

CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

Many people have been wondering about the status of the YMCA's construction in the nearby parking lot and thus when Masses would be moving to St. Albert Schools. The last time I spoke with Mr. Len Romano, Director of the YMCA of Greater Omaha, was in January. At that time he informed me that May or June would be a likely start time. I spoke with Mr. Romano again on Wednesday, April 15th about the status. He mentioned that the YMCA had some people do site mapping of the parking lot a few days after Easter Sunday and that within the next couple of weeks, a crew will come over to make "test pits" of 8' - 15' deep below the parking lot to see more specifically what is underneath (steel? concrete? boulders? etc ...) since it is the location of the old Mercy Hospital from decades ago.

As far as a start date goes, Mr. Romano is unable to give a start date, since many administrative procedures which started in January have yet to be concluded. When the YMCA should start construction, although date unknown, it is highly likely that the entire lot will be unavailable for parking and thus Masses will have to be moved temporarily to St. Albert Schools. Two locations are possible at St. Albert's: the high school gym or the auditorium. Each location has its positives and negatives. The auditorium is dark, conducive to speaking, smaller, less handicapped accessible, requires less set up, and processions during Mass are more problematic. The gym is bright, conducive to singing, larger, easier for overflow Masses, more handicapped accessible, requires more set up, and would receive damage from the salt from winter shoes. Masses will be held in the auditorium, not the gym as previously mentioned. Whether it be the auditorium or gym, both would require people to adjust their "normal" routine. People will have to be extra thoughtful about allowing parking spaces for the handicapped to park near the auditorium entrance. To follow along in the liturgy, people will have to consciously get a missalette in order to read along with the Lectors and to sing along with the Choir. The flow of liturgy and how to preach, to lector, to serve in the space will feel and operate a little differently. Although these are easy challenges, we will have to learn to adjust to the new space.

In speaking with the architect for the Parish's project, he mentioned a few weeks ago that it is still possible for the Parish to break ground at the end of Fall or the beginning of winter. Just like the YMCA many factors are at play and unexpected delays could happen; but such a time line is possible.

Thank you for your questions and attentiveness to the construction project. In order to help processing of Campaign payments, please remember to make them automated payments if you have not already done so. Please see the Parish Website for the latest renditions. And make sure to tell others that the Mass location will not be moving until further notice from the YMCA. As soon as a more specific date from the YMCA is received, it will be announced. Peace to you! *Fr. Glen*