

Jan. 21-22, 2011

From the Pastor,

The second week of the presentations from the Meitler Group is now over. Week one reviewed recommendations about Parishes and week two reviewed recommendations about Schools in the Northeast Deanery. As you may have heard the recommendations are not favorable for Holy Name School nor Holy Name Parish.-Today, Thursday, January 19th the Omaha World Herald published an article on the proposals from the school meeting. I have to say the OWH summary was a truer representation of this process than the information presented by the Meitler Consultants. Like most people who attended the meetings I was too stunned to respond and there was not much of an opportunity for response in the second meeting. After looking more carefully at the documents provided by the Meitler Consultants there are definitely some things that need to be explained.-The information from these documents are public and truly damaging to the mission of Holy Name Parish and School. The action of making this information public today does not support positive treatment of the problems in our area.

First of all, please remember that these are proposals and not conclusions. The Archbishop personally reaffirmed that message to me by phone today. No decisions have been made by the Archbishop. Having clarified that, let me take you through a few of the problems that have come up. In the proposals concerning the other parishes the wording was merge, consolidate, collaboration, and coordinated planning. These words were not used in regard to the proposals for Holy Name Parish. One of the proposed recommendations simply says "Close Holy Name Parish." That kind of wording is not used for any other parish. There is an option mentioned for the possibility for Holy Name to merge but unlike other situations the possible mergers are not mentioned with the proposal as it was with the other parishes. A third option is mentioned for Holy Name Parish but is also presented in a unique way. It states that there could be significant investment in the buildings. (That is my underlining.) The reason they added "significantly invest" is due to the fact that they performed a special architectural assessment of our facilities. Normally I would have been happy that they were taking special interest in our parish. This study was not completed for any other campus in the Northeast Deanery and used criteria not applied to any other parish or school site. Due to this inequity in researching the other sites it feels like they wanted to prove that it would be a waste of money to try to keep Holy Name Parish and School open. If this kind of study had been done for any of the other facilities the same result would have been seen. All of the buildings in the Northeast Deanery could use millions of dollars of work to make them perfect. Holy Name is no different than any other site in that the continued maintenance and repairs that we are doing will keep us going for many years.

In the school report the wording for the schools in the south deaneries says, "Students from the following sites will be accommodated in the six systems sites. For the north deaneries it is simply Holy Name School will close, and it is in **large bold print**. This and many more discrepancies put a totally different emphasis and fatalness on the "proposals" for Holy Name Parish and School. It is this that we have to battle.

As I have mentioned before I am a strong supporter of the need for this strategic study. Not having an adequate plan for the future has cost the Archdiocese millions of dollars in the past couple of years. We need a plan, but it must be based on a fair and honest treatment of the information. The good news is that the Archbishop is aware of the difficulties we are bringing up so hopefully things will be a little clearer in the next phase of the study. In the meantime we will continue to operate and move forward as usual as a parish and as a school

God bless you all.

Fr. Frank