



"Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain." — Psalm 127:1

Dear St. Barnabas Parish Family,

I would like to begin by thanking you for your continued patience and support over the past year as we have worked diligently to find the right contractor and finalize our plans. There have certainly been some twists and turns along the way, but I can honestly say I feel better about this project now than at any point over the past two years. I am very happy to be working with Independence Construction and am grateful for their partnership.

God has also opened a few doors over the past year by bringing two wonderful people onto our team: Sam Schillero and Fred Geis. Both have been connected to St. Barnabas for many years and bring a tremendous amount of experience in construction and project management. Their guidance, advice, and expertise have been an incredible blessing as we've worked through many important decisions.

I would like to share some details about how we will move forward while our church is under construction. This letter outlines our initial plans, and we will continue to communicate additional details as the project progresses. For example, I will not be covering plans for Christmas or Holy Week in this letter, but we will share those details well in advance as those seasons approach.

Construction Update

I am delighted to share that all of the major components originally envisioned for this project remain part of the renovation. The new narthex, the fully renovated worship space, and the new Adoration Chapel are all included.

Like many families who have experienced increased costs with home improvement projects, we have also faced significant construction cost increases. Because of this, we have decided not to renovate Bedell Commons or construct the covered walkway leading to the new narthex at this time. I hope that we will be able to complete the covered walkway in the near future.

As I mentioned previously, one of the major reasons for the delay this past winter was the increase in construction costs. In response, we reopened the bidding process in February with several additional construction firms. The bids we received were all at or above the

proposal we had already received, so we continued working toward a final agreement with our selected contractor. Although we reached an agreement on the scope and pricing, we were ultimately unable to finalize a contract.

Since then, we have partnered with Independence Construction and completed a comprehensive review of the project. I am very pleased to say that we were able to bring the overall cost back in line with the amount we had previously negotiated. While the final cost is still significantly higher than what was originally estimated two years ago, I am grateful to share that, as construction costs have increased, God has also provided generous benefactors who have helped make this project financially possible.

As always, we will continue fundraising over the coming years, but I am happy to announce that the Diocese approved the project several weeks ago, and we officially have the green light to begin construction!

Construction Costs

The total cost of the project is approximately \$6.7 million, which includes construction, audio/visual upgrades, permits, architectural services and other related expenses.

Thanks to your incredible generosity, we currently have over \$4 million in cash on hand, along with approximately \$1.2 million remaining in outstanding campaign pledges. We will continue fundraising over the next several years to complete the project and anticipate paying off the remaining loan within four years.

We remain confident in the financial strength of our parish. Donations and pledge payments continue to come in each month, and we are grateful for your ongoing support and commitment to the future of St. Barnabas.

Construction Timeline

Independence Construction plans to begin mobilizing the week of July 12 by setting up the site and preparing for demolition, which is scheduled to begin on Monday, July 20. The project is expected to take approximately one year, and we look forward to celebrating Mass together in our beautifully renovated church next summer. Our final Mass in the current church will be the 5:30 p.m. Mass on Sunday, July 19. Following Mass, we will have a special closing ceremony as we entrust this project to the Lord and prepare for this next chapter in the life of our parish. I invite you to join us for this special Mass and blessing.

Mass Times and Locations

Beginning the weekend of July 25, all weekend Masses will be celebrated in the parish gym with modified times on Sunday:

- Saturday: 4:30 p.m.
- **Sunday: 8:00 a.m., 9:30 a.m., 11:00 a.m., and 5:30 p.m.**

If you serve as a lector, Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion, usher, greeter or in another liturgical ministry, your ministry leader will contact you soon regarding scheduling during construction. Thank you in advance for your flexibility and willingness to continue serving our parish.

- Children's Liturgy of the Word will be held during the 9:30 a.m. Mass each Sunday.

Although we will not have a designated cry room while Mass is celebrated in the gym, I want to continue encouraging our young families to bring their children to Mass. Your children are a blessing to our parish, and we are always happy to have them with us. (The Parish Center atrium and cafeteria will be available should you and your children need to exit Mass temporarily.)

Daily Masses will temporarily move to Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish in Macedonia starting July 20, while maintaining our current schedule:

- Monday, Tuesday, and Friday: 8:30 a.m.
- Wednesday and Thursday: 7:00 a.m.
- Saturday: 8:30 a.m.

For those who prefer a later daily Mass time, Our Lady of Guadalupe offers a 12:00 p.m. Mass on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Fridays.

During construction, weddings and funerals will also be celebrated at Our Lady of Guadalupe.

I will continue working closely with Mr. Seislove regarding plans for our school and other parish programs. Please stay tuned for additional updates in the coming weeks.

Sacraments and Parish Life

Eucharistic Adoration will continue throughout construction, although we are still finalizing its temporary location. We will share those details soon.

Our regular opportunities for Confession will continue.

Saturday morning Mass at 8:30 a.m. will be celebrated at Our Lady of Guadalupe, with Confession immediately following Mass. Saturday afternoon, Confession will continue before the 4:30 p.m. Mass in the parish gym from 3:30–4:15 p.m.

Plans for Monday evening Confession, including the location, will be announced soon.

While we will not be able to continue our Monday evening Community Holy Hour with music during construction, I look forward to re-establishing this beautiful time of prayer once we return to our renovated church. In the meantime, I encourage you to continue coming for Confession and for quiet prayer before the Blessed Sacrament throughout the duration of the project.

Baptisms will continue to be celebrated here at St. Barnabas. We will have a temporary baptismal font set up in the gym, and families are welcome to continue scheduling baptisms here. If you would prefer that your child be baptized in a church sanctuary, you are also welcome to schedule the baptism at Our Lady of Guadalupe.

I am incredibly excited about this project and all that it will mean for the future of St. Barnabas. There is no doubt that this coming year will require patience, flexibility and sacrifice from all of us. I ask that we continue to pray for one another and work together as a parish family throughout this journey.

Our mission remains the same: to bring people to Jesus Christ. I truly believe these renovations will help us fulfill that mission by providing a welcoming space for gathering in our new narthex, a beautiful chapel dedicated to silent prayer before the Blessed Sacrament, and a renewed church that will inspire reverence and worship for generations to come.

Thank you once again for your prayers, your generosity, and your unwavering support. Please continue to pray for this project, for everyone involved in the construction, and for our parish family. May God continue to bless St. Barnabas as we build not only a renovated church, but an even stronger parish community.

We plan to send out a brief but detailed email before the contractor proceeds with the project, finalizing any information that we were not able to convey to you in this letter.

God bless,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Fr. James Kulway". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style. The "Fr." is written in a smaller, more formal script, while "James Kulway" is written in a larger, more expressive cursive.

Fr. James Kulway
Pastor