

Rectory Construction Update – Feb. 27-28, 2021

Good evening/morning. My name is Curt Appel, and I'm the chair of the Rectory Building Committee. Today I will update you with a brief progress report.

20 years ago, our parish decided to stop maintaining the old parish rectory, and to replace it someday. And 2 years ago, we began raising funds for a new one. We wanted to raise *at least* \$250,000, to build a new home for our priest; and hopefully even more. If we fell short, then Father would have lived off-campus, instead.

By last summer, the campaign gained enough support, to build a new rectory on-campus. So in August, our committee was formed. We chose our contractor (Greg Speedling); and in the fall, we began reviewing details. Last February, our parish leaders met with the diocese to finalize the plans, and obtain the bishop's support. In May, ground was finally broken; and last month, we moved our priest into it.

We are so thankful for the support of over 170 households and businesses, for their financial contributions, volunteer labor, and discounted goods and services. We also thank all who assisted with moving. Many hands made it all possible.

Now, construction is expensive. Donors have pledged over \$305,000; and we estimated that our construction costs, would be a bit less. In the end, we may have a few cost overruns (10% or so). Some came from disruptions in supplies or labor during the pandemic, and others came from higher excavating costs. Also, some donors stepped forward to improve materials, with additional support.

But the good news: we never needed a loan for this project, because of the terrific generosity of so many donors – whether to the campaign, the furnishings fund, or other contributions. Some contributions are still coming in, and we may need to “tap” a little savings to make ends meet. But the new rectory will be fully paid for, because of your goodness!

So, our parish now has a beautiful, durable, quality home for our priests, for many decades to come. And it is worth even more than we spent, because of those who donated labor or supplies. Thank you so much, to all who participated, in any way!

Now a few words about the old rectory. Recently, we removed it altogether. Let's remember why this was done. For 20 years, our parish had decided not maintain it. Instead, we let it decay, until we could replace it with something new. Eight years

ago, we moved the offices out. And two years ago, we announced it would finally be removed. It was over 100 years old, and was only getting older.

It was also bigger than needed: 1,000 more square-feet of living area than the new one. It had two stories; the new one has only one. It was not handicap-accessible from outdoors; the new one is. It was also dark indoors, and it had bats. The new one is bright, and has no rodents. And utilities in the old one, were more costly than the new one – almost three times as much.

Also, it would have cost about the same to renovate the old house, and bring it up-to-code, as building a new one. Here's one example: the electrician was amazed that electricity even made it into the building; it was out-of-date and unsafe. And we would have needed to maintain our aging rectory for many more years.

Instead, we believe that our church building is the center of our community. Now, our church is already 109 years old; and we have to maintain our beautiful, old church, more than we needed such an old rectory. Plus, we might want to expand the church to the east, in the future – for classrooms or office space, when the Parish Center gets older. Now we have the room to do so, someday.

After we announced that a new rectory would be built, only one person expressed interest in transporting the old one. But he changed his mind. No one else ever came forward. So the best course of action, was to salvage a few items (nothing was of any value), abate the asbestos, and remove the remainder.

We finished that process recently. This week, the cavity will be filled in. In the months ahead, we will need a landscaping plan, and also look at other needs. For example, our church exterior will need some cleaning and painting, before too long (including steeples, gutters, and brickwork).

But today, we are glad to have made it this far. I want to thank all of you, who have participated in this process, from start to finish. Our parish couldn't have done it without you!

After Mass, I'll be available in the Narthex, if you'd like to learn more, or still offer support. Or you can visit our website for information. We'll post this update there, and you'll also find links to some photos, for a virtual tour. And we hope to have an open house, at a later date, after the pandemic.

But for now, thank you so much. God bless you all; and let us pray for one another.