

From the Pastor's Desk:

Following Jesus isn't always easy - he talks about that in the Gospel. God will sometimes place us in situations, or lead us to unknown things. When we ask to be used by God we may find ourselves in situations we didn't bargain on - as the first reading said "You duped me O Lord, and I let myself be duped." Are we really willing to let ourselves be used by God when we ask? When I was on my retreat I spent hours reflecting on this and spoke about it to my spiritual director. I see where the Lord has led me, and what he has asked me to do. Amid all the challenges, I know God is supporting me. We may still want to run from our responsibilities at times - but God has a way of making even the difficult become sweet ... in time.

There has been some progress on the handicap access issue. Due to the tireless work of Paul LeBlanc, and after several sessions with tape measures and discussions with architects - we believe that we now have a plan that will allow the work to be done in a quality manner and within our price range. The obstacle we have been encountering are contractors who are so booked up that they are unable to commit to the job. The savings we anticipate should help us to expand to the fuller project (which included additional bathrooms), and still keep us in budget. Please keep praying.

Speaking of budget ... this past week the Finance Council met and approved our budget for next fiscal year. The work of budget committees from the school and Finance Council, and the coordination by our Business Manager Bill Lawton, produced a clear proposed budget to work with towards the final version. We have budgeted a deficit - not something I like to see. Some of this is the anticipated fundraising losses for the school that we will experience, and another results from the situation with The Caring Place that I mentioned in an earlier column. A mild increase in weekly donations would be a help and wipe away some of this, and if fundraising efforts at the school (including BINGO) be able to reopen sooner, then we will be able to close the gap. We are also blessed with healthy enrollment at the school. We are at capacity (a reduced capacity due to the COVID), and *we have a waiting list*. We are looking at how to provide a virtual environment for those on the waiting list so that they will be part of the family and able to join us fully when the pandemic restrictions subside.

The first meeting of our hiring committee for our new principal will meet on Monday. You may remember that I mentioned previously that Mrs. Tavaska will be retiring. If anyone knows a qualified individual who may wish to interview for the position, resumes can be sent to the school care of the Principal Search Committee.

A group met to brainstorm faith formation activities, and I have received personal communications with great ideas that we can do (some with a limited physical presence, or fully virtual). Mrs. Sweeney and I met to discuss these and incorporate them with the planning that was already underway. Our sing project (that was slowed to a halt by COVID is now up and running and the committee is working to get to the next step in the process of producing coordinated signs across our campuses. This team previously worked well to redesign our logo, and come up with designs for stationary and business cards. We are fortunate to have such talented members of our parish willing to assist in this.

God provides us with new challenges as a community and individually. But the decision to follow God always means that these challenges will be countered with resources and strength

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to complete them. Let us all give thanks to a God who so enthusiastically partners with us and lets us join in the accomplishing of great things.

Peace,
Fr. Steve