



# TODAY'S CHALLENGE TOMORROW'S HOPE

Capital & Endowment Campaign  
Diocese of Greensburg

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In 1826, Beethoven was composing the music of his soul; Pope Leo XII was leading the faithful; and, most important to our local history, St. Mary's Parish was established in Freeport, Pennsylvania. Surely, country, church -the Catholic Church- and parish have endured many changes throughout these past 184 years: 39 presidents, the invention of the telephone, automobile and airplane. We have traveled to the moon and have experienced medical miracles. Moreover, at the touch of a button, we are able to travel the information highway into cyberspace. Metaphysics takes on a new dimension.

Needless to say, against this background the Catholic Church has experienced fourteen popes as well as having survived the vernacularization of the liturgy, greater involvement by laity, reception of Holy Communion on the hand; and, a loving, extroverted pope who gathered with the youth of the world to celebrate the Catholic faith in prayer, dance and song.

Not to be forgotten over the past 184 years, 44 priests have served St. Mary's as part of the Pittsburgh Diocese before joining the Greensburg Diocese. While twice building the church and moving the first cemetery to build a school, St. Mary's has grown into a large family—a community of love and life.

**For I know well the plans I have  
in mind, for you, says the Lord,  
plans for your welfare, not for  
woe! Plans to give you a future  
full of hope.**

**Jeremiah 29:11**

And what a family it has become. Throughout the many changes over the years—some more disruptive than others—St. Mary Mother of God parish has remained constant in its responsiveness and generosity to the needs of its church family as well as to the needs of the community in which it thrives today. There is no doubt that the Catholic Church is built on the love of Christ and the sacrifice He made for us. God's reign over humanity has its past, present and future. However, Jesus Christ is found at the center of it. He is the center of our church family. He is the way, the truth and the resurrection of life.

Hence, our ancestors' love of Christ and the desire to do His will were the spiritual mortar and bricks that built the house of St. Mary Mother of God. In addition, these brothers and sisters in Christ sacrificed in order to build the rectory to house the pastor; sacrificed to build a school to educate their children; and, sacrificed to build the convent to house the Sisters of St. Joseph serving the parish. Their example was a great model for future generations: especially when the school needed to



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be expanded; the church ceiling needed to be rebuilt; and the floor in the church needed to be repaired.

And so, today, in love and homage to our Lord, we commit to each other as a growing parish family to prepare for the future of our children, and by extension the future of our church, by accepting the sacrifices we are called to make in **Today's Challenge ~ Tomorrow's Hope**. This campaign has become an exercise in community and solidarity of purpose, not to mention an opportunity to dedicate oneself to the cause of Christ, with valiant and decided hearts as we continue to build Christ's Kingdom on earth. And Christ's Kingdom has grown at St. Mary's by 48 new families in the past year and 3 families since February of this year.



Thus, the planned multi-purpose parish center will provide a place to gather together for Christian fellowship. In a manner of speaking, the communion table will become an earthly extension whereby we may satisfy the hungry, quench the thirsty, comfort the lonely and support the grieving. Indeed, there will be greater opportunities for each of us to become a more participating member of St. Mary's family—if only to share a cup of coffee and conversation.

The newly configured one-level space will be safe and welcoming with no barriers for those with physical limitations. Likewise, by adding the chair lift and family-friendly restroom to our worship space we will become more inviting to all sectors of our parish community. Parishioners who have been unable to join us because of accessibility issues will once again be able to participate at Mass.

Less than two months ago, when the parish goal of \$635,000 was announced, it seemed like an unobtainable goal. However, once again, through the generosity and faithfulness of the St. Mary, Mother of God family, we will reach our goal. Indeed, the multi-purpose parish center and the improving of the accessibility to the church, defined in our Strategic Plan's long term goals **will** become a reality before 2010 ends!

Further, should we raise funds beyond our goal; we will be able to add items to the parish center which would have been added later at a higher cost, such as a new sound system and energy efficient windows.

In closing, John Paul II questions how we can profess faith in God's Word, and then refuse to let it inspire and direct our thinking, our activity, our decisions and our responsibilities toward one another? Faith is always demanding because faith leads us beyond ourselves. So let our faith lead us to accept the responsibility for **Today's Challenge ~ Tomorrow's Hope**.

## Tracking Our Success

As of March 22nd

Diocesan Goal:	\$355,000
Parish Goal:	\$635,000
Total Pledged:*	\$541,155
Percentage of Diocesan Goal:	152%
Percentage of Parish Goal:	85%
Parish Rebate:	\$253,693
Number of Pledges:	184
Average Gift:	\$2,941

\* Pledges are made over a 5-year period

Funds raised over the parish goal will allow us to complete the parish center by installing a sound system and energy efficient windows.