Our Path to Building our New Church – Letter #5

We are ready to build

All the major pieces are in place to start construction of our new church. The Glennwilde Basin purchase activity changed directions a couple of weeks ago. Letter #3 stated that the Diocese of Tucson was going to purchase the basin for Our Lady of Grace Parish. The Diocese reconsidered their decision and has decided not to purchase the basin for the parish. Their decision leaves us with two alternatives: (1) Our Lady of Grace Parish purchases the basin out right. (2) Have the civil construction team modify their existing drawings to move the water drainage away from the existing basin. We do not have the money to redesign and change water flow on the property. The parish is now working with the Glennwilde HOA to purchase the property. Preliminary discussions have taken place with the Glennwilde HOA and the parish.

The church construction will be completed in a series of phases. (A) The streets and infrastructure will launch the process and be completed first. The infrastructure for the church and future administration building will be brought to their required positions. (B) The church building will be completed. (C) The administration building will be completed.

Currently, the property is rough graded for streets. If you go out to the property which is located east of Porter Rd on Adams the road ends at one of Glennwilde pools. The dirt road north of the pool will become the main entrance to the church. You will see a sign for Our Lady of Grace Church. Once the infrastructure is completed a date to begin construction of the church will be made. The construction and design team are working very hard to find ways to bring costs down. We are very confident they will bring our costs down. The actual church start date will depend on our finances.

History – The path to build our new home:

- In 2007 our original capital campaign goal was $2,750,000.00 to build the new church on our present site. The Capital Campaign managers calculated the parish would receive pledges of $2,500,000.00 to build the church.
- In 2008 we had $1,977,000.00 in pledges that grew to $2,180,000.00 dollars in the following years.
- Early on in the campaign Bishop Kicanas told Father Velasquez that we couldn’t build the church on our existing property because he felt a Catholic School would be necessary in Maricopa.
- The search for new property began. We tried making trades with Maricopa school for property they had been given to them but the locations didn’t help us. Finally the Diocese purchased the Glennwilde land for $780,000.00 for the Parish.
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- We currently pay 3% interest only payments monthly to the Diocese with principle payment in 10 years. These monthly payments are budgeted in the church’s operations budget.
- Our present property was appraised for $750,000.00 prior to the housing crisis. The current land will be used to pay the Diocese for the new land. The payment of the new land doesn’t affect the construction of the church.
- Some Capital Campaign pledges stopped for various reasons based on personal decisions by parishioners. We now have total pledges of $1,734,884.00. We have collected $1,222,201.00 with a balance of $512,683.00 still to be collected which is $1,000,000.00 short of our original goal.

There is no question that the cost of the church exceeds the original planned campaign goal because of the roads and infrastructure cost. When our new church is built we will lease the remaining property creating life time income for the parish.

We will be starting a new capital campaign, shortly. We currently have 375 families giving to the capital campaign started 5 years ago. We are asking the remaining 650 plus families to assist us in building God’s church. We ask our winter visitors to help build their church in Maricopa. We also ask the original donors to decide if more can be given to this campaign. It isn’t easy to give more money, it isn’t easy to follow our faith but these moments define our character and our faith.

We hear many reasons why people don’t participate, the Diocese should pay for the new church, and the Pope in Rome should give us the money. Some say this is the second or third time their giving money to build a church. They are done building new churches. What we need to understand is that it is God who offers us the opportunity to share in the building of His church. God has called us to Our Lady of Grace Parish here in Maricopa and it’s up to us to build this church because it is His will. Let us show our faith by building a worthy dwelling place for God and His people. The church we will build is for our present generation but the future will reveal the great works of grace that God worked through us by building His House of Prayer.

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