

**August 4th, 2024.
School Roof Project**

**By Michael Eardley
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I recently read an article by a theologian arguing that, contrary to the cliché, we as Christians do not build the Kingdom of God. We hear throughout the Gospels that “the kingdom of God is at hand.” Christ is King—and that kingdom is established once and for all!

But that doesn’t mean we don’t have a role to play. As we hear in Isaiah, we are to “make straight his paths” by living our lives in ways that make Christ known to the whole world. We all have work to do, to be sure.

Sometimes that work involves building things (but not kingdoms). In the case of St. Cletus Parish and School, we use several buildings to help us in our mission of spreading the Good News of Jesus. We have a responsibility to be good stewards of our resources, both in meeting our community’s needs today and in “making straight the paths” for our future parishioners and schoolchildren.

Without further preamble: we need to build a new roof on our school building.

By what can be attributed either to unparalleled midcentury craftsmanship or divine intervention (or both), the majority of the school’s roof is from the original construction over 60 years ago. As a school parent, I’ve seen the water damage on our ceilings and hallway walls firsthand. It’s an issue we cannot responsibly defer any longer.

Last week, Fr. Elmer and Deacon Franco convened a group of parishioners to hear from the archdiocesan construction manager about the roof’s condition and the proposed plan to address it. We dug into the proposal, received thorough answers on why and how the work will be done, and discussed how our parish can responsibly meet the needs. It was a positive meeting built on transparency and a spirit of good stewardship. There’s a strong path forward.

My goal with this letter is not to outline the construction plans or financials—there will be more on that later. Rather, I want to share my encouragement that our parish’s generosity over the years (particularly a modest endowment created for the school in the 1993) has placed us in a position where we can reasonably address the present need.

That said, there will be more building, and savings will need to be replenished. Let us continue to be generous and good stewards so our church and school can fulfill the mission for years to come.