

Our Lady Comforter of the Afflicted
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A letter from Father DiPerri – Annual State of Our Parish

October 1, 2013

Dear Parishioners:

As we begin a new year of parish activities, my thoughts turn again to our annual parish review. It is an opportunity to acknowledge our many accomplishments and to review our current needs as we further Christ's mission at Our Lady's Parish.

PARISH STATUS

Almighty God and the Blessed Mother have bestowed upon our parish many wonderful blessings—the latest of which is the recent decision of the archdiocese to permit Our Lady's to remain a “stand-alone” parish within the archdiocesan-wide pastoral planning process, working in collaboration with all other parishes, under the leadership of Cardinal Seán O'Malley.

With this decision, the archdiocese has acknowledged the demonstrated growth and good works of both our church and school community, situated as we are in such a unique geographical and socio-economic section of Waltham-Lexington. For helping us achieve this major milestone, I thank all of our parishioners, parish staff, and many volunteers who helped spur the growth of Our Lady's Parish in the past several years, all by God's grace.

However, in reporting the state of the parish, I would be remiss if I did not remind you that our success as a stand-alone parish community depends on our maintaining financial stability, continued prudent stewardship of our resources, and the continued engagement of volunteer parishioners. With your ongoing help, we can help carry out the evangelizing mission of Jesus Christ, in concert with all the parishes in the archdiocese as outlined in the Church's collaborative plan, *Disciples in Mission*.

Parish Property Updates

In the coming year, Our Lady's celebrates its 50th anniversary of the initial cornerstone dedications for both our church and our school. During the past several years, we have done much to maintain and update all parish properties. However, there is still much to accomplish. As you are aware, infrastructure projects are financed under two separate operating budgets, church and school, outlined as follows:

- **Church:** Our most significant church expense is the need to replace the church roof. This will require further outreach to the parish community during the upcoming year. Other updates to the church and grounds are being considered to enhance our parish properties, including improvements to the sanctuary designed to enhance community worship as we celebrate fifty years of praising One God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. A committee is preparing to review proposals to beautify the church interior. Finally, one of our parishioners made a targeted donation to install a new confessional inside the church proper, encouraging more of the community to take regular advantage of this holy sacrament in a more accessible setting.

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- **School:** Next summer we hope to construct an extension to the school, which was communicated last spring but postponed a year to raise additional funds. This project includes a new main entranceway to promote school safety; long needed expansion of school administrative offices; construction of a parish meeting room; and other facility enhancements. A special school fund has been set up for improvements designed to enhance school services. The fund comprises savings from increased enrollment over the past five years and two generous donations from parishioners. Further updates will be provided in the weekly bulletin as we move forward on these enhancements.

2013 Grand Annual Campaign

As I say every year, Our Lady's cannot balance its fiscal year parish budget without your continued generous support. As a parish we rely on our operating budget to pay for current expenses--**but a key component of this budget is income from the Grand Annual Campaign to fund church expenses.**

After the weekly offertory, the Grand Annual is our most important collection of the year. Proceeds from this annual campaign go to support our church ministries and help toward the completion of vital repairs and improvements to our church. This campaign starts the weekend of October 26 -27, 2013 and runs through January 2014. I ask you to please consider stretching your annual gift to **\$500 per working person.**

As always, however, should this amount be beyond your means, please give whatever amount you can afford. And, should you enjoy the means to contribute even more to meet the special needs of our 50th Anniversary cornerstone year, I will be most grateful. Enclosed is our annual parish financial report for your review, as prepared by members of our parish finance council and staff.

A special Grand Annual envelope is enclosed with this letter. Envelopes for this purpose will also be available at the back of the church during the entire Grand Annual Campaign time period. Additionally, automated EFT payments, including credit card payments, can be arranged by contacting the parish office; we also accept PayPal donations through our website.

In closing, I thank you once again for your enthusiasm and support that allowed us to demonstrate the pastoral need for Our Lady's to remain a stand-alone parish in collaboration with others. I feel grateful to have witnessed the amazing growth at Our Lady's and to serve as pastor of such a committed faith community. I ask God to bless each one of you and your families on our journey toward the Kingdom of Heaven. May Mary, our Blessed Mother, also continue to watch over all of you and your loved ones now, and in the coming year.

Sincerely in Christ,

Fr. James M. DiPerri

Father James M. DiPerri

Pastor

Enclosure: Parish Financial Report

