

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK



A RENEWED SAINT CHARLES CHURCH...

As a rule in the bulletin letter each week, I like to write about religious things—after all, I am a priest and a pastor and if there is one thing I should know something about, it's the things of God and the Church! However, this Sunday I want to discuss with you an exciting new project we are contemplating here at Saint Charles Parish—a

total renovation of our beloved church here in Oakwood Heights.

As you know well, the present church was erected over 45 years ago and was dedicated by Terence Cardinal Cooke in 1972. While the building has served our community and its worship needs for decades, I believe that some vital improvements could be made. Since the parish has the financial resources at hand, I would like to invest our capital where it counts and can be seen in the church itself.

What needs to be done? Well, for starters, we need a whole new roof! Every time it rains outside for a period of time, it also rains inside near the altar. This necessitates placing cans or barrels around to catch all that moisture. Also, water has ruined at least part of the woodwork in the back of the church. So this is a problem that needs to be addressed soon.

Secondly, new improved bathrooms. Currently, the church only has one very inadequate toilet facility poorly placed just outside of the sacristy. Since the restroom is not up to code, there would be an upgrade, and brand new larger facilities would be constructed. I am sure this will come as welcome news to many people who have had to wait on line for the bathroom during church masses and services!

Third, a larger vestibule and gathering space. Right now, the church has a very tiny vestibule which is not really adequate for the number of people that come in and out of the church on Sunday mornings. There also has been some suggestions made about a "crying room" for the children and we will explore this possibility.

Next a new Eucharistic Adoration Chapel. Currently, we are very fortunate to have eucharistic adoration at Saint Charles five days a week for five hours. The current chapel while functional, could be made much better. It really is more of a "closet space" where the altar servers place their robes. With the renovation, a newer more devotional chapel is envisioned. The chapel would be much more conducive to prayer and meditation.

Finally and most importantly, the placement of the altar and tabernacle. As we know the tabernacle is what we might call the "House of God." It is where the real presence of Christ abides in a special way in the church. In a new design for Saint Charles, the tabernacle would be placed in the center of the sanctuary and not along the back wall as it currently is now. Our beautiful altar would be positioned in a way that everybody could see the priest and not be behind him.

These are, in a nutshell, some of the ideas that have been discussed with Archdiocesan representatives and architects in recent days. While no plan has been drafted yet, it is my hope that by the end of summer we should have something specific to present to you, the parishioners. I would very much like your input and your thoughts on what we could do to make Saint Charles a better church and parish.

As the weeks go by, I will give you some further updates. I know this will be a change, but it is a great opportunity and a challenge for our parish to be the best that it can be!

*Sincerely in Christ,
Father Jerome*