

November 15, 2020

Dear Parishioners

+JMJ

On October 27, I had two meetings: a cemetery committee meeting, and a Saint Wendelin Education Foundation meeting. Here are highlights:

Cemetery Committee Meeting

- We have two quotes to repair the 50-gauge rolled rubber roof on the mausoleum, as well as the parapet wall, the outside of which is getting badly cracked and looks like perhaps some pieces could start falling off. We have one quote for \$15,000; another for \$24,000.

- Mausoleum tuck pointing, water sealing and downspout repair was quoted at \$86,950; and then by another company at \$162,000.

- It seems there is some significant cleanup of the inside of the mausoleum that would have to happen before selling any more crypts.

- We have a quote for \$46,286 to repair the cracked base on the monument in the priests' circle at the center of the cemetery.

- Would there be any contractors who would donate their work to any of these projects? Should we explore this, once we decide to move forward on the repairs?

- We are considering creating a more permanent pavilion structure over the interment pad that we now use for interment ceremonies. Imagine a structure with roll-downs on three sides to keep out bad weather, and a storage place for chairs. We have one quote for \$24,585, and we are awaiting the quote of another company. Could we collect the "vault setting fee" for the use of this pavilion each time, in order to have a little bit more income for the perpetual upkeep of the cemetery? Right now the tent fee for the interment is paid to the funeral home. With the pavilion we would no longer need a tent set up for each cemetery service.

- We will allow priests who want to be buried in the priests' circle to choose their own space, rather than requiring their plots to go in order.

- We discussed how to handle interment of cremains: Build a columbarium? A cremains garden? Or stick with using gravesites as we now do? While discussing this, we have to be careful not to present cremation as a norm, such that people would forget that the Church's strong preference is to have the body of our beloved dead at the funeral Mass.

- In the spring we should lay down a truckload or two of stone for the cemetery driveway.

- It would be super useful to purchase a new or used utility vehicle, as well as a dump trailer for the work around the cemetery. A dump trailer could range from \$5k-\$7k, a used one about \$3.5k. Two years ago we got a quote for a utility vehicle (which included a \$4.5k discount) for \$16k. This is all for hauling equipment, boards, shovels, etc. to sites. Right now these items have to be carried in a personal car to the gravesites.

- We are adding to the cemetery rules: "Any use of secular imagery, nicknames and personal

quotes/epitaphs is not permitted.” This is to maintain the sacred atmosphere of the cemetery.

SWEF Board Meeting

- The St Wendelin Education Foundation graciously agreed to grant the parish up to \$24,000 support for our CCD program this fiscal year. That amount will cover the cost of much of what I described in a bulletin letter a couple months ago as our whole CCD offering for the year. I am very grateful for the generous donation of the SWEF.

- In meetings, and in individual conversations, I have heard people say that we will not get our school families back to the parish, because they now feel pressure to participate in those parishes, i.e., Fremont Bishop Hoffman and Tiffin Calvert. That is because when our school closed, our families were invited to those schools with the understanding that they could receive the parishioner discount. The Education Foundation is going to offer some more money to cover the busing, above and beyond what is already offered. Hopefully that will relieve some pressure. But, I am searching to see if even by this next semester I could come up with some parish money to offer those two schools, so that the parishioner family discount St Wendelin's families get at those schools happens with the understanding that those families are participating in the life and financial support of St Wendelin Parish. I'm pretty confident that our families would want to participate fully in our parish life! What families would want to miss out on giving the Lord His due and receiving all the graces that come from attending Mass and other faith activities, and even giving financial support to our parish? I don't think *whether* to participate and support is so much in question, as is the decision *where* to participate and support. If they are supposed to be active at, and supporting, St. Wendelin's parish, in order to receive the St. Wendelin Education Foundation scholarships, yet they are supposed to be active and supporting Tiffin or Fremont Parishes in order to receive parishioner status discounts from those schools, how can they decide? If our parish could provide some funding directly to those schools, could that ease the pressure on those families, so they don't feel so divided in their loyalties? That is what I'm trying to figure out, and I have begun to reach out to those parishes to research the possibility.

So there are highlights from those two meetings. Given COVID-19 collections, I am not prone to move quickly on any of the repairs above. The parapet and roof seem to be the priority in the list, however. Have a blessed week!

In cordibus Iesu et Mariae,
Father Poggemeyer