

Father McDonald's 15th of December Address to the Parish about the New Church and Cost of Construction

Today, I want to provide everyone with an update on where we are with the new church. We asked you to pray for the project last Sunday because we were going to learn the price of the new church and social hall last Tuesday. Thank you for praying. I suggested that prayer helps us discern how we can respond to what we face in life, and I believe prayer in common helps us and makes a difference.

First, some good news: We have received full approval of the design of the church and social hall from the bishop. All that remains for us to do before the start of construction is to have the diocese sign the contract for the construction. This will require a financial review to ensure we can fully fund the cost of construction.

I want to compliment everyone in our parish. We have worked hard, donated generously, and exercised patience for over eight years as we have slowly moved closer to realizing the dream of a new church and social hall. Thank you once again for believing in this goal. Now, we are near the time when the new church will begin to rise in reality.

On Tuesday, December 9, we met with our general contractor, Edifice, and received their guaranteed maximum price to construct the Church and the parish social hall. We will expand the hall in a later phase of construction after we finish and pay for this phase. Based upon the drawings of the church one year ago, the estimated price for construction was 9.7 million dollars. One year later, on December 9, the price to construct the church rose about seven percent to 10.5 million dollars. It was a higher price partly because the final construction drawings had greater details which raised the price, and there were also some necessary additions, for example, we had to relocate an existing sewer line on the campus. We also listened to what people of our congregation wanted, and we restored the kitchen to be a commercial kitchen.

Therefore, at this price, we would ultimately need 800 thousand dollars more to fully fund the new church and social hall.

Now, I would like to discuss how we will finance the project in the face of its higher cost.

First, we are working with Edifice, and we are reviewing the specifics of the pricing with a goal to reduce the final cost by 300 thousand dollars. This would bring the total cost to 10.2 million dollars and reduce our deficit to 500 thousand dollars, five percent over budget instead of seven percent. This means finding less expensive ways to implement the project as well as sacrificing some items that are not essential.

Next, we will present our financial position to the diocese to receive approval to sign a construction contract with Edifice. We anticipate that the diocese will require us to sign a contract with a reduced level of completion for the social hall while at the same time allowing us to restore those aspects that are reduced as additional funds become available.

Therefore, we will also do some additional fundraising to close the gap between the available funding now and the total cost of construction. We will make an appeal for everyone in the parish to make one more gift – perhaps an extension of our pledges for one more year or a one-time gift. We also will invite families that are new or have not yet made a pledge to help with a three year pledge. We will ask for this extra support early in the new year.

Think of it this way: We will build the complete church—that is assured. We still want to make sure the social hall is as complete as we can make it. And we are ninety-five percent of the way to our goal! Look how far we have come and how close we are to crossing the finish line. We can do this! I promise to continue my pledge, and I hope you will join me in whatever way is appropriate and doable for you to help us close the gap so we can complete the social hall. I am convinced that God will do amazing things among and within us as a community when we accomplish this. Please continue to pray—pray for the success of our project; pray for insight into how you can help; and give praise and thanks to God for bringing us this far.