



November, 2019

Dear Redeemer Parishioners,

Welcome to the autumn season and my favorite time of the year. Recently I visited my hometown of Staunton, Virginia and witnessed the brilliant display of color passing over Afton Mountain. With the turning of the leaves and the cool crisp nights to enjoy, our God is reminding us that change is in the air. Something new is about to happen.

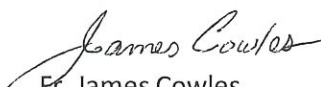
On May 18th I received a phone call from the Bishop's office announcing I would be the new pastor of the Church of the Redeemer. Since then, and still very much today, change is a major part of my life. New people to meet, a new area to find my way around, new challenges and welcome opportunities fill my days. I welcome all these changes and personally thanked Bishop Knestout just two weeks ago for this assignment.

People are asking me all the time if I am "settled in" yet? My answer is usually, "Yes, but!" Why do I say that? Since July 1st when I arrived I realized that the rectory for Redeemer, my home, had some major issues that required immediate attention. An ongoing issue with the aging house has been the presence of black mold in several areas as well as in the ventilation system. Numerous people have been through the rectory to evaluate the situation including finance council members, parish staff, facilities committee members, local restoration services, and representatives from the Diocese of Richmond.

In mid-August the decision was made that the problem was significant enough that an alternate residence for me would be required ASAP. I had also developed a chronic cough my first 6 weeks here. At present I am enjoying apartment living residing just off Atlee Station Rd. A plan is underway now to correct the issues at the rectory as well as to upgrade aging appliances, electrical, etc. Unfortunately, the costs of this project will be significant and is an unplanned capital improvement expense.

Starting the middle of this month, running through and culminating with the upcoming grand celebration of ***Redeemer Royale*** I am asking on behalf of our parish leadership for your assistance. Financial support, in whatever way you can help, is needed to complete the rectory renovation project. Envelopes will be provided for your use at Mass as well as **e-giving** options available online. The final big push to defray these unexpected costs to the parish will be ***Redeemer Royale Night, February, 15, 2020***. Your support of *Redeemer Royale* in any number of ways to make it a HUGE success will greatly help us reach our goal.

Lastly, a very special thanks to my staff and all of your parish leadership for quickly addressing this issue and helping me through this transition time. Yes, "change is in the air!" Needless to say, I am very much looking forward to the new changes. I look forward to being able to say one day soon, *I have settled into my new home*. God Bless you all!


Fr. James Cowles
Pastor

