



January 26, 2021

Dear Friends,

Our OMPH vision calls us to be *"a welcoming community witnessing our faith in Christ and growing in our relationship with Jesus as we journey together toward eternal salvation."*

Some of our present parishioners remember those harrowing days, 25 years ago, when the weight of the snow collapsed the school-gym roof. Thank God, no one was hurt. Under the leadership of Fr. Gildea and the parish pastoral council, a beautiful church, offices, and new school wing were built. For the last 25 years, unfortunately, the parish has been in a maintenance posture, rather than creatively looking at the 'future possibilities' of OMPH.

Last year, as good stewards, the Long Range Planning Committee of the Finance Council began looking at the long term needs of our parish. The committee focused on three areas of the parish that should be addressed based on their declining condition and the needs of the parish, keeping in mind the parish mission and vision statements.

After we informed the diocese of our intentions, we quickly decided it was time for the parish community to be part of the process. So we formed three subcommittees with 10-12 parishioners in each group. Each group consists of various members of our parish community, with diverse backgrounds, and different skills.

The three areas of our parish community that make up the three subcommittees are the following:

The Bernadine Center

The ministerial life at OMPH has grown rapidly over the years. We presently have over 35 active ministries at OMPH, and we do not have enough room for meetings and various hospitality functions. Our mission and vision statements challenge us to be a 'welcoming' community to everyone, but especially those who are searching for the Good News. We need more space to be that 'welcoming' presence of Christ through our parish ministries. The Bernadine Center has served our parish community well over the years, but presently, it is hardly used. This subcommittee will be looking at different

possibilities in regard to the Bernadine Center, always keeping in mind our Mission and Vision statements.

The School

Even before the pandemic, OMPH Catholic School was experiencing space limitations. When this occurs, the school begins to look at places where programs need to be limited. Unfortunately, when this occurs, the school cannot grow.

This subcommittee will study the space limitations at the school and recommend ways in which the school can reach out creatively to meet the needs of all the children who come to OMPH.

In addition to this, we have learned from parent surveys that a full day preschool for 3 and 4 year olds is greatly needed. Therefore, this subcommittee will be looking at OMPH 'specializing' in Catholic preschool education for young children.

The Grounds, Landscaping etc.

While we have hard working parishioners who selflessly care for the grounds, it has been pointed out that many of the trees are now over grown, the OMPH sign is not practical, the lighting is insufficient, and there should be more gardens for reflection and prayer.

If a parish is to be a 'welcoming' community, then it must begin when a person approaches the property. This subcommittee will ask - *"when a person, or family approaches OMPH - do they feel welcomed - when they are searching for a place of worship, or a school for their child? Do they experience the warmth and beauty of God's creation in the parish landscape and garden design?"*

As a part of this process, the parish conducted what is called a "Reserve Study." This study is highly recommended before beginning any major building projects. A couple weeks ago, a Professional Reserve Analyst came to our parish and looked at the condition of our buildings, appliances, machinery, grounds, windows, etc. This firm after completing their study will provide the parish with a report listing the useful life of all the items inventoried. We will know how much we will have to spend going ahead, based on this report - and what we will have available in Reserve.

We have currently implemented at OMPH parish what is called the **Master Plan Process**. To be faithful stewards, we need to evaluate our present needs, but also we need to look to our future needs. The Master Plan Process will be implemented in different phases over the next 15 years in coordination with the parish finances.

During the process, the parish pastoral council will submit survey questions to all the parishioners. Newsletters will be sent out on a regular basis, also from the parish pastoral council, informing parishioners of the subcommittee activities.

Each subcommittee will focus on their area of concern, and will recommend with the assistance of professionals (*architect, engineer, etc.*) a preferred plan to present to the Master Plan Team (*Future Possibilities Group*). The Master Plan Team, also consisting of approximately 12 parishioners, will collect the results of the subcommittees and put together a final prioritization/phasing plan.

The Master Plan will go to the Pastoral Council for approval and then to the Pastor for his approval. Then, final town hall meetings will be held to seek input and approval of the plan (*exhibit, model*) from the parish community.

The Master Plan will then be submitted to the Diocese for approval.

Although the majority of you are not in the meetings, you are just as much a part of this process as the committee members. If you have any comments or suggestions, please go to our parish website home page - omphchurch.com - **Master Plan**.

Also, if you would like to drop off a comment or a suggestion, we will have suggestion boxes outside the school gym and in the church narthex.

Please keep all of us in your prayers as we come together in committees to discern the will of God for this wonderful parish of OMPH.

May Mary our Mother of Perpetual Help protect us and keep us safe.

Fr. John