

Just a simple update about Fr. McCarthy. He is doing well; his spirits are high and he's so grateful for all the prayers and support from all of you. The Archdiocese's internal investigation has begun but at this point it's too early to say how long the process will last. I will keep you posted with any updates but for now we can pray for Fr. McCarthy, the accuser, and a just resolution.

The November 8th St. Elizabeth of the Trinity feast day went as well as it could have, I think considering the current restrictions with no food or hospitality allowed afterwards. There are holy cards available with the unification prayer on the back that you can pick up from the rectory if you didn't get one at Mass. We truly are blessed to have St. Elizabeth of the Trinity as our patroness.

I know everyone would like the spirit of unification and the honoring of the traditions and some symbols from the three parishes (especially St. Thecla and St. Cornelius) to happen more quickly, but much has already been accomplished. You'll notice in the church that the processional cross is new (from St. Cornelius) the candles on the back altar are from St. Thecla and are oil burning so they can be used more regularly. The candelabras that used wax candles before were not usable for more than a couple Masses before clogging up. We are also intending to bring over the newer presider/deacon chairs from St. Cornelius. Slowly but surely, we're blending symbols as we can.

I brought the hanging wooden statue of St. Thecla from the sanctuary of the church to our sacristy, we're still considering the right spot for her. St. Cornelius parish did not have a statue of St. Cornelius but does have a sacred image that we are going to bring over. The Our Lady of Guadalupe image, so especially meaningful to our Spanish speaking parishioners, is temporarily tucked by the marble Our Lady image in front. There are other plans too of redoing the front sign and adding a stained-glass image of St. Elizabeth of the Trinity in the church...it just takes time and there is so much to do.

The Unification Committee is beginning to transition into the more permanent councils (i.e. Finance Council, Parish Council, and Evangelization team). The volunteers on the Unification Committee have been involved for about eight months and were responsible for such things as giving input on the Mass times, inventorying sacred items from all three campuses, connecting ministry leaders from all three merging parishes, creating FAQ's and new signage for the neighborhood, and have offered me constructive suggestions about what more the parish can do to make the merge as unifying as possible. I truly appreciate the time, ideas and energy they have contributed; may the God bless them!

There will also be something of a "tradition" committee with members from all three parishes to help advise about how best to honor the past three parishes on this campus while helping build the new identity of St. Elizabeth at the same time. It is important to have continued input about how people's spirits are in this process and how we can make it as welcoming and inclusive as possible; we're happy to hear from you.

I know things have not been perfect in this merger either at the parish or school, but overall I think it is coming together with God's grace and the hard work of parish and school staff, dedicated volunteers and all of your continued prayers and support.

Through it all the Lord is doing good work here, let's make sure we do our part and not bury our own talents, so that we can hear our Savior say: ***"Well done, my good and faithful servant....come share your master's joy."***

God bless,

Fr. Mike

