

January 31, 2009 Pulpit Update

My name is Matt Cooney. I am a member of St. Catherine's Pastoral Council. I am here to update you on our parish's facilities project, to tell you what the Council has authorized, to provide an overview of what will be happening, to explain how you can be involved and to discuss when a final recommendation will be made to our Pastor, Father Mahler. I plan to do this in 3-4 minutes.

On January 13, the Pastoral Council voted unanimously to approve a series of activities that will lead to a final go/no go recommendation to Father Mahler in October. This follows extensive study of the parish center and church buildings by consultants, who made numerous recommendations. One of the activities authorized is a professional study of what our Parish can afford. Results of the study will be reported to parishioners in early May at a forum.

Between now and October there will be an extensive education program to keep you informed and part of the process. There will be regular updates in the church bulletin, and from the pulpit. Parishioner tours of the parish center and church buildings are scheduled for Saturday, February 28 and Sunday, March 1, following Mass. There will be parish-wide forums at which time your feedback will be solicited. The first forum is scheduled for Sunday afternoon, March 22, in the parish center.

We recommend that you visit St. Catherine's website, stcathofsiena.org and review preliminary facilities options. Also there will be a "virtual tour" of our facilities on the website by February 28.

This beautiful church building will be 50-years-old in 2012. Its roof and heating/cooling systems are well beyond their expected service lives. The parish center has major structural issues and was never intended for the active parish ministries that now enrich our lives.

Finally, we know that an obvious question will be: Why now? We believe that challenging economic times are no hindrance to success, if one's need is genuine. We ask that you join with us in determining our Parish's needs in order to carry forward Christ's ministry at St. Catherine's, not only for the near future but for those who follow us.

So, to summarize: a study will be started in March to determine what our parish can afford, results will be reported to you in early May, an extensive education program will continue to assure that parishioners know what's being done and that you have an opportunity to feedback your views. A final recommendation to Father Mahler will be made by the Parish Council this coming October. I always keep in mind Proverbs 3:5. "Trust in the Lord with all your heart; in all ways acknowledge Him and He will make your path straight."