**Our Lady of the Mountains Parish Allocation of Space**

**Parish Offices**

Since our inception as a parish in 2011, the Parish Team and Staff have been working out of the offices on the first floor of St. Patrick Convent. This was always envisioned by the Team and Staff to be an interim measure until more suitable office space could be created.

**The former plan that we inherited in 2011**

1,. The original plan was that the offices be located at Saints Peter and Paul office building (formerly the Capuchin Friary). This space was originally designed as a convent and was adapted for the living space of the Friars and Saints Peter and Paul Parish Offices. It consists of two floors: the first has been reconfigured as offices and the second was the living space for the friars. It has steps (which make it inaccessible to wheelchair bound parishioners).

2. The second location suggested was St. Patrick's Activities Center. This three floor building built in 1923 was designed as a school. The ceilings are high, the walls are thick and it would take considerable work and money to carve the space into usable office space. Its most attractive feature was that it has an elevator making it more accessible for more parishioners.

However, moving the parish offices there would take away from the space that is used for our Sunday Faith Formation Classes eight months of the year.

**What has changed since 2011**

The Human Resource Development Center of Allegany County (HRDC) had been renting the entire former St. Mary's School building for ten years. They made several overtures to buy the building from the parish or continue in their rental agreement. In the Summer of 2012, HRDC announced that it would move the head start and early head start operations to another permanent location in South Cumberland in August 2013. They did not want to purchase the building or continue renting. They gave us no reason for their decision.

**The present situation**

At present Fr. Bernard, Fr. Steve, Deacon Urbano and Ryan Mullaney do not have an office they call their own. The Faith Formation Coordinator and the Youth minister share an office. The Pastor's office is shared by two other parish ministries when he is not using it.

Without a central storage area, Parish Marriage records are being stored at each of our five locations.

Each of our five cemeteries' site maps and records continue to be stored in their respective locations.

The Parish Staff break is unable to be used for its purpose when the room is used to count the weekly offertory collections.

There is no regular available space for a conference, a meeting, a consultation or for someone to go to confession.

The first floor of the convent is not handicapped accessible.

**Our Solution:**

We want to move the Parish Offices to St. Mary's School.

**Our Rationale:**

St. Mary's School building was built in 1960, making it "very young" in comparison with some of our other buildings in the parish.

Some of the attractive and compelling features of the building are:

It is all on one floor

It is handicapped accessible from three entrances

Its ceilings are lower and could be more easily adapted for office space

It has plentiful space to be made into sixteen needed offices, two large meeting rooms as well as plentiful storage space.

It would provide enough room at a central location for parish records, our cemetery records and site maps which are presently being stored at all five of our sites.

It has ample parking and good security lighting.

We have presented this proposal to the Parish Council and the Parish Finance Council in 2013. By consensus they agreed that this would be the best option.

**Our Plan**

With the Pastoral Council and Finance Council's 'green light' we already have begun renovating the former St. Mary's School building into parish office and meeting rooms. Electricity and telephone wires have been installed. Dry wall is being put up as this is written.

**Our Need**

Our parish has a rich and talented pool of carpenters, electricians, plumbers, painters, cleaners as well as a variety of handymen and handywomen. We believe that we can create a very usable and beautiful office and meeting space for the needs of our growing parish.

**Our Request**

The Pastor and the Parish Pastoral Team invite you to share your talents to make this need and this dream happen. Please call our Business Manager, Mr. Ed Jones **301-777-1750**

or at **OLMCumberland@archbalt.org** to volunteer your time, your talent or your treasure.

**Our Hope**

The Parish Pastoral team and I would like to see us be able to have our Parish Office Center be Blessed by Archbishop Lori or Bishop Rozanski in early September 2014, which will be the third anniversary of our establishment as a Parish.

**Please pray** about this, reflect upon it and plan to share your gifts in this exciting project for the present and future needs of our thriving parish. May Our Lady of the Mountains pray for us.