

Various people have asked over the last few months about a general sense of how the parish was doing financially, how the assets of the property sales have and will be used and the general strategic plan going forward for the parish. These are big questions that require some response. St. Elizabeth of the Trinity Parish was created officially on July 1st, 2020 (in the middle of Covid).

There are three phases in the Archdiocesan Renew My Church (RMC) process: “Discernment and Decisions”, “Operations Transition”, and “Building the New Reality”. For the most part we are in the Building the New Reality (BNR) phase with the exception that we still haven’t sold the two churches of St. Thecla and St. Cornelius yet and are still stabilizing operationally. The BNR phase consists mainly of accompanying people to unity in the Lord, a spiritual renewal, and helping to form intentional disciples of Jesus Christ.

The operational transition is going fairly well and is easier to quantify. If you remember when we first merged, one big question was parking. Since then, we added twenty diagonal spots on Moody and a 35-stall lot across the street to go along with the existing small lot, mostly addressing that need. The over \$2.5 million deferred capital repairs are being addressed which includes tuckpointing and roofing every building on campus as needed (the gym and rectory are complete; the school and church still have more to be done).

Other projects are being planned as we speak, that include a parish sign in front of the church and signage for the gym and school. There are also designs for displaying the legacy images of St. Tarcissus, St. Thecla, and St. Cornelius as a permanent memorial within the church. All of these projects that deal with unifying the parishes have the creative input from our various councils and ministries including Parish Council, School Board, Finance Council etc... Our new school mascot was artistically created by the students and voted on by them while being professionally produced by some of our school parents...we do it together!

Next month, the Finance Council will review the Annual Report for the FY ending 2022 and it will be published in the bulletin. We are intending to have monthly offerings reported in the bulletin, which is a bit more involved due to electronic giving and envelopes/cash being used. We will be reforecasting this year’s budget and likely giving some updates on that by this February. I will say that my goal and that of the Finance Council, is to be transparent with how the assets of the parish are being used which shows good stewardship of the parish resources.

It is easier to quantify progress in terms of projects and financial reporting since they are visible and more tangible. The matters of the heart and spirit are more important, but harder to measure. We are working on a more comprehensive strategic plan that will position our parish, school, and ministries to be more vital and alive in the Lord and for the community for years to come.

Jesus gave a parable this weekend that contrasted a tax collector and pharisee in prayer, one was very proud and rejected, the other was humble and his prayer was heard. We have all been very humbled by the experiences of the merger and possibly other areas of our lives. That can be a good thing to make our prayers to the Lord more heartfelt so that they will be heard. Jesus Christ promises us great things when we are humble: ***“whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and the one who humbles himself will be exalted.”***

God bless!

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LUKE 18:14