

Dear Parishioners of St. Patrick Church,

Since the floor plans and renderings have been available at the parish festival and at the back of church, they have generated some good discussion. For some it has clarified their understanding and for others it has become more confusing. I thought it might be helpful to provide some insight into what these floor plans and renderings mean within the general process towards a new facility and the opportunities parishioners have to offer their input.

The renderings and floor plans on display were the end-result of the concept design or "programming" phase of the design process. This was the very beginning step in which a Building Committee was organized; meetings, research, and discussions were held and the information taken from those efforts were compiled into a document that lists the type, size, and character of spaces that the facility (and parish) requires. That basic information has been issued in prior bulletins and is available on the parish website.

Having established basic size, usage of space, and diocesan requirements, the architect was tasked to take a "giant step forward" and create a set of plans and renderings (illustrating one of many possible design solutions for the facility). Architects are aware that renderings are fundamentally incomplete but to the general public such renderings may be interpreted as precise which is not the case.

The purpose of the renderings are to create discussion about the ongoing effort. Discussion and questions have been good. People have expressed various ideas and interests about the design concept. To name a few ideas some of those items include the kitchen, choir location, the adoration chapel that doubles as a cry room, location of bathrooms, adding conference rooms near the front entrance to serve as a Newman Center for college students, and addressing the outdoor area by the social hall for grilling and other outdoor events.

This is part of the process. These initial drawings make it possible for all parishioners to think about the design concept in more depth and for those ideas to come forward. This has been fruitful.

The design process is very much a "back-and-forth" effort. Decisions are made, pushed forward to varying degrees of completeness, and are reviewed for compliance with the program requirements (as well as newly-identified parish needs). If needs are not met, that decision can be re-evaluated until the design is satisfactory. This "back-and-forth" effort will continue to push the project to completion, but it is important to understand that the information gathering, fundraising, and schematic phases that are yet to be completed have the opportunity of altering the drawings that are currently on display. This is not to say that everything will change, but those previously-developed resources will be a starting point for future discussions, future steps in development, and future decisions. And while it unfortunately may not be possible to address every concern voiced, the goal of the process is to develop plans for a facility that addresses the parish's current and future needs as a whole.

Thus far, the parish staff, the Building Committee, and Parish Council have been gathering information in an informal manner through conversations and email.

On May 5 all parishioners will begin a month-long opportunity to formally share their thoughts. This is called a Campaign Planning study and will be conducted by Steier Group from Omaha. The study is strictly about gathering input from parishioners. I strongly urge that everyone participate in the surveys that will be mailed out to offer their input. Your thoughts and ideas are a valuable part of this process.

Thank you for taking the time to learn about the project, share your ideas, and thinking in depth about the parish's current and future needs. I have learned a lot in this process with you. Let us continue to learn together.

Fr. Glen