FATHER SCOTT WALLISCH'S

PASTOR'S CORNER

Dear Flock,

Happy 30th Sunday in Ordinary Time. I hope you are ready for Halloween (and, more importantly, the All Saints Day that follows.) When I was a kid, I was pretty bad at picking out Halloween costumes. Out of a sense of pity, my neighbors still gave me candy. This year Fr. Waldeck and I are going to dress up as spiritual ninjas, wearing all black except for a little white square at our neckline. I hope it will be enough to still get candy from our neighbors! (Actually, I do not need any candy, so there is no need for anyone to send any bags of sweets to the rectory!)

Without sugar-coating anything, you may already have seen the financial report that is in this bulletin. I encourage you, even if you do not have a degree in accounting, to read the whole report, but I wanted to highlight a topic.

You will see a note that we will need to address concerns with the roof of our church. This is an issue that has become apparent to us in the last few weeks. It was on our building maintenance committee's radar that we would need to replace the roof in the next several years, but after starting to see water leak spots in the ceiling of the church, some investigating made it apparent that we need to do something sooner rather than later.

What we need to do has not yet been fully determined. We are doing our due diligence in investigating the scope of the problems and what the possible solutions are. I will not get too technical (using words like thing-a-ma-jig and whats-a-ma-bob), but essentially, over time, water has gotten under the tiles and is slowly degrading the plywood and insulation underneath. There are places where we know that this is an issue, but it is not clear yet what the extents are.

Unfortunately, I do not have numbers to share with you at this point in the process, but the costs will become clearer with time. The finance council and building maintenance committee are both helping to guide the discernment process to find solutions. We are engaging a consultant to help us find the best path forward. We will share more as we go along.

As you can imagine, repairing or replacing roofs the size of a church will not be an insignificant amount. In light of the announcement that we made a couple weeks ago about the purchase of the neighborhood house as the new rectory, which helps to expand our campus, you may think that this is a lot to spend in a few months. I understand. These were not the sorts of decisions I was looking to navigate in my first few months, but they are critical improvements, so we want to do what is best for the future of Ascension.

The good news is that we have been planning for these sorts of opportunities and challenges for years. Your generosity in the past helped Ascension to create a capital improvement reserve for moments like this. Thank you for helping the parish to prepare! My hope is that we can together continue funding this reserve for the opportunities and challenges that will inevitably be in our future.

Again, I encourage you to read through the rest of the financial report. I look forward to the opportunity next month to share with you some of the other ways that your generosity has made Ascension a parish where faith, community, and service thrive.

Okay, now back to planning my costume. Have a blessed final week of October!

In Christ's Peace,

Fr. Scott Wallisch