



February 4, 2024

Dear Parish family,

Thank you for filling out the survey for our capital campaign. It is my goal to keep everyone updated on information pertaining to our future projects and progress. Next week Lorraine Klemz, myself, Jim Shannon, our finance chairperson, and our business manager will be meeting with the Diocese to discuss the project and plans for moving forward.

Lorraine shared with me that some people have questions and asked if I would put something out there to the parish explaining the projects in more detail. So here I go...

Our original parish church building was what is now the parish center/gym. Our parish's new church was erected in 1989, which provides a beautiful space to worship. Our first mass was celebrated on December 19, 1992. Our church really embodies God's work in creation, by encompassing the natural sun light, with openness. Our goal is to respect what is present and build on that.

When the church was built there were financial limits as to materials and liturgical art in the church. It costs a lot to build a church. Our parish is 60 years old and this is our opportunity to build on what our founders began, doing our part for the next 100 years.

Projects:

I did talk at all the masses the first Sunday in January briefing all in attendance, addressing the what and why. Here it is in writing.

- 1) **Relocation of the Baptismal font from the narthex to the front right pier in the church.** The pipes feeding water to our present font have a crack(s) and are feeding dirt into the font. The narthex floor would need to be lifted and pipes repaired or replaced in order to fix the crack(s). We have an average of four to eight babies at Sunday baptisms. It does not help having the font in the narthex, asking everyone to be seated in church and then moving individual family groups back and forth, from the church into the narthex, then back into the church. Also, we are not able to regularly have baptisms at a Sunday mass, which allows the community to participate, or on Holy Saturday, the baptismal ritual is witnessed by only a handful of people, excluding the 800 people seated in the church. I understand the historical reason for a baptismal font in a narthex, but in all honesty, it is not practical for a parish our size, or as relevant in 2024. In fact, Bishop Siegel suggested I do this eight years ago. We are working with liturgical art designers and when we have renderings/drawings and pictures we will provide them to the parish.
- 2) **Above the relocated baptismal font (on the right front pier) we would like to have a mosaic of St Raphael (currently there is a wood box).** The choice of St Raphael is twofold; one he is our Patron Saint, and secondly, he is the Arch Angel of healing. Baptism is our ultimate healing as it restores our broken relationship with God and infuses God's love (Holy Spirit) in our souls.

- 3) **The main Aisle** (which is currently clay tile) would be replaced with a flooring that adds beauty, elevating our path to the sanctuary of our Lord. Also working with ideas at present, while respecting the whole space. We would replace the current clay tile flooring in the sanctuary.
- 4) When you look at the curved areas in the church it makes it more obvious that our reredos works against the original design. There are curves on both levels in the sanctuary, the altar is also rounded out, so are our windows on each side and this rounded out theme is carried over to the organ. We are looking at a reredos design that has some curvature to it, while not blocking the view of nature.
- 5) **A larger cross** would be suspended above the Altar.
- 6) **New light fixtures.** One of the designers commented that our light fixtures in the narthex are nicer than what we have in Church.
- 7) **Our doors on the front of the Church** are good industrial doors but are not church doors. We are working to have safe, sound, beautiful doors to replace them. Entering a church is not like entering a gym or office building, the doors alert the faithful that they are entering into God's house.
- 8) **A portion of the parapet on the church is failing and a section of roofing** on our administration building has passed its life expectancy and needs to be replaced.
- 9) **Upgrade the bathrooms in Church** During the readiness assessment, we were blessed by a parishioner who generously offered to pay for this work to be done.
- 10) **We have already raised \$20,000 from school parents for a real kitchen at the rear of the Gym.** This has been on our parish list for a long time, as we have no land to build a parish center. Our gym is our parish center and is used for various parish events and having a working kitchen would be a real blessing.
- 11) **Faculty/Teacher Endowment.** Our Catholic schoolteachers choose to work in Catholic schools, which do not pay near what public schools pay. Established in September 2023, it is our hope to build this endowment to subsidize our teachers' salaries, making their salaries more in line with public schools. This will help us keep our teachers longer. The surrounding Catholic schools in Naperville already have established endowments.

Pax,

Fr Dan