

Pulpit Update, June 13 and 14, 2009

Hello, I'm _____, a member of your Pastoral Council, and I'm here to provide you with an update on the proposed Facilities Projects we've been sharing with you since last fall. We have the final results of the Financial Feasibility study to share with you, as well as a disturbing report from the engineering company hired to assess the integrity of the 32 laminated beams that support the church roof.

First, though, Father Mike and the Council are deeply appreciative of the diligent attention you have given the proposed project for the last six months, as shown by your attention to the pulpit updates, the many bulletin inserts, the tours, two forums, the numerous studies published on our website, and your many, many probing questions of us.

Second, we were humbled by the tremendous response to the RSI Financial Feasibility Study, conducted last month, which tested one concept for the proposed Facilities Projects. Over 160 Parish Households responded to the RSI survey. That response rate of better than 25% of all parish households far surpassed RSI's expectations, and led them to have great faith in the validity of the conclusions they drew from your responses.

Final results of the RSI Financial Feasibility study, received this week, showed that St. Catherine's could hope to raise about one million dollars in a three-year fundraising campaign. While that is much less than the amount needed for the concept design that underlay the study, it certainly provides us with a starting point for getting to work. And work clearly must be done, and soon.

Also within the last three weeks, the engineering firm mentioned previously concluded that four of the church's 32 support beams have serious decay and need steel reinforcement to continue to support the roof. Many of the remaining 28 beams have internal decay, which can be corrected with epoxy injections and a wrapping of a protective aluminum skin. As you may recall, we had already determined that the church roof and the HVAC system needed replacement as soon as those projects could be scheduled. We had planned to make recommendations to Fr. Mike in October but have concluded that the beams and roof project need to be completed during this construction season.

With these results in hand, the Pastoral Council and the Finance Committee met this week, and recommended moving forward on five critical actions relating to our facilities:

- Hiring an architect to draw up bid specifications for replacement of the church roof.
- Contracting with Dajon Associates of New Jersey to make repairs to the church's 32 laminated support beams.
- Soliciting bids for the repair or replacement of the Parish Center roof.
- Soliciting bids for the assessment of the air quality in the Parish Center, so as to ensure the health and safety of those who use the Center.

- Soliciting bids for replacing the church's obsolete HVAC system.

In concert with the Finance Committee, the Council also decided to go forward with these projects only when we were certain of the Parish's willingness to pay. Therefore, a sixth critical action relating to funding was agreed to:

- Hiring our Feasibility Study Consultant, RSI, to assist the Parish in planning and executing a successful three-year fundraising campaign to pay for the actions listed previously.

Father Mike has approved this action plan. We therefore expect to move promptly on all six items. There is more detail on these matters in a two-page insert in today's bulletin, which we hope you will take home and read. As well, minutes of last week's Pastoral Council meeting, at which the six action steps were decided, have been posted on our website for your reference, as we keep faith with our promise to make all aspects of the Facilities Projects as transparent as possible. And the final RSI Feasibility Study report also is there under the Facilities Tab. A hardcopy also is available for review at the church office. Thank you for your attention. Please keep us, and Father Mike, in your prayers.