

GREAT NEWS!

A long-awaited Opportunity!

December 6, 2020

Second Sunday of Advent

Dear Faithful,

During this Advent season of joyful anticipation and preparation for the coming of our Infant King, I would like to share with you an extraordinary and exciting opportunity which Divine Providence has made available to us members of this Chicago apostolate of the Institute.

Most of you are familiar with the old Saint Clara parish school building, which is located just a few feet from our historic landmark church and our priory. The church, which the Institute's American apostolates and benefactors nationwide are helping to build together, will be the spiritual capital of our American province as the Institute's U.S. provincial Shrine of Christ the King. The priory serves not only as the home and residence of our clergy and candidates, but it also serves as the Institute's U.S. provincial headquarters, where the administration of our apostolic work in the United States is managed daily.

The century-old school building has been home to the Southside Center of Hope since the 1980s. The Center offers a residential program for women in recovery and their children. Since the Center of Hope will soon be moving to a new location, our Chicago apostolate has been presented with the providential opportunity to purchase the building. We are currently in negotiations to acquire this property which will be instrumental to the long-term growth of our apostolate here in Chicago, even now while the church is undergoing restoration. It is such an exciting opportunity to reunite the entire campus of the original parish under the property ownership of the Institute. This building will provide much-needed space for classes, meetings, social gatherings, and offices for our apostolic activities in Chicago. Additionally, with a little work, it will also serve us well as a larger, more conducive space for our temporary chapel until the completion of the provincial Shrine of Christ King.

The closing date for the school building purchase is set for December 28. This purchase is being made possible thanks to a significant donation by an anonymous local benefactor for this specific purpose, as well as by the tremendous collective generosity of you, dear faithful, during this past year. The reasonable acquisition price reflects the fact that this circa 1915 building needs a considerable amount of work in order to suit our use. **Thus, in order for our local Chicago community of faithful to enjoy all of the benefits which this building has to offer, I will need your help. Under our paternal leadership, I am asking all of you to devote your combined talents, volunteer efforts, and resources to repair and renovate this building to be the parish center of our shrine apostolate family.** Over the next several weeks, we will begin to develop a plan of action and will be keeping you updated as to how we can all work together over time to

make this school building a large and beautiful home for our Chicago apostolate's programs and activities.

Together with the efforts of the Institute's entire U.S. Province, we will continue to pray for and contribute to this national endeavor to build a throne to the Holy Infant King within the Institute's namesake Provincial Shrine. **In contrast, the acquisition of the school building as a spacious home for our Chicago apostolic activities will be our responsibility as members of this local community of faithful to restore, upkeep, and operate as our home.**

Over the past five years, you have remained faithful while making many sacrifices, enduring the consequences of a devastating fire, gathering for Holy Mass in this small basement chapel, and remaining dedicated to the Catholic faith and to our apostolate even in these difficult times. We are so thankful for your continual devotion over these many years. **By the grace and help of our Infant King, we have full confidence that our Shrine family will rise to the occasion of this new endeavor which will bring so many fruitful benefits to us and our children.** With your many helping hands and those of local friends, we will surely make this new home a place where the Reign of Christ our Infant King will touch more minds, hearts, and souls in our city and region.

If you are interested in pledging your contributions of time, talents, and/or monetary gifts to the renovation of the school building, please contact the Shrine Vice-Rector, Canon Commins, who will manage the work of this new endeavor. He can be contacted by sending an email to shrine@institute-christ-king.org or by calling the new office phone number for our Chicago apostolate: (773) 363-7821

Looking forward to providing you with more updates and information soon about this exciting new chapter in the life of our local apostolate, I remain,

Faithfully Yours in Christ the King,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Matthew Talarico". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Canon Matthew Talarico
Provincial in the United States
Rector of the Shrine of Christ the King