



TO TEACH WHO CHRIST IS

A Newsletter for the Campaign for Parishes, Catholic Education and Faith Formation

April 2020

COVID-19 Update from the Archdiocese of Chicago

During this time of uncertainty and fear, we hope that you and your loved ones are safe and healthy. To protect the safety of our community, most pastoral services are currently being performed virtually. We invite you to visit our website, www.archchicago.org for up-to-date information on televised liturgies and other resources.

It is important that our parishes and pastors receive the offertory support they need to remain operational and sustainable despite the suspension of weekly Masses. The archdiocese has developed a general online giving page where the faithful can make an offertory donation to any parish in the archdiocese. These donations will assist with ongoing expenses related to ministry, maintenance, staff and other pressing needs, that depend on regular offertory support from parishioners.

Additionally, in light of the financial hardship suffered by many in recent days, we have also launched a Coronavirus Emergency Fund. This fund will support members of our community who have been negatively affected by the pandemic.

Please visit archchicago.org/support to support parish offertory, the Coronavirus Emergency Fund or both as your means allow. Your generosity is needed now more than ever. Thank you for your support.

Q&A with Fr. Peter Wojcik and the Department of Parish Vitality and Mission

To dive a little bit deeper into an area of the campaign that truly allows us to spread God's word and teach who Christ is to the youth and new members of our Church, we connected with Fr. Peter Wojcik, director of the Department of Parish Vitality and Mission, and the rest of his team to help explain the ways the *To Teach Who Christ Is* campaign has strengthened and funded evangelization over the past five years.



Pictured above is Fr. Peter Wojcik, director of the Department of Parish Vitality and Mission.

Please describe the specific programs funded by the *To Teach Who Christ Is* campaign.

Here's a breakdown of *To Teach Who Christ Is* funding for our evangelization programs, as well as a summary of each program:

Catechetical leaders certification training (\$10,000), new course development for catechist certification (\$15,000), and scholarships for catechist certification training (\$24,500): Training programs hosted by the certification team

that have reached thousands of faithful disciples who have chosen to dedicate themselves to become certified catechists.

Youth minister formation (\$25,000): This includes training and support programs that develop and revitalize parish youth ministry groups across the archdiocese.

Scholarships for Holy Fire (\$80,000): Holy Fire is a day-long spiritual experience that features powerful stories of witness from dynamic speakers, live music, worship experiences and sacramental moments designed to deepen the faith experience of all participants in a fun and exciting way.

Scholarships for The National Catholic Youth Conference (\$50,000): NCYC is a youth evangelization conference offered to high schoolers across the country that takes place bi-annually in Indianapolis, IN.

Theology on Tap (\$75,000): Theology on Tap events bring young adults together and are focused on learning about faith, growing in faith, or serving through faith while developing a deep relationship with Jesus Christ.

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Around 7,500 Catholic youth attended last year's Holy Fire event in October. Pictured above is Fr. Peter carrying the Eucharist at the beginning of adoration. (Karen Callaway/Chicago Catholic)

How has the evangelization office/program grown through the *To Teach Who Christ Is* funding?

Our evangelizing efforts have grown through the implementation of our new programs funded by *To Teach Who Christ Is*. This includes our Online Certification Program, which has reached over 200 archdiocesan Catholic Schools. In addition, 37 parishes have utilized our two-year Summer Institute for Youth Ministry Program, which supports the work and enables training of future youth ministers who work with students across the archdiocese.

How many parishes/schools has the office engaged with through campaign funding?

Our programs have been offered to every parish and school throughout the archdiocese and in 2019, over 80 parishes and schools received scholarships for our Holy Fire program, with 100 percent of our scholarships funded by the *To Teach Who Christ Is* campaign.

Are there specific programs/initiatives that were created as a result of campaign funding?

Yes, as we mentioned above, our Online Certification Program was developed to support outreach to our religious education programs in schools/parishes. During the last two years, we have also been supporting the efforts of the newly-formed Department of Parish Vitality and Mission agency, Young Adult Engagement. This group strives to evangelize young adults who are currently disconnected with their faith.

In addition, Theology on Tap has been revitalized through funding and will help reach many young adults looking to learn and grow in their faith this summer. It's through the campaign we've been able to better

our young adult outreach, create effective educational programming and provide online formation options for schools, teachers, parish catechists, and people of the archdiocese.

Finally, we were also able to use funding to conduct research leading to the Renew My Church process which supported the development of our evangelization strategy.

In your perspective, why is evangelization important?

The church exists to evangelize, there is no church without evangelization.

How is the office continuing to grow evangelization through the *To Teach Who Christ Is* campaign?

We were able to undertake a two-year research phase that led to developing our archdiocesan evangelization strategy. The funds enabled us to train the first groups of people supporting parish evangelization efforts and bring more evangelization coordinators to the table to help with these efforts.

How has the *To Teach Who Christ Is* donors' generosity impacted the evangelization office/program?

The donors' generosity has provided us with monetary resources to invest in our youth and young adults, the future of the church, by providing scholarship opportunities and funding for programs that help them grow and prosper in their faith. We are making disciples through your generosity.

For more information on the Department of Parish Vitality and Mission and the programs available to parishes and schools, please visit pvm.archchicago.org.

CAMPAIGN UPDATE

Overall Campaign Goal: \$350,000,000

Total Raised to Date: \$425,300,215*

Percent of Goal Pledged: 122%

Pledges Paid to Date: \$253,053,938

Percent Paid to Date: 72%

*includes cash, documented pledges and bequests

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