

## **Saint Demetrios Opens its Doors**

With God's blessing and the complete support of our parishioners, our new church, a church whose unique beauty has been recognized by Orthodox Christians literally around the world, will open its doors on the weekend of May 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>.

We have received over 350 pledges totaling well in excess of \$7.5 million with over 60% paid ahead of schedule. If all those who intend to pledge, do so now, with their first donation made, and if those who are in their second or third year of honoring their pledges, do so prior to the June 30, 2013 date our bank loan becomes an amortizing mortgage, it would obviously be a great benefit to Saint Demetrios.

Beyond the statistics, the most gratifying outcome of our project, and a hallmark of our endeavor, is the utter harmony of our parish in its pursuit of the long term commitment to realize our dream. Once the decision was made to proceed, nothing could stop our progress or move us off our common path.

We certainly did have challenges and will have more in the months to come, but the knowledge we are all unified in our purpose breeds an irrevocable confidence we will work together until all the fixtures, furniture and icons are successfully installed.

Separate from the drive to raise funds to build our church, you will recall that the means of funding these next elements will be on a first come, first served basis once the book listing the possible gifts is completed and issued to all parishioners. There will certainly be ample opportunities of small and large donors to participate in meaningful ways. Our new church will have need of donors for the costly iconostasion (icon screen) and the many sacred vessels and furnishings that will complete the interior of our new church. We already have solicited funds in a separate drive for our seating. At \$500 a piece, we are delighted to report \$55,700.00 has been collected to date representing 28% of our goal.

Our existing pews and iconostasion, as well as many of the existing furnishings, just after Easter and just prior to the opening of the doors, will be removed by a master craftsman to be extensively refitted and refinished for installation in our new chapel. The mosaics currently flanking our altar will have their new home there as well. The Deisis (the three mosaic icons) from behind our old altar area will be installed above the great main doors in the exo-narthex as you enter our new church.

May 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>, will be a celebration for all Saint Demetrios parishioners. Make your plans now for your whole family to join in this sacred and moving moment in the history of our parish.

Peter Bassett