

Listening Session Information Sheet
St. Ignatius Parish
May 2022

Preamble: Boston College and St. Ignatius Parish have been cooperating and collaborating for close to 100 years, since the establishment of both in Chestnut Hill. The university has expressed an interest in establishing a new stage in its relationship with the parish. This is driven in part by a wish to enhance ministerial, formational and educational opportunities, to mutually benefit the parish and university communities. It is also driven by the university's desire to restore the church building.

Parishioner-driven: Since the start of this process in fall of 2021, the Parish Pastoral Council (PPC) made it clear to the Jesuit Provincial and the University that if the university wanted to ensure a vibrant parish, then the university should work with the parishioners, not just the pastor, in this process. The pastor, Fr. Joe Costantino supported this mode of operating and has been closely present to, but largely hands off this process. The PPC then asked a team of five parishioners to represent the parish to the university. That Partnership Team has been working with the PPC to discern best directions. For its part, the PPC has used multiple modes to both share and solicit information with parishioners, so as to best represent the desires of the parishioners throughout the process. The PPC is trying to be mindful of the parish's interest for the next year as well as 5, 10 and 15 years down the road. In reference to the needs of the building, the PPC recognizes that the cost of doing nothing is considerable.

What has been clearly established in the process so far:

- The parish is to remain a territorial parish, with all the privileges and responsibilities that bestows, such as the ability to perform and record significant sacraments, like baptisms, marriages and funeral Masses.
- The pastor and pastoral staff will continue to be employed by and responsible to the parish and archdiocese.
- The Finance Council (FC) and the Parish Pastoral Council (PPC) will continue to offer guidance and leadership for the pastor and staff.
- All of these, including the Commissions and committees will continue to function in service to the parish communities and commitments.
- The Jesuit Provincial is responsible for naming the pastor and has advanced a name to the Archbishop for approval.

What is pretty clear at this point:

- Most parishioners value the relationship with the university, and more than half value the independence of the parish from the university.
- Many express excitement about the possibility of increased connection; some others remain skeptical.
- Many parishioners express concern about the vitality of the parish community, especially given the significant challenges of the past two years.

- The church building is in need of substantial repair and restoration. An estimate for repair and restoration of \$10-13 million was made in 2013; no substantial work was done at that time. Those costs would be greater now.
- Over the past 15 years three efforts have been made to raise money to address needs of the building.
 - Most recently, “Doors and More” raised \$100,000, which was used to refurbish the doors and confessionals and to defray costs on the boilers and HVAC.
 - The “Fr. Bob Legacy Fund” raised \$450,000 and was used, in part, on the boilers and HVAC.
 - In 2009, just over a million dollars were raised for repair work on the tower and other immediate projects.
- A capital campaign had been discussed for 2020 but was scuttled because of the pandemic.
- In a parish of 2000 households, just over 600 are regular, sustaining contributors.

Some of the things that have NOT yet been determined:

- How parishioners feel about the needs of the church building
- Whether parishioners desire any change to the current relationship with the university.
- How parishioners would financially support restoring the Church, with or without an enhanced partnership with Boston College.

Helpful things to know as we move forward:

- The parish property is owned by the Archdiocese of Boston, but any maintenance or upgrades are the financial responsibility of the parish.
- Boston College is a Jesuit university led by the university president and Board of Trustees.
- The Jesuit East Coast Provincial is the provincial of the Jesuit community at St. Mary’s Hall at Boston College, but has no oversight of the university.

What we hope to accomplish with you in these listening sessions:

- Get a sense of your hopes and concerns going forward. What are the advantages you see? What are disadvantages?
- Give parishioners a chance to hear one another’s hopes and concerns.
- Offer some direction to the PPC and parish Partnership Team.

Thank you for your time and attention to this process.

Theresa O’Keefe

Chair of the PPC