



# ST. BERNARD CAPITAL CAMPAIGN & maintenance update

Beginning in 2019, a Capital Improvement Campaign for St. Bernard Church in Burkettsville was set in motion. **The original projects listed for this campaign were: Roof Repair, Storm Glass for stained glass windows, Brick Tuck Pointing, Basement Window Replacement, Rectory Window Replacement, and Heating/Air Conditioning for the church.** With the support of parishioners, many of these projects are complete; only the Rectory Windows & Basement Windows remain.

Through thoughtful conversations with the Building & Grounds Committee, as well as discussions with the Pastoral Council and Finance Committee, **adjustments have been made to this plan. The final project of the Capital Campaign will now be the Repair of the Concrete Steps of the church instead of replacing the rectory windows.** In brief, this adjustment was made with the following points in mind:

- The concrete steps of the church have deteriorated to the point of becoming a safety hazard. This deterioration happened much faster than anticipated when the capital campaign phases were planned, and thus was not a major concern until recently.
- While replacing the windows in the rectory would increase energy efficiency, their condition is stable as they exist now with no known water leaks or broken glass.
- The primary use of the rectory has changed since the campaign phases were planned. In past years, the rectory was utilized as a space for religious education classes and is now being rented. Now, the rental income can go towards rectory maintenance, replacing its dependence on the St. Bernard Campaign donations. More on this on the back of this flyer.
- The St. Bernard Maintenance Fund can support both remaining projects: repairing the concrete steps & the basement window replacement.

Considering the change in scope to the original campaign to which many donated, we want to be sensitive to everyone's thoughts on this change. **Please address any questions or concerns about the changes to the parish office by September 1, 2025.**

Buildings & Grounds updates like this one are forthcoming for all the churches & will be published in the future.



## REMAINING CAMPAIGN PROJECTS:

### BASEMENT WINDOW REPLACEMENT

The basement windows of the church will be completely removed & replaced. The parish received two quotes for the work from local contractors. Moeller Door & Window was chosen to do the job for \$25,685; work will begin in September. As a result of continuous donations, this project is already funded and will be paid from the St. Bernard Maintenance Fund.

### REPAIR OF CONCRETE STEPS

As mentioned, the final project for the 2019 Capital Campaign will be the resurfacing of the concrete steps. Repairs will also be made to the central retaining wall of the main entrance. This project is also already funded and will be paid from the St. Bernard Maintenance Fund.

# FUTURE PROJECTS

*next priorities*

Even before the campaign began, it was known that there would still be large projects that were not included in its several-phase plan. The goal of the campaign was to address the highest priorities directly & effectively; we accomplished that. Now, it's time to outline new priorities.

### PARKING LOT

Both parking lots will be resealed & striped by Spring 2026 by Taylor Painting & Striping (Celina- estimated total \$8,661.34). This project will be funded with the St. Bernard Maintenance Fund.

Sealing and striping work does not address any of the asphalt's structural issues. At some point in the future, the west parking lot may need to be completely repaved; the current base is unstable, causing cracks & bulges. This cost will likely need to be collected through a fundraising campaign.

### INTERIOR PLASTER WORK

Damaged plaster is noticeable in the sanctuary and on several interior walls. This damage was mainly caused by water entering through the exterior walls and capstone along the roof line, making its way inside. The recent masonry repairs have corrected the issue causing the damage. After sealing the exterior, it is recommended to give the interior walls a year to allow any moisture left in them to escape. When the walls are dry, interior plaster repair can begin. This would also include fresh paint on the areas of repaired plaster. Currently quotes are being gathered and one restoration contractor gave an estimate for the plaster and paint costs around \$100k-130k.

### OTHER POSSIBLE INTERIOR PROJECTS:

**Speakers:**

The sound system has been notoriously difficult. Experts in church acoustics are being consulted to understand our options for improving sound.

**Statues:**

The statues that used to be in the choir loft needs to be restored and placed in the church.

**Pews:**

The raised platform in the west wing of the church needs to be removed so the pews can be reinstalled facing forward.

**Beautification:**

There are several elements within the church that could benefit from cosmetic updates. These include the carpet, the interior paint scheme, and the sanctuary.

# IMMEDIATE NEED:

## *stained glass window restoration*

The original Munich-Style stained glass windows in our churches are virtually irreplaceable. Replicating one of these windows with all new materials would cost *more than ten times* the amount of restoring them as they are now. For this reason, preserving the beauty we have is an absolute priority.



### WHY:

Contractors were recently able to do a hands-on inspection of our stained glass. The church contains (73) stained glass windows, all of which are due for at least some form of repair. **Unfortunately, there are (7) windows that are severely deteriorated.** All seven of these windows are on the west side of the building, exposing them to more intense weather and sunlight. The windows contain multiple bulges, cracks in the lead, and in some cases, **there is glass already falling out.** Multiple contractors agree that **if these windows are left unrepaired, they will eventually experience catastrophic failure- they will literally collapse. If this occurs, there will be no repairing them, not to mention the physical risk it poses for parishioners.**

### CLEARING UP ANY CONFUSION:

Almost all churches have two sets of windows- stained glass (interior) and storm glass (exterior). In 2022, new exterior storm windows were installed as part of the capital campaign. Leading up to that project, a fundraising document was circulated that used the term "stained glass window repair" instead of "storm window repair". This may have led to confusion about what exactly was being done during that phase of the campaign: only the storm windows were replaced, and no work was conducted on the stained glass windows.

Also at that time, a stained glass studio gave a quote to replace the storm windows and repair the stained glass. Their approach was to make repairs to the stained glass windows without removing them. While this "repair in place" technique may be suited for some windows, it is not suited for all of them, especially the (7) high priority windows that need to be completely restored.

### A LASTING FIX: REPAIR VS RESTORATION

In regards to stained glass windows there is "repair" and there is "restoration". **A completely restored window is expected to last 100 years with proper maintenance, compared to 10-20 years with a "repair in place".** During a complete restoration, the window is removed entirely from its frame and is transported to a studio where the old lead is meticulously replaced with new. Any damaged glass is repaired during the process. When the window is put back together, it is returned to the church and reinstalled.

### THE COST:

We received quotes from two of the area's leading stained glass studios. We grouped all (73) windows into priority groups. Each studio quoted the same scope of work for each priority group for an apples-to-apples comparison. Window Creations (Fort Jennings) was chosen for Priority 1.

Priority 1: \$122,450 (7 windows)      Priority 3: \$81,400 (5 windows)  
Priority 2: \$122,450 (7 windows)      Priority 4: \$88,200 (22 windows)

The goal is to have repairs on Priority 1 started in the winter of 2025-2026. In order to start this project, a fundraising campaign will begin immediately. All parishioners will receive a letter outlining this fundraiser and more details.

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# ST. BERNARD RECTORY

## *a house of discernment*

### CURRENT USE

In the autumn of 2023, two young men who were discerning a vocation to the priesthood and religious life approached Father Hess with an idea for a structured house of prayer. Some marks of this household would include: communal prayer (Liturgy of the Hours), assisting priests during Mass in various ways, and working for the parish in some capacity. This idea soon developed into a reality. The rectory was not being utilized at the time and seemed to be the perfect location for such an idea. More than five men have spent time at the house over the past two years. The household members sign a lease and pay rent, but are very intentional about following a specific rule of life. This arrangement has paid dividends for our parish, not only giving purpose to the building itself, but also enriching the lives of many families who have come to know the young men staying there. Two of the original household members have since entered formation. David Slonkosky is studying at Mount St. Mary's Seminary, and Nathan Soria will enter Clear Creek Abbey in September. There are still two tenants currently living at the rectory.

### TESTIMONIES

Scan the QR codes to read testimonies from some of the men living in the St. Bernard Rectory, the Loreto House.



NATHAN'S  
STORY



DAVID'S  
STORY



### FUTURE HOPES & PLAN

Hopefully, the household continues as a religious discernment house. If new members are called to join, we have every intention of supporting its current purpose. Inquiries have also been made with religious communities in Cincinnati who may be interested in extending a group of nuns here in the north. A decision like that could take years for a community to make, but we are doing what we can to offer the invitation. Other options for the house that don't include a religious community are on the table as well. In the case that the house would sit empty, efforts will be made to preserve it as efficiently as possible until it could be used again.

### THE ECONOMICS

A cost analysis on the rectory found that expenses for its regular maintenance range from \$10k-12k per year. This number varies depending on the number of tenants and the use of air conditioners. This estimate did not include any large improvement projects that could be done to improve the building's efficiency, such as new windows, insulation, plumbing & electrical updates, etc. A full house could offer the parish a modest rental income that would help offset both maintenance costs as well as improvement projects. For the sake of decision making only, a recent estimate was collected that showed a full demolition following all state and federal laws for a building of its kind would cost upwards of \$100k. There are NO intentions of demolishing the St. Bernard Rectory.