

3rd Sunday of Advent

The groundbreaking for our new building and parking lot took place Thursday afternoon on our patronal day, the solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. For years the leaders of our community have been meeting and planning, our members have been sacrificing and pledging, friends of the cathedral have been praying and contributing, and last week we reached the financial markers that the diocese sets for the bishop to approve a construction project of this size. Bishop Johnston was here on Thursday to make that announcement, bless the ground, and pick up a shovel to turn the first spade of dirt. Congratulations to you all!

The first part of the work will take place a few blocks from here. Bishop Johnston is inviting Morning Glory Ministries to continue its meal service in a new location, the bottom floor of the Catholic Center at 9th and Baltimore in the historic New York Life Building, where he lives. Renovation there will take at least a couple of months, but as soon as the cafeteria is ready, the meal service will move.

That will allow us to begin demolition. We'll be tearing down everything that is not the cathedral. About a year after that, a new parish center will rise on the corner of 11th and Broadway. The parking lot will stretch from there to 12th Street. Even that is not enough space for the cars that come here on a typical weekend, so we have reached an agreement with the owners of the multi-level garage across Broadway. They are donating spots to us. You will be able to park there free of charge, cross the street, and worship here.

The first floor of the new building will be at the Broadway level. You'll enter from the south. Our offices and meeting rooms will be there, as well as the emergency assistance we offer through Morning Glory Ministries. We will still help people get an ID, pick up winter coats, lace up new shoes, and obtain items for personal hygiene. That service remains here.

The upper floor of the building will match the level of this floor. From here you will be able to enter the new building, which will greet you with more restrooms and an expanded gift shop. You can visit over coffee and donuts as you look out on the city. And a new Father Donnelly Hall will be suitable for larger receptions after weddings, ordinations, 50th anniversary celebrations, and more.

All of this is possible because of the vision of planners and the generosity of our donors. We anticipate the total cost will run \$14.4 million. We are already at \$10.8 million. That's enough to begin, but the more we continue to raise now the lower the debt the cathedral will adopt. The pledge form is in the pews and on our web site.

On the Advent weekend that the Church celebrates *Gaudete* Sunday, we have many reasons to rejoice. Our responsorial psalm today proclaims, "The LORD God keeps faith forever, secures justice for the oppressed, gives food to the hungry.... The LORD shall reign forever; your God, O Zion, through all generations." Our campaign theme is Building Glory, glory to God, who rescues those in need and rules for all generations. Thank you for helping the cathedral fulfill its mission to feed the hungry and praise the Lord for generations to come.

Sunday, December 11, 2022