

# Heat and Air Conditioning Project

Dear Parishioners,

I do not write to you often, yet when matters are really important, I want to share those details with you. I want to update you on issues related to our heating and air conditioning in the Cathedral.

**History:** Our Cathedral is over 75 years old. Our primary heat source comes from boilers that pump 125 degree water through pipes embedded within the Cathedral floors. This method is not really efficient, especially when heating such a large space. Unfortunately, it's the design we have to live with. Originally there was no air conditioning, but during the renovation of 1989, air conditioning was added and at the same time, the hot water boilers were replaced. Therefore our boilers and cooling system are over 37 years old. In reality, most of our heating system, other than the boilers, is original equipment from when the Cathedral was first built.

**Fall 2025 Situation:** We had two air conditioning compressors, only one of which worked during the summer of 2025. The compressors were outdated and horribly expensive to maintain. Last September we lost the second compressor, leaving us with no air conditioning. Neither compressor could be repaired and needed replacement.

Contractors and engineers were brought in to assess our needs. It was clear that not only was the air conditioning in need of replacement, but the entire heating system was also in bad shape. We would be lucky to get even one additional winter with the existing boilers. Hence, we began a process to replace both systems and upgrade all controls so that we could better heat and cool the Cathedral. After months of design, a comprehensive plan was developed, which was reviewed and approved by our Parish Council/Finance Committee, and by the diocese.

**The Solution:** We are currently in the process of replacing both systems. Our goal is to complete the air conditioning hopefully by August 1<sup>st</sup>, thus ending our rental costs for the temporary air conditioning staged in the parking lot just East of the Cathedral. Our hope would be to complete the heating system by October 1<sup>st</sup>.

**The Financial Reality:** This project costs \$1.9 million dollars. Wow.... I never imagined it would cost that much, yet we have a very large building to heat and cool.

- **Good News #1:** The diocese has agreed to pay for half of this project, leaving us with \$950,000.
- **Good News #2:** Every year the diocese gives us about \$90,000 per year to help with the operating costs and maintenance of the Cathedral. This is for the Cathedral building only and cannot be used for the school or rectory. Any remaining amount remaining at the end of a fiscal year remains available to us, but is restricted to capital expenses only, and not every day operating costs and maintenance.
- **Really Good News:** For the last 8 years of my tenure with you, I have chosen to not use any of those funds from the diocese. Instead, I let them accrue in an account at the diocese to be used only for capital projects. Thus far, we have accrued approximately \$815,000. However, at the end of this heat and air conditioning project we will be in debt about **\$135,000**. Please note that by using all the funds in that capital account, I hope and pray we won't have any other major capital projects until we replenish these funds.

- **Where I Need Your Help:** I would like to reduce this debt as soon as possible. I really do not want a debt payment to impact on our current budget and operating expenses. After our increased offertory program, two years ago, we have just stabilized our income and expenses which means we are not creating new debt from our everyday needs and expenses. Thank you for your generosity in contributing each and every Sunday to meet our needs.

Starting in August, you will find additional envelopes in your packets that will be mailed to you. The new envelope is for a monthly contribution to help reduce the debt from this project. I went with a stock envelope (to save money) which has "Utilities" on the front side of the envelope. The reverse side lists more specifically the heat and air conditioning project.

For those who give electronically, there is an option to contribute to this project online. Additionally, we will have envelopes in the Cathedral. We will be placing on our website, Flocknote, and in the bulletin a QR code to allow you to contribute to his project. Thank you in advance for your financial consideration towards this project. No amount is too small with larger gifts welcome if you are financially able.

**Thank you for your love and support for our Cathedral and its ministries.**

In Christ,

*Fr. Bill*

Rev. William G. Dewan

