

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN NEWS

St. James Catholic Church

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The Vision for St. James Parish

“Where there is no vision, the people perish.” (Proverbs 29:18)

We live in a vibrant and growing community. This places our parish in a unique position to share the Good News of Jesus Christ to the people in Liberty and the Shoal Creek Valley. As the proverb listed above says, if we do not have a strong vision for serving God, the end result is not an attractive one.

As Fr. Tom Albers and Fr. Timothy Armbruster have been leading us to examine where God is leading our parish, it is helpful to pause and take a look at where we've come from.

Our History

It was in November, 1837 that the parish of St. James the Greater, had its beginning with about 170 members and is now one of the oldest Catholic parishes in the Diocese of Kansas City - St. Joseph.

For seventy-five years, St. James continued as a mission parish with Masses scheduled on the average of once a month.

With more than a century and a half of history, it is one of the oldest parishes in the diocese. On July 25, 1997 the congregation celebrated its sesquicentennial - 150th birthday.

In recent years, rapid growth in the city of Liberty has meant a continually growing Catholic population. In 1988 there were 666 families registered in the parish. Today there are over 2,000 families who call St. James home. Our church currently seats 600 and we have five weekend Masses. We are at capacity with over 2,300 people attending Mass on any given weekend. One only needs to try to find parking during a weekend Mass to discover that things are tight here. Evidence has shown that people are discouraged and at times turned away from worshipping or participating at St. James due to overcrowding.

With the recent expansion of our school, our 430 children have adequate space for the time being.

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From Our Pastor

Dear Friends,

“For I know well the plans I have in mind for you, says the LORD, plans for your welfare, not for woe! Plans to give you a future full of hope.” Jeremiah 29:11

It has been said that God is never early, never late, but always right on time. I am excited to announce that we think it is

God's timing and plan for St. James to embark upon a journey of faith that will include designing and building a new church, expanding our facilities and ministry impact, and paying down the debt we currently service. This plan has been a decade in the making, and I'm grateful to all the members of our parish for your patience and your dedication to St. James.

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Our Future

We can expect nearly 10,000 new families will move into our community in the next 10 years. The history of our parish is rich, but our vision for the future must change to meet the growing needs of a growing Catholic population.

It has been over 20 years since any major church renovation has taken place at St. James. Our strategic planning and discernment process clearly have directed us to build a much larger church. Additionally, the Meitler study which was commissioned by the diocese to study the current and future needs of parishes in the northern part of the metro, recommends that St. James construct a larger church, one that can seat between 1,200 to 1,500 people.

The continual growth will also tax our current parish meeting space and social hall. It has been suggested that we convert our current church into a much needed multipurpose room.

Urgency

To successfully fulfill the mission to which we feel God has called our parish, we feel it is imperative that we begin to immediately implement a plan to raise funds for building our new church. Our Masses are overcrowded, and we've delayed building for nearly a decade as we've improved school facilities. Now is the time for our parish to move forward in faith to meet these growing needs and challenges.

The Financial Considerations

While the urgency is high and the need is readily apparent, there will be a good deal of sacrifice for our parishioners to accomplish these goals. With prayer and Fr. Tom's leadership, we are confident you will join us on this journey of faith. By way of comparison, in 2003 St. Mark's in

Independence completed a 1,200 seat church at a cost of \$5 million. Our parish neighbor to the west, Holy Family, is planning to construct a new 1,500 seat church costing approximately \$10 million.

We are projecting a multi-phase process to complete all our plans. During the first phase of our plan, we will need to raise approximately \$2 million to pay down debt on our current facilities (\$1.5 million) and create the preparation and design plan for a new church (\$500,000). Future capital campaigns will follow to construct the church, early childhood center, and make needed facility renovations.

As we move into this next phases in the life of our church, please be praying for Fr. Tom, Fr. Timothy and the rest of the parish leadership. There are exciting days ahead filled with promise and challenge, and with faith we trust that God is leading us. The vision for being a beacon of hope in our community will guide us to be faithful stewards and faithful followers of the True Light.

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The Church Development Foundation to Assist St. James

St. James has retained the services of The Church Development Foundation (TCDF), a Kansas City-based consulting and church management firm, to help us secure the resources necessary to meet our building expansion goals. TCDF has helped more than 150 churches, many of them Catholic churches, raise nearly \$200 million in support of building projects since 1981.

Using prayer and discernment as our guide, TCDF will lead our church through a stewardship-oriented capital campaign to help our parish reach its mission and goals. Denis Greene, the president of TCDF, will be assisted on this project by consultants Bill Cordaro and Matt Schoenfeld, writer and editor, Ed Dobbmeyer, graphic artist Eileen Akers with assistance from manager Lindsey Collins. Together, this team brings a wealth of fundraising, management, and stewardship training experience to help St. James achieve its long-term strategic plan.

The members of TCDF will be working closely with Fr. Tom, Jim Newell and many volunteer committees who will help lead our capital campaign. For more information about TCDF, visit their website at www.tcdf.org.

St. James Needs to Hear From YOU!

As St. James moves into a capital campaign in the next five months, one of the most important steps is hearing from you about how you feel about the direction of the church, how the church is meeting your spiritual needs, and if you are in support of our plan to build a new church.

To obtain this important feedback, The Church Development Foundation (TCDF) will be helping our church with a survey of its members. Approximately 50 families will be asked to conduct confidential in-person interviews with TCDF consultants from February 19, to February 22, 2009.

Additionally, we want to encourage every member to who is not interviewed to complete a survey. We want to listen to your comments and concerns which you may have about the process to build a new church and to raise the funds to do so.

There are two ways to complete a survey. See the box on the right for complete details.

The deadline to complete the paper survey or the on line survey is Wednesday, February 25.

Projected Project Timeline

Recently the Meitler study confirmed that the church should embark on several initiatives to expand our facilities to accommodate the current and expected growth in our area. The timeline below provides a possible schedule for various church growth projects in the near future. Our construction timeline is determined on the generosity of parish members and working with the diocese, therefore, these dates are not definitive and are subject to change.

For every survey that is completed on line, TCDF will make a \$2 donation to the St. James Parish. One survey per person please.

Once the surveys are completed, TCDF will compile the responses and complete a comprehensive report with recommendation on how the parish should move forward with the plan to begin a capital campaign.

Experience has shown completing the survey process is incredibly valuable to a church. Not only will we learn about how the church is meeting the needs of its parishioners, we will gauge levels of support, ideas for improvement, and insight into the heart of our church. Thank you for taking the time to help us with this important step. We value your feedback!

If you have additional questions about the survey, please contact Jim Newell at 816-781-4343.

Feb-June 2009: Capital Campaign to raise funds for Phase I to reduce debt and fund the church building preparation and design phase.

Mar-Nov 2009: Conduct church building preparation and design process.

July 2009: Select an architect.

St. James Wants to Hear From YOU Today!

Two ways to let your thoughts and opinions regarding St. James Parish's plans and capital campaign known.

1. On-Line Survey - Go to our web site and follow the links to TCDF's survey web site.

www.stjames-liberty.org

2. Written Survey - Complete the enclosed written survey and return it directly to the TCDF offices in the pre-addressed, postage paid envelope.

The surveys are confidential. The St. James' staff do not have access to the written or the on-line surveys.

Deadline for both surveys is Wednesday, February 25, 2009.

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List of Projects and Estimated Costs if Available

- Debt Reduction: \$1.5 million.
- Church Building Preparation and Design: \$500,000
- Church Construction: \$10 million
- Early Childhood Center
- Social Hall Renovation
- Convert current church to large Multipurpose Room that will Seat 600

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From Our Pastor

The next several years will hold both challenges and great opportunities for our church to grow in unity and purpose as we serve Jesus Christ in Liberty and the surrounding area. Our church leadership is in full support of this course of action, and Jim Newell, Fr. Timothy Armbruster and I will be coordinating the effort to build a new church. Additionally, we have the approval of the Parish Council, Finance Council and Stewardship Council. Further, the diocese concurs with the recent Meitler Study which recommends that we construct a larger church to

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better accommodate the continuing population growth in Liberty.

Over the next five months, there will be a lot of activity and excitement surrounding this movement to build our new church building. We very much want to hear from you about this process, so we'll be communicating with you every step of the way and asking for your feedback and input. The first opportunity to do this will be through a survey that we'll be making available to every member of our parish. See page 3 in this newsletter for more information on how to take

the survey.

We can rest assured that God has a plan for our parish and God wants to see us fully serve the people He sends our way.

As always, remember the mission of our parish and the members of our community in your daily prayers. God bless you.

In Christ,



Fr. Tom Albers, C.P.P.S.

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