

Our Lady Comforter of the Afflicted
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Palm Sunday – April 10, 2022

Dear Parishioners,

As we come together this **Easter** to celebrate the Resurrection of Our Lord, Jesus Christ and commemorate the celebration of our **100th consecutive outdoor Sunday/Weekend Mass** we give **thanks to Almighty God** for all His blessings upon Our Lady's Parish. Throughout these most difficult times we have celebrated an equal number of indoor weekend Masses, many more weekday Masses, all the Sacraments and have frequently held Eucharistic Adoration. **Our Lady's Parish** has **remained open and vibrant**. I particularly wish to **thank all the volunteers, staff, and parishioners, whether longtime or new worshippers**, for their support and enthusiasm in helping us find **innovative ways** to keep the practice of our **faith alive** without interruption. Our Lady's served and continues to serve as an **oasis of faith and prayer** for all. This coming Easter Sunday we join parishes throughout the world in honoring the Resurrected Christ. The soon to arrive *statues* of the *Madonna* and *Jesus Christ teaching the children* are intended to thank God for His help throughout the pandemic and acknowledge the efforts made by all. The *mosaic improvements* to the *shrines* of the *Blessed Mother* and *St. Joseph* inside the church are expected to be fully installed this coming summer. As prior mentioned, these projects were planned over a year ago, and are already fully funded through contributions specifically given by parishioners for them.

This past winter we became aware of a **significant and costly challenge** we need to face soon. Both **the heating and cooling systems need to be replaced**. Our current systems have served the church well for many decades, but have neared the end of use. Many thanks go to those who contributed toward their installation many years ago, now we must do the same. As many of you know, our aged heating system **failed multiple times** this winter on Thanksgiving Day, the night of the January blizzard and other days. Our current Jackson Gas-Fired boiler is no longer manufactured and the company has gone out of business. Creative and costly repairs, which in some cases required the skillful welding of salvaged parts, discarded by other institutions, were made in order to replace parts that are no longer manufactured. These **emergency efforts during the winter of 2021-2022 kept the now unreliable system operating at great cost** in increased maintenance and fuel consumption. **Our heating system is not sustainable to heat our church** another winter. **The air-conditioning system is also nearing the end** of its operational life. The coolant is no longer manufactured and has been phased out by the Federal EPA Authorities. Replacement parts for this system have also become more costly and difficult to secure. It is therefore **prudent to purchase a quality and energy efficient new commercial-grade system** for our **Church**, that **can handle both our heating and cooling needs**. A new system will be easier to maintain and service. This is a **major project** that **requires the special support of parishioners, beyond the abilities of the Sunday collections and the Grand Annual, which fund the yearly operational expenses of the parish**.

Compounded by **inflation**, a **serious shortage of parts** and the **world situation, prices are at an all-time high** resulting in a significant increase in the purchase of a new heating and cooling system for our church. It is now our time to join together as we inherit the responsibility of acquiring a system of high quality that will service us and the future generations of our church as the one installed many years ago has done for us. Following a detailed engineering evaluation, consulting with our Parish Finance Council and conducting an extensive review within the industry, the price for **replacing the heating and cooling systems will be above \$285,000**.

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This investment is important as we cannot run the risk of installing a system of poor quality that will possibly not last or not be designed for our specific needs. **Our Lady's Church** is a **massive structure in comparison to any individual home**. Since November 2021, several options have been considered to determine the best-made and quality efficient system for the design of our Church. Since we lack a basement we'll need a system that will adapt to the existing heating and cooling pipes located within the walls of the Church. Currently, there is a **twenty-week wait period** in the arrival of a new system due to **long delays in manufacturing**. **Further delays in ordering a new system may lead to an even longer waiting period, which will create a potential problem for heating the church next winter**. After much study and careful consideration, it has been determined that the best option for our church is the installation of a system consisting of *two new Trane Hot Water Handling Units*, supplied by *Lochnvar High Efficiency Gas boilers*. They are projected to be 97% efficient. These boilers would also have a cooling coil installed with a 40 ton condensing unit to replace the current aged Air Conditioning system located outside at the back of the Church. This new unit would use refrigerant that is EPA approved.

I ask you to consider making a gift of **\$500 per working person**. **Contributions exceeding this request** are also **appreciated and needed**. **Should that amount be beyond your means, please remember that any and all donations are welcome and essential to the success of this crucial project**. Thankfully some funds have been previously raised through parishioners' donations to the Church Building Fund.

Please find the enclosed envelope for this appeal. You may also use any other envelope indicating in the *check memo* that it is a donation for the *new heating and cooling system*. Also enclosed is the form if you would like to pay by credit card or through your bank. You can also use your phone camera and hover on the QR Code to the right, olca.org will appear, tap on the square and you will be directed to our donation form. This will allow you to fill out the form to submit online.



The parishioners of Our Lady's have always responded to each and every need throughout my fourteen years serving as pastor of our Parish. Beyond our Grand Annual Appeal, the parish has sent out only two special direct mail appeals to parishioners for significant capital improvements of this kind – one being the replacement of the Church roof over ten years ago, and the other for the work on one of the two church parking lots completed several years ago. Parishioners on their own, have come forward to fund all other projects, repairs and improvements helping us cover the costs without incurring a loan on to the parish. I have strived to **maintain and improve** both our **school and church** properties with **quality, and lasting workmanship** to help **serve** our **present** needs and those of **future generations**. This special request for significant donations is essential now, and calls for your generous support according to your means. Please know of my gratitude and continued prayers for you and your family. **I entrust this project and the life of our parish into the Loving arms of Mary, our Mother**, and continue to ask for **Her intercession for us before the Throne of the One God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit**. Wishing you and your family a Blessed Easter.

Sincerely in Christ,

Rev. James M. Di Perri
Pastor

