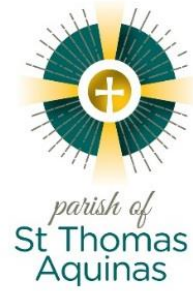


ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF A GROWING TAURANGA CATHOLIC COMMUNITY



October 2017

Dear Parishioners

Kia ora tatou. In my letter to you in March, I expressed the hope that we would be able to make a decision, by the end of this year, regarding the future development of the parish. In that same letter, I included:

- some of the feedback from parishioners
- the concept plan from Thorn Architects
- Monsignor Trevor Murray's response

A parish as large as ours, to function effectively, needs a parish church and centre which incorporate the following:

- a worship space capable of seating 700
- an adjoining administration centre (reception area, offices, meeting rooms, archives, kitchen and toilet facilities)
- a gathering space where people can meet before and after liturgy – and move the talking out of the worship space
- a single entrance foyer
- parking and access for elderly and disabled parishioners
- a side chapel for quiet prayer, for baptisms, and small weddings and funerals – possibly weekday Mass (and which could also double as a “crying room” during Sunday Mass)

Our present main church does not allow all of these things. There are other issues attached with our existing facility also: security, parking, disabled access, noise, maintenance.

Some suggestions have been made with regard to the Elizabeth St site (St Mary Immaculate) and I wish to respond to some of these.

UNDERGROUND CAR PARK

I approached Brunel Construction to get some idea of how much such a development would cost. They responded as follows: “Assuming the car park would be largely dug into the ground, it would require concrete external walls with waterproofing, drainage, lighting, sprinkler fire protection system and possibly a ventilation system dependent on whether you could obtain natural cross ventilation by incorporating into the design. The cost for this would be in the region of \$1,500/m² dependent on final design. Currently the land area is 3,893m² therefore on the assumption that 2,000m² would have car park, the capital expenditure could be in the region of **\$3 million**. Should your proposed building be greater or less than the 2,000m²; just apply the \$1,500/m² and you will not be far off.

This could be further refined and possible savings made to incorporate the foundation structure into the basement design thereby gaining cost savings on the building foundations.”

That's \$3 million for maybe 30-40 carparks.

RECLADDING

The present church (opened in 1991) needs to be reclad – that is clear. There are issues with leaking and internal rotting of timbers. The estimated cost to reclad is **\$1.6 million** but that does not allow for rotting timbers within the wall structure which may need to be replaced – we won't know until the cladding comes off. The church will need to be “wrapped” and will be therefore unavailable to us for some weeks, possibly months. (This figure, and other estimates below, came from **Prendos** and can be viewed in the Parish Office.)

NEW EXTENSION

The Thorn Studios concept plan (included in my March letter) proposes the demolition of the 1955 building (presently kitchen, supper room, toilets, overflow room, sacristies) and replaced with a more purpose-built structure, which would include a gathering space, entrance foyer, meeting room, modern kitchen, toilets. The cost of this would be in the vicinity of **\$3 million**. This plan sees the demolition of the current Elizabeth St

presbytery, and some extra parking made available, as well as a one-way driveway which would allow a separate entry from, and exit to, 1st Ave. The Thorn Studio plan, as is, has inadequate office / administration space, and this would need to be addressed. The provision of a presbytery in the city needs to be addressed also – the next parish priest may not be prepared to live at Te Puna!

In brief:

Underground car park	\$3 million
Recladding	\$1.6 million
Rebuild	\$3 million
New driveway/retaining wall	\$300,000
New seating, floor coverings	\$250,000

VALUATION

We have sought a valuation of the St Mary Immaculate property, which we have received. It is not appropriate to include it in this letter – but it is significant, to say the least.

PYES PA

A meeting of parishioners with the Aquinas Development Strategy team took place in April and was well-attended. This group has published its first concept plan for the Aquinas College/Pyes Pa Rd property, and this is attached. You will see that it includes provision for a **church, presbytery and primary school**, as well as considerably more parking (both for cars and buses). There are some issues with this plan, particularly around traffic management, and they have “gone back to the drawing board” – literally! However, it gives some idea of what is possible.

Our options (as I stated them in March) remain the same:

1. Develop Elizabeth St only – and “land bank” Pyes Pa Rd
2. Sell the Elizabeth St site, shift to Pyes Pa Rd
3. “Compromise”: Maintain a presence in the city – develop a new church and administration centre at Pyes Pa Rd
4. “Both” – develop Elizabeth St and build a new church and centre at Pyes Pa Rd

So... as I indicated in a Sunday newsletter a few weeks ago, it would be good for us to have a meeting to allow people to have their say about the issues highlighted in this letter and the previous letter. This meeting will take place on **Thursday October 19th at 7pm, at St Mary’s School.**

- Any parishioner who wishes to speak has two minutes, and you need to book your speaking “slot” through the Parish Office. It’s always better if you write down what you want to say.
- Some may not want to speak – but they might like to have their views read aloud – please limit what you’d like to say to 250-300 words (about two minutes worth) and hand them in to the office before the meeting.
- And if I can’t get to the meeting? A record will be kept of all submissions and made available for review and comment should you be unable to attend the meeting.
- Outcomes from the meeting will be used to evaluate and discern a preferred option and develop a recommendation to be put forward to the Diocese.

Before the meeting on October 19th, I urge you to walk around St Mary Immaculate Church, inside and out, and have a good look.

Submissions received since my March letter have been included with this letter – thank you to those who have written.

Let us continue to pray that the Holy Spirit guide us in our reflections and decision-making – and, as Jesus says so often, “Do not be afraid!”

Yours sincerely in Christ



Father Mark
Parish Priest