



Dear Parishioners of St. John Paul II Scioto Catholic Parish,
Grace and peace in Christ Jesus.

Over the past year, many of you have been aware that the former St. Monica Church building and adjacent storage building have been listed for sale. During that time, we have prayed for wisdom and patiently entrusted this process to the Lord, asking that He provide the right path forward for our parish and the right steward for this beloved property. After many months of discernment and waiting, I am pleased to share that we have entered into an agreement to sell these properties to Refuge Southern Ohio, Inc., with the sale expected to be finalized within the next few weeks.

While transitions such as this are never easy, we are grateful for God's providence and for the opportunities this decision provides for both our parish and the wider community.

Throughout this process, I have often reflected on the generations of faithful Catholics who sacrificed, worshipped, and built a community of faith at St. Monica. Their legacy remains a living part of our parish, and it is with deep gratitude for their witness and trust in God's providence that we take this next step together.

For many families, St. Monica Church is far more than a building. It is a place where generations encountered Christ through the sacraments, celebrated life's joys, found comfort in times of sorrow, and grew in faith together. Baptisms, weddings, funerals, First Holy Communions, and countless prayers have filled those sacred walls. The faith, sacrifice, and devotion of those who built and sustained that community remain an enduring part of our parish's story, and for that we give thanks to God.

I am pleased to share that the property is being purchased by Refuge Southern Ohio, Inc., a Christian ministry committed to evangelization, discipleship, prayer, and outreach throughout our region. Their mission is to help people encounter Jesus Christ, grow in their faith, and experience God's healing and hope. Through worship gatherings, Bible studies, community ministry, and outreach to those in need, Refuge Southern Ohio seeks to bring people into a deeper relationship with the Lord. It is reassuring to know that this property, which has been dedicated to Christian worship and ministry for so many years, will continue to be used for the proclamation of the Gospel and the service of God's people.

As we prepare for the completion of the sale, all items currently being stored at the former St. Monica property will be carefully relocated and put to use throughout our parish. These furnishings and sacred items have served the Church well, and we are committed to ensuring that they continue to support the mission and ministry of our parish family. One particularly meaningful transition will be the relocation of the statue of St. Monica, which currently stands at the front of the church. This beautiful reminder of the faithful mother whose prayers helped lead her son, St. Augustine, to Christ will be given a new home at Notre Dame Elementary School.

There, St. Monica will continue to inspire future generations of young people with her example of perseverance, faith, and prayer.

I would also like to clarify that the former rectory is not included in this sale. The rectory will remain the property of St. John Paul II Scioto Catholic Parish and will continue to serve as the residence of the Missionary Servants of the Word (MSW) Lay Missionaries, whose presence and ministry continue to be a blessing to our parish community.

As we move through this transition, I ask you to join me in giving thanks for all that God has accomplished through the people of St. Monica Church. While buildings may change, the mission of the Church remains the same: to proclaim the Gospel, celebrate the sacraments, and bring others to Jesus Christ. The legacy of St. Monica Church is not ending; rather, it continues through the faith of its people and the work of the Church throughout Scioto County.

Thank you for your prayers, your support, and your continued commitment to the mission of our parish. May God bless all who have worshipped at St. Monica Church, all who have sacrificed to build and sustain our parish, and all who will be touched by the ministry that continues there in the years ahead.

May Almighty God bless you and your families.

In Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Fr. Stephen M. Smith". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of each word being capitalized and prominent.

Fr. Stephen Smith

Pastor