

As we come to you this month, we would like to update you on some very recent developments in our planning process. This past Advent, in a special mailing we spoke to you about an offer to purchase the 116th street (IHM) site. At the time we were waiting for a response from the Archbishop. As the President of the Parish corporation, he makes the final determination regarding any potential sale. Since that Advent mailing, new developments have become very important over the past several weeks which will directly affect his decision and our future planning.

As you know, the West Allis/West Milwaukee Catholic School, Mary Queen of Saints is located at the former St. Aloysius parish site. Over the past two years, an in-depth study of that facility was done. The conclusion drawn from the evaluation was that the site can no longer sustain the school because of necessary repairs. As our response to the study, Mother of Perpetual Help Parish clearly stated, that the new parish was not going to fund any more repairs to that building. A moderate renovation of that building would cost somewhere between \$5-6 million dollars. When we informed the Archdiocese of our decision, they began a feasibility study to look at all the existing parish sites in West Allis. In the end, two sites were proposed as a new location for the school, Holy Assumption and the former IHM site. The difference in start-up costs between the two sites exceeds \$2 million dollars, with IHM's costs coming in at around \$100 thousand dollars. As of this writing, we have heard that the IHM site will likely be chosen by those involved in the decision, so no sale of the IHM property will take place. The idea of the school moving to a new site is not a new one, but that idea has now reached the point of decision from the Archbishop, The Office for Catholic Schools and the board. Our current task is to share this information with as many people as possible, as soon as possible. Please note the start date at the new location has yet to be determined and we are looking at several other factors that may be impacted by a move of this sort.

Another point we must ALWAYS remember is that the School is a collaborative effort of all 5 of the parishes in West Allis. It is operated by a board which is made up of all 5 pastors and elected board members, one from each participating parish. It is a Seton School, which means that the daily operations of the school are moderated by the Seton Schools Initiative.

Since we are unable to sell the IHM property as proposed, having the school as a long-term tenant allows us to continue to pay down the mortgage on our debt, which is about \$1 million dollars. Having the school at this site also creates other possibilities for future planning. Our Outreach Ministries and Administrative Offices can remain in their current site, and we can also maintain the Rectory as a possible residence for the Pastor. Mary Queen of Saints Academy would occupy the entire school building.

We will be happy to answer any questions you may have. Please pray for the continued success of our parish efforts and that the school planning initiative will benefit all of us in the West Allis/West Milwaukee Church.

Fr. Thomas, Fr. Jeff and the Pastoral Staff, Council and Transition Team.