



*Our Lady Comforter of the Afflicted*  
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Waltham–Lexington

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## **Our Lady's Academy Proposed School Extension Project**

**April 9, 2013**

### **To All Parishioners:**

Our Lady's Academy enrollment has grown 55% in the past five years from 218 students in 2008, to the current enrollment of 337 students. The growth of the school has been a blessing to the parish and the wider community. Beginning in the fall of 2011, discussions began on how the school facility could better meet the needs of the increased enrollment. From that point forward, discussions have been held with various parish consultative bodies: finance council, pastoral council, and school consultative board regarding a possible school extension. A combined parish leadership meeting was held in the spring of 2012, and a draft plan was presented to the school parents at their general parent meeting in September 2012 to discuss the proposal.

Preliminary support of the archdiocesan school office was secured following a presentation of the project at an on-site meeting during the fall of 2012. Work with various archdiocesan offices has continued throughout this time. We have also worked in a collaborative fashion with our proposed cluster parish. As announced at last weekend's Masses, our parish committees have recommended that the proposed school extension project be brought to the archdiocesan building commission for its consideration at its May 2013 meeting. Should the project proceed, our goal is for construction to commence this summer. Joe Fournier, a parishioner, is serving as the project's architect.

### ***Overview of the project***

- Ca. 2000 sq. ft. extension to the present structure from the corner where the original school building meets the school addition built in 2000 at the Belmont side of the school. (St. Joseph Chapel entranceway area.)

### **Extension to include:**

- **Centralized school entranceway** to enhance school security
- **Modern administrative school offices** for principal and school secretary office with adequate meeting space in the school principal's office for admissions, parent conferences, etc.
- New **Parish Meeting Room** for use by school and church with kitchenette for gatherings. This first floor meeting area will be handicap accessible and have access to the school chapel.
- **Storage space for school records and materials** – as recommended in the recent school reaccreditation report.

## ***Some of the Benefits of the Project***

- **St. Joseph Chapel** – where the **Blessed Sacrament is reserved** – will be the **central focus** of the new entranceway as Jesus Christ and the teachings of the Catholic Faith are the primary reason for the school's existence from which the overall educational needs of the school are built.
- **Enhanced school security**
- This configuration places **school and church offices in the same area for greater parish coordination.**
- **Savings in Heating/Other Utilities and Security** - During evening meetings the new parish meeting room will allow better energy management by limiting the amount of heat and air conditioning to only occupied spaces. Limiting building access will enhance building security during after-hours access. The current 2nd floor meeting room will return as a much needed full-time classroom.
- The **existing school administrative offices** will be used for **future guidance/tutoring space** as well as for other uses.
- **Technological Updating** - for school administrative computer, phone, and Internet usage as well as for use in the parish meeting room.

## ***Cost/Funding***

This phase of the school extension is expected to be fully funded by the school at end of this current fiscal year. Funding of this Ca. \$420,000 project has been secured through the following means:

- Savings from Increased Enrollment over the past 5 years (estimated \$350,000) – after completing many necessary upgrades to the school property and school operations throughout this time period – as well as investments into education services. *(It should be noted, additional funding from increased enrollment is expected to level as the school nears capacity.)*
- Conservative Parish Budget – past 5 years
- Parishioner contribution secured for this project:
  - > Estate of George Coleman –former longtime parishioner - \$20,000
  - > Anonymous parishioner/family donation - \$50,000

Should the project be approved by the archdiocese in May, the parish will be able to seek the necessary permitting from the City of Waltham. It should also be noted, a school safety plan will be professionally implemented during the time of construction. Additional information will be provided as it becomes available. A parish meeting for school parents and parishioners will also be scheduled to address any further project related questions.

May Almighty God continue to bless our parish as we journey together in God's Name. May Mary, our mother, watch over this project, and the church and school entrusted to her maternal protection.

Fr. James M. DiPerri, *Pastor*  
Chandra Minor, *Principal*

*\*See next page for an artist's rendering of what the proposed addition might look like.*

# FRONT PERSPECTIVE



# SECTION-PERSPECTIVE

