

Good Afternoon, my name is Jane Taylor. I have been the Director of St. John the Apostle Preschool for the past 10 years and a parishioner at St. John's for 34 years.

When I first moved to Leesburg ALL our masses were in the Little Church across the street--and believe it or not, you could always get a seat! That was when we were a very small parish with over 200 families. Since then we have grown to a parish of almost two thousand-five hundred families.

Today we have been blessed with a beautiful day for this wonderful occasion. We welcome you and thank you for your presence at this exciting day for St. John the Apostle Parish. We are here to celebrate and witness the beginning of our long-awaited church building.

We are especially honored today by the presence of His Excellency, Bishop Loverde. Also with us are representatives of the Leesburg town government, the Honorable Kristen Umstattd, Mayor of Leesburg, Katie Hammler and Marty Martinez, members of the Leesburg Town Council and also Kelly Burk, Leesburg District Supervisor.

This has been a long and prayer-filled journey for our parish for many years. Today, it is especially gratifying for me to be present with all of you at this glorious groundbreaking for our new church. As I look out over this sea of faces there are so many of you I know...our dream is finally coming true. Thank you.

Now I have the pleasure to introduce our first speaker: MARY DAVIS, Chair of Our Parish Council for the past two years, MARY...

It is, indeed, an exciting day for our parish!

And so today I speak not only on behalf of the parish council but on behalf of all parishioners at St Johns.

I would like to begin with some familiar words from St. Augustine. He said:

Faith is to believe what you do not see; the reward of this faith is to see what you believe.

With those words in mind,

First, I thank you, Bishop Loverde, for your faith in us as a parish to take on the task to build a church. I thank you for your prayers for us and for the support and guidance that you and those in the diocese have given Father Mosimann and Bill Knauer. Thank you, Bishop.

To Father Mosimann, I thank you for your vision to design and build for us a beautiful cruciform church. I thank you for your tireless, tireless work on this project, and most importantly, for reminding us throughout this effort and in all that we do we should always remain rooted in faith and prayer. As you tell us, that is the proper order of things always and everywhere. Thank you, Fr. Mosimann.

To Bill Knauer and the Building Committee, on behalf of the parish I thank you, too, for your hard work and dedication. I have been the Parish Council liaison to the Building Committee for two years and I was in the business world for nearly 20 years, and I can report to you that Bill's project management skills are second to none. I can also tell you that Father and Bill put together a hardworking team with many years of knowledge and experience in their respective fields and it served this project well. Thank you, members of the building committee, for an outstanding job.

Thank you to our architects, Michael Franck and Art Lohsen for bringing alive our vision in your magnificent design of this church. Thank you, gentlemen.

To Whiting-Turner, our General Contractor, I extend a warm welcome from all the parishioners here at St. Johns. We look forward with great excitement to your being with us for the next 16 months.

To Mayor Umstadt and Supervisor Burk, we appreciate the expeditious processing and approval of our plans through the town and county processes and thank you and the entire Town Council for sharing in the vision to have our church be a part of the Town of Leesburg.

Finally, to our parish families, thank you for your sacrifices and prayers. Those prayers and sacrifices were needed to make this dream of a beautiful parish home become a reality. I also want to thank the families of parishioners who volunteered in any way on this project. Because whenever a spouse or father or mother was at a meeting or working at an event or on a capital campaign visit that usually meant they were away from you, their family. And so I thank those families for that sacrifice as well.

In closing, I want to share with you that for me this groundbreaking day is both exhilarating and humbling. I am humbled when I think that God called on us, all of us, as a parish family to build for Him a beautiful home, a church. I am exhilarated because once that home is built and our church is here, it will be here not only for us, but for our children and our children's children for many generations to come. And so, again, on behalf of the parish, I thank everyone for their prayers, sacrifices and hard work. All of which have brought us to this important and momentous day in the history of St. Johns.

Thank you.

Thank you, Mary.

BILL KNAUER has chaired our building committee since its inception and continues to oversee this massive project, BILL...

At the same moment God created the Earth, he chose (gave us) this very site that we are gathered on today to build a church, OUR St John the Apostle church. (Good afternoon. I'm Bill Knauer) It has been my honor and my privilege to be your Building Committee chairperson over

the last 2 ½ years. Today is the day when Father Mosimann's Vision for a new church transitions to a reality!

Before I start my brief report, I would like to offer my personal thanks:

To Father for his leadership and for inviting me to join him and lead the Building Committee on this wonderful, rewarding journey

To all the BC members for their dedication, their hard work, and, most importantly, their willingness to work as a Team to achieve common goals. [BC members please stand; when you see a committee member, give them heartfelt thanks for their outstanding work.]

To set the stage for my remarks, I would like to read an excerpt from the Father Mosimann's Vision Statement for the new church –

"...Saint John the Apostle is depicted as an eagle because his Gospel, from beginning to end, soars to the throne of heaven. It is my hope that our architecture be profoundly inspired by the words of Saint John's Gospel, particularly the joyful words spoken in the prologue: "the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us, and we saw his glory, the glory as of the Father's only Son, full of grace and truth"."

Today, it is my pleasure to report that our church design has been inspired by St John's words - our exterior design features tall spires culminating in a 130 foot bell tower visible from miles around, and on the inside, a vaulted ceiling uplifting our eyes and our mind to Heaven.

When we started formulating our church design requirements, we identified 4 guiding principles:

- Incorporate the rich culture of traditional Catholic architecture
- Remember our 130 year Catholic legacy in Leesburg
- Recognize our location as a welcoming gateway to historic Leesburg
- Have sufficient seating to meet the demands of future growth

I am happy to report that all these features have been fully incorporated in a beautiful and timeless design, which will stand as a testament to our Catholic faith and give glory to God for the 3rd Millennium.

Our work has been a collaborative effort with our building business Partners.

From our senior Partner, the Diocese Office of Planning, Construction, and Facilities, I'd like to introduce Reid Herlihy, Director of OPCF, and Mark Anthony, Planning Manager.

In October 2008, we selected Franck & Lohsen Architects of Washington, DC as the church architect. I'd like you to meet the company's principals, Michael Franck and Art Lohsen.

Just last month, we selected Whiting-Turner as our General Contractor. Representing W-T today is their project management team for our job –Bob Kehoe (Proj Exe), Bill Brandt (Proj Mgr), & Frank Homer (Asst Proj Mgr).

Lastly, I like to introduce Ken Tschida. Ken is our parish Director of Development, and is responsible for the Upon This Rock Capital Campaign.

When we started this journey, it was difficult to envision this day – so many unknowns, so many challenges – but here we are celebrating our GB – today, we start moving dirt with a few shovels; in a few days, bulldozers will be grading the site; then a steel structure appears; and finally, before we realize it, with God’s blessings, we will be celebrating Easter 2012 in our new St John the Apostle church.

Thank you, Bill.

KELLY BURK was a member of the Leesburg Town Council for 3 years and in 2007 she was elected to represent the Leesburg District on the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors, **SUPERVISOR BURK...**

Thank you Supervisor Burk.

The Honorable KRISTEN UMSTADTT has served the Town of Leesburg for the past 18 years. She was a member of the Town Council for 10 years and was elected Mayor of Leesburg in 2002, **MAYOR UMSTATD...**

Thank you Mayor Umstattd.

Our last speaker needs no introduction; Father John P. Mosimann, Pastor of St. John the Apostle Parish was the driving force behind our Capitol Campaign. He has carried a vision of this long-awaited and much-needed church, which is now becoming a reality. His dedication and hard work to build a new church for this parish knows no bounds. I am proud that he is my Pastor, my boss and my friend.

FATHER MOSIMANN...