

## Parish Meeting with Father Clary

Approximately thirty parishioners including nearly the entire newly blessed Parish Pastoral Council assembled for an Open Parish Meeting on Monday September 19th. Father Clary summed up the last year of parish life with the returns of the full Mass schedules, prayer groups while noting that attendance is 30% below pre-pandemic levels and the weekly offertory reflects that trend. The International Group held a scaled back Christmas Sing and live streaming capability was added to the upper church.

**INSPIRING HOPE:** The estimate for the completion of the two bathrooms and lift as agreed upon when the campaign began and pledges were solicited is \$576,000.00 which is higher than the plans in November 2019. Inflation and a change in the lift manufacturer are among the reasons for this increase. The economy and the level of parish activity and giving when the feasibility study conducted in the Spring of 2019 rightly said that the conditions were ideal for such a capital campaign to take place. The publicity materials stated that the earliest that the project would begin would be in March 2020. Our intention is to see this project through to completion, to honor the pledges and those who have donated so far. Some have paid off their pledges while others have until the end of 2024 to do so. Our parish savings would not allow us to proceed nor would a loan from the Archdiocese be available since their resources are limited. It is the hope that updates and conversations amongst parishioners based on where the campaign is at will rekindle support and assurance that the church will be suitably accessible and comfortable for all who wish to pray, worship and gather.

**GRATEFUL DISCIPLESHIP PROGRAM:** With the consensus of the staff, pastoral and finance councils it was decided to take a new approach to our weekly offertory. We will no longer be running a Grand Annual Collection in the Fall which was often set to raise tens of thousands of dollars within a short period of time. To make such a generous request of parishioners is no longer a successful manner of meeting our operational expenses. Our new model would be rooted in the "Grateful Discipleship Program" which will begin in the next several weeks. "This simple engagement program encourages parishioners to make a yearly commitment based on their personal circumstances to the growth of the parish. After prayerful discernment, they commit to devote time to prayer, service and generous sharing." It would be the hope that the amount one would give to the grand annual would be distributed throughout the year.

**NEEDS ASSESSMENT OF THE PARISH/MASTER PLAN FOR THE FACILITIES AND PROPERTY;** In order for our current ministries, groups and gatherings to have suitable space and to allow for new evangelical activity. We will be forming a commission to see what the most proper use of St Theresa House under its current physical condition and look at all the options that must be discussed. Only after fair and prudent discussions, research and a fiscal assessment will a decision be made.

**PARISHIONER OPEN DISCUSSION;** There were many fine ideas for strengthening our parish: Revamping our ministry and outreach to prisoners at local facilities, bringing back Youth Ministry, Young and Catholic, utilizing the Religious Education program to build youth programs, using social media (Facebook, Instagram) and making better use of our website and Flocknotes, running a series of articles about the importance of Eucharistic Adoration and inviting more to pray at the holy hours that are already scheduled. Parishioners would like the BBQ to return along many other past events that promoted community and also to get to know one another by having "One to One" conversations.