



**ST. KATERI PASTORAL CENTRE
ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF WHITEHORSE**

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Prot.#: 050920

September 5, 2020

Dear parishioners of the Catholic Diocese of Whitehorse,

RE: Renovations of Sacred Heart Cathedral

With this letter, I would like to bring to your attention the urgent need for renovations to the Sacred Heart Cathedral in downtown Whitehorse, and the reason why we are looking to move forward with a Cathedral renovation project.

The Cathedral was constructed in 1959 and stands as a symbol and home to all Catholic faithful in our Diocese. Since it was built, there have been only a few renovations done, including the roof of the original church. Also, an addition was constructed in 1998 to add office storage, a washroom, and a lift for access to the main floor and basement.

In light of the current condition of the building and in response to an energy efficiency assessment by an engineering firm this summer, the following issues which require our immediate attention have been identified:

- a) **Heating** of the building is poor and has been an issue for several years, particularly for our elderly population. Although the age of our two oil-fired furnaces is unknown, we have been told that they are at end-of-life and require immediate replacement.
- b) The **walls** have a very low R-value and are well below current municipal energy efficiency standards. This is resulting in a lot of heat loss.
- c) The **windows** are single-pane and the frames are deteriorating. Again, a lot of heat is being lost.
- d) The **roof of the addition** needs to be upgraded to make it more energy efficient.

To sum it up, the Cathedral requires much-needed general maintenance. As well, its low energy efficiency continues to contribute to extremely high heating costs. As you may recall, this need for upgrades was presented and discussed at the Sacred Heart Parish AGM this spring.

We are in a unique situation right now in that, despite the negative economic impact of the Covid-19 crisis, we have the opportunity to take advantage of Yukon Government incentives to address these deficiencies in our building. The Good Energy rebate program will cover up to 40% of the total project cost. This will allow us to move ahead and complete the necessary upgrades at a fraction of the cost. We are also planning to apply to the Community Development Fund which provides funding for local building projects. And finally, we will be appealing to your generosity to help raise funds through a Benefactor Program. More information will be provided to you soon about this appeal through Sacred Heart Parish.

There is no doubt that these renovations need to be done if not now, then in the near future. It is prudent to do them now so that we may take advantage of these government incentives and thus reduce our costs. Also, we will then avoid a potential emergency situation (for example, a sudden breakdown of the furnace(s) in winter) which would come with its own new set of challenges, including a higher price tag.

I would like to thank you in advance for your kindness, understanding, and support of this renovation project. Extending my blessings to all of you, I remain,

Yours in Christ,



Bishop Héctor Vila