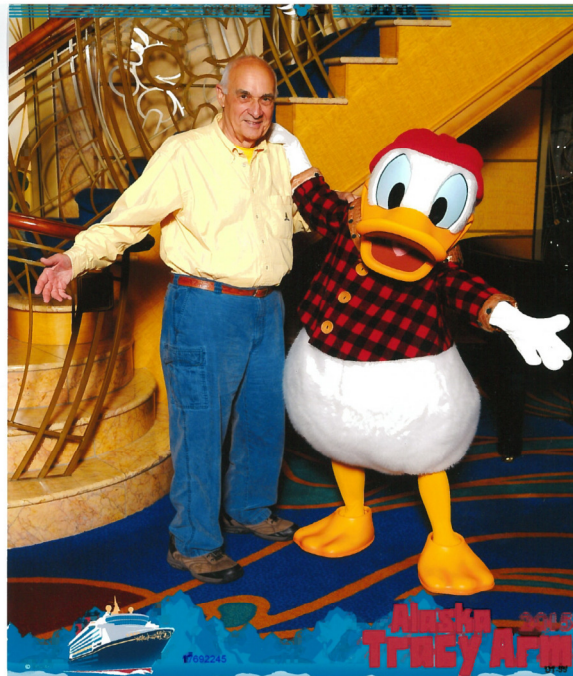


E-NEWS – October, 2015

This summer was one of the best I had in my whole life – I had an enjoyable trip to Vietnam for a wedding and to finalize our purchase of statues for the church; I will describe these items at a later time – but an early hint: 2 of the statues will be part of my Christmas sermon.

In the summer I also was able to spend time with all 48 members of my family: siblings, their children, and their grandchildren. I am the oldest of everyone, so I enjoy considerable deference. Part of my visits included a Disney cruise in Alaska and Donald Duck, my namesake, provided a gracious welcome.



New Church Information

This E-NEWS will be about the new church we have been working on for 3 years. We recently received the architectural drawings: the 2 rolls are so massive I can hardly pick them up. We also received an early estimate for the site preparation work. As of this date we are awaiting the early estimation of the construction itself. The early estimate for the site preparation work was not great news; you can guess: the costs are higher than anticipated. These are some reasons:

- Costs have changed in construction from 3 years ago; builders have many more opportunities now than they did then.
- Costs of materials have increased due to the construction in our region.
- Many subcontractors are already very busy on other projects, and have increased their costs for labor
- We have to put in a water retention pond
- The sound system and other electronic components of the church were more expensive than we thought in the beginning.
- The new parking lots have to be at a higher grade than the ones we have; they require curbing.
- The widening of Apex BBQ Road is more extensive and more expensive than we anticipated. To see what we have to do, just go west on Apex BBQ Road to the new school and see how they had to make the entrance with new lanes for left and right turns. We have to do the same.
- Our church is large; it will seat 1450. It has to be large; we all recently rejoiced that Apex is the best small town in America. But that is the last time Apex will receive this honor. Soon population will climb over 50,000 and Apex will not be a small town any longer.
- Cutting down the size of the church is the easiest way to curtail expenses, but that would not be the responsible thing to do. We already did cut the seating down by 100. Just for comparison: we officially seat 1170 in the gym – so that means we have 280 more seats in the church.
- During the design for both the site and the structure many ‘value engineering’ decisions were made with the designers and contractors to bring anticipated costs down.

Our Next Steps

On January 7, 2014 we had a Finance Plan approved by the Diocese. We will most likely need to make a new one to take into consideration the new costs as soon as we have those costs accurately identified. One good piece of information: we have burned the mortgage on the school and the classroom addition building this past year. Tho that burning had been taken into consideration when we made the original Finance Plan.

The next steps:

1. This week I am on Retreat with all the priests of the Diocese. It is an enjoyable time to see friends I have not seen in some months. And it is time for serious reflection. I will include reflection and prayer about how best we can proceed.
2. We have a Parish Council meeting on Wednesday October 7. I look to the Council for advice on the best ways to deal with this issue and all issues that affect the parish. The church construction will be on the agenda.
3. We will need to convene a meeting of the Church Building Committee to meet with our architects and builder to see if there are ways to reduce some of the costs for the site and for the building.

I have always assumed we would have the need for more funds. Why? Because we began this project a little before I thought we were ready. We began in 2012 because we had to participate in the campaign for the new Cathedral for our Diocese. We successfully did our part and that task is now behind us. All funds now stay in our parish.

As soon as we have accurate and final construction information I will send via the mail an invitation to you to help provide funds for us [again] in this project. The mail will be directed to:

1. Especially the 43% of the parish who have not yet made a pledge or gift for our new church. If that segment of the parish would help as generously as those who have already given we would probably have about \$3 million – and that would be more than enough to complete the entire project as planned.
2. But sorrowfully it is difficult to expect that kind of response. I wish I knew why, but years of experience have made me very aware of the reality that some people do not provide financial support to the parish, though they are not hesitant to ask when they wish some church services.
3. So we will also have to ask those who have given and pledged before. I ask you if it is possible to make a new pledge or gift. Or extend the one you have already given. These funds will be needed now, not later as the key aspect of this finance plan is ‘our cash on hand’ so that pre-payment of pledges, or special additional funds will mean much more than additional pledges, or extension of existing pledges.
4. There will be a pledge/gift form in the mailing I hope to send you in the next few weeks.

A Final Word

A final word: for weekend worship we can live for a long time with our gym. It works well and with all the wonderful volunteers who put up the chairs and take them down – the tasks get done.

However, after 15 years of borrowing other churches for weddings and funerals, we should consider taking our responsibility for these events.

As we are discovering – building the church is more expensive than we and our experts thought. But with generosity from all, it will be possible.

I will continue to keep you posted, but wanted all to know the present state of circumstances.

St Joseph, carpenter and builder of wood and father of the Holy Family, pray for us.

Father Donald Staib