

**St. Clare Parish
Town Hall Meeting
May 30, 2017**

Comment/Question Cards from Parishioners

- Why spend money to remodel and renovate the sanctuaries, when we will probably tear down the churches anyway?
 - Putting ramps in at Greenleaf and Askeaton is good.
 - Why a 6:00 Mass on Sunday evening? (Packers fans will not attend!)
 - How about a guitar Mass? After all, we have one in Spanish
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- Re: "Modest renovations: to existing buildings: please consider upgrades to plumbing.
1. All sacristies lack adequate water supply for preparing, celebrating and cleaning up after the Rites.
 2. Restrooms at Greenleaf and Askeaton are neither adequate or accessible.

- For the Sanctuary (wall) crucifixes, would you consider the use of the San Damiano crucifix – so closely associated historically with St. Clare and St. Francis?
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- Split the finances out for a couple years. See which sites are really contributing.
 - When most people at the evening Mass were from Greenleaf, why have it in Wrightstown?
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- Why stick money in modest renovations? Place funds to a new Church.
 - Are we being mandated to build ramps by a certain date?
 - I believe we need to build Church first on the land, not offices and RE school.
 - 2nd phase of buildings should be offices etc., while selling the remaining sites.
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- Why would we waste our money on seeding the new area down? Rent it out and make money. We should not put up a new office area when we already have a nice big building for the office.

**Short Answers to Questions (not Comments)
and Points of Clarification Where Needed**

The buildings are meant for the edification of the people as followers of Christ. Even while discussions of church buildings continue, the churches should still be performing their function as best as possible; hence, the suggestion that their liturgical/spiritual impact be heightened (with modest expense).

6:00pm Mass on Sunday has been a commonly heard suggestion by parishioners, and so it was put as a possibility. Packer fans have plenty of options of when to go and worship God.

A guitar Mass would be fine, provided there are skilled guitarists in the parish who would dedicate themselves to the ministry.

Yes, a San Damiano crucifix would certainly be possible.

The suggestions from parishioners were for a Sunday evening Mass in Wrightstown.

As long as the parish community is divided on the question of churches, it's our responsibility to keep up what we have, both structurally and liturgically.

No, ramps are not mandated. But they are necessary if we don't want to discourage people from participating in the Mass.

There is no common space currently within the parish. Until there is, buildings and such will continue to be "theirs" and "ours", and St. Clare Parish will continue to be stuck. Seeding a portion of the new land for immediate parish use is a small investment in the future of the parish, and a possible help to getting "unstuck."

- People drive all over the state for sports. They can drive for RE too. Why start with the RE space if the church is never built?

- I believe building new offices and school before a Church is going backwards. I think if you are going to build, it should be a Church built first. The offices and school are usable for now as is. A new Church first may save some money in the long run and create the unity that a Parish should have.

- Not much was said about the school. Has any thought been put into more classrooms or a gym? I appreciate all you have done. Keep up all the great work!

- Why start a 4th site when you are already trying to maintain 3?

- What does it gain to raze the Wrightstown and Greenleaf Rectory and Convent? Why do it?

- If you are going to build on the new land, why start with offices? Start with the Church.

- What is the historical value of the Wrightstown Rectory? (If historical sight, we should not demo.) From past experience, I agree that the Wrightstown convent (specifically plumbing and electrical) would be more costly to repair, but I feel there is a great value in keeping the Wrightstown Rectory. The convent could be demoed and made more parking, but why don't we utilize Rectory for marriage consult meetings, baptism prep, small prayer groups? Or we could spend less than the \$37,000 to demo the Rectory, to renovate minimally and possibly rent out like Askeaton Rectory. And why aren't old Askeaton school buildings being demoed? Are they in safe/accessible condition?

- In moving forward, the best thing would spend some money on Wrightstown site and move all masses to that site and don't spend any money on the other two buildings and give Wrightstown a good try and that would be a stepping stone to bring everyone together.

Before the first church buildings were ever built, there was the community of believers. Disciples build buildings; RE helps make disciples; hence, RE can logically take priority. The "church" we're trying to build is the body of disciples. Even if there is no church building, yet a thriving community of disciples, we will have succeeded.

Yes, some consideration has been given to the physical/logistical needs of St. Clare School. As with the church buildings, it is a matter of balancing the current needs with the possibility that the school could be relocated to the new campus.

A common space is badly needed within the parish; hence, the new land seeded with some grass. The maintenance on the new land is simply mowing.

Razing the WR rectory and convent saves on insurance, utility and maintenance costs. It's possible we could consider renting the GR school/convent; depends on the market and if the parish has the available staff and resources to make it happen.

The offices are not accessible and are removed from the population center of the parish (where most of the day-to-day interactions happen). The new Parish Center (offices, social hall, RE Center) is meant to help continue building the community. Starting with the Church is correct; but it depends on what we mean by Church—"building" or "people"?

As there were no significant, wide-reaching historical events that occurred at the WR rectory, its historical value would seem to be limited to one's personal feelings about the structure. Unlike the AS rectory, the WR rectory hasn't been lived in for around 16 years, and it hasn't been maintained; it's simply deteriorating. Renovation with the intent to rent it out could be a very costly project, and beyond the interests of the parish (that is, we're not overly interested in becoming landlords).

The demolition of the WR rectory and convent has a more immediate benefit (i.e., parking and outdoor prayer space) than does the demolition of the old school buildings at Askeaton; hence, the greater focus on WR than AS. As a longer range plan, the razing of the AS school (at least the larger one) is on the table for safety and accessibility reasons.

- Thank you, Fr. Brian, for all your hard work and insight into this parish. I think the plan is a good one. Wrightstown's church building, located on such beautiful river property could be absolutely beautiful renovated. Feel spending money on buildings eventually meant to be unused is not wise.

- Update music more for the younger people!

- Build one new church – take things from all the (3) churches to bring everyone together.

- I applaud this plan! In particular, I appreciate that it is comprehensive, i.e. addressing all key aspects of our parish community (not simply the issue of buildings).

Like many other parishioners, I pray that we can move forward together and this plan will enable us to do so. Thank you!

- Askeaton – what's wrong with the ceiling?
- How are you planning to do sacristies?
- Is there no market for Greenleaf school and Convent? Cost of razing?

- In the past, it always felt as though this topic was being forced on us, as though we had no say in one new church. I now feel that this is being done as a consensus instead of a done deal. I feel much better about this process.

- Thank you, Father Brian, for all your time and effort with this process, and listening to the parishioners.

- Fr. Brian: really appreciate
1. The focus on education
2. The focus on building community
3. The phased approach

- It seems a very practical approach, where as in the unlikely event plans don't develop, the assets could be sold . . .

The AS church building has shifted over the years, and with the exterior walls bowing slightly outward, there was concern that the integrity of the ceiling has been compromised. The inspection will give us more real information.

The sacristies will be painted and generally freshened up, and also reorganized to reduce the amount of crowding and traffic in them before Mass.

We could certainly consider renting the old St. Mary school and convent, if there is a market for it and if the cost to make the building "rentable" to the general public is feasible. We would have at least a couple of years to investigate that.

- How can we possibly pay for land and a new church, when we can't even get **ALL** of the money for Bishop's Appeal?

- I feel St. Paul's is fine for our needs. When the two buildings are gone, we can make more parking – NOT GREEN space!

- If they build a new church and sell the old buildings, what happens to money – does our parish keep the money and use it toward the new buildings?

- The 4:00 p.m. Mass in Wrightstown was something we need for the elderly and handicapped. We can't go to the other churches.

- Are we going to address the money issue? We do need money to do all these things.

- This is the best laid plan given to us. I feel if we had something like this when the merger began, we could have had less controversy.

- My feeling is to go ahead with the general direction of the plan.

- I am hoping that great care will be given to the cost of the renovations.

- I also do not want to lose a Saturday Mass.

- Also important not to stretch the ministers, choir, etc. to a 4-Mass weekend schedule.

- Wrightstown site: Wood tacks on back of pews are pulled lose by children and put in mouths / choking hazard.

- A 6:00 p.m. Sunday Mass would be better replaced by a 6:00 p.m. "Saturday" Mass at Wrightstown.

- VII Regarding stabilizing tuition – how would the scrip percentage that goes towards tuitions for families be awarded?

- IV Current topics to inform people by guest speakers – human trafficking, substances abuse, etc.

- II Sunday music – appropriate current music how it fits into our daily lives in a Catholic life style.

- I like the children participating in weekday Church readings – Sunday offerings, etc.

The land is already paid for. As far as new buildings go, that is a different kind of fundraising effort than the Bishop's Appeal. The "effects" of donations to the Appeal are much less readily seen, and so it tends to take a while to meet our goal. Buildings, however, are an immediately tangible "effect" of our donations. Traditionally, such projects build more interest among people, and increase the desire to give because we know exactly where their donations are going.

St. Clare Parish Corporation is the owner of all its properties and land. All proceeds from any sale of property belong to the parish corporation, and would be used to further the activities of the parish.

Yes, the money issue will be addressed as the capital needs of the project become clearer. Those needs will become clearer as the details, limitations, etc. of the project get worked out.

The SCRIP percentage and the way it is awarded to families will remain as is.

- **The School needs to be a part of the big picture for the parish community. If eventually the churches become / new church that the cemetery properties are maintained.
- Thank you for your efforts, Fr. Brian.

- After years and years of discussion on what to do, what direction to take regarding St. Clare Parish – I am very pleased to see some actual progress being made!
- The need is here not only for physical growth, but spiritual as well.

- Father: Just want to “Thank You” for all your hard work. We’ll continue to pray for you and your decisions. You are doing a great job – we are so “Blest” to have you here in our parish. God Bless you!

- We have to consider the repairs of all three churches and also the expenses of having three churches to heat, insure, etc.! Those expenses are high.

Church building utility costs for 2016 were: \$9,396 (WR); \$6,649 (GR); and \$5,193 (AS)--\$21,238 total annually. This is about 3% of our annual budget.

- I think all 3 sites need to have an entrance with a bathroom (more than 1 stall) on the main floor, close to worship space, for elderly and also an overhang/shelter where a car can pull up and drop off elderly or bride with protection from the weather. I would like to see at all 3 sites with this, which is why I think we need a new church.

- What happens if 1 of our churches has too much to be repaired?
- Can we please get Saturday 7:00 p.m. Mass back at Greenleaf?

If any of the church buildings have cost-prohibitive, major structural repairs, the parish would bring it to the diocese for consultation.

- How are the handicap supposed to get to the bathrooms at St. Mary’s and St. Pat’s?
- Getting in the church is fine, but they need the bathrooms too.
- I do not support a building on the new land. Build by St. Paul’s!

The accessibility needs in our churches are real. It is a question of the values of the parish and how much we want to put into our existing buildings to make them more accessible.

- Why are you excited about the future of the Parish, and how does this plan excite you?