

January 31, 2020

Building a Church...Continuing a Mission Committee Report

The second meeting of the Church Restoration Committee was held on Friday, January 31, 2020. At that time, committee chair Frank Bivona reviewed the parish's progress in four key areas.

The first area concerned insurance. The parish has been assembling the documents that will be used to support its insurance claim. To that end, extensive documentation from the 1979-1982 construction of the church has been recovered, and a meeting with the original architect has been completed. MBS has also compiled a detailed list of the contents of the church at the time of the fire. Further, the parish has already met with the organ company and obtained a comprehensive projection of the organ's replacement cost. On February 3, committee members met with the Director of the Office of Risk Management and Insurance Services for the Archdiocese of Newark to present the materials that have been assembled and get further information about the status of the claim. In addition, the parish will be looking for some direction as to when the site of the fire can be cleaned up. The debris from the fire cannot be removed until all of the insurance adjusters have completed their on-site inspection. The committee is trying to move this forward so the site can be cleaned up as soon as possible.

The second topic of discussion concerned the selection of an architect for the rebuilding of the church. Requests for Proposals (RFPs) were sent to four architects familiar with church construction (and recommended by the Archdiocese) two weeks ago; the committee has thus far met with three of the four, and their completed RFPs are due to be submitted on February 7. The process has been helped immeasurably by the expertise and quick responses offered by the Archdiocesan Office of Property Management. Once proposals have been received and reviewed, another set of interviews will be conducted to ascertain the best choice for our parish.

The third topic discussed was finances. The single most important financial consideration in the rebuilding effort is to obtain an accurate estimate of the ultimate insurance claim, which is currently being reviewed. That estimate, coupled with funds already contributed to the *Founded on the Past, Focused on the Future* capital campaign and donations to the MBS Church Restoration Fund, will help to establish a realistic foundation for the budget on which our new construction will be based.

The final topic of discussion was the need to establish for all parishioners a firm foundation of the liturgical considerations essential for rebuilding. In that regard, the parish hosted a workshop on February 6 for all parishioners. Directed by Reverend Thomas Dente, the Director of the RCAN Office of Divine Worship, the purpose of that presentation was to review the basic tenets of *The General Instruction of the Roman Missal (GIRM)* and *Built of Living Stones*, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' document outlining fundamental considerations in church construction. Following that presentation, Father Dente, Father John and Committee Chair Frank Bivona responded to questions about the evening's program and rebuilding plans.

A summary of the February 6 presentation will appear in the next church bulletin. As a reminder, all meetings of the Committee will be reported in the MBS church bulletin the week following the meeting. The current Committee report, as well as an archive of past reports, is also available on the parish website, under the tab "MBS Rebuilds".

The next committee meeting will take place sometime in February, once more specific information becomes available regarding the status of the insurance claim and the RFPs of potential architects.