

NATIVITY CATHOLIC CHURCH

THE FUTURE IS NOW CAMPAIGN AND CHURCH RENOVATION UPDATE MARCH 16/17, 2019

I have good news to share with you today about The Future Is Now Capital Campaign and our upcoming church renovation project. Since arriving at Nativity in January, I have been meeting and talking regularly with parish leadership to help us move forward with the plans for the renovation and expansion of our worship space. Among those involved in these conversations have been our Parish Council; the Finance Council; our building committee; and the parish staff. Here are some highlights of what has been happening over the past several weeks and what we can expect in the weeks and months to come. All of this information and more is available on our parish website and also as a handout as you leave Mass today.

Let's start with construction. Although you will see some outdoor groundwork beforehand, on Monday, April 29, a little more than a week after Easter and the day after our First Communion Masses, we will begin the process of moving out of this building to allow construction on our renovated worship space to start. Construction is anticipated to last for about seven months, with a goal of being in our renovated church by Christmas. The plans for this building are beautiful – expanding our seating capacity, bringing more natural light into the church, upgraded lighting and sound, a renovated sanctuary area, new liturgical art, a large new gathering space with new restrooms, and much more. Updated drawings and artists renderings can be seen in the narthex and on our parish website, and I encourage you to check them out. I am especially excited about the stained glass windows, designed by a Benedictine monk of Saint Meinrad Archabbey, which will be in our renovated sanctuary and depict the choir of angels that sang at the birth of Jesus. You can see a rendering of these windows in the narthex of the church after Mass today.

Because of the extent of construction, we will not be able to use this building for Masses during those months. So beginning April 30, weekday and weekend Masses will be held in the Parish Center, and Thursday morning school Masses will be in the gym. In order to accommodate our parishioners and visitors in a smaller space, during the months of construction we will be adding an additional Sunday morning Mass at 7:15 am, beginning on May 5. We're all going to be stretched during these months, but our parish leadership and I believe this is the best plan for our temporary worship space, and I am confident that it will work for us. Further details about the logistics of masses and the celebration of other sacraments while we are in our transitional space can be found in the information handed out after Mass and on the parish website.

Of course, an important part of this process is financing. We have been extraordinarily blessed here at Nativity with the response to the Future Is Now Capital Campaign, which has seen more than \$2.5 million in pledges toward this project. Additional money from previous campaigns and parish fundraising will cover the financing of this renovation project. However, because many of the pledges for the campaign are set to come in over a 5-year period – and we are currently in year 2 of those 5 years – our Parish Council and Finance Council approved seeking a \$1.6 million Line of Credit from the Archdiocese of Indianapolis in order to begin construction this spring. When we have to begin accessing this Line of Credit, and to what extent, will depend on the pace at which pledges are fulfilled. Any amounts borrowed against this line of credit will be repaid over the next four years as pledges come in. The need for this Line of Credit was part of the financing plan for this project from the beginning, and the details and terms have been reviewed by our Finance Council and will continue to be monitored by them as we move forward. Again, further details about the financing aspect of the project can be found in the FAQs document.

But there is a second financial component of this project that we must also address. We are currently in the process of receiving and reviewing bids for the construction. In looking at actual costs versus projected costs, and comparing that with our projected income from the Campaign and other funding sources, there are some significant decisions that will have to be made. This is a big project - \$3.5 million – and we are committed to being good stewards of our resources in providing a beautiful and functional worship space for our parish and community. But there is a good chance that we won't be able to do everything we want, at least not right now, especially in terms of some of the finishings and liturgical art items for the church. We will need to prioritize the most important parts of the project, and some items may end up on a wish list to be added later, as additional funds are received. I will be working closely with the building committee and parish leadership in the coming weeks as more details are finalized, and we will continue to communicate the latest updates to the parish community.

I have said before that I feel blessed to be part of this parish community at this moment in its history. Many people have poured heart and soul into the life of this parish in so many ways, and I believe we are well positioned to take the next steps in sharing the good news of Jesus Christ through prayer, fellowship, faith formation, and evangelization in this local community. Certainly, a church building does not do the work of the gospel on its own – we, the people of the Church, are the primary way God is made known and loved. But the cross on top of the new 50-foot-high steeple that will rise above this building will let this community know that here – along Southeastern Avenue just east of Five Points – is a place where you can encounter the living God. Here, at Nativity Catholic Church, is a community where the Word is proclaimed and where the Sacraments are celebrated and where men, women, and children are sent out on mission to love as we have been loved. Here, in this place, our young ones are baptized and our dead are commended to almighty God; here we gather to be sent forth; here we form a community of faith. May the choirs of angels that sang at the Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ help us keep our eyes fixed on him, so that the work of our hands and the sacrifices of our hearts may lead more people to Jesus, the reason this parish church exists. And now ... let's get ready to build!