

The St. Wenceslaus Building Committee recently decided to run a “lightning campaign” to collect cash and pledges totaling \$500,000 before September 1, 2019 to add on to the St. Wenceslaus school building. Last fall, the Parish Council decided to halt the previous building campaign and allow people to reallocate their gifts in different projects. After that, some \$900,000 remained available for doing something for a smaller school building extension. The Building Committee has been meeting regularly for the last six months to come up with an extension that covers the greatest number of our previous building goals at the most reasonable price with the best materials. We on the Building Committee feel that we have found the best convergence of those three in the design you see before you. Try as we might, we just cannot make the building we desire at the quality we need for less than \$1.3 million, and the prices of course could rise some too. That is why we need to see a commitment of \$500,000 to go with our \$900,000 in the bank before we can build.

The key goals from the original survey that the extension would achieve are: school kids eating in their own building, not having to walk the kids outside in the weather, not having to cross First Street, and getting rid of the ancient portable classrooms. New goals that have come to light since then include: getting a computer lab that holds an entire classroom at one time, moving Speech and Resource to more suitable spaces, space to grow our successful summer care and before and after school care programs, and having a space where CCD can gather initially and have group activities on Wednesday nights. While the shrinking of the original campaign design to this more modest project meant focusing mostly on education-type advantages, two items from the church hall goals list are met here: having another meeting space that’s bigger than the parish office but smaller than the church basement, and having a place where families can gather before weddings and funerals.

The design as it is now—and we do not think it is feasible to change much of this—is a main floor entrance connecting to our current front foyer, which opens up into a commons area with fold-down lunch tables to feed ~160 kids at a time. This includes a serving kitchen, i.e. one that has warmers, fridges, and microwaves, but not ovens, etc. Beyond that are two classrooms for Computers and Music. Below, there will be a semi-finished basement that could become more classrooms, but for starters it would be a quiet place to study at after-school care and has extra bathrooms. The building will be designed to be immediately expandable to the north if we need more classrooms added.

Part of the reason we are referring to this as a “lightning campaign” is not merely because we already have a chunk of money and just need to top that off, but also that we are doing this over a fairly small window of time and people need to decide if they want it or not. To build, we need to have \$500,000 in cash or pledges by September 1, 2019. If someone wishes to pledge all or part of their amount, we need that fulfilled by September of 2021—three years from now; two years from the deadline to pledge. (These are slightly different giving windows than Father explained from the pulpit, with a greater openness to paying over time, but with the pledges being agreed to earlier.) If we don’t have the money/pledges on 9/1/19, we will retire the project.

This is a largely self-organizing campaign. We will not be actively going around to our parishioners again asking for pledges but we do hope anyone interested in ensuring Catholic education for the future would be open to a visit. If you want to be a part, please contact Mary Bartek at home, not the parish office, (402) 607-0034, or marybartek.pledges@gmail.com. Mary has pledge forms and direct deposit sign-up sheets. She can also receive checks. The PushPay app has the campaign too; just know that it takes 1% for ACH, 2% for debit, 3% for credit cards. Reach out to alumni, your own parents, and grandparents of current school students. And as Father Faulkner says, “If you know somebody who’d like to put their name, or their parents’ name, on this building for \$250,000, call me!” (Reminder: this campaign should not mean skipping out on your normal Sunday giving, CSA/DDP, Joy of the Gospel pledge, etc.)