

Blest Beyond Our Faith Our Family Our Future

You will recall fondly the celebration of the 75th Anniversary of St. Mary of the Lakes Parish. We commemorated the milestone with the Concelebrated Mass of Thanksgiving offered by Bishop O'Connell, the Dedication of the Eucharistic Adoration Chapel, the renovation of the parish offices and Emmaus Center, and investing in Catholic education. In addition, we gathered to celebrate at a "soup to nuts" dinner dance as well as "lunch on the lawn."

St. Mary of the Lakes parishioners had hoped to renovate the sanctuary in accordance with The General Instruction of the Roman Missal (GIRM). However, the results of the feasibility survey indicated a greater need to upgrade the parish offices and meetings rooms, invest in Catholic education, and if funds allowed, to add a Eucharistic Adoration Chapel.

Regarding the renovation of the sanctuary, the GIRM reads:

308. Likewise, either on the altar or near it, there is to be a cross, with the figure of Christ crucified upon it, a cross clearly visible to the assembled people. It is desirable that such a cross should remain near the altar even outside of liturgical celebrations, so as to call to mind for the faithful the saving Passion of the Lord.

314. In accordance with the structure of each church and legitimate local customs, the Most Blessed Sacrament should be reserved in a tabernacle in a part of the church that is truly noble, prominent, conspicuous, worthily decorated, and suitable for prayer.

Currently in the Church, the only cross with the figure of Christ crucified upon it is the processional cross, but it is not clearly visible to those sitting or standing at a distance or in the transepts. In addition, the current tabernacle, which needs replating (but cannot be, as it is permanently fixed to the table where it is placed), is not prominent, conspicuous nor worthily decorated.

One year ago, parishioners who are husband and wife met with me to make a generous donation so the renovation of the sanctuary could become a reality. In addition, I approached other parishioners who are husband and wife, and they too were also very interested in the renovation. These benefactors have agreed to underwrite the entire renovation, which is \$775,000.00.

After receiving approval from our parish pastoral council and finance council, I wrote to Bishop O'Connell asking for his permission to renovate the sanctuary, which I have received. The contract has been reviewed by St. Mary of the Lakes pro bono attorney. I also received approval of the renovation described below from the Office of Liturgy at the Diocese of Trenton.

The tabernacle will be placed behind the main altar in the center of the reredos (the wall behind the altar). The tabernacle will be visible from the main altar and also from the parking lot entrance of the Church. The "Adoring Angels" tabernacle doors on the main altar will be flanked by the existing statues of the Blessed Mother and St. Joseph. The "Alpha and Omega" tabernacle doors facing the parking lot entrance will be flanked with Adoring Angel statues identical to the adoring angel statues that are in the Eucharistic Adoration Chapel. Above the tabernacle on both sides of the reredos will be a prominent crucifix.

The wood for the reredos will match the wood in the pews. The arches above the crucifix, Blessed Mother statue and St. Joseph statue (adoring angels on the reverse side) of the reredos will match the arches in the ceiling of the Church. I spent the better part of a day viewing marble samples. I selected three colors of marble to comprise the new altar, pulpit and tabernacle altars: Beige Dalmatia, Botticino and Dark Emperador Brown. These colors closely match the stone walls of the

Church and the wood in the ceiling of the Church. The sanctuary floor and three center aisles will be made of porcelain (which is more durable than marble) and Dark Emperador Brown marble trim.

While the entire renovation has been underwritten by the two benefactors, parishioners will be given the opportunity to contribute to the renovation and memorialize the appointments (main altar, pulpit, tabernacle altars, adoring angel statues, crucifixes and sanctuary lamps).

Lastly, the remaining floor of the Church will be carpeted as it is time the current carpet is replaced. The cost of the new carpet will be taken from reserves.

The liturgical designer for the renovation is Drazen Cackovic, AIA, of DCAK-MSA Architecture & Engineering, PC. I worked with Drazen on the renovations at St. Benedict, and was so pleased with his work that I contacted him when this project became a reality.

The timeline for the renovations will be through the summer months with a November 1, 2021 completion date. Bishop O'Connell will offer a Mass to consecrate the new altar on Sunday, November 14 at 12:00 p.m. followed by a light reception in the Emmaus Center.

Weekend Masses will be offered in Church during the renovations. Daily Mass and Masses of Christian Burial with a low attendance will be offered in the School Chapel.

Please join your prayers with mine during this time of renovation as we further beautify our Church. The new sanctuary will give greater honor and glory to God who has blest St. Mary of the Lakes in so many ways these past 78 years.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Father Dan".

Father Dan