



Dear Parishioners,

As we move ahead into a new year, I wanted to share with you some updates, plans and reflections.

Our parish continues to be alive with growth and change. Most visible are important physical improvements. The exterior of our church has received needed attention and is now repaired and protected. Equally important, the church is now able to welcome all parishioners—including those in wheelchairs—via improved entryways. Related, our new circle drive and walkways (now “frozen in place” for completion in spring) help create a more accessible and unified campus. The parish center cafeteria is revitalized. Catherine’s Health Center has wonderful facilities where many more people can receive quality health care in a dignified setting.

Some improvements are less visible. Right now a major upgrade to the electrical system in the former school building is underway. This sets the stage for installation of an elevator, accompanied by a new, accessible entrance on the west side of the parish center (right off of the circle drive). That project will be complete by early summer. In the fall we expect to begin repair and repainting of the church interior walls. These are just some of the things that our capital campaign has made possible. It continues to amaze me and warm my heart to know that more than 500 donors, individuals and families as well as our foundations—have generated more than \$1,800,000 for this campaign. It could only happen with the prayers and support of everyone in the parish. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

We continue to welcome new members to our parish. More than 80 individuals and 55 families joined our community in 2010.

In 2010, our Social Concerns Ministry distributed 28 tons of food to 7,700 people, provided clothing to more than 7,100 of our neighbors, delivered more than 1,400 meals, and prepared 238 tax filings to generate almost \$350,000 in returns for this neighborhood. This work is remarkable.

Our parents, students, volunteers and teachers have helped All Saints Academy get off to a strong start, providing great education and opportunities for youth development in a Catholic setting. Similarly, we have a tremendous group of youth and adults participating in our faith formation programs. We are fortunate to have Mr. Pat Reagan bring his experience and talents to lead this program.

A committee of parishioners is in place to recruit a new music ministry director. We continue to owe a huge debt of gratitude to Sarah Hamstra who is doing so much to keep our liturgies alive with spirit and sound.

Our financial condition is sound. Money is always tight, and our programs and operations take resources, but this parish always finds a way. We also continue to find ways to trim expenses, and some of our capital improvements make a big difference in lowering our ongoing costs.

We have much to appreciate in this parish—especially the people of St. Al’s. This is a remarkably warm, caring and faith-filled community. It is a blessing to be here.

I invite you to join me in reflecting on, and appreciating, the amazing things that our parishioners bring forward. From longstanding events such as Fish Fry and the annual Auction to more recent additions such as the popular PALS program, we have a tradition of individuals stepping forward to advance new ideas and turn them into action that benefits us all. I sincerely hope you know that my door is always open to receive all who come to share hopes and dreams for the future of St. Alphonsus.

Related to this point, as a community we want to ensure that there are opportunities for everyone to fully participate in our parish life. I am therefore forming a Parish Life committee to help further support and connect the many good activities underway at St. Al's, and to take stock of ways we can create new offerings that help engage more people in the joy and beauty of our community.

You will hear more about this committee (which will complement, not replace, the other groups that are active in so many ways at St. Al's) in the next several weeks.

We know 2011 will be a time of continued progress, and I look forward to working with my fellow Redemptorists and all of you to make it a great year for the present and future of our parish.

Sincerely,



Fr. Denis Ryan, C.Ss.R.

Capital Campaign Snapshot

2008

Replaced church roof

2009

Repaired and sealed church exterior walls (tuck-pointing)

Repaired church exterior window cracks and damage

New church tower roofs

New lightning protection system for church

New church entryway walls (flanking main steps)

2010

Renovated cafeteria in parish center (former school building)

New circle drive

Replaced roof on Lafayette wing of parish center

Renovated former school space for Catherine's Health Center (funded via independent campaign)

Initiated rebuilding and upgrade to ramps, walkways and steps leading to church

Initiated major upgrade of electrical and mechanical systems in parish center

2011

Complete major upgrade of electrical and mechanical systems in parish center (winter)

Complete rebuilding and upgrade to ramps, walkways and steps leading to church (spring)

Create access-friendly new parish center west entrance on circle drive (June)

Install parish center elevator providing access from new west entrance to cafeteria (June)

Revamp current gym restrooms, including handicap access (June)

Upgrade parish center kitchen (fall)

Repair and repaint church interior walls (fall)

Next-tier priorities, currently unfunded

Replace church boiler

Complete renovation of parish center space for Food and Clothing Pantry relocation