

July 3-4, 2010

From the Pastor,

Last weekend was the dedication of the facilities for the new parish of St. Charles Borromeo at 192nd and Chandler St. Some of the parishioners from St. Richard Parish were able to attend. I was able to tour the buildings a couple days before the dedication. They have parish office space, the church and a social hall/gym. This new parish is already the size of Holy Name with approximately 500 families. The Stations of the Cross, which also were originally from Holy Angels have been touched up and look magnificent in the church. The pews and tabernacle for the church are from St. Richard. The windows are originally from Holy Angels and will be rotated seasonally. Right now "Jesus, the Good Shepherd." is displayed. I didn't get a chance to learn how they will rotate the windows. It is not as easy as saying, "Hand me that window." That was the case when we changed storm windows and screens from season to season on my grandmother's house.

Other churches have also benefited from the church furnishings. St. Anne in Dixon, NE replaced their broken down pews with the last twenty pews from St. Richard. St. Ignatius in Brunswick will have the baptismal font for their church. Our Lady of Guadalupe Church has made use of many of the "extra" things that came from the church: candleholders, poor-boxes, vigil lights, the statues of Mary and Joseph, etc. The statue of St. Richard went to St. James School. The pulpit went to a local Christian Church. The altar went to the Intercessors of the Lamb. The bells will be installed in the new St. Michael's Parish church in Lincoln, NE.

There are a lot of things that have been worked on dealing with the closing of St. Richard and the use of its property. The goal, as set up by the Archdiocese, was to pay any outstanding bills and then help the neighboring parishes. Here are some of the results of these efforts. The second collection that was taken up at the end of the closing Mass went to provide a scholarship at Roncalli High School in honor of Bob and Rosemary Wilson for their work at St. Richard. This was for \$1400. \$1000 was also sent to Sacred Heart and Blessed Sacrament Schools for tuition assistance. This was from money that came from the sale of items at the closing party last year. Holy Name did not receive \$1000 but did get some extra supplies from the school and church. Those three schools also had the opportunity to take books, kitchen appliances, desks, etc., that would help their programs.

The last thing that had to be done was to take care of the property itself. This was the toughest decision. The Archdiocese incurred a significant amount of debt from the school during its last two years. That is why it closed. Everyone involved hoped that this debt could be repaid. That was not possible. The Archdiocese and I had each looked in our own ways to find appropriate developers or Christian groups that could make the facilities useful for the neighborhood. Developers could pay a little for the property and show that they have the money to do something good with it. Christian groups could make good use of it but didn't have the money to maintain it. As of July 1, 2010 the Holy Name Housing will own the property.

Holy Name Housing would be doing what they do best, putting together grants and building excellent, economical living space that will enhance the neighborhood. They can't repay the debt to the Archdiocese but they could promise to do good things with the property. I will let you know more about that later.

God bless you,
Fr. Frank