



Pastor's Notes: February 10, 2019

Altar Rail Cushions

As you know, in our recent renovation, we were able to restore the traditional altar rail in our sanctuary. This is one of the most popular initiatives that came from our Town Hall meeting of 2014. You will note that it matches the style, art, and wood type of the altar, thus highlighting the connection between the altar and the rail, the rail being the extension altar for the people to approach – and approach they have! At the 11:30 and 1:30 Spanish Masses, we utilize the altar rail in the traditional manner, with the priest moving from person to person, who are kneeling along the rail, and at the 5:30 and 9:00 Masses, the rail is used by those who desire to kneel to receive Holy Communion when they approach in the single file line that has become common in most churches since the Second Vatican Council. Many people have expressed their desire that the rail be covered with a cushion, as the hard surface is oftentimes difficult on our knees. Do not worry; we have been planning to place a kneeling cushion along the rail, and we are getting closer to the reality now. Through two generous donors, whose gift will cover the cost of buying and fabricating the materials, we hope to have the cushions in place by Easter. Until then, we invite you to join your suffering to that of Christ on the Cross, especially as we prepare to enter into the Lenten season.

Liturgical Questionnaire

We recently offered a questionnaire on the liturgical practices here at the Basilica of Saints Peter and Paul. Thank you for the generous response! We received over 430 completed questionnaires. This will give us a great understanding of where people are in our parish, *vis a vis* the questions asked. It is interesting that many commented through the questionnaire that they would like to see a cushion on the altar rail, and I am happy to note that if you read the above paragraph, we have already anticipated this request. We are currently compiling the data and entering it into our software. The next step will be to produce reports based on certain criteria, and then we will begin analyzing the data, or crunching the numbers (if you will). The results will be shared with the Parish Pastoral Council, the parish staff, and hopefully we will have a way of presenting it to the whole parish. Of course, it will aid us also in our Strategic Planning, coupled with the demographic survey we took in 2017. Thanks for all who have participated in giving us the feedback that is needed to be good stewards of the resources of our parish.

All Saints Academy Update

As you may or may not know, the venerable old All Saints Academy building, built in 1925, which has served our parish over time as the original Notre Dame High School, the Sts. Peter and Paul grade school, the combined All Saints Academy when the St. Francis School closed, and now as our Hispanic Ministry center, has been a burden on the parish due to its aging infrastructure and high cost of maintenance. Since I have been here, there have been many discussions about what we should do with All Saints Academy. In fact, it was a major topic in the Town Hall meeting of 2014. Even then, a majority of people were in favor of either tearing it down outright or converting it to some other use, for the benefit of the parish and/or community at large. In 2016, we made a concerted effort to see what it would take to renovate the building for parish use, especially in light of our homeschool co-op, Hispanic ministry, and youth group. However, when we started putting monetary figures to our hopes for the building, it became very evident that renovation and upkeep of the building would be far beyond the means of this parish, and would stifle us with debt. At this point, we consulted with the Bishop, who approved our idea to seek a developer through a land lease agreement. In the fall of 2016, we put out the request for proposals to reputable and known developers in the community. We then narrowed down the applicants (three) to one that the All Saints Committee felt was best in line with the parish priorities and benefits. The result is that we have partnered with a developer that goes under the name "Patten Parkway Development Associates." They plan to renovate the old school building, taking the top two floors and turning them into apartments. The bottom floor, consisting mainly of the gymnasium and the cafeteria, felicitously will be made available to the parish to use. The original plan was that the apartments would be targeted to the low to moderate income bracket, thus providing affordable housing for people near the parish. However, when the funding sources of public grants fell through due to timing, an alternate use of the apartments was proposed. The new proposal would offer integrated housing for people who suffer from autism. This program would utilize the apartments to assist adults who are on the autism spectrum to live semi-independently, as resources for this are severely lacking. I believe that this will be a noble use of church resources, and the plan will benefit our parish monetarily, as well as giving us access to the lower floor for parish activities, particularly our Hispanic ministry. We expect to enter into the final negotiations this spring, with the hope that we will be under the agreement by this summer (2019). This will mean that for the time we are out of the building, we will be greatly reduced in our meeting spaces and facilities. More on that to come in the future.

Sincerely in Christ Jesus,

Rev. J. David Carter, JCL
Pastor and Rector