

Mar. 4-5, 2017

Thoughts from the pastor,

I hope you have gotten past the first few days of Lent successfully. When we make resolutions, our body and mind fight back. Neither one likes change in their comfortable patterns. But that is what the fasting, abstaining, and other Lenten changes are all about. We are working on disciplining our minds and bodies to make them more helpful in our battle to improve our spiritual self. If we are locked into comfort we are usually not growing in grace. So you might have slipped in these first days of Lent. You might have been tempted to give up on a particular resolution. Anyone who has ever been in anything like boot camp will know about that feeling of wanting to give up. But Lent is a kind of spiritual boot camp. God is working with us to make us stronger. Our old patterns are blocking us. Don't let them block you forever. If you fall, keep getting back up and trying again. If you feel like the only failure, just remember that the Church has Lent every year for a reason. No one has ever been naturally good at this stuff. That is why we work at it year after year.

I hope you have had a chance to look up and see some of the work that is getting done on the roofing project. The asphalt rectory shingles are already replaced with the metal ones and it looks great. As I write this, the asphalt shingles on the parish hall are gone and the metal ones are being finished. I hope you like how the color scheme and pattern really seems to accent the look of the building. I'm glad the Parish Council did so much work to figure out the best look.

The church roof is also progressing. There is a lot more to the church part of the project. The tiles are off. That was about forty tons of weight taken off the roof. I think the roof actually gave a sigh of relief when they were off. The center sag almost totally disappeared when the weight was gone. The sag on each side by the side ridges did not disappear. There is  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch plywood under the tiles and most of that along those side ridges and some along the bottom had to be replaced. It was rotting because of the leaks. Right now the tiles are on pallets and are sitting on the east side of the facility. They will be sold. We have a few bites from people who would want them.

Many of you should have gotten an email about taking a moment to sign one of the metal shingles for the church roof. Since they are going up this week it must be done this weekend. I thought, since these will probably be on the church until the whole church collapses, that some of you might want to use them as a kind of vigil light to continue your prayers. The concept of a vigil light is to have something that continues our presence in the church for hours after we have been there to pray for a particular intention. These signatures could be there for decades. I will have a basket for donations to the roof project right there so you can add your own alms to the prayer as you sign the shingle.

I still don't know what the final cost to the parish will be for this project. I do know that it will be under \$70,000. Hopefully it will be a lot less than that amount. But most of this project of repairing the exterior of the church will be covered by insurance. There are many more aspects to this project. The skylights still need to be replaced. That will hopefully be done in less than three months. Most of the exterior needs to be repainted. That will be this summer. Most of the metal trim around the facility needs to be replaced or repaired. The huge wood beams that come out from the front of the church need to be reworked because of hail damage. The exterior of the church could look brand new. Which brings up a possibility that I will bring up in next week's letter. Stay tuned.

God bless you,  
Fr. Frank