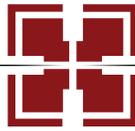


LIVING OUR FAITH



BUILDING OUR FUTURE

December 13, 2013

Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As we continue in this season of Advent and prepare ourselves for the joyous coming of Christ, I am again reminded of the continued generosity and activity of our parish community. I recently sent a letter to all the donors of the *Living Our Faith, Building Our Future Campaign* and I'd like to take a moment to share the progress with the wider parish and school community as well.

The newly renovated Saint Joseph Parish Ackles Center has been a wonderful space for parish work, gatherings, programs, and serving our neighbors in need. While we still have pictures to hang, some furniture to arrange, and a short "punch list" to complete, our new parish center is an active place! Please come by to visit anytime; general hours are Monday through Friday, 8AM to 5PM. Also included in Phase I was the opening of Saint Joseph Preschool. Our curriculum embraces all areas of child development: spiritual, emotional, physical, and cognitive. We continue to offer open enrollment for new students, and you are welcome to register your children for next year!

Phase II is focused on projects in the church. One half of the pews have already been refurbished and we are currently working on the pews in the loft. After the holidays, we will work on the front pews and then begin to re-stain the rest of the furniture in the church. Construction of two prayer niches featuring Saint André Bessette and Blessed Basil Moreau is currently in process. Future projects in the church include new doors and a study of our sound system.

Phase III will feature the school addition and green/play space. The timing of this project will largely be determined by the progress of collecting pledges. Summer of 2014 is the earliest we could start this project. Diocesan policy states that, in addition to securing pledges for capital projects, 50 percent of cash needs to be in hand before construction can begin. After expenditures from Ackles Center and church renovations, we are currently about \$600,000 short of this goal. Since we are in year one of a three-year campaign, realistic forecasts would suggest that we break ground in spring 2015, and open the addition January 2016.

Finally, I would like to draw your attention to a related matter. We have purchased, demolished, and paved the former car wash on LaSalle Street across from the church. While the final topcoat, sealing, and striping of the lot will take place in the spring, parking is available to us now! We have not finalized the details, but plan to share the cost, storage, and parking with Saint Joseph High School.

If you have any further questions about these campaign projects please feel free to contact me (574) 234-3134, ext. 20. If you would like to make a pledge or if you have questions about your pledge payment plan or would like to sign up for EFT and/or payment reminders, please contact Lisa Slott at ext. 13.

Family and friends often ask me how I am settling in. While I still have much to learn, Saint Joseph Parish feels like home! This is a wonderful community and I know that I speak for the entire parish staff when I say how grateful we are to be part of it. Thank you so much for all you do to support Saint Joseph Church and School and our mission of serving God through worship, service, and education here in the heart of South Bend. I wish you a blessed Advent season.

God bless,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Fr. Kevin". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Fr. Kevin Russeau, C.S.C.