



May 28, 2021

Dear Parishioners,

We hope this letter finds you and your loved ones well and safe.

A great deal of important work has been accomplished with the planned rebuild of our beloved church since our last update several months ago. Given the considerable complexities of the planning and funding for this immense project, numerous factors contribute to the timeline for reconstruction. We understand that the parish community is eager for updates on progress.

In December, the Rebuilding Committee provided a detailed explanation of its work during the year since the fire. Our architects shared the parish's plans for the new church, community center, and chapel (both of those reports remain archived on the parish website). The response to the images and designs shared at that time was overwhelmingly positive.

In its report on December 11, 2020, the Committee also indicated that some insurance factors remained unresolved and that the disposition of those matters could have a significant impact on the design that the architects and Rebuilding Committee were recommending.

At this time, the Committee is pleased to announce that significant progress has been made concerning the insurance process. While there are still planning aspects that remain a topic of discussion, the Committee is now confident that the insurance settlement that the church will receive aligns with the estimates the Committee anticipated when it recommended the design of the new church to the parish in December. While the insurance claim is still incomplete and its negotiations remain an ongoing process, the Committee continues to pursue the appropriate coverage to which the church is entitled.

Most Blessed Sacrament will now move forward with the second stage of the architectural process, which involves generating a more detailed description of both the interior and exterior designs for the new building. This work will enable the church to prepare bid documents for construction and move ahead to seek approvals from the Franklin Lakes Planning Board. Given this progress, we anticipate identifying a builder later this year.

As the Committee indicated in December, there remains a gap between the expected insurance settlement, the funds raised during the *Founded on the Past, Focused on the Future* capital campaign, as well as the contributions made over the past sixteen months to the MBS Rebuilds Fund, and the current budget projections for the new church building. That gap will be bridged with a capital fundraising effort that will begin shortly.

Because the rebuilding will be partially refinanced by insurance coverage, the process includes a review of the claim by the insurance company. This involves evaluations by third-party adjusters and insurance carriers and consultation with Archdiocesan and parish representatives and external experts at each step in the process.

Adding to the complexity of this plan and based on a survey of parishioners conducted last year, are the requirements for the new facility. This includes increased seating and overflow capacity to accommodate the needs of our growing congregation.

The Archdiocese of Newark's finance and insurance offices and the parish's administrative leadership, along with the town's building office and other project stakeholders, are in alignment on the priority and necessity of this project. We continue to take all necessary steps to move this project forward in a timely and judicious manner. In the coming weeks, as updates are provided by the insurance carriers and related third-party stakeholders, we look forward to keeping the parish community informed. We are grateful for the continuing support and patience of our parishioners.

The Archdiocese of Newark remains committed to supporting the planned rebuilding of the church of the Most Blessed Sacrament in Franklin Lakes and joins the parish community in looking forward to the day when parishioners will celebrate and worship in the new facility.

Through the intercession of Saint Joseph and Mary, our Good Mother, may God bless you and your families.

Sincerely,

Reverend John R. Job
Pastor

Frank Bivona
Chair of the Rebuild Committee