

From the Pastor's Desk

NOVEMBER 6, 2011

Annual Financial Report – Capital Campaign Update – Church Renovations

According to the policies of the Diocese of Pittsburgh, each October every pastor is required to submit a financial report detailing the previous fiscal year's financial activity. Inserted into today's bulletin is the report that I sent to the Diocese last week. It covers the fiscal year that began on July 1, 2010 and ended on June 30, 2011 and was reviewed and approved by the members of our parish Finance Council at its most recent meeting.

As you review the report you will find that the parish ended the year with a healthy operating surplus and savings deposit despite the many capital improvements to our buildings and property. You will also find a very positive "ending cash balance" in the school's budget.

Many thanks to all of you who are so very generous to the parish and school and sacrifice so much to ensure their financial health and viability. Special thanks also to our Business Manager, Joanne Carmassi, our School Principal, Ken Klase and the members of our Finance Council who are so helpful in managing and overseeing the complex financial operations of the parish.

Capital Campaign

While we are on the subject of finances, it would be a good time to review the progress of the Jubilee Year Capital Campaign and the projects associated with it.

As you'll recall, before I arrived here in July 2008, Father Tom and the Finance Council had decided to initiate a Capital Campaign associated with the upcoming 50th Jubilee Year of the parish. The goal of the Campaign was to make improvements to our facilities and secure the financial footing of the parish for the next generation.

A list of prioritized goals was developed and the Campaign was launched in the final months of 2008. The first priority was to pay off the parish's debt of \$700,000. Next, there were to be renovations to the school building including a complete overhaul of the cafeteria and its three adjoining classrooms. Additional projects around the parish were also a part of the Campaign (paving of parking lots, new rectory roof, concrete repairs, etc...). There was also a sanctuary renovation planned as the final piece of the Capital Campaign.

Thanks to the generosity of our parishioners, the Campaign garnered a total of \$3,425,710. To date, payments totaling \$2,127,461 have been made. That means that we expect an additional \$1,298,249 in scheduled payments to come in by the end of 2013.

With such a successful response to the Campaign, we have been able to accomplish the following for Saint Louise Parish:

- The \$700,000 debt has been paid off in full
- New sound system for the church
- School cafeteria and three adjoining classrooms totally renovated
- School cafeteria air conditioned
- School science lab renovated with significant donations to the Capital Campaign by two donors
- Various classrooms renovated and updated
- Front church and school parking lots repaved
- New rectory roof
- Stucco repairs and repainting of church and rectory
- Church stonework repaired and repointed
- All concrete walkways around property repaired and resealed

At every turn, we have been striving to be careful stewards of the money that you have generously given. Please know that each project is carefully managed to ensure fiscal responsibility and the best possible outcome for the parish. As you continue to pay on your campaign pledges, understand that we will continue this level of dedication until all of the projects are complete.

Church Renovations

At the outset of the Capital Campaign, both the Finance Council and I stated clearly that Saint Louise would not borrow any money for projects related to the Campaign. I did not and do not want to put the parish in debt again when we have worked so hard to erase our debts.

Now, the next major project to be completed is the proposed renovations to the interior of the church. We have been working for over two years with the Astorino architectural firm. Their work will soon be drawing to its conclusion and we will begin the process of securing the final approvals of the Diocesan Building Commission. Once that process is completed we will be taking the project out to bid and utilize the same strict value-engineering process used with the cafeteria project. This will ensure quality work at the best possible price. With the cafeteria project, the bidding and value-engineering process took almost six months after which the contract was awarded to Mosites. This methodology helped us to avoid many mistakes that can occur along the way without the proper pre-planning and budgeting. After the bidding and value-engineering process is completed,

we will begin to work with the USC Township officials to get through the permit process.

While I had hoped to begin work on the interior of the church this coming January (2012) and conclude by Easter, this simply won't be feasible for two reasons:

- 1) There are still a lot of plans and processes to go through to get the necessary approvals; and
- 2) We currently have roughly \$350,000 in savings and the project is projected to cost around \$1 million.

Consequently, because of the many weddings already scheduled here for the summer and fall of 2012, the interior church renovations can't begin until next January (2013). This will allow us more time to save and plan to ensure that no borrowing will have to be done, and that a smooth completion with minimal disruptions to our parishioners can be accomplished.

Please note that with the rate of pledge payments coming in, there will be no problem in saving the required amount by January 2013.

Again, thank you for your continued financial support of our parish and the Capital Campaign. Your generosity will serve and benefit not only you and your family, but also the future generations who will comprise the Parish of Saint Louise de Marilla c.