

Our Parish is Growing!

(This article originally appeared in our bulletin in March of 2019, but is still pertinent today!)

As of June of 2018 our parish was listed as having just over 1,900 households. Today, nine months later, we have over 2,100 families registered in our parish! Thanks to the grace of God we are growing. In light of such growth, any responsible pastor, indeed, any responsible parish, will take concrete steps to respond adequately to the pastoral and temporal needs that growth brings with it. Growth and possible future needs have been one of the topics discussed at recent Parish Council and Finance Council meetings in the last several months. Here is some of the fruit of those discussions:

1. Build a New Office Building. It may come as a surprise to some parishioners that we have not yet completed our building project! Yes, we have expanded the church. Yes, we have paid off the loan. But no, we are not done yet. Growth, and the needs that growth brings, will include increasing the size of our parish staff, whether paid or volunteer staff. Currently we are the largest parish in the Diocese of Raleigh without a Parochial Vicar (Associate Pastor). If our pastoral needs continue to grow at the current rate, we will most likely have to ask the diocese to assign another priest here. Also, other parish needs that have been identified are: Director of Communications and Director of Outreach. The current office building is simply inadequate for our current staffing needs, much less for additional staff.

2. Expand Loaves and Fishes. This vital outreach ministry provided by our parish has outgrown its current location (kitchen and two small storage closets in our parish hall). The original Parish Plan was to move Loaves and Fishes into the current office building after construction of the new one. If it is determined that Loaves and Fishes, and the parish in general, would benefit from such a move, then we will continue to implement the original Parish Plan.

3. No Capital Campaign! By means of judicious fundraising we hope to pay for the new office building and renovate the old one (to accommodate Loaves and Fishes) without resorting to a capital campaign (*applause here*). We hope to avoid a capital campaign in the following ways:

- 50/50 Raffle. In years past it was announced that the proceeds of the 50/50 Raffle were for the building fund/loan repayment. Last year there was no Raffle. This year the Raffle was brought back, but without announcing its purpose. The proposed use of the proceeds will be for the Building Fund. The Building Fund can be used for future construction, maintenance and upkeep of current buildings, and/or loan repayment.
- Second Collection on the first weekend of every month. Beginning with the first weekend in April we will take up a second collection for our Building Fund.
- Yellow Envelopes. Yellow envelopes can be found in the pews. As there is no designation printed on them, these donations may be deposited in our Building Fund. If parishioners use a Yellow Envelope and would prefer the donation be used for another purpose in the parish (offertory, outreach, etc.), then the desired purpose should be written on the envelope.
- Other Fundraisers such as the "Parish Festival" and other types of parish events.

Through the use of judicious fundraising, we should be able to respond to the pastoral and temporal needs that come with the rapid growth that we are experiencing.

Blessings to all – Fr. Mark