

St. Bernard Church

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Issue 5

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STEERING COMMITTEE REPORT



Steering Committee

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Accept, O Lord, our thanks and praise for all that you have done for us. We thank you especially for setting us at tasks which demand our best efforts, and hold the promise for leading us to accomplishments which satisfy and delight. Be present with us as we work together: make us responsive to your will and give to us a healthy pride in all we do that we may be good stewards of all things entrusted to us. May the prayers of our patron Bernard help us to keep in mind the wise counsel given long ago "whoever would climb to a lofty height must go by steps, not leaps."

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen

THIS WEEK

This past week the Steering Committee and the Finance Committee met with Brother William Dygert, the Superintendent of the Diocese of Providence Schools and Bruce Daigle, Director of Planning. The topics discussed included: the Mission of Catholic Schools, Need for Elementary School Seats, and Funding Paradigms.

The mission of Catholics schools is to provide spiritual and faith formation, to evangelize and to promote a Catholic way of life. A school enhances the life of the entire parish.

Three years ago the Diocese commissioned the Meitler Study which was charged with the task of assessing whether there was a need for more classrooms in the South County area. Using demographic information and interviews the Meitler Study determined that there was a need for more classrooms. The study also determined that the population growth rate in South County will continue to increase in the next 25 years.

Lastly, two funding models for schools were explained. Traditional school budgets have been based on revenues coming from tuition, parish subsidy, fundraising, and development income. A newer funding model called Cost-Based Tuition/Needs Based Assistance is gaining in popularity. Tuition is based on the actual cost per pupil. Tuition assistance is provided to families with documented need. Parish subsidy and other funding sources are used to create a tuition assistance pool.

The Committee learned that Holy Apostles in Cranston is building a new school so it was decided to invite Father Sheehan, the pastor, to speak to the Committee about the process. Much more work needs to be done, and will be done, before any decision is made on whether or not to build a school.

Question for Sunday, July 13, 2003

Would you agree that a new St. Bernard Catholic school (preK – 8) would benefit the Parish and the community?:

Yes _____ No _____

Why/How? _____

Please drop your response in the collection baskets or send an email to steering_committee@sbcwickford.org. Thanks for your response!

The Steering Committee has a new e-mail address: steering_committee@sbwickford.org Please make a note of it and keep sending your questions, thoughts and responses.

Thanks so much to the ministry leaders and members for completing the questionnaires and returning them to the Parish Center. Your responses are a vital part of the Master Plan phase of the project. The Steering Committee and the architects will use them in the early stage of planning.

The Church Building – a Legacy

~171~ Churches are built to be legacies to a community's faith. Every parish community hopes that its space for worship will endure long after those who now pray there have joined the Messianic Banquet. Liturgical education is primary in the development of any parish's plans for the future, since the building is an embodiment of the Church's transmission of the Gospel. If built wisely and well, the building itself will evangelize the descendants of its builders.

From *Built of Living Stones* Guidelines of the US Conference of Catholic Bishops

Coming Up:

~ The Steering Committee is compiling a list of church facilities to visit in the upcoming weeks including new parish centers and churches in the area. Let us know of any you would like us to visit.

~ The committee is planning a trip to visit the Cistercian Abbey of St. Joseph's in Spencer, Massachusetts. St. Bernard was a Cistercian monk. Cistercian architecture is known for its simple unadorned style of construction. Where have we seen that?



St. Bernard Church of Wickford



Cistercian Abbey of Fontenay

WEEKLY QUESTION: YOUR RESPONSES

In next week's newsletter there will be a summary of the responses we have received to all of the questions posed during the month of June.

Note: You have the unique opportunity to incorporate your thoughts and ideas into the planning of the future of St. Bernard's. Please use this opportunity to make your opinion known. The Committee reviews all responses to each question.