

September 2nd, 2011

RE: St. Mary School Status

Dear St. Mary Parishioner:

The Finance Council, Pastoral Council and Home & School members met with Michael Lancaster, Superintendent of Catholic Schools for the Diocese of Madison, on Wednesday, August 31st to discuss the financial situation of our Parish and School. The names of all attendees are listed at the bottom of this letter. After the meeting, **ALL** left feeling more positive about the possibility of St. Mary School being open long term in Platteville.

Bishop Morlino submitted a letter to our parish last week with a guarantee that our school would be open through the full 2011–2012 academic school year, whatever it may take, to accomplish that worthy goal. More clarity was given to this statement in addition to other questions being answered during the meeting. A summary is noted below.

- This is a one (1) year guarantee to keep the school open.
- The Diocese has hired CPAs who will come to St. Mary Church to fully examine our financial situation and assets (likely in September).
- Several Lay Leaders in the church will help gather the financial data, with Fr. Faustino's involvement, to provide to the CPAs.
- A plan will be developed by spring, 2012 with help from the Diocese to financially stabilize the Parish and School.
- The goal of the plan is to reduce the reliance on the Parish to fund our school (which is currently at approximately 75%).
- There is currently no procedure for the Diocese to financially support any parish/school.
- No definition of the financial support, if needed, has been established at this time (loan or gift).

Why is the Diocese willing to allocate resources to help St. Mary School?

- The Diocese has a goal to be able to offer a Catholic education to all parents/children that desire it.

- A study the Diocese performed indicated that a high percentage of people will not attend mass regularly or send children to a school over 11 miles away. The closest Catholic schools are a greater distance than 11 miles from Platteville.
- Our financial decline was very abrupt so the Diocese wants to help provide us time to develop a long term solution.
- It is unprecedented that the Diocese may provide financial assistance to a parish/school and the reason they have offered are the factors noted in this letter.

We know this will not be easy and will require effort from our entire parish family with positive attitudes, continued prayers and Stewardship to make this work. Future communications will be provided as the plan is developed.

If you have any questions, please contact any of the individuals listed below that attended the meeting with Michael Lancaster. **Thank you very much** for all your past, present and future support of St. Mary Parish and School. We can work through this...together!

Sincerely,

Fr. Faustino	Tim Budden	Chris Budden	Terry Busch
Connie McCabe	Jerry McCabe	Terry Woolf	Rosemary Anderson
Jan Siegert	Dave Swanson	Linda Schmidt	Myron Tranel
Shawn Steinhoff	Joe Hood	Sheila Kelley	Jim Rosemeyer
Lee Eggers	Greg Merrick	Tim Dreger	