



Frequently Asked Questions

As we prepare for the launch of our *Mission Critical* capital campaign, our goal is to answer questions that surfaced during the planning study through a series of *Frequently Asked Questions* bulletin inserts. You can find copies of each insert along with additional campaign materials on our website (stthomaspls.org).

The goal of our *Mission Critical* campaign is to address facility and maintenance issues throughout our campus. This process began as an initiative of the *Faith in Our Future* strategic plan which led to the formation of a facilities committee composed of several parishioners with expertise in construction. The committee hired Opus Design Build to conduct a facility review that identified numerous maintenance needs throughout our campus. The review allowed us to determine which needs are most critical and could result in additional problems if not addressed immediately.

Here are answers to questions we received about specific projects:

WHAT IS AN AIR HANDLING UNIT (AHU)?

An air handling unit regulates and circulates air as part of a heating and ventilation system. Air handlers connect to ductwork that distributes the fresh air through the building and returns it to the AHU. Our school building, gymnasium and parish center do not have AHUs so air is not circulated in these areas, and no fresh air is brought in from outside. This leads to poor air quality and makes it difficult to regulate the temperature.

DOES THE CURRENT FIRE ALARM IN THE SCHOOL WORK?

The current fire alarm system is functioning however it is only an internal system, meaning that it does not connect to the fire department, alerting them to a building emergency. This is not up to the present fire code. Installing a new system would provide a safer environment for all who use the school building.

IS THE BOILER GOING TO BREAK DOWN SOON, OR CAN WE HOLD OFF ON INSTALLING A NEW ONE FOR A BIT LONGER?

Our 93-year-old boiler is still functioning; however, it has shut down on numerous occasions. In 2017, we spent more than \$30,000 on only the most essential maintenance for the boiler. Spare parts are becoming increasingly difficult and expensive to purchase. Installing a new heating system will be more energy efficient and will allow us to better control the heat requirements for different parts of the building.

IS THERE CURRENTLY EXTERIOR LIGHTING AT THE PARISH CENTER?

There is some lighting on the exterior of the parish center, but it does not provide sufficient lighting for sidewalks and some parts of the parking area. This means that people walking on winter evenings and early mornings cannot see ice underfoot, and the security of people entering or leaving the building during dark hours is compromised.

MISSION 
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A CAMPAIGN FOR BUILDING RENEWAL