

FULFILLING OUR MISSION

Almost a year ago, our parish initiated a planning process to help St. Theresa's respond to the ongoing growth of the Sugar Land area. After surveying the parish, a master plan was developed, and a capital campaign initiated. To date, the "Fulfilling Our Mission" campaign has raised \$4,346,704 in pledges, of which \$1,003,004 has already been remitted.

The original scheme for the master plan presumed that we would be able to close or redirect the portion of St. Theresa Boulevard in front of the church. We have been in discussions with the City of Sugar Land for more than a year, providing the city with detailed traffic and architectural studies.

Two weeks ago, the city informed us that they would be unable to close or divert St. Theresa Boulevard. Despite making a good faith effort to grant our request, city officials had too many reservations about the proposal to give it their approval.

Without being able to divert the street from its present location, our master plan will have to be revised, a process that is already underway. One of the advantages of the first master plan was that it allowed us to use all of our existing buildings while construction was underway on the new Education Center. This will not be possible in the revised plan.

Before construction begins on the new building, we will need to remove some of our existing structures. It is likely that the existing education building and Oggero Hall will need to be demolished before construction on the Education Center begins. The older buildings will remain in place until phase two. While this will cause some short-term inconvenience, there are several advantages to this approach:

First, we will not need to purchase any property from the city or the Knights of Columbus. **Second**, while the original plan called for construction on the site of our largest parking site, requiring the expensive demolition of that lot, the new plan will leave all parking, streets, and parish access intact. **Third**, under the first proposal, we would have had to relocate not only the street, but also the storm sewer and other utilities in the right of way. **Finally**, parking needs would have required the purchase of a new rectory and constructing a new parking lot on the site of the current parish offices.

Not having to take these measures will result in a savings of at least one million dollars, perhaps much more. While a revised master plan will require that we provide temporary classrooms to replace those that are torn down, this provisional measure is within our means.

Jackson & Ryan architects are working on a revised master plan proposal. Without any additional property, the plan will need to be more compact than the original design. Nevertheless, the first phase should provide us with a building that has sixteen classrooms, in addition to offices for the parish and school.

The new proposal would actually give us **more** classrooms than the first phase of the original plan, making the inauguration and growth of our school much easier. A second phase would include additional pre-school classrooms, and well as labs for junior high and classrooms for art and music, together with additional office space.

As these plans are developed, I will share them with you in the bulletin and on the website.

Our next steps include the following: **First**, our parish will make a presentation to the Archdiocesan Finance Board in the first week of October to gain approval for our financial plan for the building project. **Second**, at about the same time, a new development application will be filed

with the City of Sugar Land. Included in this application will be information relating to our new parish school. **Third**, as soon as the new plans are available, we will invite parishioners who have not yet pledged to the Capital Campaign to do so.

If all goes as planned, we should be able to begin architectural work in October and Construction in May or June of 2007. School will open in the fall of 2008.

Some parents have asked about the grades that will be available in 2008. The school committee had hoped that we would open in 2007 with pre-K through third grade. Does that mean that in 2008 we will include a fourth grade as well? The answer is simple: as long as there is enough interest in and support for a fourth grade, I see no reason why it should not be included in the first year of our parish school.

Please keep this project, and all the needs of the parish, in your prayers.

Sincerely,

Fr. Stephen B. Reynolds