

3rd Sunday of Lent

I've received the results of the feasibility study on developing the eastern side of our property. Overall, our members and consultants support the plan to move forward, so I'm giving you the official word today that we will proceed.

Our dream is to rehab the office building to house Morning Glory Ministries; demolish the former school building, garages and Donnelly Hall to make way for more parking; and erect a new building on the corner of 11th & Broadway with restrooms, offices, meeting spaces, an expanded gift shop, and a new Donnelly Hall. We anticipate that this will cost \$9 million.

We received two extraordinary gifts that make this dream more possible. Many of our members include the cathedral in their will, and every contribution helps us. From one estate this year we received quite a substantial gift: \$600,000. We used part of it to pay off our short-term debt. The remaining "mortgage" you see in the bulletin represents a no-interest loan from our own endowment that paid off the renovation 20 years ago. It's down to \$225,000. I'm visiting with the finance council this month to make a decision about what remains.

More significantly, I have this news to share: Catholic Charities provides wonderful services to our diocese. Recently, to focus its ministry more productively, it sold several properties, including the Cathedral Towers next door to us. Bishop Johnston felt that since the cathedral had ceded that land years ago to provide quality, low income housing downtown, our parish should receive an allocation from that sale: \$3 million to support our social services through Morning Glory Ministries and other assistance to members.

Because we are a cathedral, the bishop's development director will help us solicit gifts from other Catholics in the diocese. We hope to raise \$3 million within the parish and \$3 million from other sources; we have \$3 million already. It's actually more than that because we got another \$20,000 we hadn't even asked for.

I have polled the members of our pastoral council, finance council, and stewardship council. They favor going forward, though several members expressed reasonable concerns: We cannot rely on a few donors; we need everyone's time, talent and treasure. We need to build our membership, especially among those living in the burgeoning downtown community. We need to focus on our mission: especially providing worship and social services. Some fear that our current members cannot contribute sufficiently, and that future members will face increased expenses. People also want better parking on site, and the minimal increase we anticipate will be disappointing. Members also want us priests to have a place to live if the renovation takes over our home. Hiring fundraisers adds to the expense.

On the plus side, we benefited this year from the government's PPP loan. Replacing the damaged finial in front of the building can likely be covered with other funds. A new Donnelly Hall will be rentable, providing a fresh source of income. We were shocked that 140 new spaces of underground parking could cost \$15 million. We will pursue alternate solutions. It costs money to raise money, and we believe the company that began our work is best positioned for

3rd Sunday of Lent

the two-pronged campaign inside and outside the parish. We will consider options for priest residences on and off site.

On the day I share this news with you, the gospel tells of Jesus cleansing the temple of buyers and sellers. He treated the temple like his own home, which it was; he wanted other activities to have their proper place. We want the same. We want everyone to know this cathedral is their spiritual home, with supplementary buildings to enrich their social lives.

On behalf of the building committee, staff and councils, thank you for your interest in this project, and pray that what we do will praise God.