



Church Restoration Underway

Construction crews moved in as soon as Easter services were over this April, as our church restoration project got underway. Recently, the St. Sebastian Parish Foundation announced the project was fully funded, with the Cornerstone of Our Faith campaign successfully raising over \$1 million for the restoration (see story inside).

An amazing amount of work has been completed in the first 12 weeks, including re-painting of the church interior; power washing the exterior; removal of all 112 pews and 240 kneelers for repair and refinishing; cleaning of the massive altar mosaic and the mosaics depicting the stations of the cross; restoration of the coat of arms above the entrance; repair and refinishing of the terrazzo and marble floors; and installation of new doors, a new sound loop, and new lighting.

Work still underway includes the repair and refurbishment of all the statues and shrines, installation

of the refurbished pews/kneelers with new book racks, restoration of the confessionals, cleaning of more than 250 bronze crests, restoration of the brasswork and woodwork, and reconfiguration of the entrance plaza and steps.

One of the contractors hard at work is Lindsay Jones, who was hired to repair and restore most of the artwork in the church. Jones launched her company, Blind Eye Restoration, in 2016 after years of working in historical preservation and, before that, construction. Her background in both areas as well as her degrees in fine art and art history provide her with a perfect mix of skills for this job, which requires her to determine what would be the best, most appropriate approach (in terms of materials as well as artistic and historic sensibility) for the restoration of each unique piece.

One of her first tasks was restoration of the giant coat of arms that resides above the front door. **The metal coat of arms is about nine feet tall**, measuring from the protruding arrows at the bottom to the plumed helmet at top. Jones cleaned the coat of arms and restored all the



Photos courtesy of Blind Eye Restoration

finishes, which included applying patent gold leaf to 70% of the piece while working 50 feet in the air in a bucket truck. The finished product now gleams from its perch above the church plaza on Mull Avenue.

Among the interesting facts Jones has discovered is that **all the gold plating in our church is crafted with 100% 24-karat gold**, even the gold tiles in the altar mosaic. Restoration of the massive mosaic was another of Jones' early tasks. She spent much of her time the first few weeks working high atop five-level scaffolding, which needed to be wide enough to span the 40 x 40 foot mosaic as well as tall enough for her to reach the ceiling so she could also clean the painting above the altar.

Jones says the mosaic is in generally good condition for its 60 years. She would know because **she carefully examined every section of the mosaic made of 175,000 pieces of Venetian glass**, making

continued on page two



We Will Remember

The Alumni Association extends our sincerest sympathy to the families and friends of our deceased alumni. If you learn of the passing of a St. Sebastian alumnus, please contact us by phone at 330.836.2233 x119 or by email at alumni@stsebastian.org.

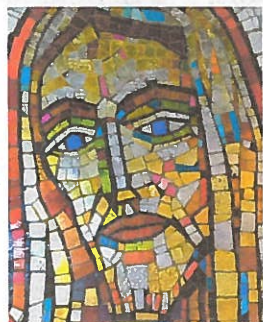
(February 1, 2018 through May 31, 2018)

† Please keep these friends in your prayers †

Marilyn Sturmi McDonald '40, April 20, 2018
Colleen Coyle Hassett '41, May 5, 2018
Norman C. Zix '43, May 22, 2017
John J. Schumacher, Jr. '44, February 2, 2018
Lawrence M. Humphrey, Jr. '45, February 18, 2018
Floyd R. Beatty '46, May 12, 2018

Regina Stuhldreher '63, February 19, 2018
Patricia Kelly Quirk '64, April 26, 2018
David J. Ochsenhirt '65, March 7, 2018
Terrence M. Stuhldreher '67, March 15, 2018
Kathryn Lieberth Lytton '94, April 1, 2018

Restoration *continued from pg. 1*
repairs to the grout in some places, resetting tiles in other places, and cleaning everything with a fine-tooth comb, or in this case, sometimes with dental tools. She



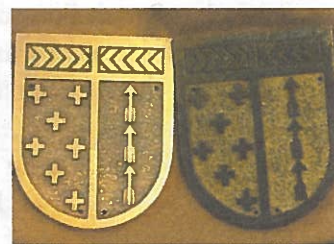
got up close and personal with all the mosaic's figures and took this fascinating picture of **the face of**

Jesus, which is about three feet tall and full of colorful tiles. Jones says more color tiles are used in the figures in the mosaic since they are meant to stand out.

Another large job on Jones' plate is the restoration of all 14 shrine statues. Jones says **each shrine statue is hollow and carved out of the same wood, including the statues of Mary and Joseph, which are a little larger and gilded in gold.** Jones painstakingly cleaned each statue, with several of them requiring a great deal of elbow

grease (or really wax) to restore their feet, which were worn and scratched from the loving touches of church goers. "Lots of foot touching happening in this church!" Jones notes with a smile. Other repairs included: carving a new toe for St. Francis and a new tail for the sparrow at his feet, repairing St. Joseph's shoulder (which suffered

damage years ago from falling scaffolding), and applying a patina treatment and aluminum gilding to St. Patrick's crosier.



One challenge Jones faced was figuring out the best way to **restore the more than 250 small (approx. 3 x 3.5 inch) bronze shields that adorn the pews and door handles.** After exploring a few options, Jones chose a bright brass buffed with wax for easier maintenance vs. the failed varnish coat, which even though it was worn out, proved very hard to remove. Once the process was settled, Jones hired someone to tackle that project while she got back to work on the statues. Jones, who will finish her work here by the end of June, has a deep appreciation of our church, saying she likes what she sees in St. Sebastian: "Old buildings like this church were built to last, and if you take care of it, it will last forever."

Class of 1968 50th Reunion

Friday, September 21

10:00: Golf Outing, J.E. Good Park

Evening option: Sit together to watch the STVM v. Hoban football game at InfoCision Stadium or Walsh football game at home v. Cleveland Heights

Saturday, September 22

4:30: Mass at St. Sebastian Church (newly restored!)

5:30: Tour of school

6:00: Dinner and 60's rock & roll, Zwisler Hall

Hotel: A block of rooms for Sept. 21-22 has been held at Fairlawn Hilton (\$119/night, \$219 for suite)

More Info: Details will be mailed to classmates this summer – we hope everyone can join us! Please send address updates or questions to Patti Large Cleary at clearypatti@gmail.com. And please contact Patti if you did not receive a save-the-date postcard or email!

Stay Tuned! Our next issue will feature the restoration of the pews and kneelers, front plaza, floors, doors, and more!