



Faith to Move Mountains A Campaign for the Diocese of Trenton

"Nothing will be impossible for you" (Matt. 17:20)

Throughout 134 years, as the growing Church of the faithful in the Diocese of Trenton, we have worked hard to fulfill our mission to make disciples, baptizing in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Numbering 800,000 strong in 2014, we Catholics have come this far by faith. The challenges before us appear formidable, indeed mountain-like, but the faithful of our diocese have always responded to the challenge of the Gospel through their generosity in many ways. They have always believed that faith is greater than the mountain.

Fiscally we have been prudent with wise management of our resources. Proactively, as we seek to nurture new seeds of faith in our Church through vital and dynamic programs and services, we must secure additional resources that will work for us in supporting our efforts.

Secure endowments have long been mainstays of wealth for universities and hospitals, generating perpetual restricted income, funding specific programs and services. Like the tiniest mustard seed, which grows into the largest of plants, diocesan restricted endowments will nurture a multitude of lives through specific ministries that foster a strong faith by strengthening our parishes and schools; forming and supporting our seminarians and clergy, growing our lay formational and educational programs and broadening our social services.

We are seeking to raise a minimum of \$75 million to facilitate not only keeping the faith, but living, professing, witnessing and spreading it. Although the goal is ambitious, we remain confident that it can be achieved. Jesus said "if you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you." You are invited to review the following funding priorities and consider how your participation will strengthen our Church for the future.

Parishes: \$22.5 million

"Faith is strengthened when it is given to others!" (Redemptoris Missio, 2)

The parish is where the faithful within the Diocese of Trenton grow and mature in their faith. A primary objective of this campaign is to ensure that our parishes have the necessary resources to teach, prepare, and nurture the next generation of Catholics. This campaign will provide each parish with the opportunity to address many of their needs that could otherwise go unmet, such as capital improvements, deferred maintenance, debt reduction or local endowment funds to support long-term needs.

As part of this campaign, a minimum of 30%, or \$22.5 million, of the funds collected at the parish level will remain at the individual parish, and 70% of the funds will go toward the following areas outlined in this document. Once a parish has reached its goal, the allocation of funds will reverse and the parish will receive 70% of all additional monies collected within the parish.

Diocesan Assistance Fund for Parishes: \$7.5 million

"God is our refuge and our strength, an ever-present help in distress. Therefore we fear not, though the earth be shaken and mountains plunge into the depths of the sea." (Bishop O'Connell, Blue Mass Homily 2014)

Each year, the Diocese provides emergency assistance to parishes that find themselves in immediate and pressing financial need. Over the past ten years, the Diocese has provided significant financial support to parishes that have been unable to fund their parish and school employee healthcare, pensions, and retirement. Approximately 40% of all parishes have received this kind of support at one time or another in the past 15 years. Because of this support, the Diocese has made it possible for parishes to maintain fiscal stability as they work to recover from setbacks and shortfalls while continuing to meet the spiritual needs of the congregation.

However, with each passing year, this becomes more difficult. Aging parish complexes require more repairs and maintenance, the cost of doing business rises and the need to employ professional ministerial staff grows stronger. In order to ensure that this safety net continues to be available, in the event parishes find themselves experiencing critical financial circumstances, this fund seeks to strengthen the hand of the diocese to assist struggling parishes.

Catechesis and Evangelization: \$5 Million

"Having entered into The Third Millennium of the Christian era, the lay faithful will open themselves, through their witness, to all people with whom they will take on the burden of the most pressing calls of our time." (Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 551)

In considering how best to ensure the vibrancy of the faith for future generations, we have only to look to our catechetical and lay faith formation ministry. In his 2013 series on the New Evangelization, Bishop David M. O'Connell, C.M., affirmed the important goal of lifelong faith learning, in order for parents to effectively raise their children in the Catholic faith, and for adult Catholics, in general, to be able to have a mature understanding of their faith.

Pointing to the prevailing culture that sees Confirmation as "graduation" from faith formation, the Bishop noted that some Catholic homes do not provide encouragement or examples to children in continuing their faith education or participating in faith-based activities. He writes, too many "Catholic children grow into Catholic adults with an eighth-grade understanding (or less) of their faith." He echoes what St. Augustine once observed: "No one can give what he/she does not have."

Moving past this cycle will require a concerted effort of bolstering parish catechetical programs and adult faith formation efforts. Specifically, with the resources of the campaign, the Diocese will create a restricted endowment fund, income from which will support and promote the following goals:

- **Catechists and Catechetical Leaders** -- Currently only 30% of catechists have participated in the diocesan catechetical certificate program. Our goal is that all catechists work toward full certification. We will expand educational advancement for our catechetical leaders that they might attain a Master's degree in theology or religious education.
- **Parish Adult Faith Formation** -- By training adult faith formation teams, and working with parishes to either strengthen existing programs or create new ones, we aim to ensure that every Catholic will have the opportunity to deepen their faith education in a way that works with their busy lives. We will provide for the ongoing opportunities for lifelong faith learning, cultivating a new culture in which more Catholics are drawn into a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ in which they make the Gospel their way of life.
- **New Evangelization** -- The mandate of the New Evangelization -- new in its methods, expression and passion -- calls the Church to a more intentional and robust outreach in the mission of forming disciples.

Here in the Diocese, we will develop a comprehensive network that takes the best of parish evangelization ministry and builds on it, empowering every parish community across our four counties to deepen the spiritual lives of its people, to reach out to those who have left the Church, and to invite and prepare all those who are coming to the faith for the first time.

Catholic Schools: \$15 million

*“Catholic education is one of the most important challenges for the Church, currently committed to new evangelization in an historical and cultural context that is undergoing constant transformation.”
(Pope Francis at the Congregation for Catholic Education on February 13, 2014)*

Each year, students are given the extraordinary opportunity of receiving a Catholic education through subsidies provided by their local parish. Our students go on to pursue higher education at a rate of over 95%. These students are so well prepared for college that in 2014 alone, a total of \$180 million in scholarships was offered to our graduating Catholic high school students by their accepting colleges and universities. With a graduation rate of 99.9% the Diocese of Trenton strives to enable our youth to live faith-filled lives as educated and morally responsible Catholics.

But the challenges that face our Catholic schools are considerable, and become more difficult as the culture becomes ever more secular. **It would be impossible to solve all of the financial challenges faced by our Catholic Schools through this endowment campaign.** However, the funds from the campaign will augment existing restricted endowment funds and will be incorporated into the Foundation for Student Achievement endowment. The purpose of the FSA is to develop strategic programs and initiatives that will help to build a stronger future and encourage more families to enroll their children in Catholic Schools..

The income produced by the Foundation for Student Achievement endowment will be used for the following purposes:

- **Scholarships.** Scholarships will be funded for “seats” reflecting the total cost of educating the student, not tuition. The full cost of educating a child in Catholic Schools has risen to nearly \$7,000 each which is well above the average tuition of \$5,000 per student. Schools, not individuals, would apply to participate. Principals would make the ultimate decision for the students receiving scholarships.
- **Mission Schools.** The School Sustainability Study, published in the summer of 2013, identified three schools in areas with high percentages of at-risk students living in disadvantaged neighborhoods. The study defined: Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, Asbury Park, Trenton Catholic Academy and Pope John Paul II Regional, Willingboro as “Mission Schools” serving underprivileged children from ethnically diverse communities with limited access to a quality Catholic education. Providing these students with an opportunity to live faith-filled lives as educated and morally conscientious Catholics is a responsibility we take seriously. Due to the overwhelming fiscal challenges these schools face, they are often unable to meet their budgets despite concerted efforts by parish and school leadership. Income from the FSA will be available to these schools in the event of a deficit in their operating budget.
- **The Catholic Alumni Partnership.** Over the past 18 months, the Diocese has invested in the Catholic Alumni Partnership – a program designed to identify and engage the alumni in the financial support of their alma maters. Since its launch in 2013, this program has raised more than \$180,000 in funds for the FSA endowment that have been distributed right back to our schools. This has enabled schools to provide tuition assistance, upgrades in technology and meet other priorities particular to their campus. Nationwide, studies affirm that the program has the potential to be even more effective. Funding this endowment will provide the administrative and operational support needed to train each school’s staff so it can realize its advancement potential.

Ordained Ministry: \$20 Million

"Without the priest, there would be no Eucharist. And without the Eucharist, there would be no Church." (John Paul II, Gift and Mystery)

Echoing the message expressed by St. John Paul II in his memoir "Gift and Mystery," Bishop O'Connell emphasizes how critical the responsibility of inviting, forming and supporting priests is to the life and future of the Church. With approximately 170 diocesan priests serving more than 800,000 Catholics within our Diocese, every priest is essential, and building the number of priests in active ministry has never been more important.

Funds raised for Ordained Ministry will be restricted endowment funds, the income from which will support:

- **Seminarians.** The extraordinary news is that our current class of seminarians has grown to more than 30 men. Bishop O'Connell has set the goal of bringing that number to 50 seminarians in formation over the coming years. This growth will present a welcome challenge, as the cost to educate one seminarian for one year is approximately \$40,000. Recognizing the seminaries' indelible impact on our Church, we will establish a priestly formation endowment to supplement education costs. The discernment and spiritual formation of our seminarians will continue to be a priority for generations to come as we seek to meet the increasing demand for priests in our Diocese.
- **Retired Priests.** Providing for our priests in their retirement has always been a priority for the Diocese. However, the average age of our priests continues to advance, and the number of retirements anticipated in the years to come will exceed past decades. In the next 10 years alone, 44% of our current priests will be eligible for retirement. This will require an additional \$800,000 each year to provide care for those who have dedicated their lives to their parish communities. Amid increasing healthcare costs, we must be prepared to meet growing demands by increasing the current endowment for our retired priests. This will provide a renewed opportunity to give back to our priests who have given so much to us.
- **Permanent Diaconate Program.** As some men are called to a priestly life of sacramental service to the Church, others are called to serve as permanent deacons. With more than 300 deacons currently in service, the Diocese of Trenton has been blessed with one of the largest diaconate programs in the country. A comprehensive study recently conducted by the Diocese has led to new measures aimed at strengthening the formation for permanent deacons, and restructuring how they minister in the Diocese. Key among these measures is the provision for advanced studies, a portion of which is subsidized by the Diocese. As the need for permanent deacons continues, so too must the Diocese's investment in preparing men that can minister to their congregations with engaging homilies, sacramental preparation and spiritual direction. Above all these funds will help the diocese in the formation of deacons who are better prepared to minister to the faithful.

Social Services: \$5 million

There can be no true charity without justice. (Pope Benedict XVI, Caritas in Veritate)

Through the Diocesan Office of Catholic Social Services and partnering Catholic Social Service Agencies, the Diocese integrates the principles of Catholic Social Teaching through emergency assistance, anti-poverty initiatives, education and advocacy, and counseling. In response to the call of Pope Francis, our mission is to be a "Church of the poor" by providing care and assistance to individuals and families in need throughout Diocese. As a vibrant Catholic community, in collaboration with our parishes, this endowment fund will enable us to work in faith and in charity to provide vital support in the following areas:

- **Diocesan Parish Counseling.** Our priests have witnessed, and in turn, expressed a critical need for counseling services among their parishioners. With this in mind, a new program has been developed to assist our pastors by providing short term professional counseling through qualified, Catholic counselors to individuals and/or families who would be referred by pastors. These counselors would provide professional counseling back-up to clergy. Priests would feel comfortable with the referral to counselors who have been vetted re: “Catholic” issues and appropriate professional qualifications. This program was introduced in September 2014.
- **Community Services.** Sharing information, networking and building collaboration among all parishes, Catholic Social Service agencies and diocesan efforts provide a more effective outreach to struggling individuals, families and communities. It is critical that these services are supported with ample resources that help them remain available and dynamic.

A restricted endowment will be created to enable the Diocese to award grants to parishes and Catholic Social Service agencies to address present and emerging social service issues. Donations to the endowment campaign will also be a resource to supplement our special collections for disaster relief when a sense of urgency is a key component in the solution.