

SACRED HEART RECTORY

Building Condition Survey Concerns

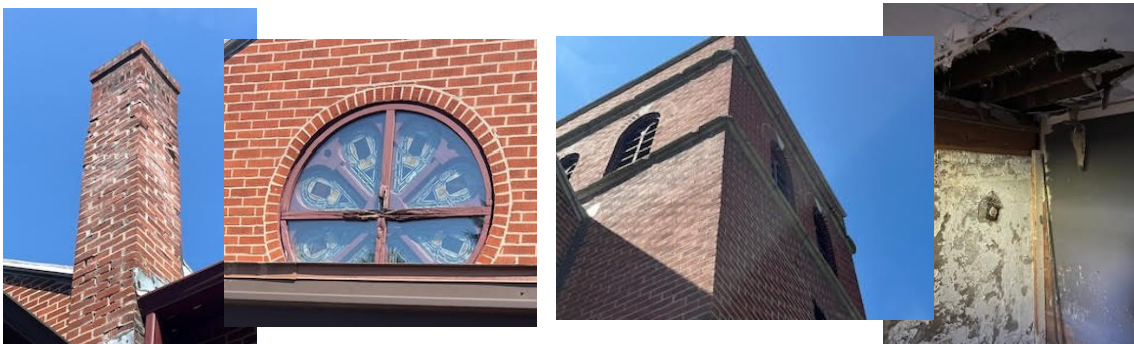


FUTURE POSSIBILITIES



DIVINE MERCY RECTORY

Building Condition Survey Concerns



STRATEGIC PLANNING: RECTORY

Dear Friends,

Greetings in the Lord! Strategic planning continues.

How blessed we are to now have the assistance of Father James Buttner at our *Two Parishes, One Family* of Sacred Heart and Divine Mercy! We are also blessed to have Seminarian Doug returning next summer as a deacon. Unfortunately, neither of the rectories that we have will sufficiently house all of us together.

THE IMPORTANCE OF PRIESTS LIVING TOGETHER

The *Code of Canon Law* prescribes: “Some practice of common life is highly recommended to clerics; where it exists, it must be preserved as far as possible” (can. 280). In other words, the Church recommends that priests do things together like pray and eat. Living together helps to foster the common life, which provides support and builds fraternity. Ultimately, the common life helps priests (and seminarians) to flourish. Following the general recommendation of Bishop Lucia that priests live together, it is my goal to get two priests, a seminarian (or perhaps one day a retired priest) and a guest all under one roof.

RECONFIGURING EACH RECTORY

The rectory at Sacred Heart, which was built in the 1920’s, can only accommodate three people. The rectory at Divine Mercy, which was originally a church built in 1927, can only accommodate two people. **Teitsch-Kent-Fay Architects** recently completed a **building condition survey** of each rectory to determine whether it is possible to accommodate four people at either location. The cost of reconfiguring the rectory at **Sacred Heart** is **\$487,500**. Due to the limited space at Sacred Heart, the building condition survey recommended putting all four rooms upstairs and reconfiguring the downstairs to accommodate communal living space for four people. The cost for reconfiguring the rectory at **Divine Mercy** is **\$512,500**. Due to the wet nature of the lower level of the rectory at Divine Mercy, the building condition survey recommended against adding two rooms down there.

MAINTAINING EACH RECTORY

One option is to simply keep and maintain both rectories and deal with the fact that we have to live in separate spaces. The building condition survey yielded an overall score of **6.43** out of 10 for the **Sacred Heart** rectory, meaning it is “mostly functional, but unreliable, or inefficient.” The building condition survey yielded an overall score of **7.51** out of 10 for the **Divine Mercy** rectory, meaning the same thing as the Sacred Heart rectory but at a slightly higher level.

If we maintain the **Sacred Heart** rectory as is (utilities, landscaping, etc.), it costs approximately **\$8,992.66** per year. If we bring the deficient items (exterior walls, roof coverings, heating and cooling systems, wiring, drainage, etc.) up to “good” on the score card, it would cost approximately **\$168,000**. If we maintain the **Divine Mercy** rectory as is (utilities, landscaping, etc.), it costs approximately **\$15,029.79** per year. If we bring the deficient items (foundation, roof coverings on bell tower, heating system, energy efficiency, exterior walls, etc.) up to “good” on the score card, it would cost approximately **\$195,000**. Thus, if we want to continue using both rectories it would cost **\$363,000** for necessary improvements and at least **\$24,022.45** per year to maintain them.

A “NEW” RECTORY

Considering the importance of the common life of priests as well as the expense of maintaining two rectories, it seems to make sense to look for a new location to accommodate four people under one roof. Doing so would not only accommodate our current situation, it opens up more possibilities for us to receive another seminarian in the future for a pastoral year or summer assignment. It also provides an attractive living situation for a retired priest to come on board and assist with the pastoral care of our parishes. It is difficult to think of not using either rectory that we currently have. Each has their own unique charm and history. However, as the number of active priests available to serve the parishes of our diocese continues to decrease dramatically, it would serve us well to plan for the future.

It is important to remember that the **territory** covered by Sacred Heart parish is near other territories that currently have resident priests (e.g., North Syracuse, Liverpool, Baldwinsville). The territory covered by Divine Mercy Parish is vast and includes the North Shore of Oneida Lake. The closest priests live in Mexico/Pulaski, Fulton, and Oneida. Therefore, for the sake of pastoral care it makes the most sense to have the clergy serving our *Two Parishes, One Family* live in the Central Square area.

Last fall, I approached Mr. David Grasso who owns the **former rectory of Saint Michael**, Central Square, which is a house right next door to Divine Mercy. It currently serves as his law firm. When Saint Michael and Saint Agnes merged to form Divine Mercy, this house was sold to help fund the building of the new church. Mr. Grasso is interested in selling this house back to us for what it is worth today. With **various modifications** (reconfiguring the upstairs, enlarging the garage, etc.) of about \$150,000 it can easily accommodate four people according to today’s standard of living. It would also cost less to maintain each year.

Purchasing this house would be **funded** primarily by the **sale** of the Divine Mercy rectory. The costs of the renovations would be covered by funding available in the capital improvement accounts of each parish. Due to the placement of the Sacred Heart rectory and the significant need of work to bring it up to “good” on the score card, the building condition survey recommended that it be **demolished** at a cost of about \$48,000.

This would allow for various possibilities in the future; for example, additional parking and green space. The strategic planning committee is currently looking into updating the campus at Sacred Heart to help us better carry out our mission, particularly as Micron begins to become a reality. While a significant amount of money was spent to make necessary improvements to the Sacred Heart rectory (windows and appliances), it would cost more in the long run to update and maintain the building for one or two people. Likewise, while a significant amount of money was once spent to renovate the Divine Mercy rectory, it would cost more in the long run to update and maintain the building for one or two people.

PROPOSAL

Therefore, in order to be **good stewards** of the gifts we have been given, the parish trustees, pastoral council, finance councils, and I propose to relieve both parishes of having to update and maintain their respective rectories, which are collectively much more space for four people than is needed. Instead, we are working to create the living space we need now and for years to come at the “new” rectory in Central Square to foster the common life of priests. In doing so, we will save each parish a significant amount of money.

Thank you for your kind attention to this important matter. As always, please do let me know if you have any questions. There will be a **Town Hall Meeting** on Sunday, August 3rd at 4:00 PM at Sacred Heart about this matter if you would like to ask questions or offer comments. Continued gratitude and prayers for you and all you do. God loves you! And so do I!

In Christ,



Reverend Christopher R. Seibt

Pastor

PROPOSED “NEW” RECTORY

