

THE CROWN

OLQM Parish Life Center Progress Report

With thanks to all who have volunteered...*and an invitation to all!*

Perhaps the Parish Life Center has been a part of your family's faith life for generations, or maybe you're new to the parish and have only been inside on a few occasions. But there's no denying that the center, built in the 1970s, continues to serve the parish well. This gathering place for learning, prayer, and celebration belongs to all of us! Yet after four decades of heavy use, the Parish Center is showing its age. The sturdy 1970s kitchen appliances and lavatory fixtures were worn and inefficient. The lighting and heating systems were draining the checkbook. From the paneled walls to the flowerbeds, the colors were drab everywhere. That's when volunteers stepped in!

A new *Buildings and Grounds Team* was formed last spring to support our Facilities Manager, Bill Blais. Last summer, volunteers steam cleaned and sanitized the boys' and girls' restrooms, helped Bill to remove the broken and worn fixtures, installed new tile ceilings, and gave the rooms a fresh coat of paint. The bathrooms are now much easier to maintain. In December a volunteer from the community helped to repaint and redecorate the Faith Formation office. The *Buildings and Grounds Team* is helping Bill this year to turn the teachers' lavatory into a gender-neutral, handicapped-accessible restroom with a baby-changing station. They will paint the space once Bill has the wallboard and floor and wall tile installed. The main hospitality room and kitchen are now being professionally painted, and the tile floors and inside kitchen cabinets will soon be cleaned. With three sites to maintain, the work is ongoing. **Can you join the team?**

Through Fr. Dan's efforts, we qualified for the *Massachusetts Energy Savings Program*. This allowed us to replace all of the lighting in the Center with LED fixtures at a tremendous savings, and we continue to reap the benefits in our electric bill. We've already connected new gas furnaces in the church and rectory to *Columbia Gas* lines, a project that has been fully paid for and presents a huge monthly savings. In the fall a moratorium on digging up the street will expire and we'll be able to connect the Center. In the meantime, all of the hot water heating pipes have been replaced with new insulated piping. No more ceiling leaks, and we're ready to connect to a new gas burner furnace.

The work continues. Will you help? Our *Landscaping Team* weeded and mulched all of the flowerbeds at the Center and planted more than 100 perennials last year. New wells will provide irrigation for the regenerated lawn, and a program of regular care should keep it healthy. This committee of about a half-dozen parishioners is looking for more gardeners to join them for this year's maintenance and to take on the flowerbeds at the rectory.

We also need your financial contributions. To complete the project, we are buying new appliances to replace the 1970s dishwasher, the refrigerator, and the two 220V wall air conditioners with energy-efficient units and to add a microwave with a vent fan. So much has been accomplished with volunteers and a small amount of parish funding, but money is needed for the appliances. We would also like to install updated FORMICA countertops as our funding program allows. **Can you help?**

"Our goal is to raise \$3,000 through \$50 contributions from sixty families or individuals. Contributions will be gratefully acknowledged in a framed list of donors to be permanently displayed in the Center. We invite gifts in memory of your loved ones." Let us to begin to make the building what it should be for all of us today and for generations to come. To help, please contact Fr. Dan at RevDLacroix@aol.com to offer Financial Support and Paul Rego at PaulRego@comcast.net to volunteer for one of the committees.