



Dear Friends,

This past week I received some shocking news: the developer who signed a contract to buy the school building and convent in Brookfield has backed out of the contract. He had offered \$500,000 for those buildings which he planned to turn into condos. In the letter he said he was breaking the contract because the school's sewer pipe to the village sewer was clogged and the cost of removing the asbestos tile flooring turned out to be more than he had budgeted. We have not done our own testing of the pipe which would cost \$500.00

We had counted on the \$500,000 to keep the parish afloat during the pandemic. Without that money we are in a perilous situation. I can do no better at explaining our situation than our Director of Operations has, so I will simply give you what she has given me.

1. Based on the review of the first six months of operations, the parish continues to incur operating losses however on a much-reduced scale from the prior fiscal year.
 1. Through December 31st - operating loss of \$86,300 of which \$54,700 is attributed to the school (i.e., closing costs, post-employment benefits and unemployment insurance claims)
 2. Sunday collections through December 31st are approximately 25% less than collections received during the first six months of FY 2019 2020, despite Mass restrictions.
 3. Lease for the La Grange Park school building began on August 1st - monthly rental income of \$14,429 and ancillary billings of approximately \$4,500/month which directly offset our operating costs.
 4. Increased costs specifically related to COVID 19 - supplies \$6,500, Video \$5,600
 5. AOC Capital loan balance at Feb. 28th - \$26,288
2. Capital expenditures are limited to emergency projects only, at this time (\$51,000 through Dec. 31st) Projects on this list that are planned include the following -
 1. drywall/paint/carpeting - St. B PC
 2. electrical St. B church
 3. electrical/ice dams St. B rectory
 4. sump pump St. B rectory (\$3,000)

The two rooftop HVAC units at the St. B PC are at the end of their useful life and can no longer be economically repaired. The initial quote to replace these units is approximately \$190,000. Funding for this project would wipe out all of the TTWCI (\$125,405) and the Building Fund (\$63,418) accounts.

All of this leaves us staring at empty bank accounts. We have no money to address any other emergency that may arise which raises the question of the viability of Holy Guardian Angels. That question could invite the Archdiocese to step in to resolve this issue. Should they do so, the

possibility of closing one of the two churches becomes real. I will have no say should events bring us to that precipice.

I realize that many, if not most of us, are having a hard time making ends meet during this pandemic. If you're like me, you are being asked for money by lots of folks needing financial help. Many of these requests come from worthwhile causes. But as the old saying has it, "Charity begins at home" and right now our home is in need.

I ask each of you to pray for the guidance of the Spirit and see if you can't help our situation by adding to your regular collection. No contribution is too small. Since we are all in this together, every dime helps. But if your situation allows, please consider adding \$2, \$5, or even \$10 to your weekly or monthly contribution. I will definitely increase my own contribution. And I perfectly understand that some people can't do this. God does not ask that we reduce ourselves to poverty by giving money to others in need.

If I may quote the Revolutionary War patriot Thomas Paine, "These are the times that try men's (sic) soul's" He wrote these words when things looked very bad for the Revolution, attempting to bolster people through the hardships of 1776. We may not be fighting to free our nation from a foreign power, but we are in a very trying time trying to keep our life - and now our parish - together. God *does* help those who help themselves. Remember the story of the loaves and fishes? Jesus took 2 loaves and 5 fish and fed 5,000. Perhaps he will take our \$2 and \$5 and turn them into financial security for us.

Be strong and take courage, all who hope in the Lord. Ps. 31:24

Fr. Denis