

## *Parish and School* *One Community in Christ*

Last week, I presented you with a summary of the survey results from our proposed facility project: *The St. Mary's Connection*. In that summary, I highlighted two survey comments: (a) The project does too much for the school and not enough for the parish (b) The project does too much for the parish and not enough for the school.

These two comments, of course, are mutually contradictory. While some people look at the project, they see it weighted too heavily toward the school, others view the same project and see it as weighted too heavily toward the church. As I explained last week, I think both comments miss the point of the “St. Mary’s Campus Connection.” Its purpose is to do something that will be mutually beneficially to *both* school and parish. For example, the proposed music and art rooms, which the school needs, will also be used by our parish choirs and other organizations, and the parish life center will afford the school additional space when needed.

The point I want to address today, however, is the *single mission* we have as a parish community. St. Mary’s should not be composed of two competing communities, the parish community and the school community. It is a single community—the St. Mary’s Community—that embraces school and parish. Consequently, what is beneficial to the parish is beneficial to the school, and what is beneficial to the school is beneficial to the parish. Why is this so? Because we are a single community with a single mission: *to grow in the gospel and proclaim the gospel to the world*.

Since we have a single mission, we need to be a unified parish community if we hope to carry out our mission of growing in and preaching the gospel to others. If we are not a unified community, we will be working at cross purposes with each other, a situation that will lead to rivalry and division. In a strong and united community, everybody seeks the good of the other as well as his or her own good.

Everybody rejoices in the success of the other. Everybody is saddened when others encounter mistortunes.

The purpose of the St. Mary's Campus Connection is to highlight—in a physical and tangible way—that we are one community: one in mind, one in heart, one in faith. St. Mary's School is central to our parish mission, and St. Mary's Parish is at the heart of St. Mary's School. We are not involved in two separate and distinct missions. We are not two different communities. We are one body, one community in Christ, mutually supportive of each other.

*Father Matera*