



# TO TEACH *Who Christ Is*

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

February 2016

Dear Friends,

Lent often finds Catholics making personal sacrifices, fasting from chocolate or the like as we prepare ourselves for the death and Resurrection of Christ.

During this Jubilee Year, our Holy Father, Pope Francis, asks that the season of Lent “be lived more intensely as a privileged moment to celebrate and experience God’s mercy.” He further asks that we devote ourselves to the spiritual and corporal works of mercy that “remind us that faith finds expression in concrete everyday actions meant to help our neighbors in body and spirit.”

*To Teach Who Christ Is* was launched far before the Jubilee of Mercy was even announced. Still, as Archbishop Blase Cupich has pointed out, the success of this campaign offers us the opportunity to glimpse the gift of God’s mercy in the hearts of so many faithful throughout the Archdiocese of Chicago. This spirit of sacrifice is definitely one to reflect on during these 40 days.

I offer my heartfelt thanks to the thousands who have shown personal sacrifice already, and those who will prayerfully consider their pledges in Wave V. The impact these gifts will have in parishes and for the shared ministries of our Archdiocese are truly helping us *To Teach Who Christ Is*.

Yours in Christ,

Rev. Ronald Hicks  
Vicar General

## Archbishop Cupich: ‘The campaign is designed to reinvigorate your parishes’



*Archbishop Cupich addresses To Teach Who Christ Is volunteers at St. Julie Billiart Parish.*

More than 1,800 parish volunteers attended orientations for Wave V, the largest wave of *To Teach Who Christ Is* to date.

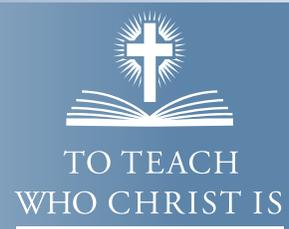
“I’m so grateful you’re here today — it does make a difference,” Archbishop Blase Cupich told the nearly 900 gathered at St. Julie Billiart Parish in Tinley Park on January 25. “We can do this. We can make this goal. I’m confident that the people here today share that same enthusiasm for their parish, and for the Catholic Church.”

Parish orientations were also held at Mary, Seat of Wisdom in Park Ridge on January 21, and Our Lady of Mercy in Chicago, for Spanish-speaking parishes, on January 27. Orientation meetings are specifically for those who serve as Campaign Executive Committee members and assist their pastors in carrying out the campaign.

The Archbishop shared about being pastor of two large Nebraska parishes before becoming a bishop in 1998, and how this experience gives him valuable insight into

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the role of the pastoral center in helping parishes in the Archdiocese of Chicago. “This campaign really is about the parishes,” he explained, and not only because 60 percent remains at parishes for needs they designate. “The other 40 percent doesn’t come to the diocese. The other 40 percent is put in various funds and programs that, again, allow us as a whole diocese to help the parishes, whether that’s in the [Catholic Education Scholarship Trust], or religious education, or ways in which we can also be more creative in which we prepare teachers who are going to be catechists in your own programs.”

He added, “The entire amount of the campaign is designed to reinvigorate your parishes.”

Mary, Seat of Wisdom was filled to capacity for the kickoff for Wave V parishes, according to Father Jerry Gunderson, pastor. “As folks gathered before the meeting, I sensed that this was Church — the gathering of the most faithful parishioners of 27 parishes,” he said. “In the church, I experienced a level of attentiveness and hopefulness that I hadn’t anticipated. Afterward, 50 members of my parish who were present felt positive about their experience of the evening’s gathering, especially seeing the wide representation of church members from across the Archdiocese.”

Wave IV’s 56 parishes have now raised more than \$36 million, 117 percent of their collective goal. Although the wave’s active fundraising phase is complete, many parishes continue to invite parishioners to participate in *To Teach Who Christ Is* and exceed their individual goals.

The campaign is on track to exceed its overall goal of \$350 million, with \$244.4 million in pledges and gifts, according to Peter de Keratry, campaign manager. “Our efforts have certainly been buoyed by the momentum and excitement created during Waves III and IV, as well as the generosity of those who have contributed major gifts.”

The major gift effort has now yielded \$121.1 million from 56 gifts solicited by Archbishop Cupich and campaign cabinet members instead of through parishes. After exceeding its \$100 million goal last summer, Archbishop Cupich pledged to raise \$125 million.

The final wave of parish campaigns will take place during the second half of 2016. 🙏



## Campaign gives Chicago parish a lift

Perseverance pays off! Our Lady of Mount Carmel participated in Wave III but has continued to invite parishioners to take part in *To Teach Who Christ Is*. The Chicago parish recently reported 34 additional gifts — reaching 100 percent of its goal.

Wave III parishes have now raised more than \$26.28 million from 6,800 gifts.

Our Lady of Mount Carmel has already directed its share of campaign funds to a new elevator and two new first grade classrooms for Our Lady of Mount Carmel Academy.

# Second annual *Celebrating Catholic Education Breakfast* a success

Catholic schools foster liberty, Jim Rigg, Ph.D., Superintendent of Catholic Schools, told the nearly 450 people gathered for the second annual Celebrating Catholic Education Breakfast at the Hyatt Regency Chicago on January 26.

“Our schools epitomize the American values of freedom, self-actualization and the common good,” said Dr. Rigg, the event’s keynote speaker. “Catholic

The event netted nearly \$225,000, which thanks to event sponsors, including Diamond Sponsor Sage Foundation, have been directed specifically to the Caritas Scholars Program, as well as programs of the Office of Catholic Schools.

An early gift to the *To Teach Who Christ Is* campaign funded the Caritas Scholars Program, which is part of the Catholic Education Scholarship Trust and



Archbishop Blase Cupich with Jim Rigg, Ph.D., Superintendent of Catholic Schools and the event's keynote speaker.

He reminded attendees that Christ is at the center of every Catholic school, and that forming children in Gospel values is the primary reason Catholic schools exist. “The true liberty of a Catholic education resides in how we lead each child to recognize, know and accept a unique call from God,” Dr. Rigg said. “We are here for a particular purpose, to transform the world around us and spread the hope of Jesus Christ. Our children embody this hope. They emerge from our schools ready to positively change a world that desperately needs them to liberate the world from despair.” †



Students from St. Benedict Preparatory School sing before the Celebrating Catholic Education Breakfast.

schools are America, so it’s fitting with that we recognize them in a special way during this time of the year.”

The breakfast took place on the eve of National Catholic Schools Week, an annual event celebrating Catholic education in the United States. The Archdiocese of Chicago’s Catholic school system, which Dr. Rigg has overseen since last October, serves nearly 83,000 students in 230 schools across Cook and Lake counties. It boasts more National Blue Ribbon Schools than any other U.S. school system, public or private.

“I believe that good Catholic schools anchor and, in fact, save neighborhoods,” said Father Dennis Holtzschneider, CM, president of DePaul University and the morning’s emcee. He added that research has shown that Catholic Schools “are the surest predictor if a young person will participate in church as an adult. Literally, when we invest in the schools we invest in the future of the Church.”

has served as a trial scholarship program. Already, more than 2,000 children are attending Catholic schools in the Archdiocese, thanks to Caritas scholarships.

Archbishop Blase Cupich has been leading the *To Teach Who Christ Is* major gift effort, which predominately benefits the Catholic Education Scholarship Trust. In his introduction of Dr. Rigg, he shared, “As I look across the landscape of our schools, and our parishes that support schools and all of the people who are interested in it, I am convinced that there really is a lot of energy out there that wants to come together in a way that makes our schools more sustainable and stronger.”

In his keynote address, Dr. Rigg reminded the group of the old adage of the value of teaching a man to fish. “We all know that knowledge is liberating,” he says, “Through conveying knowledge and skills, we prepare children to confidently face the challenges that lie ahead.”

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## CAMPAIGN UPDATE

**Overall campaign goal: \$350,000,000**

Total raised to date: \$244,474,473\*

Percent of Goal: 69.8%

Cash received to date: \$75,051,700

**Parish campaign goal: \$250,000,000**

Raised to date: \$123,342,030\*

Number of gifts: 40,540

Percent of goal: 49.3%

Cash received: \$48,938,093

**Major gift goal: \$100,000,000**

Raised to date: \$121,132,443\*

Number of gifts: 56

Percent of goal: 121.1%

Cash received: \$26,113,606

\*includes cash, documented pledges and bequests

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