

## **SAINT PETER CHURCH**

### **To the parishioners of Saint Peters Catholic Church**

As I began to compose this letter, I realized how quickly my first year as President of the parish council has passed. It has been a year characterized both by rewarding events and new challenges. One of these challenges has been to provide you with a yearly update on the council's activities, but, as your President, my service and communication to you strengthens our fellowship as well as our Church.

While serving as your President during the next two years, my goal will be to keep you informed of the council's activities, its endeavors and parochial events. Therefore, effective immediately, I have asked the Secretary of the parish council to make the minutes of our parish council meetings available to all parishioners of St. Peter Church. The minutes will be posted on the Church's website and Facebook page. Paper copies will also be available through the parish secretary.

2011 through 2013 will be remembered as our years of transition. To this day, St. Peter Church continues to go through major renovations. These much-needed renovations were long overdue and necessary to ensure the structural integrity of the building. In addition to the ongoing renovations, I am excited to report to you on our stewardship programs and the upcoming 180<sup>th</sup> anniversary of St. Peter Church.

### **Past Construction Projects**

In the latter part of 2011, under the direction of the previous pastor, Fr. Driscoll, St. Peters engaged the design and construction services of Archer Properties, LLC (Archer) to renovate the kitchen and interior of the Parish Hall. The goal was to build an industrial kitchen and reception hall capable of supporting parish activities and small functions. The renovation was extensive and included the redesign and layout of the kitchen and renovation of the reception hall. The total cost of the renovations was \$262, 426.53, which included the addition of a new security system as well as a new audio visual system. The renovations were completed in early January, 2012.

Following the completion of the Parish Hall, Archer discovered that the northwest portion of the church's foundation was compromised by water intrusion and excess moisture. In consultation with our parish administrator, Father Carucci, the council approved and retained a professional civil engineer to evaluate the water intrusion and provide the Church with a professional report before committing itself to a significant capital expenditure. The cost of the Civil Engineer's report was \$1,500. Derril Strickland, a civil engineer with the firm of Goodwin Mills and Cawood, performed the investigation and found that the foundations were as solid today as they were when first constructed in 1834. The Civil Engineer's report did find that the moisture problem stemmed from poor site drainage after a severe rainfall.

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Relying on the civil engineer's recommendation, St. Peters awarded the repair and enhancement of the site drainage to Con-Creation. Con-Creation constructed a concrete edge slab and cut the earthen slope at the northern face of the Church so that rainwater could naturally drain away from the building. At the same time, Con-creation re-established the storm drains in the moat and water-sealed the lower exterior walls of the church to prevent any further water and moisture intrusion into the Church.

While the building structure was being stabilized, St. Peter Church retained Dan Woods, a registered Architect with Goodwin Mills, to investigate the terra cotta tile roof, flashing and gutters of the church building. The cost of Mr. Wood's report was \$2,400. The Architect's report determined that water was penetrating through the old chimney on the Northern side of the church roof and that several roof members in the Bell tower were severely deteriorated beyond repair. Following the Architect's recommendation, Saint Peters bid and awarded the repairs of the church roof and tower to Southern Roofing for a cost of \$135,000, which also included the fabrication and installation of the two new awnings at the rear of the church building and parish hall.

With the restoration of the church's foundations and roof system completed, St. Peters, along with members of the parish council and finance committee, began discussions on the renovation of the front entrance. It is important to note that the construction of the front entrance could not have been possible without the endowment from John Dowe.

### **Renovation of the Front Entrance**

St. Peters retained the services of Cathy Gerachis, an Architect with Goodwin Mills Cawood. The design challenge was to take the original architectural drawings developed nearly ten years ago for the front entrance, develop a functional final design that would meet the approval of the parish and the City of Montgomery's Architectural Review Board committee.

The final design of the front entrance was presented to the parish on two separate occasions. The Architect, Fr. Carucci and I were available on both occasions to answer questions from parishioners. The construction drawings and documents were completed in April 2013 and bids for the project were solicited shortly after. Five construction firms were invited to submit bids for the work.

During the bid period, the architect also finalized the design for a new interior vestibule to the church and those drawings were issued to the bidders to be priced as a separate addendum. The new vestibule will be dedicated to the memory of John Arnold.

The new vestibule will be slightly longer than the existing vestibule and will have two interior wood glass doors that open into the sanctuary. The new vestibule will require the removal of the first three interior rows of pews as one comes into the Church. The code required space will ease congestion while exiting the sanctuary.

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The five bidders were all local general contractors with excavation and structural concrete experience. One contractor elected not to participate in the bid process, which left us with four competitive bids. The bids for the front entrance expansion and vestibule were received on April 25, 2013. The low bidder was Stallings & Sons with a bid amount of \$819,872.

Construction is currently progressing at the front entrance. To date, the contractor is slightly ahead of schedule and plans on completing the structural concrete and flatwork by October 1, 2013. Following the completion of the concrete work, the contractor will perform the architectural finishes, paving and landscape. Completion of the front entrance is scheduled for December 4, 2013 or sooner if weather permits.

### **180<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

Next year, on April 25, 2014, Saint Peters Church will be celebrating its 180<sup>th</sup> anniversary. In preparation for the celebration I have appointed, with Father Carucci's approval, Ms. Gage LeQuire to the position of committee chair to organize this wonderful event. In the coming weeks, Ms. LeQuire will be presenting the program to the council for approval. Ms. LeQuire will be presenting an interim report to the parishioners this coming weekend and subsequent reports of the planned events will be advertised through the year in the church bulletin, website and Facebook page.

### **Stewardship**

In an effort to promote and strengthen our stewardship programs, I requested members of the parish council to develop a program booklet containing all of the stewardship committees at St. Peter Church. Our program booklet represents our welcome to new parishioners to the Church and extends an invitation for all to get involved. As such, we intend to have copies of our program booklet available in the pews, on our website and on our Facebook page.

I urge all of you to get involved in any one of our stewardship programs, as the longevity of our beloved church exists not only because of our faith, but also through our willingness to serve.

### **Altar Service**

Earlier this year, under the direction of John Mottram, we began formal training of our altar servers with the objective that our young servers perform to a higher and refined standard.

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Several announcements were placed in the church bulletin earlier this year asking young boys and girls and adult males to get involved. We had a respectable response and began educating both young and old servers with the help of several adult servers and Father Augusty.

All the adult males who intend to serve also attended the mandatory Child Protection training session at Catholic High last month. In addition, any adult who intends to serve will be required to take the training session before serving with our children. This is a mandatory requirement for all of our stewardship programs that include children.

### **Future Communications**

Keeping you informed of Church news and events is one of our most important functions. In the past, announcements were placed in the Church bulletin or delivered verbally by Tommy Holliman before Sunday service. Although this effort of communication informs some of the parishioners, it does not inform everyone, particularly our elderly members.

Consequently, effective immediately, all communications will be posted on the Church website, [www.stpetermontgomery.net](http://www.stpetermontgomery.net), Facebook page and the new Church bulletin board once construction of the front entrance is completed. In addition, we have started a phone committee, presently chaired by Wayne Bagwell, who will be contacting parishioners who do not have access to the internet, or who due to health reasons are unable to attend service.

### **Closing**

I trust that by now you are aware of our efforts and progress on the renovation of our Church, and our stewardship programs. As I mentioned a while back, some 180 years ago while in transition, the parishioners St. Peters held steadfast to their faith. Like you, I am looking forward to next April to celebrate our 180<sup>th</sup> anniversary. To all parishioners and guests, I ask you to come to St. Peter Church – the cradle of Catholicism in Montgomery, Alabama.

Sincerely



Domenic Ioffreda  
President  
September 6, 2013