***From the Pastor’s Desk***

 One of the main topics of discussion at the Parish Council meeting last Monday was suggested changes to the Upper Church. The first change would be to move the tabernacle from its present location at the side of the church to the sanctuary, behind the altar. There are three reasons for this. First, on entering the church people are often not aware of the presence of the Blessed Sacrament and do not genuflect or make any sign of reverence. Second, every procession at the beginning of Mass must be interrupted so that the celebrant and ministers can reverence the Blessed Sacrament. When the procession is longer, for example for First Holy Communion and Confirmation, this becomes even more complicated. Finally, everyone who sits in the front part of the church has their back to the Blessed Sacrament for the entire Mass. The tabernacle and its stand would be elevated so that it would be visible above the altar and celebrant.

 The altar and pulpit are both very large and can easily be reduced in size to accommodate the tabernacle. In addition, the pulpit would be moved forward to make it more visible to the congregation. The celebrants chair would be moved to the to the side of the altar opposite the “Cry Room” and on the same axis as the pulpit. This would make the celebrant more visible and ensure that he is not sitting with his back to the Blessed Sacrament.

 The area in which the tabernacle is now located would become a shrine area with three kneelers and sets of candles: one in front of the stained-glass panel of the Resurrection and the other two in front of the two diptychs.

 A final change would be the lowering of the bowl of the Baptismal Font to the level of the railing. The height of the font often presents a challenge to person holding the baby for baptism.

 The preliminary estimate for all this work is about $10,000. Joan Boutross has already met with stone masons who determined that the altar and pulpit are not solid granite but composed of panels of granite which can be dissembled with relative ease.

 The members of the parish council were in favor of these changes and felt that most of our parishioners would feel the same way. Please let me know your thoughts on these proposed changes.

Thank you, Rev. Edward O’Halloran