



Sacred Heart Catholic Church

330 N Silverleaf St.
Gladwin, MI 48624
gladwinharrisoncatholic.com

Tel. (989) 426-7154
Fax (989) 426-5770
sacredheartgladwin@gmail.com

Presented to the lay faithful of Sacred Heart Parish before all Masses the weekend of May 8 and 9, by Fr. Marcel Portelli.

Dear Fellow Disciples,

1. I am very happy to announce that after many years in the planning process, on April 29th, Bishop Gruss approved the final contract to complete the interior church renovations.
2. Unfortunately, due to ever-increasing construction costs (40 percent increase just since January alone, as estimated by our architect) and the uncertainties of the pandemic, we are unable at this time to afford to construct the planned new narthex addition. So, the Strategic Planning Team and I considered several options:
 - a. Option 1: Simply do nothing except wait another year to see what the situation will be like and make a decision at that time.
 - i. This was rejected, because we have already locked-in contracts with other vendors. Plus, we all want to see the church renovated, which is the heart of the entire project. In addition, who can say what the situation will be like next year?
 - b. Option 2: Take out a loan for about \$327,000 to offset the increased costs and build the narthex.
 - i. This was rejected, because I don't want the parish to go into debt, especially in these uncertain times. The design work of the narthex is already done, so it can always be built later if the money becomes available.
 - c. Option 4: pay for the shortfall out of parish savings.
 - i. This was rejected because it is a different pool of funds from the

capital campaign. Also, this is our rainy-day emergency fund in case our everyday operations are disrupted, such as if there's another Covid spike and we have to go into lock-down again.

- d. Option 3: Move ahead with the church renovation, and decide on the narthex at a later time.
 - i. This was the option chosen because there have already been too many delays. Also, as mentioned, we have already some signed contracts to complete the church this summer. We can always revisit the narthex addition later. None of the homework we've done on it is wasted.
3. To provide a more detailed explanation of how this decision was reached, all registered parishioners of Sacred Heart will be receiving a letter from me very soon. It'll provide a brief project history and other financial information that can't be properly addressed here.
4. So, regarding what's next, we received three bids and awarded the contract to Three Rivers Corporation (TRC) of Midland without the narthex option. The primary reasons for choosing TRC included positive work history on a number of extensive construction projects, employment of numerous local subcontractors, and a strong connection with a parish member who previously worked for TRC. In addition, TRC's total bid that included the narthex was roughly \$300,000 less than the competing bids. This should result in substantial overall savings should the narthex be completed in the future.
5. The starting date for the interior renovation work will be released very soon, with the work likely taking much or all of this summer. The work will require us to move all Masses and devotions into the Activity Center.
6. This has been a long, long, process, and I want you to know all the latest news—the good and the not so good. In the end, it's all about what's best for the parish.
 - a. Probably most of your questions will be answered by the letter, so please watch for it. But are there any questions at this time?
 - b. Thank you for your patience, flexibility and ongoing prayers and financial support.