**NEW PARISH ACTIVITY CENTER UPDATE—JULY 25, 2017**

 **During our last Parish Council meeting, comments were shared about the New Parish Activity Center Project becoming too expensive. The price increase was due to rising cost of materials as well as suggested changes and additions recommended by the Archdiocese Building Board as we were going through some of the stages of approval. As a result, Bernie Mattingly (our contractor) spent hours in making 11 cutbacks that will drive the cost down by $52,500. The ceiling will be switched from dropped tile to regular drywall. The roof shingles will be installed by volunteers instead of a roofer. The parking lot will be cut back since many parish members voiced the large lot was very unnecessary. Upon calling about the water meter, Bernie learned we may use the existing meter left from the old convent building. Bernie asked if the septic system could be dug cheaper and was able to get this price cut almost in half. A change was made to have foam insulation in the ceiling and walls instead of under the rafters. Baffle vents will be placed between each truss at the top of the plate instead of top plate to ridge. The floor tile will be switched to a sealed concrete floor. No closet will be built around the breaker box. A used stainless steel commercial sink will be purchased from Craig’s List instead of a new one. The 3 outdoor residential heating and air units will be placed in the back of the building enclosed by a privacy fence thus no need in extra buildings for these.**

 **Since that meeting, we also received news about the response from a letter we sent to the Abbott of Gethsemani Abbey. Because the amount was over $50,000 the monks had to individually vote on whether they should donate to the cause. The votes came in quickly and all unanimously voted to grant us the $100,000 gift. It was said they were really glad to see our parish coming together to build this much needed space and that it shows a time of growth and strength in our parish.**

 **On July 20th, Father Ken scheduled a phone conference meeting with two Archdiocese board members. Bob Ash (chief financial officer) and Bill Zoeller (director of facilities) along with Father Ken, Bernie and I were in attendance. After sharing the cutbacks from Bernie for $52,500 and the large gift of $100,000 from the Abbey, putting us at 62% of funds raised (since they needed at least 50%) and a plan to continue raising funds in order to complete our goal, Bob Ash has encouraged Father Ken to write the letter to ask for approval to begin the project. This letter must include that we have raised at least 50% of our goal, we must show in writing the plan to raise the other 38% including dates of all events for the plan and finally, are required to state a backup plan. \* (Toward the end of our phone conference, Bob Ash announced we were approved for a $10,000 grant in addition to $19,000 from our insurance company to be used for the painting and plaster work on the inside of our church)!**

 **So, the amount we need in pledges and donations is $382,500 and we have already raised $235,794. This leaves us with $146,706 to complete the project donation goal.**

 **This building should be self funded from the wedding reception rentals alone and we could actually raise money for our general church account if the council decides on other rentals. The building space would also open new options to hold picnics, meals and other functions to raise money for the church if these are options we decide upon. I have heard many uses mentioned. Some spoke of small play group gatherings, small exercise groups, adult bingo, cards or other meetings, movie nights for children or adults, bereavement meals, family reunions, and anniversary celebrations. People from Raywick and New Haven have mentioned to me that they would really like to see this and a member from St. Catherine Church suggested we visit her church with pledge sheets because they stand behind us and are like family and this would allow them to be a part as well. A member of St. Francis of Assisi Church stated we need this so bad and they want to donate as soon as we get started with the construction. Still, another individual from Culvertown stated that everyone around is getting excited for New Hope and will want to rent it for wedding receptions and reunions.**

 **Some of the features of this building include: open-faced decorative block that has a look of stone and is treated so it will not need to be painted (the parish will vote on the colors); Anderson Gothic style windows to match the church will be surrounded by beautiful stones (that the parish will also have the opportunity to vote on) and the stone will be placed at the corners of the building; the dining area will have nice commercial round tables and sturdy commercial chairs; there will be a stage platform for performances/music and such; the parking lot will be in rock; a divider wall curtain will be in place to create two smaller rooms when needed for easier clean up after smaller gatherings; we may be receiving a donation of a large screen TV pull down from the ceiling with a DVD system; and we will be needing everyone to think of and create items to decorate the interior of our building. Some have shown an interest in collecting old school books from the New Hope school of the past and possibly needing a display case built to display items of interest.**

 **Thanks to Bernie Mattingly and to every parish member for all you do to support St. Vincent de Paul Church! If you have not taken the opportunity to pledge or donate, please donate what you are able and continue your prayers for the success of our activity center. Those of you who will be purchasing building materials are welcome to place this dollar amount on a pledge sheet and just document on the sheet that your pledge will be in building materials. Also, invite friends and family to be a part of the donation process. Together we will build a beautiful space to welcome our community as well as out of town visitors.**

**Thank you and God Bless.**

**Norine Masterson**

**Building Chairman**