

**November 5, 2014**

**Dear Parishioners of St. Sharbel Maronite Church,**

Over the past few years we have been discussing the future of St. Sharbel Church. As we have made known some of our concerns, you have responded favorably and generously to our request for support. These discussions have centered around the costs associated with maintaining our parish complex. Our collections barely cover our costs for the day-to-day operations even though we currently are utilizing only 50% of our building space. They do not provide enough funds for major renovations and repairs to meet the needs of the future. It is only through the hard work of our volunteers and sponsors during our annual festival and various fundraisers that we raise money to cover these ongoing costs. We have witnessed the aging of our Church and property over the last ten years. We have also witnessed the movement of our faith community. The majority of our active parishioners live north of our current facility.

We have received an offer from Life Application Ministries, the church next door, to purchase the St. Sharbel complex. Over the course of the past year, Life Application Ministries has expressed an interest in purchasing our entire complex. Two weeks ago they contacted us to present an offer to purchase. After four days of negotiations, they signed a final purchase agreement on Friday, October 24, 2014. On Sunday, October 26, 2014 the Parish Advisory Board and the Finance Committee met with Chorbishop Alfred Badawi, and unanimously agreed to accept their purchase agreement.

On Monday, October 27, 2014 Bishop Zaidan met with Chorbishop Alfred Badawi and members of the Parish Advisory Board [Sue Malkoun, Leonard Thomas, Paul Fayad] to discuss the offer, and our short term and long-term plans. Bishop Zaidan agreed with and signed the purchase agreement which was then submitted to Life Application Ministries. Life Application Ministries has forty days to finalize their finances and be prepared to close by the year-end.

The details of the agreement are as follows:

- Purchase price: \$3,180,000.00 [cash].
- No contingencies on the survey, environmental or financing.
- Appraisal to be completed for mortgage approval.
- We will keep all of the Stained Glass Windows, religious items, donated items and personal furniture.
- They are asking to take possession of the property by the end of April. We are asking that it would be the end of May.

Currently we have \$600,000.00 in the bank. The \$3,180,000.00 from the sale of our complex we will be secured for the future home of St. Sharbel Parish. A Building Committee will be established in the near future.

The following is a summary of our short and long-term goals:

### **Short-Term**

Find a temporary location within a few miles of our current location to provide for our weekend liturgies, Religious Education Program, offices and residence for the Pastor.

### **Long-Term**

Find a permanent location that will be suitable for our new Church. We are currently working with local real estate agents, the Archdiocese of Detroit Office of Property Management, and our Eparchy. We will be working with an architect and other professionals on the design of the new church and supporting buildings. We will continue to update you as we move through the various phases of development.

### **FAQ's**

1. Is St. Sharbel Church staying open as a Church? **YES. We have been blessed with an opportunity to allow us to move forward to build a new beautiful more efficient and suitable Church for the future. This is due to the offer we have received. If we do not take advantage of this opportunity now it may never present itself again.**
2. Is Chorbishop Alfred Badawi remaining as our Pastor? **YES.**
3. Will Chorbishop Alfred Badawi be overseeing this project? **YES.**
4. Is the Bishop or the Eparchy receiving any of the money? **NO. The money from the sale of the property will be placed in an escrow account and used for this project only.**
5. Does the Bishop support our decision? **YES. He is very excited about the future endeavors of St. Sharbel Maronite Catholic Church and our relocating.**

### **What Can You Do?**

You can be a part of this new venture to any extent that you feel comfortable. If you have questions or ideas please forward them directly to me or to Chorbishop Alfred.

### **With Gratitude**

This is an opportunity to celebrate a new chapter in the life of St. Sharbel Maronite Catholic Church. Thanks to our forefathers, living and deceased, who have established this wonderful community, we are enjoying the fruits of their prayers and labors. Through their efforts, they laid the foundation and with them we have grown this community into what it is today. To them we owe our deepest gratitude and love.

This new chapter in the spiritual life of this community will allow us to follow in their footsteps and create a beautiful worship place for all Christians to come and pray with us, and will be an open door to the many who have a strong devotion and love for Saint Sharbel and his powerful intercessions.

We appreciate your cooperation, patience and prayers during this period of transition. Please keep us in your daily prayers as we pray for you.

Sincerely,

Paul Fayad  
Chairman  
Parish Advisory Board  
Finance Committee