

February 28, 2009 Pulpit Update

My name is Matt Cooney, and I'm a member of St. Catherine's pastoral council. On this first weekend of Lent 2009, I'm here to ask you not to give up something, but rather to give something. That something is your time following Mass today. We shall be leading a brief tour of St. Catherine's church building and parish center, so that you may see firsthand some of the facilities issues that we've been mentioning in recent weeks. The tour will start right outside the west entrance of the church. We'll gather in a group and Steve Moolin, an architect, and Mike Redlin and I will help navigate around the buildings. This should take perhaps 15 to 20 minutes.

Why are we doing this? St. Catherine's buildings currently inhibit the parish from achieving its vision of being a vibrant Catholic community where all are welcomed, challenged and supported on their life journeys. And our facilities also hinder our mission to inspire, engage and nurture our community through worship, witness and service. Our facilities inhibit us in three significant ways: (1) the church building and parish center systems have significantly deteriorated; (2) they are ineffective in meeting parishioners' needs. There is inefficient traffic flow and insufficient space in the church and in the parish center; and (3) the old designs for the church and parish center do not meet current building code requirements.

Two weeks ago a letter was sent to three fundraising study companies seeking proposals from them on helping us understand what our financial capacity is to meet your parish's genuine needs. A company

will be selected in early March, it will conduct the parish's financial capacity study during March and April, and we shall report the results of the study to you in early May.

No decision has been made on whether to proceed with any construction. A number of parish forums will be held, starting on Sunday, March 22nd, to solicit your views on prioritizing use of our parish facilities. After listening to you, the Pastoral Council will make a final recommendation to Father Mahler in October.

You may also obtain additional information on the facilities project at stcathofsiena.org. Click on the Facilities Tab. You will find a link to a Virtual Tour of church building and parish center issues. You will also be able to leave feedback by using an e-mail address for St. Catherine's found at the website.

Tonight you have an opportunity firsthand to learn more about your parish's ministries and to see for yourself how the church building and parish center facilities are inhibiting us from achieving our vision and mission.

Join us right outside the west entrance and help to shape the future of St. Catherine's ministries now and for those who will follow us. The tour will take only 15 to 20 minutes. Please hold questions until the end, and we'll stay as long as you wish to answer them.