

The building committee met this week with GLPM Architects and White Construction. Our goal is to build onto the front of the church and to freshen things up inside. Our construction budget is around \$550,000, but the bids came in 20% high. We have some options. We can buy less expensive materials, but we don't want cheap materials. We can ask the bishop about increasing our budget, but I think it's not prudent to borrow much more. In the fiscal year just ending, for the first time in at least 10 years, we did not receive all the regular contributions we were expecting, so we withdrew some money from savings. Five fiscal years ago we received \$134,000 in contributions. One fiscal year ago we received nearly \$169,000. Last year we budgeted for 174,000 but we received 161— so 8000 less than the previous year; the number of our members has not changed.. St. Aloysius in Maysville, though, went from \$13,500 5 years ago to almost \$21,000 last year, 2000 more than we budgeted for them. It costs us \$200,000 a year to operate St. Munchin. When you think of it, it's a bargain. You cannot put a price on what we do. But, for whatever reason, we didn't meet our regular goal last year, so I'm hesitant to request a much larger loan on our building project.

To get the project under budget we are considering a change in design. Inside the church we had talked about taking out the 2 walls on either side of the sanctuary and building a new wall behind the altar for a new sacristy. If we leave the sanctuary walls as they are, we can save quite a bit. If we solicit special gifts for new sanctuary furnishings, we can make it look nicer. We can still move the tabernacle to the back wall, relocate the music area over here and set up the baptismal font over there. We can paint the walls and recoat the ceiling. We can arrange the pews to make more room for the coffin during funerals and for communion stations every Sunday. We can still have the addition: an accessible gathering space, restrooms, a new reconciliation room, a new vesting sacristy and storage. We can use the present sacristy to cleanse the vessels, and the room we use for reconciliation and child care can be devoted entirely to storage.

The basement under the addition is a question. Members of the committee want to keep that basement in the plan. They argue we have one chance to build it; you can't come back and do it later. As of today we still don't know if that will be feasible. We're meeting again this Thursday, and we should have more answers then. We really are very close. You could be moving out of here and over to the gym before I get back from my trip. Your contributions and your patience should be rewarded very soon.

Where am I going this time? I will be attending a meeting of the International Commission on English in the Liturgy in Newry, Northern Ireland, and a meeting of Societas Liturgica in Palermo, Sicily. The first meeting concerns changes in the words for the prayers at mass, and the second meeting is an ecumenical and international gathering of specialists in the field of liturgy. I'm giving a short presentation there on how I preached about September 11 here the first year after the terrorist attacks.

**Father Aloysius Kasoma will be here while I'm away. I'd like to thank the Barnhill family who are hosting him. He will be speaking at a few other churches while he is here, so a priest from Conception Abbey will come the next 2 weekends, and then you'll see Father Aloysius after that.**

**I have received a number of questions about statements from the Vatican this month concerning the Latin mass and the meaning of the word "church". I will say more about these matters when I get back from this trip. In the meantime, I want you to know that Mass in Cameron will continue to be in English and that you may continue to call every other church building in town a church.**

**I always miss you when I'm gone. I really do, and I keep you in my prayers. I'll be back in four weeks. I only ask two things while I'm gone: Love the Lord your God with all your heart and your neighbor as yourself.**