

The Pastor's Pen

There has been much talk around our campus about transitioning into phase two of our capital campaign. It looks like, in general, that is the desire of parishioners--about 450 who took a recent survey and/or were personally interviewed on the topic. Several things seem clear to me: one is that people want to remain in motion and moving forward, primarily for the sake of future generations. A second thing is that parishioners want to separate wants from needs--people are not interested in funding a wish list but addressing issues that demand attention. People want more information to determine if our parish office is unsafe and whether we need to expand our sanctuary now or if it can wait.

I am convinced that the answer to the former is yes--the current parish office is dangerous and the answer to the latter is yes--the expansion of the church can wait. Last week a structural engineer inspected our office building. You can get a copy of his 37-page report from Blake or Randy at our office. A rough summary tells us that this house, built in 1967 as a rectory/residence, is wearing down. The west end of the building's foundation is crumbling from water run-off due to an uphill slant; there are multiple cracks in the foundation and significant external brick damage. The east end of the building is gradually falling off due to excess weight put on the cantilevered portion of the upper floor and the downhill slope of the ground. The upper floor of the split level structure is uneven--staff members and visitors have many anecdotes about objects that roll and humans that totter at the imbalance.

Most parishioners have been made aware that the aluminum electrical wiring is unsafe; we have, evidently, been lucky to avoid electrical fires. The electrical box is also apparently overloaded. Because it was created to serve primarily as a home in the 60s but used as a business office in modern times, the house has brought forth many challenges. Our technological society demands that we modernize for computer usage which the building does not permit. Our sensitivity to ADA and handicap accessibility needs have grown drastically in recent decades--though we have made many renovations to comply, great inconveniences remain. The sheer traffic within our central office has put immense strain on the building for which it was simply not made--you may recall that we had to shut down the building for a few weeks last summer to address some major plumbing issues. The unventilated attic is unsafe and leads to unnecessary expenditures for heating and cooling. Each page of the report lists additional minor repairs from skylights to roofing problems. The bottom line is that these are not just a few maintenance issues but safety and security concerns of which our leadership understands and wants all of us to be aware.

"As for me and my house, we shall serve the Lord."

Joshua 24:15

Heather Murphy has been in charge of Children's Liturgy for a few years now. She coordinates the program that allows the children to learn about the gospel on their level. We see these children enthusiastically going to the front of the church, so excited to go downstairs to have their own time during our homily. Without Heather, this would not be possible. Thank you so much to her and her staff! If you would like to volunteer your time and talent, please contact Kristi Powell, kpowell@stmkc.com or 942-2492 x209..

Stewardship Corner

There are certain Bible verses Christian stewards have memorized. One of them is in Saint Paul's letter to the Philippians found in today's second reading-- "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" (4:13).

Most people define themselves either by their problems or their possibilities. Fearful people wake up each morning ensnared by their problems. Christian stewards wake up reflecting on their possibilities with confidence and hope. Some stewardship reflection questions for the week: What challenges do you back away from because you doubt that you are up to them? What would you attempt tomorrow if you were sure God would help you?

~ International Catholic Stewardship Council

Opportunities for Involvement

Do you like to sing?

Additional cantors (song leaders) are needed for most of the Sunday Masses. Auditions are required. Contact Carol Rupp at crlrpp@aol.com for more information or to schedule an audition.

Computer Nerds and Techie Geeks Wanted

Do you have fun in the tech world? It has collided with the world at STM and we need you! High School youth and adults who like to work behind the scenes with cameras, sound or computers may apply. Time commitment is varied according to ministry. Contact Joan, 942-2492 x202 or information@stmkc.com.

Looking for a parish ministry to join?

Look no further! We are seeking more ushers at most of the Sunday Masses. No experience required; training is provided. This is a fun way to get more involved in our parish with a very limited time commitment. For more information, contact Sharon Arnett, sharon@stmkc.com or 942-2492 x208, or talk to her or any usher after Sunday Mass.