

Dear Holy People of God,

I have some important news to share with you. After careful reflection, I have made the decision to shut down the Parish Center. The following events led me to make this difficult, but necessary decision.

January 21st - the boiler shut down due to failure of the LWCO (low water cut off). The part was replaced by Industrial Steel and Boiler at a cost of \$3,620.00. This is the same company who had completed the original boiler repair work over the past two years.

January 25th - Michelle, our Operations Manager, discovered a leak in one of the rooms in the Parish Center basement from a condensate return pipe (rusty and cracked). Length of pipe was replaced by Waldman Plumbing and Heating but has not been invoiced yet. The pipe was actively spraying enough water that the boiler had to be temporarily shut down and the repair made immediately. (1)



February 1st - Michelle noticed a musty smell in the hallway leading to the bathrooms on the first floor. She didn't find any problem in either bathroom. When she grabbed the vacuum cleaner from the first-floor janitor closet, she noticed water droplets around the light fixture and some of the pipes above the slop sink. Black mold covered the ceiling and the walls, close to the electrical panel. Waldman Plumbing was called to trace the source of the problem. Upon their diagnostic review, they found not one, but two problems in the basement. There was another active leak discovered in the room adjacent to where the first leak was found, under a concrete slab. (2)



The second more major problem was the discovery of multiple active leaks on the wet returns in the crawl space (dirt floor area) of the basement. Waldman could not move forward with addressing any of the leaks because they are covered in asbestos. The Parish Center thermostat was lowered to 58 degrees to slow the leakage. The boiler could not be shut down due to the freezing temperatures. Note the mold in the closet was created by the steam rising through the cracks from the basement. Given the amount of mold and condensation, this problem was happening for some time. (3) copy and paste this link for additional photos: <https://app.companycam.com/galleries/PrJBcVRL>

Michelle contacted Air Safe immediately and David Walsh came Wednesday, Feb. 3rd and did a walk through with Judy Ware. A proposal was emailed to remove approximately 300 linear feet of asbestos insulation for \$7,300 with an additional \$650 to treat the mold situation.

Waldman Plumbing presented a rough repair estimate of \$7,600 for two men, two days (with possibly a third day needed) to make the repairs that they could visibly see. But they emphasized that once they started making repairs, they could not guarantee they wouldn't find more. Again, refer to the photos and video shared in the link above.

In Fiscal Year 2021/2022 we have already roughly spent \$17,000 on the heating system repairs, which does not include the most recent service work of Waldman on the condensate returns. (Note we also had to replace the hot water heater in November \$1,675). Based on the fact that all of the pipes connected to the heating system are corroded, the cost to replace them is prohibitive, leaving the only prudent decision to shut down the Parish Center. Without major renovations we cannot expect to earn sufficient income to cover expenses for the Parish Center. (Rental income year to date is \$2,150).

As a result of the excessive repair costs, I have authorized the move of the Business Office back to the Rectory, with Faith Formation classes, gatherings and meetings will be held in the Chapel space.

Winterization of the Parish Center and the relocation of the business office to the Rectory will be an additional expense. We will have to maintain the Fire Alarm system and emergency lighting for the Parish Center. Wishing we could turn back time, but unfortunately the decision to keep the Parish Center open was made to accommodate Faith Formation, Bible Study, the 120th anniversary events, and hall rentals by the parish community. We did our best.

The City of Salem has shut off the water in the street. Waldman Plumbing has completed the winterization of the Parish Center building.

At this point, a discussion has to ensue on creating a hall space in the basement of the Church building. God will provide and we must come together, as a praying community, to prepare a plan for a space in the basement of the Church that will meet the current and future needs of Ste. Anne Parish.

Fr. Maurice

