

December 21, 2018

Dear St. Peter Church and School Community,

As I begin this letter, the words from Psalm 106 come to mind: *"Give thanks to the Lord, who is good, whose love endures forever."* We indeed have much to be thankful to God in our rich legacy of 175 years for St. Peter Catholic Church and 140 years for St. Peter Catholic School. For that total of 315 years, it is also right and just to give thanks to the many who sacrificed, some in extraordinary ways, to make St. Peter Parish what it is today. Over those early years, times were very hard and at times very harsh. To all who have gone before us, we are deeply indebted.

As I have communicated with you previously, it is our time to carry on the rich tradition for our families and for our future generations, knowing without a doubt, that we will leave our strong legacy. Many needs of the parish have been addressed most recently through the renovation of the Church, Adoration Chapel, the Upper Room, the Youth House, lighting upgrades and much more. Our attention now must be directed to urgent and immediate needs at our school so that we can continue to provide the Catholic education in our parochial school that we have known and benefitted from since 1878.

After evaluating our present and future needs, while also keeping in mind the factors of land constraints and city ordinances, an architectural firm is in the process of designing an 18,600 sq. ft. two-story building. This proposed building will accommodate administration needs, classrooms for middle grades (4th and 5th) and space for our pre-kindergarten (key cottage). The building will primarily be used by our school but will also be used for our growing parish needs.

After many months of prayer and preparatory work including the approval from our Pastoral and Financial Councils and the School Advisory Board, I moved forward and presented a request for a four million dollar loan in November to the Financial Council of the Archdiocese of New Orleans. After providing the records requested by them concerning the financial stability at St. Peter Parish along with the availability of a down payment of \$1,700,000 and the proposed means for the church and school to repay the loan over a maximum of 15 years, the loan was granted. My earnest desire and prayer is to pay the loan off as soon as possible.

Let me say, I believe that St. Peter Parish's past history of repayments of loans, your present generosity which you show in a multitude of ways in the church and school, and the assurance that it would be a joint church and school effort, were contributing factors in the decision for the approval. Thank you St. Peter Church and School! Together St. Peter Parish will continue its strong legacy as we meet our present urgent needs.

My prayer forward echoes some of the words in our school's mission statement:will create an environment where students will grow spiritually, intellectually, humanly, and apostolically, thereby glorifying God and giving witness to the presence of Christ in the world. Please join me in that prayer. I will keep you abreast in the coming weeks and months ahead as together we take our next steps forward. For all of you and all the good at St. Peter Parish, I am grateful.

God Bless,

Fr. Otis W. Young, Jr.

Pastor of St. Peter Parish