process has involved the dedicated work of many talented individuals in our community and the resourcefulness of an outstanding architect. I am grateful to all who have served on various committees and to Bruce Williams, of Black and White Studio Architects, for carefully listening to our needs and thereafter designing two exceptional floor plans. Sheet 6 details the steps that have brought us to this point, our present actions and the next steps in bringing a conceptual plan to reality.

Now I respectfully ask for your help! Your voice is critical, and I want to hear it. The purpose of our upcoming meetings is for each member of our community to get a better understanding of these two options through direct discussions with our architect and through viewing scale models and computer-generated graphics. After Easter we will begin a four-week Feasibility Study, facilitated by "Guidance in Giving," a company with a proven track record in our Archdiocese. The purpose of this study, in which every parish and school family will have an equal opportunity to share their thoughts, is to determine the "buy-in" for one or other of the options and to provide an accurate assessment of potential financial support. Depending upon the results of this study, I estimate a possible Capital Campaign in the fall of 2012, and construction could begin in the summer of 2013. Our Parish Finance Committee will design our financial strategy, and we'll communicate that to you for your review prior to committing funds. Of course, these steps must also be approved by our Archbishop and the Archdiocesan Finance Committee.

As I write, "HMS Construction Cost Consultants" is calculating the projected cost of each option and I'll have that information for you at the upcoming meetings.

This is a very exciting time in the history of our parish! I am personally grateful to you for your past and future prayerful and financial support of our parish and school, especially to those who have contributed towards this process to date. Because of their generosity and vision we have arrived at this point without spending a single dollar from our parish or school operating budgets. Thanks be to God!

I look forward to welcoming you personally to our upcoming meetings. They are designed to last for 90 minutes, with time for follow-on questions and discussion as you desire. Thank you for taking the time and personal interest to help us "honor our past and plan for our future!"

Gratefully,
Fr. Tom