

After 9:00 Mass
Sunday, October 11, 2015

Good Morning. As Father Ron mentioned, I am Sheryl Bissen. My husband Duane and I moved to Grinnell in August of 1980, the weekend before our oldest child started kindergarten. We raised our 3 children in Grinnell and at St. Mary's.

Thinking back, I became active in the parish very quickly after moving here; chaperoning youth trips, serving as lector, and I assisted Deacon Bill Olson in the early years of RCIA classes. Duane and I chaired the Fall Festival twice and were involved on the planning committees for several years. Currently I serve as a lector, Eucharist Minister and I am on the Building Project Fundraising Committee and track all pledges and payments to the campaign. Thank you for all you have done already.

Let me tell you just a quick story...

This summer we were playing a game of cards with family when I proceeded to dominate the conversation and literally stop the game for 20 minutes. It all started when I told them how I had been working with the Capital Campaign for the Building Project. I told them about the project itself, people's generosity, and about the amazing opportunity this parish has. It really is a once in a 'parish lifetime' opportunity. You know when I finally stopped and apologized for occupying the conversation, my family expressed encouragement and told me that I was obviously very passionate about this project and the future of our parish. That's why I stand before you today.

This church, this parish, you all have been a part of my life since we moved here in 1980 and I can't imagine my life without any them. Being a part of this parish community has brought such richness to my life and the lives of many. We've been through heartache and joy together many times over the years.

We, the people of St. Mary's Parish have an amazing opportunity in front of us. To make an investment in the future of our families, our parish family, our community with this building project.

I am very impressed with the current building plan. It is a very modest building with lots of flexibility of space in order to get the most for our money. Does it have everything that we all would like to see? No, but It is a project and a goal that is reasonable and achievable.

Building costs, heating costs, use of resources will all be impacted in a positive way by the choices being made with this construction. And it will serve our parish far into the future in ways most of us can't even imagine now. Our parish will have a parish center it can be proud of. But we have to have the money. We need your pledges, we need your support and we need your prayers. Please do whatever you can to help us with this project. In order to break ground, to actually start this project, we have to have that certain dollar amount collected already. For those of you who are able, we would like to ask you to pay ahead of schedule, to pay what you can in the next couple months to help us reach that 'break ground goal.'

With our new facilities and a renewed sense of community and confidence, St. Mary's Parish will be able to continue to play an important role in our community, in our lives and in the lives of those to come after us. As we Build Forward Together in Faith.