



TO TEACH *Who Christ Is*

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

May 2015

Dear Friends,

On June 1, I will become the Rector of St. Joseph College Seminary, where I spent five years in leadership before being appointed as Moderator of the Curia in 2012. While I am excited to return to the seminary, the past three years have been enlightening — especially considering all we have accomplished, and continue to accomplish, through *To Teach Who Christ Is*.

Not only is the campaign important to the future of Catholic education and faith formation in the Archdiocese of Chicago, pastors have shared how it will strengthen their local parish communities. Indeed, as of last month, parishes have received \$13.3 million from *To Teach Who Christ Is* to spend toward their locally identified needs. This is a direct result of the generosity of thousands of Catholics who have pledged gifts to support their parish campaigns. On behalf of the many pastors whose parishes are already benefiting from this vital effort, I thank you.

Please join me in praying for the success of *To Teach Who Christ Is*, and for all the campaign will accomplish for generations to come.

In our Risen Lord,

Father Peter Snieg
Moderator of the Curia

‘I let the hand of God take control’



Fathers Thadeo Mgimba and James Flynn

Two of Wave III’s nine over-goal parishes can be credited to the efforts of one pastor.

Father Thadeo Mgimba shepherds both Ascension-St. Susanna Parish in Harvey and St. Gerard Majella Parish in Markham, with the assistance of Father James Flynn, a senior priest.

“We all came together,” he says. “It wasn’t a house divided. It was one house dealing with the same common goal. They were all united in mind and spirit to do the same thing. And we did.”

Ascension-St. Susanna Parish in Harvey is now at 132 percent of its \$115,000 goal, and St. Gerard Majella Parish in Markham is at 184 percent of its \$105,000 goal. All parishes receive 60 percent of the funds they raise up to their Archdiocesan-set goal, and 100 percent over that amount.

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At Ascension-St. Susanna, campaign funds will be used to restore the church’s iconic windows as well as repair pews and kneelers. St. Gerard Majella will repair its boiler with all of the funds it retains from *To Teach Who Christ Is*.

While parishioners at both parishes responded well to their local needs, Father Mgimba says they were also inspired by the elements of the Archdiocesan case. The need for scholarships to Catholic schools especially struck a cord, as many struggle to

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afford a Catholic education for their own children. “People really knew exactly where the money was going to, and that was why they were so motivated to give it,” Father notes.

Both congregations were approached differently, given their varying life stages and ethnicities. Still, the parishes worked together on the campaign, which Father Flynn felt helped inspire them, as well as created healthy competition. “They knew they weren’t in it alone,” he notes. “And there was a spirit of wanting to do as well as each other was doing.”

“These are small communities,” Father Mgimba adds. “People know each other, and they love each other, and they’ve been united by one pastor for so many years. It was easy, especially to bring the Campaign Executive Committee together, explain the case, and then from there, let them work together.”

Father Mgimba found the greatest challenge within himself. With finances stretched thin, he realized that he needed to let go of biases and approach *To Teach Who Christ Is* with a clear heart and an open mind.

“I let the hand of God take control,” he says.



Father René Mena talks to more than 130 of his parishioners at St. Paul in Chicago Heights about *To Teach Who Christ Is* during the parish’s reception in April.

Campaign Update: Cash allocations to parishes, campaign elements

To Teach Who Christ Is has gained great momentum since restarting last fall. Nine Wave III parishes are now over goal, bringing the total number of parishes exceeding their Archdiocesan-set goals for the campaign to 17.

“The support the faithful are showing for the campaign is exciting,” says Peter de Keratry, campaign manager. “In many cases, the generosity of Campaign Executive Committee members is not only helping parishes reach impressive early benchmarks, it is inspiring their fellow parishioners to lend their support to *To Teach Who Christ Is*.”

Not only has the campaign experienced a significant increase in the number of gifts, he says, the size of the average gift has also steadily increased. Parishes are experiencing an average gift of \$2,320, as opposed to \$1,900 at the end of the summer 2014.

Increased support to parishes from campaign team members has also resulted in an increase in the total cash received, especially in terms of down payments. Pastors and field staff are encouraging a 10 percent down payment with each gift received. Since this time last year, the campaign has received nearly \$25 million cash.

Sixty percent of funds that parishes raise up to their goals during campaigns remain at parishes for local needs, and 100 percent over goal. To date, that total is more than \$13 million, which many parishes are already using to improve facilities, strengthen ministries and establish endowments.

This increase in cash flow has also allowed for distributions to support other case elements, such as academic excellence in Catholic schools, scholarships through the Catholic Education Scholarship Trust, certification of catechists for parish religious education programs, and critical facility issues in economically distressed parishes.

Additional funds will be disbursed as the campaign continues and cash is received through pledge payments. Wave IV of the campaign will begin in July and run through December. Waves V and VI will take place in 2016

CASH ALLOCATIONS TO DATE

Parish 60 percent share of parish campaign funds	\$13,321,130
Academic Excellence in Catholic Schools	\$1,971,598
Critical Facility Issues	\$3,275,560
Certification of Catechists	\$373,118
Innovation in Religious Education	\$110,213
Catholic Education Scholarship Trust	\$12,367,303
Caritas Scholars Program	\$7,039,872
Campaign Expenses	\$550,248
Total	\$39,009,042

Wave IV parish works ahead, sees success



Father Robert Tonelli is seeing positive response for *To Teach Who Christ Is* at St. Joseph Parish.

Although St. Joseph Parish's *To Teach Who Christ Is* campaign is scheduled to begin this fall, the pastor and his team of dedicated volunteers have already raised close to \$1 million.

"I have been pleasantly surprised by the whole thing," says Father Robert Tonelli. "The response seems to be very positive about the campaign, particularly about our church's needs."

St. Joseph has set an enhanced goal of \$1.8 million, of which \$1.34 million will remain at the Wilmette parish. Having worked on three fundraising initiatives

previously, Father Tonelli felt that starting the behind-the-scenes work on the campaign was essential if St. Joseph is to meet its significant goal.

The majority of the parish's funds will be dedicated to facility improvements in the church, including replacing the outdated cloth electrical wiring, restoring the lighting, painting the interior walls and repairing damaged plaster, as well as structural improvements in St. Joseph School.

'The campaign is giving us the opportunity to go ahead and address the issues we knew we had to at some point, but weren't able to from the weekly collection basket.' — *Joe Konen, campaign chair*

After facility improvements have been completed, remaining campaign funds will be used to initiate the first phase of a long-range development plan for a new resource center. To be created in the school annex, this sacred space will serve as a center for faith formation, specifically to welcome youth and young adults. Future plans call for the development of a new chapel, an outdoor reflection garden and an archives center to document St. Joseph's 170-year history.

Father Tonelli has had his campaign team in place for more than a year, including a handful of parishioners who have been assisting him in seeking major gifts. So far, 40 families have responded with pledges and one-time gifts of \$12,000 to \$250,000. The goal is to have these meetings completed before the campaign is officially launched at the parish.

"I want to announce that we already have more than a million dollars pledged to serve as an incentive for the rest of the parish," he says.

One major gift pledge included an additional, non-campaign gift, to replace the church flooring this summer. Father Tonelli hopes this improvement will further emphasize for parishioners the local case for facility repairs.

"The campaign is giving us the opportunity to go ahead and address the issues we knew we had to at some point, but weren't able to from the weekly collection basket," says Joe Konen, campaign chair.

He notes that the parish abounds with ministries and liturgical opportunities, and that the priority has been on meeting spiritual needs as well as caring for neighbors in need over bricks-and-mortar issues. But like he and his wife, Judy, many parishioners realize that the need is there and are pledging their support.

"*To Teach Who Christ Is* is an opportunity for St. Joseph to make our beautiful community even more so," Joe says.

OVER GOAL!

Congratulations to the following Wave III parishes for exceeding their Archdiocesan *To Teach Who Christ Is* goals!

St. Paul of the Cross
Park Ridge

Saints Peter and Paul
Chicago

St. Vincent Ferrer
River Forest

St. Timothy
Chicago

Immaculate Conception
(88th Street)
Chicago

Ascension-St. Susanna
Harvey

St. Mary of Czestochowa
Cicero

St. Vincent de Paul
Chicago

St. Gerard Majella
Markham





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CAMPAIGN UPDATE

Overall campaign goal: \$350,000,000

Total raised to date: \$152,104,839*

Percent of Goal: 43.5%

Cash received to date: \$41,442,349

Parish campaign goal: \$250,000,000

Raised to date: \$55,964,896*

Number of gifts: 23,649

Percent of goal: 22.4%

Cash received: \$24,578,640

Major gift goal: \$100,000,000

Raised to date: \$96,139,943*


Number of gifts: 36

Percent of goal: 96.1%

Cash received: \$16,863,708

*includes cash, documented pledges and bequests

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