

September 2013

My dear friends:

As the summer weeks rapidly move us to September, I write this 'Pastor's Corner' to keep you informed of what we have accomplished to enhance parish life at Our Lady of the Assumption.

~ I established a search committee to interview candidates for the position of part-time Youth Minister. The committee conducted interviews in late July. We have engaged Mr. Jonathan Galo to serve in this capacity. Jonathan will oversee the classroom Confirmation preparation program for students in grades nine and ten; fashion a social/religious program for grades eleven and twelve. Gratitude is extended to the *search committee*: Betsey Farrell, Paula Idarola, Laura DeAngelo and Sister Dorellen. Mr. Galo will begin his duties on September 1.

~ Our parish has been designated as one of seven parishes in the Archdiocese to establish an Evangelization program which may become a model for other Archdiocesan parishes. The core committee members are of Michael Dudeff, Margaret Hamilton, Wayne Luciani, Linda Maude, Pam Perro, Warner (Chuck) Pyne, III and Sister Dorellen. I will also serve as an active member. We have designated one segment of the parish as a focus point. The committee will work with families of children who received first Holy Communion in May 2011. The committee has attended workshops and will continue to develop strategies which will assist the focus group in their practice of the Catholic faith. The active phase of this process will begin in late September.

~ We are developing a new ministry called *cross bearers*. A high school or older parishioner are asked to be the cross bearer at weekend masses (5:00 PM; 8:00 AM, 9:30 AM and 11:30 AM.) Presently we have twelve parishioners who have joined this ministry. I ask you consider being a cross bearer at the weekend mass you attend. Call me, if you needed more information and/or you wish to be a *Simon of Cyrene*.

~ On the Building and Ground front, we will begin construction of a handicapped bathroom at the rear hallway of the Mother Church. Hopefully, this project will be completed in the very near future.

~ Last winter all of us experienced astronomical heating bills. Yes, the severe winter did not help, but our dependency on foreign oil leaves us at the mercy of these volatile markets. The Archdiocese has granted permission for us to convert the oil heating systems to natural gas at the Mother Church and propane gas at the Center Road church and rectory. It is anticipated that within six years the projects will pay for themselves. The cost of these projects will be come from parish savings.

~ Finally, the Building and Grounds Committee is studying energy efficient windows in the Reverend John A. Horgan Parish Center. Results of the study should be completed by October and they will be published in the weekend bulletin.

~ The Holy See has mandated changes in the English translation of the *Missale Romaum edito typica*. These changes are to take effect on the first Sunday of Advent. In order to assist the congregation with the changes, Mass prayer cards will be in the pews so all can become familiar with the new translations. We have been given permission to begin the implantation on the first weekend of October. The changes for the congregational responses are few, but the celebrant's text changes are more extensive. Dr. Keith Smolinski is reviewing and composing musical settings which will incorporate the required changes. Patience is asked as we implement these requirements.

I wish to thank all of you for your fidelity to Our Lady of the Assumption parish. Your regular attendance at Holy Mass, your reverence for the Blessed Sacrament and your continued generosity are most edifying. Even in these extremely troubled economic times, we did not forget the needy and less-fortunate of our Archdiocesan family. Your gifts to the Archbishop's Annual Appeal were just over \$125,000. In numbers of families we are not a large parish, but we are a parish with a large heart. May God bless you and "may this faith community grow from strength to strength."

I am humbled to be your priest and friend.

Father Gene