



Building OUR FUTURE Together

DIOCESE
OF TRENTON

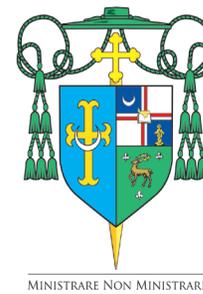


Two new initiatives, both seeking to deepen faith and build a vibrant future of mission and service, are now underway in the Diocese of Trenton. Commissioned by Bishop David M. O’Connell, C.M., **Faith in Our Future** is a planning process that seeks to strengthen parishes and diocesan ministries, and **Faith to Move Mountains** is an endowment campaign that will provide needed resources for pastoral priorities identified for the coming decade and beyond. Together, the initiatives call upon all members of the Catholic communities throughout Burlington, Mercer, Monmouth and Ocean Counties to take an active and supportive role.



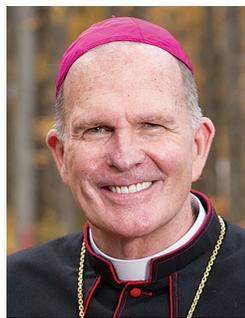
In his introductory message, page 2, Bishop O’Connell writes, “The challenge for us as Catholics is to embrace the enduring, changeless truth of God’s revelation while it speaks to us in new and different ways in every generation.”

This special report explores these two new efforts and provides answers and resources that every Catholic family in the Diocese will want to know.



Strengthening our Diocese *like never before*

To the Clergy, Religious and Faithful of the Diocese of Trenton:



Bishop David M. O'Connell, C.M.

President John Fitzgerald Kennedy once stated that *Change is the law of life. And those who look only to the past or present are certain to miss the future* ("Address in Assembly Hall at the Paulskirche in Frankfurt," June 25, 1963).

There is much wisdom in that simple statement and most of us, if we are honest, recognize its truth. Change is a constant in human life, from conception and birth to natural death. As change affects us as individual human beings so, too, it affects the human communities, organizations and institutions of which we are a part. Our Church, our Diocese, our parishes are no exception to this reality. Throughout the changes we experience, however, some things do not change: Jesus Christ, "the same yesterday, today and tomorrow (Hebrews 13:8);" the Gospels; the truth of his teachings; the truths of our faith upon which he has built his Church.

The challenge for us as Catholics is to embrace the enduring, changeless truth of God's revelation while it speaks to us in new and different ways in every generation. The past becomes the present and the present shapes the future in a living faith that St. Augustine calls a "beauty ever ancient, ever new (Confessions, X)."

That challenge has prompted me as Bishop of the Diocese of Trenton to launch two simultaneous initiatives for our Diocese intended to preserve our timeless Catholic faith as it informs, strengthens and guides our local Church well into the future.

The first of these initiatives is called *Faith in Our Future*. Corresponding to the beginning of a new year, *Faith in Our Future* is an effort to call upon the clergy, religious and faithful of the Diocese of Trenton to reflect upon the ways that we experience, live and express our Catholic faith together as the circumstances of the past and present give way to the new and changing realities that we face as a local Church. There is "one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all (Ephesians 4: 5-6)" and that fundamental and foundational source of our unity cannot be lost or compromised or sacrificed as we adapt to changing times and circumstances. We have *Faith in Our Future* and, as every

generation of Catholics before us, our faith must endure even when its expression may change.

The second of these initiatives is called *Faith to Move Mountains*. Recalling the parable of the mustard seed in the Gospels, *Faith to Move Mountains* is an effort to ensure that we will have the resources necessary as a Diocese to look to the future of our Catholic faith with "confident assurance and conviction (Hebrews 11:1)" that it will "move mountains" that stand in its way. We cannot fool ourselves into believing that the road ahead of us will not require new and greater sacrifice, new and greater investment, new and greater effort on our part. The "mountains" loom large and the challenges our Catholic faith confronts grow more daunting every day. The Gospel costs little to believe in and preach. But if we are to continue to be the "light of the world" and to build that "city on a hill (Matthew 5:14)" that Christ asks of us, we must respond to the needs required to "move mountains" to bring our faith to life in ways that our world can see and taste and touch and feel.

A bishop can dream dreams but without his people, that is all they will ever be. And, so, I invite every Catholic in the Diocese of Trenton to share the dream in ways that will make it a reality for our local Church. It will take time and the effort of the whole Diocese, like never before. It will take sacrifice and the commitment of the whole Diocese, like never before. It will take gratitude for what has been and is and the bold vision for what will be of the whole Diocese, like never before. And it will take prayer — every one and all together in the Diocese — like never before. And when we do this together as a Diocese, like never before, *Faith In Our Future* will become *Faith to Move Mountains*. May God's will be done and his blessings be ours.

Respectfully yours in the Lord,

Most Reverend David M. O'Connell, C.M., J.C.D.
Bishop of Trenton



What's inside

Faith in Our Future ...
Pages 3-8

Faith to Move Mountains ...
Pages 9-16



On the Cover

1. After hearing her confession, a priest prays over a young participant of the Diocesan Youth Celebration in April. Craig Pittelli photo
2. Divine Word Father Miguel Virella and other priests of the Diocese concelebrate Mass with Bishop O'Connell in October. Ken Falls photo
3. Students attending the diocesan Catholic Schools Mass in October bring the gifts of bread and wine to Bishop O'Connell inside St. Mary of the Assumption Cathedral, Trenton. Craig Pittelli photo
4. Bishop David M. O'Connell, C.M., raises the chalice during the diocesan Pilgrimage Mass in the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, Nov. 7. Ken Falls photo
5. A husband and wife renew their wedding vows along with hundreds of married couples who took part in October's Bishop's Anniversary Blessing. Ken Falls photo
6. A godparent places her hand on the shoulder of a catechumen during the Rite of Election in 2014 in St. Mary of the Assumption Cathedral. Jeff Metzner photo

F *aith in Our Future* is a process through which the Diocese of Trenton, its parishes and ministries, will plan to meet challenges and respond to new opportunities for sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ for years to come.

What is Faith in Our Future?

Bishop David M. O'Connell, C.M., has identified five goals for *Faith in Our Future*:

- **Strengthen and enliven** the parishes of the Diocese as well as diocesan-sponsored organizations and ministries.
- Explore **new models of leadership** in parishes and ministries in institutional settings (schools, colleges, hospitals, nursing homes, prisons, etc.) in order to address the challenges presented by the anticipated retirement of a large number of clergy and religious over the next 10 years.
- **Improve our stewardship** of personnel, finances, and facilities and other parish and diocesan resources.
- Establish **collaborative relationships** among the parishes and ministries of the Diocese that will build upon the Gospel to re-evangelize the local Church, especially those who live on the fringes of the Church, as well as those who do not yet know Christ.

- Provide for pastoral ministry to **Hispanic Catholics**, the fastest growing segment of our Diocesan population, within our parishes and organizations.



Hundreds of parish representatives spend time in prayer during an Hispanic Ministry Study Day Nov. 21. Hispanic Catholics currently make up 15 percent of the Catholic population, and are the fastest-growing ethnic group in the Diocese. Twenty-five of our 107 parishes now offer Masses in Spanish, a percentage just about at the national average.

Jairo Torres photo

WHO will be involved?

Each parish will have a core team composed of the pastor and four parish members. Core teams have the responsibility to see that the required work is completed, but they don't do that alone. They will collaborate with the parish pastoral and finance councils, as well as engage with parishioners across all ministries and populations in the parish. Parish staff members do not serve on the core team, but should be active participants in the process as it is implemented in the parish.

WILL each parish work alone or with other parishes?

At first, each parish will work on its own, under the leadership of the parish core team, to conduct an evaluation of the parish and to complete other tasks assigned. The parish core team will engage parishioners in conversations about planning for the future.

After a few months, parishes will align in groups of three to five neighboring parishes called a "cohort." The parish core teams within a cohort will discuss their strengths and struggles, and share "best thinking" about the future. Together, the cohort of parishes will make suggestions for the future that propose particular ways the parishes in a given area could work together and respond to each of the five goals of the *Faith in Our Future* process.

WHEN will the process take place?

The Planning phase of the process will begin in Advent 2015 and take place over the course of a year.

Parishes, working together in cohorts (or groups), will submit their suggestions to the Diocesan Planning Commission by June 1, 2016. The Diocesan Planning Commission

will make preliminary recommendations, and send them back to each cohort for review and a response by the end of September 2016. Final recommendations will be made to Bishop O'Connell at the end of October 2016. The Bishop will formally announce his decisions in Advent 2016.

After a period of preparation, the implementation phase will begin on July 1, 2017 and last at least one year.

HOW will parishioners be able to express their ideas and concerns during this process?

Creating opportunities for parishioners to share their ideas and voice concerns is central to *Faith in Our Future*. Parish core teams may use parish surveys, town hall meetings, focus groups and other ways to hear from as many members of the parish as possible. The more that peoples' hopes for the future can be realized and their needs addressed, the greater the likelihood that they will become involved in the parish's life and its mission.

IS this project all about merging and regionalizing our parishes?

This project is not fundamentally about merging parishes or getting smaller. *Faith in Our Future* is about growing in faith and spreading the Gospel more effectively. In our present circumstances, too much of the focus has come to be on diminishing resources and maintaining "the way it has always been."

Canon law provides quite a variety of structures and leadership models which can be considered in order to maximize the resources available for mission and best organize for ministry. Merging is only one of the models that core teams can consider as they make suggestions and responses

Continued on page 4



WHY do we need a planning process?

Planning is an ongoing responsibility in any organization. At present, there are many indications that it is time to take a comprehensive look at the configuration of parishes, their facilities, their staffing, ministry practices and outreach in order to more effectively proclaim the Gospel and pass on the faith to a new generation. Among these indicators in the Diocese of Trenton are:

- The percentage of Catholics in the general population is declining.
- The number of Latino Catholics in the total Catholic population is growing.
- Weekly Mass attendance and number of individuals celebrating sacraments is decreasing.
- Many parishes struggle financially.
- A large number of priests and religious in active ministry are reaching retirement age.

Continued from page 3

about their future. The six models available for consideration are:

1. Collaboration between parishes.
2. Linkage between two parishes.
3. Merger of two or more parishes into a new parish.
4. A team of priests sharing responsibility for a group of parishes.
5. Lay, religious or deacon leadership of parish, working with a priest sacramental minister.
6. "Personal" parishes established to meet particular needs.

Bishop O'Connell wants core teams to explore each of the models and consider which will be best in each case to strengthen parishes and diocesan ministries in a given area of the Diocese for the future.

HOW will schools be part of this study?

Schools are an important part of the ministry of the Church in the Diocese of Trenton. Any parish with an elementary or high school is asked to include consideration of these schools as part of their parish evaluation. Parishes without a school of their own are asked to consider how their parishes support Catholic schools in their area, or the ministry of Catholic schools in the Diocese as a whole.



Students from Pope John Paul II Regional School in Willingboro plant flowers outside a residential home for expectant mothers during a day of service commemorating St. Joseph the Worker May 1. Craig Pittelli photo

WHAT is the cost to individual parishes of this process?

There is no direct monetary cost to parishes for *Faith in Our Future*. The process will be funded at the diocesan level. There is an investment, however, to be made by each parish in terms of the time and energy required from those on the core team, those involved in parish evaluations, and those who will participate in surveys, focus groups, task forces or town hall meetings.

WHAT about those parishes who have already participated in parish studies initiated by the Diocese of Trenton in the last 10 years?

Faith in Our Future will ask all the parishes of the Diocese of Trenton to participate in a planning process at the same time. The recommendations made to the Bishop at the conclusion of this process will impact every parish. Parishes that have been part of a study in the past should be aware that the people and the environment, the resources of the Diocese, and the circumstances of the parish have continued to change in the ensuing years. It is, essentially, a new time. *Faith in Our Future* represents an opportunity to evaluate parish life and outreach as it is currently experienced, to converse with cohort partners, and to be a part of shaping the future for ministry in the Diocese of Trenton.

DOES this process leave behind an infrastructure for ongoing pastoral planning or is there a process for ongoing planning built in?

There is an infrastructure built into the process which the Diocese can sustain to engage in planning for the foreseeable future. At the conclusion of the planning phase in November 2016, an Implementation Commission will be established to monitor the progress of implementation, putting into

practice the decisions made by the Bishop. Each cohort will be asked to prepare an action plan for Year One of implementation, followed by a report and an action plan for succeeding years to be monitored by the Implementation Commission. The Diocesan Planning Office and the Implementation Commission will work with the Bishop and the Presbyteral Council to ensure ongoing positive action.

WHEN a diocese has completed this process, what does it look like?

The most successful dioceses that have gone through this process have much good news to report — more vital parishes, ministries strengthened by collaboration, thriving newly-merged parishes, more involved lay leaders, better allocation of financial and human resources, greater availability of diocesan ministries to all parishes, and more.

WHAT is the relationship of Faith in Our Future to Faith to Move Mountains?

Both projects begin with faith because faith is at the heart of what it means to be a follower of Jesus. As a Diocese, we are eager to build upon the past. *Faith in Our Future* will help us to envision strong parish communities and diocesan ministries that will be effective into the future. People providing financial support through *Faith to Move Mountains* are making an investment in the future, providing needed resources to pursue our shared priorities. Together, the *Faith in Our Future* planning process and the *Faith to Move Mountains* endowment campaign will result in actions that respond to the challenges of our day and move the Diocese of Trenton confidently forward into the future.

These projects complement each other. The people can be reassured that both projects embrace the optimal use of all resources in the Diocese by being intentional and prudent in planning and investing.



From left, seminarians Christopher Dayton, Nicholas Dolan and Hector Ramirez share a light-hearted moment during the Diocese's summer clerkship program, which gives seminarians practical training for the daily matters parish priests handle.

Craig Pittelli photo

ARE future projections of population and priestly leadership included in this planning process?

Most definitely. Data regarding the sacramental life and financial condition of each parish and the realities of population, Mass attendance, parish size and more will be given to the core teams for study. Core teams are to ground their work in the realities of their parish, and the realities of life in the Diocese of Trenton.

Sound planning an essential part of Church's future



By Msgr. Leonard F. Troiano
Episcopal Vicar
for Planning

For the past several months Bishop David M. O'Connell, C.M., along with the offices and consultative bodies of the Diocese, have been engaged in serious discussions regarding the need to plan for the future of the Church in Burlington, Mercer, Monmouth and Ocean Counties.

Facing the reality of major shifts in population and societal trends, as well as the number of priests who are rapidly approaching retirement, the Bishop sought the advice of these groups, asking for a way to address the challenges that lie ahead.

The end result was a recommendation that the Diocese engage the priests, deacons, religious and laity who are all part of our 107 parishes, along with our diocesan ministries and Catholic institutions in our four counties, in a planning initiative that would help address the challenges that we are encountering, and help set our parishes and ministries on a footing that will enliven and strengthen our worship and deepen our commitment to serve others through diocesan ministries and our charitable organizations.

Multiple challenges are calling us to strengthen faith formation in our religious education programs and Catholic schools.

This effort will also enable us to see ourselves as a multicultural Church, welcoming and integrating the rapidly growing Hispanic population in the Diocese into our parish communities.

As my working partners and I began to lay the ground work for the planning initiative that is now known as *Faith in Our Future*, we met with various constituents throughout the Diocese to unveil the methodology of planning.

Two overriding questions continued to surface: "What is strategic planning?" and "Why does the Church have to plan?" Neither question was unreasonable. After all, for most of us, the Church has been the unchanging bedrock in our lives. What, if anything, would bring us to the brink of having to look at the Church through the lens of a planning process, and have us evaluate our parishes or the ministry in which we serve?

Let's start with the second question. The answer to the question of "Why does the Church have to plan?" is found in the realities mentioned earlier in this article, some of which need to be addressed immediately and others that we will face in the very near future.

Planning • Continued on page 6

Q&A: Msgr. Troiano shares insights on process

1. WHAT was your first response when the Bishop asked you to take on this role?

When the Bishop asked the members of the Episcopal council to suggest someone who they thought might oversee the planning initiative, I didn't feel that I would be involved because I was scheduled to retire at the end of 2015. A short time later, Bishop O'Connell sent me an email saying that several priests recommended me as the point person, and asking if I would be interested. Grateful for his confidence in their recommendation, my first response was to ask for 24 hours to pray over my decision. However, I realized the necessity for the undertaking and deep in my heart knew that I would accept his invitation.

2. YOU have had a good deal of experience with planning and developing, both on a parish and diocesan level. Could you discuss what aspects of that experience have prepared you for this new role, and how your past work has informed your approach to strategic and pastoral planning?

Throughout my 36 years of priestly ministry, I have served in a number of assignments, both pastoral and administrative, that afforded me experience that may be useful as we move forward with this initiative. I am a great proponent of strategic planning because I believe it places situations and people on a solid footing, helping us to reach a positive end result.

3. IT would seem that planning on the scale of *Faith in Our Future* is not a "one and done" proposition. What is your assessment of how long the diocesan community will be actively engaged in this initiative?

That is correct, planning is ongoing. The experience of planning with the parishes in Lavallette and Normandy Beach was on a much smaller scale. It is never complete. You find that you have to continue to evaluate where you are and where you are going. This initiative is very broad in scope. It is diocesan wide and encompasses all the parishes and institutions of the Diocese. The projected timeline for the project is two years.

Q&A • Continued on page 6

Msgr. Troiano on familiar turf with pastoral planning process

It could easily be said that the diocesan-wide pastoral planning initiative, *Faith in Our Future*, is not Msgr. Leonard F. Troiano's first rodeo.

Earlier this year, when Bishop David M. O'Connell, C.M., first considered who he would put in charge of the new initiative, he looked for someone with experience, and lots of it.

Msgr. Troiano more than fit the bill. A large part of his 36 years of priesthood were spent in parishes and other roles where he was involved in planning, developing, construction and restructuring, both on the parish and diocesan levels.

Even before he first became a pastor, then-Father Troiano was called upon to lend his talents to projects that set the course of the Diocese of Trenton. In 1989 he played a leadership role in the Diocesan Synod and in 1992 he was named director of the diocesan Office of Planning while also serving as a member of the Diocesan Building Commission, Expansion and Development Commission and Budget Committee.

His expertise was put to the test in Ocean County five years later, when in 1997 he was asked to assume the role of temporary administrator in Lavallette's St. Bonaventure Parish. Officially named pastor there in 1998, Msgr. Troiano became involved in overseeing the construction of the seaside church's parish center; supervised renovations



Msgr. Leonard F. Troiano delivers a homily during the Catholic Men for Jesus Christ Conference in March.

Ken Falls photo

to the church, chapel and rectory; balanced the parish budget; paid down the parish debt and spearheaded the creation of many new ministries within the parish.

In 2004, Msgr. Troiano was asked to take on a second parish with his appointment as administrator of Our Lady of Peace Parish, Normandy Beach. In the years that

Msgr. Troiano • Continued on page 6

Planning process to strengthen response to challenges

Continued from page 5

Several are worth looking at in greater detail. We are facing a decline in the number of priests to staff parishes and ministries. The number of those preparing for the priesthood will not meet the need.

We look around and see a reduction in population growth as the size of our families becomes smaller. Smaller families are reflected in a diminishing number of Catholics. Added to that is the trend that, in today's societal climate, fewer people feel the need to engage in religious practice and weekly Sunday worship. Parishes are finding it more difficult to recruit volunteers to staff religious education programs and outreach ministries.

With the decline in Church membership, our Diocese and parishes suffer from a loss of income, placing stress on their financial resources. A growing number of parishes are unable to meet the demands of higher costs of healthcare, payroll obligations or the upkeep of parish properties.

Suffering from a lack of funding, pastors and their staffs are limited or simply unable to enliven and strengthen parish communities so that they can effectively minister to their people. The Diocese has funded the shortfall

Faith in Our Future

“These realities are not going to disappear...[Success will be] dependent on prayerful support and active engagement.”

from parishes to the amount of nearly \$60 million over the last 15 years.

Lastly, a positive change and yet a challenge for the Diocese and the parishes is the influx of new Hispanic immigrants, along with a large number of young, first-generation, Latino Americans who have become part of our diocesan landscape.

Realizing that we are a multicultural Church means that we need to establish new ministries and integrate their culture into our liturgies and parish prayer life. The Hispanic population is the fastest growing segment of our diocesan family and will be the largest group of Catholics in the next few years.

Bishop O'Connell, knowing the challenges that are before us, has invited us in a spirit of prayer and collaborative discussion to help him arrive at sound solutions that will best serve the people in our parishes and diocesan ministries.

Hopefully having answered the question of why planning, we can turn to the question of planning itself.

What is planning? Webster's dictionary defines it simply as the act of making or carrying out plans for the establishment of goals, policies, and procedures for a social or economic unit. It happens every day.

Our family can be considered a social unit, and so we plan the purchase of a home,

the next vacation and our children's education. We not only plan, but we come to a decision on how to achieve the end result.

Other social and economic units are businesses and corporations, as well as municipalities and school districts, and each enters into their own process of planning periodically according to their needs. Businesses and corporations plan in order to create better products (research and development), and to increase earnings (fiscal responsibility), hoping for a better return on their investment.

More recently, we have become attuned to the discussions at the state level and in our towns regarding the well-being of our municipalities and school districts. They, like many other institutions, deal with the same challenges that we are facing as a Church: demographic shifts, fewer young families with children, escalating cost of providing services.

And so they plan. These realities are not going to disappear. In each instance, without planning, these tasks will become even more difficult to solve and the decisions more painful to act upon.

Here in the Diocese of Trenton, under the leadership of Bishop O'Connell, we have undertaken two great initiatives - *Faith to Move Mountains*, an endowment campaign that will secure our financial future, giving us the necessary resources needed to minister to God's people; and *Faith in Our Future*, planning that will help to set us on the road to stronger parishes and ministries here in the Diocese.

The success of these initiatives is dependent on the prayerful support and active engagement of the faithful. Only together can we meet the goals that our Bishop has set for us, and be able to realize all that we can become as parish communities, and all that is possible as we serve the mission of this Church of Trenton.

ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF TRENTON

- About **1 in 5** Catholics attend Mass on an average weekend
- **52** parishes have more funerals than baptisms
- The Diocese is currently **15%** Hispanic and growing
- **1** priest for every **1,300** families
- **65** priests retiring in next **10** years
- **39%** of parishes operate at a deficit
- Parishes owe **\$60 million** to the Diocese for unpaid bills

Vicar brings a wealth of experience

Continued from page 5

followed, it became evident that economic and demographic realities could not sustain two parishes, and Msgr. Troiano led his community into a self-initiated merger in 2008, emerging as the unified parish of St. Pio of Pietrelcina.

The merger was seen as a success story. Msgr. Troiano had been intent on bringing in good people to help with the process and called upon a Connecticut consulting firm, Catholic School Management, to coordinate the plan. In a 2008 interview with *The Monitor*, he said that "It's important to have a good consolidation that will bring it all together. These are issues that can be emotional. We want to make sure we do it well."

He will retire as pastor of St. Pio Parish and from his post as episcopal vicar for Ocean County in January to dedicate himself full-time to his new role with the *Faith in Our Future* initiative.

Q&A with Msgr. Troiano

Continued from page 5

timeline for the project is two years. However, there will need to be ongoing monitoring of the implementation process.

4. OTHER than to serve your Bishop, what motivates you to bring your talent and energy to this initiative?

For me the answer is quite clear. Having served as a member of the Bishop's Episcopal Council I have become more aware of the rapidly changing situations that are affecting our parishes and Diocese. Always lurking in the back of my mind was the question, "How can we address these problems?" The discussions that will take place through *Faith in Our Future* will open a whole spectrum of ideas and possibilities for the future of the Church here in the Trenton Diocese. I am excited about those possibilities and would like to be part of this historical happening.

5. WHAT is one piece of advice you would offer to the faithful about how to approach this new initiative?

The one piece of advice would be to trust the process. My experience in the planning process at my parish brought about wonderful results. The parishioners took hold of their future by listening and sharing their concerns and their hopes. With *Faith in Our Future* we are being invited into the same discussion but in a wider scope. Together we will listen and share our hope for the future of our Diocese.



By Terry A. Ginther
Executive Director
for Pastoral Life and
Mission

Standing at the threshold of the Diocese's new planning process, many of us may be wondering exactly what this will mean for our parishes and how they might change. While we can recognize the promise that *Faith in Our Future* holds, and hope for the best, we may be anxious about letting go of the familiar to embrace something new.

As we consider our Diocese's plans for the future, we ask God to illuminate our understanding, inspire our work and purify our motives. We need to be clear-eyed and honest about our present circumstances, taking the time to name the challenges and seek out new opportunities. If we can be courageous in imagining new ways of working together and using resources more wisely, I trust that God will guide the process. By his grace, we will be able to serve the mission of Christ entrusted to us for years to come.

So, what might it look like? I am mindful



Formation, training and networking are an integral part of empowering more members of the laity to take active roles in parish leadership and ministry. Here a group of pastoral caregivers complete a training program sponsored by the Diocese.

Joe Moore photo

Looking toward a bright future

Faith **OUT** Future

of the Scripture which recounts the way Jesus taught his disciples about the kingdom of God. The kingdom was beyond their sight and maybe even beyond their imagination. Jesus used metaphors to stimulate their understanding.

"What is the kingdom of God like? To what can I compare it? It is like a mustard seed that a person took and planted in the garden." (Luke 13:18-19) The seed was tiny, but it had the potential to become the largest

of shrubs. Jesus was suggesting that the kingdom was already present in seminal form, and growing each day. The kingdom of God continues to gradually emerge until, in the fullness of time, all things are transformed in Christ.

I have been thinking about the impact of *Faith in Our Future* on our parishes in much the same way. Only with time and patience will we see how to advance the kingdom of God in our place and time.

I would like to suggest that each of the challenges and opportunities that lie before us hint at a way in which we may be transformed. Standing here at the beginning, we can get a few

glimpses of how the future may unfold.

Right now, most of our parishes struggle just to maintain the basics of what has seemingly always been. Only one in five Catholics attend Mass weekly. School and religious education enrollments are down. We are being asked to imagine a parish with energy and resources to focus on the New Evangelization. Such a parish would grow by reaching people who have not heard the Gospel of Jesus Christ and by engaging inactive Catholics.

In all but a few cases, each parish works alone. There are too few individuals involved in parish ministry; and those that are involved often have multiple responsibilities. Parishes duplicate services instead of cooperating. In the future, parishes might collaborate in ministry with other parishes in the area in order to extend outreach to new or underserved populations.

They could work together on a Support Group for Separated and Divorced Catholics, sponsor English as a Second Language classes, breathe new energy into Respect Life Outreach, or start an Activity Group for Moms with young children. Relationships should be characterized by cooperation and mutual respect, rather than the current competition and rivalry.

Currently, there is one priest in active ministry for every 1,300 registered families; and there are college campuses, prisons and hospitals to consider as well. It is very difficult to replace a Pastor who retires or leaves for any reason. It would seem that some parishes will need to share a Pastor and coordinate their Mass schedules in order to maintain the Sunday celebration of Eucharist and the availability of other sacraments.

For years, we have known that the team approach is best for developing parish ministry; yet, many parishes lack the funds to

implement such models. It is likely in the future that priests, deacons, religious and lay professionals will work together in pastoral teams, sometimes serving more than one parish community. This team approach respects the role appropriate to each, while providing for local pastoral care, and the proper training and supervision of volunteers.

Many parishes do not have a professionally trained Director of Religious Education or a Youth Minister. Programs engage only a fraction of Catholic children and youth living in the parish territory. Imagine sharing a qualified staff person with another parish in the area. Programs could innovate and improve; and significant support for families could be provided as well.

Parishes with ministry among Latino Catholics are growing rapidly. Facilities are strained. In the future, most parishes in the diocese will be more diverse and multicultural. Imagine a parish that is a "Community of Communities," with a bilingual staff and shared parish leadership. The congregation appreciates the distinct cultures and their religious expression, while building unity.

Financial resources are a challenge in every parish. Our dream for the future must include models that provide enough financial support for the parish to enable it to meet its financial obligations and maintain its facilities.

These are a few of the ways I think that *Faith in our Future* will impact parishes in the Diocese of Trenton. I hope you will look forward with me to a bright future. It is an exciting time to be a parishioner.

This process depends on your participation — your prayer, your input and evaluation of the present circumstances, and your best thinking to shape the future of ministry in our Diocese.



Through this process of prayer, dialogue and collaboration, members of the faithful are being asked to take part in what can be a transformative process for their parish communities.

Ken Falls photo

Navigation from the Pacific Northwest

The Reid Group brings experience, expertise in strategic planning

For a project of the size and scale of *Faith in Our Future*, the diocesan leadership team knew an outside party would be vital in accomplishing the process successfully and efficiently.

They found a consultancy all the way across the country, based in Seattle, Wash., with the precise background and skills necessary to successfully navigate the strategic planning process.

For nearly 20 years, The Reid Group has advised Catholic organizations, including large and small dioceses, as well as faith-based and non-profit organizations to strengthen their mission and impact through sound strategic guidance.

Their mission is to transform “challenges into opportunities to create a better world,” and their national experience has aided Catholic organizations in facing challenges ranging from parish reorganization to executive searches to long-term planning.

The firm was founded by John Reid, who spent 18 years helping guide formation and training for the Archdiocese of Seattle and is the author of “The Art of Change: Faith, Vision and Prophetic Planning.”

He and his brother Tom Reid, who has experience as a real estate agent in addition to work with the Archdiocese of Seattle, the University of Notre Dame, and RENEW International, are on the project management



John Reid, Karen Castellon and Tom Reid have given presentations to and held consultations with numerous groups in the Diocese in the run-up to the launch of Faith in Our Future.

Craig Pittelli photo

team working with the Diocese of Trenton, often flying cross-country to meet with stakeholders and ensure the process stays on-time and on-target. They will remain assigned for the duration of the project.

They are being assisted locally by Karen Castellon, an executive and leadership coach, who lives in Bridgewater and has experience working in marketing and sales for a Fortune 100 company.

The Reid Group has been contracted by a number of dioceses and archdioceses to assist with long-term planning and pastoral

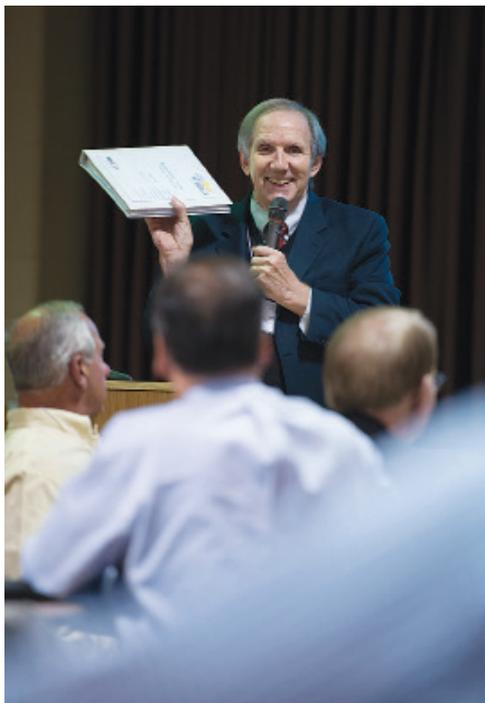
revitalization, including the Archdiocese of Newark, the Archdiocese of New York, the Diocese of Scranton, Pa., and the Diocese of Madison, Wisc.

Other projects undertaken by The Reid Group include an educational series on strengthening Catholic identity for the Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities, research and consulting services for Georgetown University’s Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate, and other national efforts, and cultural competence and planning for Catholic Relief Services.

Be an active, informed participant in *Faith in Our Future*

In addition to the information that will be disseminated to parish communities by their core teams, the Diocese will keep all parishioners updated via regular posts on www.DioceseofTrenton.org/FaithinOurFuture. Updates will also be provided in The Monitor and online at www.TrentonMonitor.com

Planning for the future



Ken Falls photos

The Diocese’s *Faith in Our Future* planning efforts reached significant milestones Nov. 17-18 when pastors and parish core team members gathered for training sessions in designated parish sites around the Diocese. During these training sessions, they received materials and learned more what their responsibilities will involve as they carry out the process in their individual parishes.

On Nov. 17, the training sessions were held for: Mercer County Northern and Southern Deaneries in Our Lady of

Sorrows Parish; Hamilton; Monmouth County Bayshore and Western Deaneries in St. Mary Parish, Colts Neck, and Ocean County Northern and Southern Deaneries in St. Barnabas Parish, Bayville.

The following evening on Nov. 18, core team members’ training sessions were held for Burlington County North and South Deaneries in St. Isaac Jogues Parish, Marlton, and Monmouth Central and Coastal Deaneries in St. Anselm Parish, Wayside.

The photos shown are from the training session in Colts Neck. At left, Terry Ginther, diocesan executive director of pastoral life and mission, engages core team members in discussion as she reviews the significance of *Faith In Our Future*. At far left, John Reid, a consultant from the Reid Group, holds up a copy of the planning guide provided to all pastors and core team members.



We read Jesus' words in the Gospel of Matthew, "Amen, I say to you, 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. Nothing will be impossible for you" (Matthew 17:20). Jesus tells us that even the smallest seed of faith – like the tiny mustard seed of the Gospel – can move mountains. But that little seed of faith needs good soil, ample light, plentiful water to take root. No seed can grow – indeed, can move mountains – all alone or without them. – **Bishop David M. O'Connell, C.M.**

What is the Faith to Move Mountains campaign?

An extraordinary campaign for extraordinary needs

For the first time in nearly a quarter of a century, the Diocese of Trenton has embarked upon a new endowment campaign, "not for the sake of bricks and mortar" said Bishop David M. O'Connell, "but, rather, for the flesh and blood that make up our community of faith, so much in need of our ministries.

"We are calling this initiative *Faith to Move Mountains* because that is what we need to do if the faith handed on to us is to endure and grow. Now, more than ever, the mountains loom large. Only your faith and generosity will move them as, together, we continue to believe that 'nothing is impossible' with God."

Faith to Move Mountains, which got underway in the summer of 2014, was planned with hopes to raise a minimum of \$75 million dollars to establish new or increase existing endowments – financial vehicles through which money is held and invested and only the interest earned is spent – to empower our Church to stand prepared to serve future generations of Catholics.

This endowment campaign is being undertaken as preparation for the future, a response to long-term and extraordinary needs. In this regard it differs from the Annual Catholic Appeal, which helps to fund the day-to-day, ongoing operating expenses of the Diocese.

The campaign rolled out with six pilot parishes: St. David the King, Princeton



A family walks through the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C., during the diocesan pilgrimage Nov. 7. Ken Falls photo

Junction; Holy Innocents, Neptune; St. John the Baptist, Allentown; St. Mary, Barnegat; St. Peter, Point Pleasant Beach, and Sacred Heart, Bay Head.

Trust in the process for success

These pilot parishes, having followed the process outlined in the parish campaign handbook, have raised nearly \$8 million, and have already received funds back from the Diocese for use in their parishes.

The remaining parishes in the Diocese will conduct their campaigns in one of four, six-month campaign blocks. The 20 Block 1 parishes are well on their way to their individual goals, while the 21 Block 2 parishes kicked off their campaign in the fall of 2015.

The entire *Faith to Move Mountains* campaign is anticipated to conclude in the winter of 2016.

Prospective donors may ask, "How do I know my gift is going to be used for its stated purpose?"



FAITH to MOVE Mountains

As with charitable trusts that have been created in the past, the Diocese works with both civil and canon lawyers to ensure those trusts meet legal requirements and are structured in such a way that the funds are protected.

Each trust will have a board of trustees, consisting of clergy and laity, to ensure the funds will be used for the intended purposes. The board will hire an accounting manager and investment advisor and will adhere to the Uniform Prudent Management of Institutional Funds Act of New Jersey.

The trusts will also be subject to an annual audit with a report to the diocesan Finance Council, and investment strategies will be in conformance with the guidelines recommended by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Together, we can make it all work

In reflecting on the importance of the *Faith to Move Mountains* campaign for a thriving Church of the future in the Diocese, Bishop O'Connell wrote, "The Church is like a big family. We depend upon each other, not for luxuries but for 'the basics' required to keep faith and hope and love alive.

"Where else can we turn to make it all work? We only have one another in our parishes, in our Diocese. We have nowhere else to go. Money isn't all we are interested in. But, again, we have to ask.

"Time. Talent. Treasure. Yes, the Church needs us to give all three...Without our generous and loving support, the Church cannot give all that it has to offer, all that we need. As your Bishop, I share these thoughts with you only asking that you think about them. God has been so good to us. Made in his image, let's do the same for one another, That's what the Church is all about."



Bishop David M. O'Connell, C.M., delivers his homily during the Catholic Schools Mass in St. Mary of the Assumption Cathedral, Trenton, Oct. 15. Craig Pittelli photo



Campaign gets underway in Block 2 parishes

The *Faith To Move Mountains* campaign made progress this fall as 21 parishes officially began their participation in the major diocesan fundraising endeavor that seeks to raise a minimum of \$75 million in gifts and pledges.

At a Nov. 10 kickoff reception hosted by Bishop David M. O'Connell, C.M., in St. Rob-

ert Bellarmine Parish, Freehold, pastors and representatives of the 21 "Block 2" parishes were given particulars including an update on the campaign's current progress as well as the process and what will be expected of the parishes during the six months of their campaign phase.

As of November 2015, Stephen Nicholl, diocesan director of development, in his introductory remarks, announced that between the six pilot parishes which inaugurated the campaign, and the parishes that comprised the Block 1 phase, the Diocese had approached \$25 million in gifts and pledges and that about 20 of the parishes had completed their campaign drive which included meeting with parishioners in their homes, hosting receptions on the parish level, prepare mailings and making an in-pew appeal at Mass.

"There are many avenues for people to be informed," Nicholl stated, "and if you follow the process and make a good faith effort, you will have the opportunity to be successful." He stressed how he could not "emphasize enough" that the most successful strategy for reaching parishioners is through the "personal approach." Having one-on-one conversations during which questions can be addressed and information provided is the most effective

tool, he said.

Highlights of the reception included an address by Bishop O'Connell, who said that his ultimate vision for the campaign was that it would allow the Church to "continue the good work that had been done" over the years to ensure that the Diocese would remain viable and strong.

"It doesn't cost a dime to preach the Gospel, but expenses are involved in everything else," he said, citing the areas where campaign funds will be directed, such as caring for aging priests, assisting the poor, seminarian and religious education and Catholic education.

"These are the mountains" that need to be climbed and "we have the faith to move those mountains," he said. "Yes, it's a sacrifice, but the campaign is necessary. Our responsibility is to work together; we need to put our shoulder to the task."

To give the Block 2 parishes a better idea of what they might expect during their campaign phase, Father Patrick McDonnell, pastor of St. Anthony of Padua Parish, Hightstown, was invited to share his experiences with the campaign as a Block 1 parish with a goal of \$695,000.

Describing St. Anthony of Padua, which was founded in 1885, as currently being a working-class parish that also includes a significant Latino population, Father McDonnell stressed how the "Bishop motivated us" to take participation in the *Faith to Move Mountains* campaign seriously.

"Bishop O'Connell got us out of our comfort zone," he said, then emphasized how important it is that "before you ask for funds, you have to make friends."

"You need to listen" and learn about the people from your parish that you will be asking to contribute to the campaign, Father McDonnell said. "You need to hear their stories and you have to be compassionate."

Joe Doherty spoke about his experience in serving on the campaign volunteer committee for St. Dominic Parish, Brick, also a Block 1 parish. Though a bit hesitant at first to become involved, he agreed to be part of the process.

As the process progressed, Doherty said, "I began to see the campaign in a whole new light."

"I realized that the campaign is more than just about the parish. You need to see the larger picture, which is the diocesan community of faith."

"I did what I could to help make the campaign successful," Doherty said, noting that as part of the parish Campaign Leadership Committee, he made personal visits to meet with parishioners, spoke at Masses and made himself available to address questions on commitment weekend, all the while encouraging his fellow parishioners to participate.

During the reception, the Block 2 pastors and representatives had an opportunity to view a video in which Bishop O'Connell outlined the particulars of *Faith To Move Mountains*, and were also treated to a musical performance by the choir from Donovan Catholic, Toms River.



Pastors and parish representatives from 21 parishes in Block 2 of *Faith To Move Mountains* attend a campaign kickoff reception held Nov. 10 in St. Robert Bellarmine Parish, Freehold.

Joe Moore photo

Faith to Move Mountains F.A.Q.s

WHY do we need another major fundraising campaign?

The Diocese needs to have a strong financial foundation from which to meet the growing needs of her people and to continue to build God's kingdom in the future. The Diocese's daily work is generously funded through the Annual Catholic Appeal, parish assessments, and other sources, such as investments and rental revenue.

But for the future, the Diocese must plan to meet increasing financial demands, including expenses for care of our rising number of retired clergy, support for our seminarians, aid for our struggling parishes, and unforeseen future crises.

WHAT is the Faith to Move Mountains Endowment Campaign?

Faith to Move Mountains is a campaign with a goal of \$75 million in gifts and pledges to be used to establish or increase existing endowments. An endowment is a permanent fund from which only the income earned is spent. Every parish in the Diocese has been assigned a financial goal to ultimately help meet the needs of parishes, schools and ministries.

HOW are parish goals determined?

Each parish has a campaign goal set at 112.5% of the regular ordinary income for the most recent fiscal year ending June 30.

HOW is this campaign different from the Annual Catholic Appeal?

Faith to Move Mountains is a campaign which focuses on the future, a response to long-term and extraordinary needs. The Annual Catholic Appeal helps fund the daily,

on-going operating expenses of the Diocese, including a breadth of diocesan ministries that serve the diocesan family and wider community.

HOW will endowments be created?

Charitable trusts, each with a Board of Trustees will be established for five *Faith to Move Mountains* campaign priorities: Diocesan Parish Assistance Fund, Ordained Ministry, Catechesis and Evangelization, Catholic Schools, Social Services. The boards will hire an accounting manager and investment advisor and will be subject to an annual audit with a report to the Diocesan Finance Council.

WILL the weekly offertory be affected?

With stewardship as the foundation for giving, parishioners are asked to prayerfully consider maintaining their regular weekly contributions to the offertory, knowing that parishes rely on this support for day-to-day operations.

WHO is conducting the campaign?

At the diocesan level, the campaign is being overseen by the Department of Development, assisted by Change Our World, Inc., who assigns professional campaign consultants to serve as parish campaign directors.

At the parish level, along with your pastor and assigned parish campaign director, a core group of parish volunteers will be asked to lead and assist in the implementation of the campaign plan.

WHERE can we get additional information?

Visit www.FaithtoMoveMountains.org or call the Office of Development: (609) 406-7417.



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.
 — www.FaithtoMoveMountains.org

How does it work?

Prayer 'fueled everything' for Barnegat parish

Last fall, the parish of St. Mary, Barnegat, home to 7,800 families worshipping at two sites, including St. Mary of the Pines, Manahawkin, was among six parishes piloting *Faith to Move Mountains*.

It was a task taken on resolutely by Msgr. Kenard Tuzeneu, pastor.

As he prepared for the campaign, memories of an earlier pledge effort, "Faith in Service," headed by Bishop John C. Reiss in the early 1990s, encouraged him in this new, even more ambitious endeavor.

Although Msgr. Tuzeneu remembered his skepticism when Bishop Reiss's plan was unveiled, he admitted his mind changed once he saw its result – Villa Vianney, the residence for retired diocesan priests.

"I was proud and amazed to see what the Diocese accomplished in filling the need for retired priests, and I knew that Bishop O'Connell knows what he's doing by creating endowments for these ministries," he said.

With the aid of a committee of 10, Msgr. Tuzeneu invited parishioners to participate and emphasized that the parish would receive 30 percent of funds collected to address the parish's needs, including improvement of the

churches' audio and visual equipment, and building improvements in both Barnegat and Manahawkin.

The gatherings and the pastor's repeated appeals from the pulpit served as an eye-opener for the faithful to the situations faced by parishes of lesser means, how those realities impact the Diocese as a whole, and how each parish is called to stewardship of neighboring parishes.

Always the discussions underscored the immediate concerns of the Universal Church and how *Faith to Move Mountains* will address the crucial need for education of seminarians, priests, and deacons, as well as our children in Catholic schools and in parish religious education programs.

When the phone calls and gatherings were done, St. Mary's pledges totaled \$1.6 million. More than 900 gifts, an exceptionally large number, had been pledged.

"I was pleased at the very positive response, which was the most important thing," said Msgr. Tuzeneu. "The greatest challenge for many parishioners was not unwillingness but their financial limitations. The economics of the times are hard."

Success came through the volume of pledges, both large and small, he said.

The pastor, who prayed daily that *Faith to Move Mountains* would be a success because he believes "prayer fuels everything," reflected on the meaning of donations, whether large or small.

"Ultimately it's not about money. Yes, money is important, but when people pledge even \$5, they're making a statement and standing with their Church.

"It's so much more than their simply saying, 'I hope the Church will be here in the future.' Giving is a concrete expression of their commitment to the Church. I look at it as an investment in the future..."

"Our need to evangelize fuels my commitment. *Faith to Move Mountains* is literally preserving and keeping our Church strong for the future."



Members of St. Mary Parish, Barnegat, along with their pastor, Msgr. Kenard Tuzeneu, are working together for a successful *Faith to Move Mountains* campaign. Jeff Bruno photo



Father Rene Pulgarin, pastor of Christ the Redeemer Parish, Mount Holly, second from left, greets parishioners at a recent parish event. Mary Stadnyk photo

Christ the Redeemer Parish family 'stepped up' to success

For the small, predominantly Latino faith community of Christ the Redeemer Parish, Mount Holly, the *Faith to Move Mountains* endowment campaign was a family affair – one that enabled them to successfully reach 124 percent of their goal.

Father Rene Pulgarin, pastor, cited a few keys to success in his parish's accomplishment. When introducing the campaign to his parishioners, Father Pulgarin emphasized the relationship that exists between the parishes and the Diocese.

Faith to Move Mountains, he explained, involves parishes helping to support and strengthen the Diocese for the future.

The campaign, in turn, is a way that the Diocese can assist the parishes with their ministries and other projects.

Another effective approach, said Father Pulgarin, was "making it my responsibility" to communicate about the campaign and asking parishioners to consider pledging. He stressed that in Christ the Redeemer Parish, "we're like family here."

Parishioners step up and support "any projects we have," he said, recalling that within the past five years, their generosity was evident in several enhancements made around the parish, including installing a handicapped-accessible ramp, painting the church exterior and refurbishing restrooms.

When *Faith to Move Mountains* began, Father Pulgarin said he was not surprised that his flock, about 280 registered families, readily pitched in and did their part.

"It doesn't matter how much a family supports, what matters is that they made a sacrificial gift," he said, adding that donations made to *Faith To Move Mountains* did not impact contributions to other parish needs.

"People stepped up," he said. "Everyone here at Christ the Redeemer did something."



Parish 'rebuilds' with an eye on the future

From the stained glass windows to the school gym floor and roof, it's beginning to look like everything old is new again at St. Peter Parish, Point Pleasant Beach.

That's good news for parishioners who have dedicated themselves over the past several years to rebuilding and repairing the iconic brown shingle church founded by Conventual Franciscan Friars in 1882, and the rectory, convent and school that followed in the 20th century.

Thanks to the collaboration between parishes and the Diocese of Trenton, the future is looking bright for the buildings on the landmark campus, which only a few years ago, said Conventual Franciscan Father Robert Benko, the pastor, was "in great danger of falling into ruin."

That was the phrase Father Benko used when launching the parish's first-ever capital campaign as part of *Faith To Move Mountains*; the parish's local theme is "Behold, I Make All Things New: Rebuild My Church."

The theme reflects the words of Jesus and his command to St. Francis of Assisi to "Rebuild my Church, which you see, has fallen into ruin."

The effort was underway when the Diocese launched the *Faith to Move Mountains* endowment campaign and invited St. Peter Parish to become one of six pilot parishes to run the initiative. The overall diocesan goal for both campaigns was \$1.5 million.

"We were among a handful of parishes leading the way for other parishes to follow," said Father Benko.

"We had reached 241 percent of our goal," Father Benko said, adding that support for the combined effort blossomed because parishioners recognized the benefit on both the local and diocesan levels.

He explained that the *Faith to Move Mountains* campaign was designed to strengthen parishes, invigorate evangelization, revitalize sacramental life and reenergize education, support ordained ministry and serve the poor, all with an eye toward the future.



Students, parents, faculty and friends of St. Peter School, Point Pleasant Beach, commemorated their school's 90th anniversary with a Mass in early 2014. Jeff Metzner photo

"We had success because everyone understood that we belong to the Diocese and we have to be a part of the diocesan plan. We also had local needs for the school roof, the gym floor, the stained glass windows," he said. "They recognized the needs."

Now, Father Benko said, parishioners are beginning to see the results, with some projects finished and others underway. This is all "a blessing, a morale boost," he said, as is the refurbishing of the exterior of the landmark church which will soon see a newer more accessible handicap ramp.

"It brought back the old, graying structure. The church just looks alive," Father Benko said.

What can we expect?

- Each parish will be assigned a professional campaign director from the Diocese of Trenton and Changing Our World, Inc., to help parish campaign leadership role out the campaign in phases over a six-month period.

- The pastor serves as the spiritual leader of the campaign, and will ask the parish to pray for the success of the campaign weekly.

- The first organizational task for the parish is to create a parish case statement outlining the parish needs to be addressed with the parish's 30 percent share of funds raised through the *Faith to Move Mountains* Campaign.

- The pastor will recruit volunteers to serve on the Campaign Leadership Committee who will have varied responsibilities, including assisting the pastor as necessary, speaking on behalf of the campaign at select parish meetings, and visiting with parishioners and families.

- Pledge cards, which aid in recording and acknowledging commitments, will be made available. Donors are asked to sign the pledge card, indicating that they have authorized the terms of the gift indicated on the card.

- Parishioners are encouraged to offer support and enthusiasm for the campaign and enter into the process with prayerful discernment.

Recognizing needs, parishioners committed to meeting goals

St. Catherine Parish, Middletown, rose from humble buildings and its community never forgot its roots. Its recorded history begins proudly with the often-told story of how the original parishioners worshiped from 1937-1948 in an East Keansburg structure known fondly as "Killpatrick's Barn and Carousel."

Over the decades it grew in community, nourishing generations spiritually and educationally, laying a strong foundation for the faithful of today. Those faithful are responding with generous hearts to the diocesan *Faith to Move Mountains* campaign, said their pastor, Father Daniel C. Hesko.

Though the parish has significant needs, Father Hesko said the case made by the Diocese for underwriting the future of the faith in Central New Jersey by way of this endowment campaign led St. Catherine's to meet its goal of \$575,000.

Father Hesko said the parish's 30 percent share of collected funds will enable the parish to earmark a substantial amount toward its own endowment fund which will enable long-term sustainability of its buildings, helping to repair and upgrade needed capital projects including, most immediately, the religious education building and the parish center.

"We see this as being vital to the future," said Father Hesko. "We have a very good food pantry which operates solely on donations within the umbrella of our St. Vincent de Paul Society. We have a thrift shop which helps people in need. ... When those in need come in, we give them what they need."

Father Hesko attributed the generous reaction of parishioners to their recognition of the parish's needs and the way the Diocese made the case to meet them. What resonated especially among the five campaign priorities - parish assistance, ordained ministry, catechism and evangelization, schools and social services - was the "nurturing of young priests and care for elderly priests," he said.



The community of faith that worships at St. Catherine, Middletown, worked together to reach the parish's *Faith To Move Mountains* campaign goal.

Ken Falls photo

"Parish needs were addressed, which was a very positive aspect," he said. "People realized that not only the future of the parish" was important, but diocesan solvency as well, he said.

"Having an endowment fund for the Diocese is important because it will be there for years to come." Through prayer and discernment, he said, "I think everyone understood that. We certainly prayed that God would give us grace" through the process.

"We made our goal through one or two significant gifts and through little gifts, people just doing what they could. We were so pleased with the very good response," he added.

Cheering the parishes along . . .

As the campaign moves forward, stay up to date with the many parish success stories to come. Watch for regular *Faith to Move Mountains* updates from The Monitor - in print and online at TrentonMonitor.com. Also, visit www.FaithtoMoveMountains.org for helpful information and inspiration.

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 percent of the funds collected at the parish level will remain at the individual parish ... Once a parish has reached its goal ... the parish will receive 70 percent of all additional monies collected within the parish. — www.FaithtoMoveMountains.org



How might Faith to Move Mountains help my parish?

Getting back means giving back to the parish and community

The first task of every parish in the *Faith to Move Mountains* campaign is to create a case statement, including a written plan for how their 30 percent share of funds raised through the campaign will be used to meet the needs of the parish community. The six pilot parishes that kicked off the campaign are the first to begin receiving their portion of funds raised, which are disbursed every six months, and are in various stages of beginning or completing the projects outlined in their parish plans.

A parish shares with the poor and hungry

For Sacred Heart Parish, Bay Head, refunds from the *Faith to Move Mountains* campaign are enabling the parish to enhance their religious education program and invest some 75 percent of their rebates in helping others outside the parish.

"The *Faith to Move Mountains* program did well in our parish, we went over our goal and I thank God for that," said Father Michael O'Connor, pastor, who noted that he and his parishioners are still very mindful of those who continue to suffer from the effects of Superstorm Sandy.

"The past few years have been difficult for people living in the shore area because of the hurricane," he said. The parish is reaching out to support the St. Vincent de Paul program in St. Martha Parish, Point Pleasant; St. Gregory's Pantry in Point Pleasant and Visitation Relief Center in Brick.



Sacred Heart, Bay Head, one of six *Faith To Move Mountains* pilot parishes, has invested some campaign funds in the parish's religious education program. Here, a catechist instructs a student during class.

Video still

Generations of faith reap the rewards

Preserving the church, parish facilities and Catholic school for the next generation is a pressing reality for the community of St. Peter Parish, Point Pleasant, and one that is being met through funds from the combined parish fundraising campaign and diocesan endowment campaign. An overall goal of \$1.5 million will address local and diocesan needs through *Faith to Move Mountains*.

Projects outlined in the parish plans include the St Peter School roof, gym floor, air conditioner and freezer. In the church, there are plans for stained glass restoration and a new handicapped access ramp. Kolbe Hall kitchen

and bathrooms will also be restored and a new utility shed and fencing are on the list.

Projects are well underway, said Conventual Franciscan Father Robert Benko. "The school roof is done. They had a kiddie pool catching the water" in an eighth grade classroom, he said, but there is no need for that anymore.

There's a sample window up in the church showing what the rest of the 115-year-old windows will look like after they have been refurbished and re-leaded. "The gym floor is amazing," he said. Embedded in the center, the school logo: "Anchored in Faith."



Holy Innocents Church, Neptune, celebrated the July 2013 installation of their pastor, Father Michael Wallack, and hopes to make building repairs with funds from *Faith To Move Mountains*.

Jeff Metzner photo

Restoring and renewing what we have

For the very active and diverse community of Holy Innocents Parish, Neptune, the church and school are the heart of the parish and hubs of activity as they live their mission as a community of faith and prayer.

It is through their prayers and generosity that the parish has begun to put their campaign funds to work. They have been repairing and upgrading the church and school by re-paving the parking lot, painting the interior of the church and chapel, replacing all the kneelers and interior doors of the church, renovating and updating bathrooms, and improving landscaping. Any additional funds received will go to address the parish debt.

The parish community's efforts to support the *Faith to Move Mountains* campaign and desire to restore their church are reflective of the congratulatory words of Bishop George W. Ahr offered when he blessed the newly built church in August 1960. He congratulated the parish "for your zealous efforts in providing a suitable dwelling for our Eucharistic Lord in the recently established parish at Neptune."



Students from St. Peter School, Point Pleasant Beach, play basketball during gym class. Funds raised through *Faith To Move Mountains* went toward replacing the gymnasium floor.

Mike Ehrmann photo



“The simple, plain fact of life is that doing the work of the Church in the world requires financial resources. Running our Catholic schools and parishes, operating our Catholic churches and facilities, helping the poor and needy among us, offering human services like Catholic Charities, providing for the growing numbers of retired priests... training new priests to take their place - this all requires asking for money.” **Bishop David M. O’Connell, C.M.**

Why should I give?

Ernie Rich recalls gift of incalculable value

For Ernie Rich, making a donation to the *Faith to Move Mountains* campaign was a no brainer.

Rich credits his childhood parish, St. Peter Church, New Brunswick, with facilitating many of the blessings in his life.

“My Dad sent 10 kids through Catholic school, and sometimes the pot was empty. But there was never a hint that we were not welcome in that school,” Rich said.

“The parishioners paid my tuition. The education I received at St. Peter elementary and high schools enabled me to go to college and establish my career as a chemist.”

The parish also established St. Peter Hospital. It’s the place where, while working as an orderly, Ernie met his late wife, Virginia, a registered nurse.

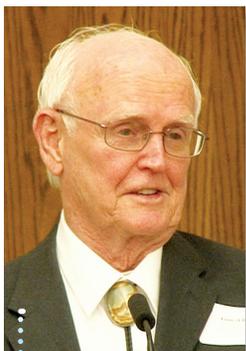
He remembered how Virginia, who was not Catholic, was inspired to convert by the example of the nuns who served on the hospital’s staff.

Above all, Ernie is most grateful that the priests and nuns set him on a spiritual journey, which he called “a gift of incalculable value.”

“Why did I make a pledge? It’s an opportunity to repay the Catholic Church for all it has done for me,” said Ernie, now a parishioner in St. David the King Parish, West Windsor, where he is in the choir and teaches religious education to first graders. “Actually, it’s a privilege and an honor.”

Upon hearing of the campaign, Rich admitted he was puzzled.

“I had never heard of an endowment program for the Church. But we have them for universities, why not for the Diocese? It’s a great idea, which will help all those things that were so important to me: the education of seminarians ... support of our priests, financing schools, especially for the underprivileged; and training of catechists to bring kids the Good News of Jesus’ love for us.”



Ernie Rich

Video still

The News About Giving

■ Every Catholic family in the Diocese of Trenton is invited to prayerfully consider a sacrificial pledge to the campaign according to their means.

■ Pledges are made over three-to-five-year periods.

■ Donors may fulfill a pledge using a credit card, debit card, or automatic withdrawal from a checking or savings account.

■ Donors considering a non-cash gift, such as stocks or real estate, or an estate gift, should contact the campaign office at the Diocese of Trenton at (609) 406-7417.

Diane and Bryn Eltringham commit to Church through donation

For Diane and Bryn Eltringham, parishioners in St. Joan of Arc Parish, Marlton, pledging to *Faith to Move Mountains* is all about commitment, a word that has had significance in their family life.

In Baltimore, Diane, a cradle Catholic, married Bryn, who attended a Methodist church as a child. When the couple moved to Marlton 33 years ago, they joined St. Joan of Arc Parish, where they attended Mass every Sunday with their three children and became involved with parish life. Diane volunteered with the religious education program; Bryn, at bingo, even though he was not Catholic. Although Diane quietly prayed he would convert, she never nagged.

One day Bryn announced he was converting. His reason? “He said, ‘I am not showing my children commitment,’” Diane said. “My heart sang that day.”

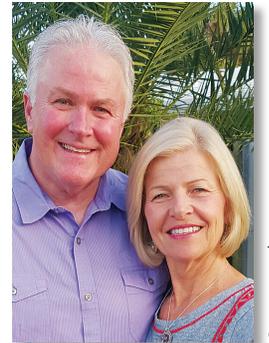
“Faith is important for our children,” said Bryn, who also persuaded nine fellow bingo volunteers to attend RCIA with him. “I needed to get serious about my faith and convert.”

His commitment paid off.

“I get spiritual strength and camaraderie from life in our parish,” he said. “It is a secure, loving place that is a big part of our lives, like family,” which is why the couple made their pledge and have spent time encouraging others to do the same.

The Eltringhams are concerned for the Church and see *Faith to Move Mountains* as a strategy to turn the tide of uncertainty.

“We need money to educate priests, deacons and catechists to assure the future of the Church. What a difference it would make if everyone who cannot make a large donation would just give something,” Diane said. “We are raising our children for the future, but we are all responsible for the future. We are on this earth to help one another and that’s what the campaign is about.”



Bryn and Diane Eltringham

Courtesy photo

Phil and Maureen White invest in future generations

Two small girls were all the inspiration Phil and Maureen White needed to contribute to the *Faith to Move Mountains* campaign.

The Whites, parishioners of St. Anthony of Padua Parish, Hightstown, and lifelong Catholics, reared two daughters in the faith. And in the past 18 months, those daughters, now married, each welcomed a baby girl of her own.

“As I was growing up, we identified ourselves by what parish we belonged to, but that’s going away,” Phil said. “My wife and I are both products of Catholic schools ... and strong parishes led by terrific clergy. I want my granddaugh-

ters to have the same opportunities we had.”

For 35 years the couple has found a spiritual home in St. Anthony of Padua Parish. Maureen is a Rosarian and prepares the liturgical linens, and Phil belongs to the Knights of Columbus.

“It is such a social parish, and it’s special going to Mass and knowing everyone,” Phil said.

“It is always amazing how something is going on, how full the parking lot is on weeknights” when different groups gather.

When St. Anthony pastor, Father Patrick J. McDonnell, asked Phil to give a talk to the parish about *Faith to Move Mountains*, Phil didn’t hesitate.

“This campaign is no different than the ones our grandparents and parents participated in,” he told his fellow parishioners. “Now it’s our turn to invest in our Diocese so the next generation can live in the same thriving community we enjoy.”



Phil and Maureen White

John Blaine photo

Pastor reflects on the spiritual endeavor of giving — and receiving



Preaching the Gospel during Sunday Mass was a moment of transformation for Father Timothy Capewell, pastor of St. David the King Parish, West Windsor.

"We had just been asked to serve as a pilot parish for the *Faith to Move Mountains* Campaign," he said, explaining that initially he agreed, but when he heard the goal amount of \$1.79 million, he called the campaign office and declined the invitation.

Soon afterward, he was reading the parable of the two sons from the pulpit during Mass: "A man had two sons. He came to the first and said, 'Son, go out and work in the vineyard today.' He said in reply, 'I will not,' but afterwards he changed his mind and went. The man came to the other son and gave the same order. He said in reply, 'Yes, sir,' but did not go."

Father Tim recalled, "I heard a voice in my head say to me, 'This is you, Timothy.' I understood the Holy Spirit to be saying, 'You're the second son and you need to change your mind.'"

So he did, calling the diocesan director of development to, once again, accept the invitation to serve as a pilot parish. But his concerns were not over, as a very large financial goal loomed in front of him and his parish. So, on a drive to the shore, he prayed the Rosary. He felt the Holy Spirit telling him, "This is too big for you. I will take care of this for you. I am

"It was an incredibly affirming process."

bigger than you."

So, for Father Tim and his parish family, the campaign became a spiritual endeavor, an exercise in trusting God, and was always referred to as such. "It was never about the money. It was about the leap of faith and the power of prayer, it was about the Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy, about giving back to God what God has so graciously given to me and to the people of my parish," he said.

As this spiritual endeavor unfolded in the parish, Father Tim underscored that the whole process was "wrapped up in prayer," for him and for the members of his parish family as they were asked to consider a sacrificial pledge.

"We have been a tithing parish for more than 15 years," Father Tim explained, so he knew his parishioners already realized the need to give back to God. What would make

a difference for them, he believed, was to understand the priorities of the endeavor, what the endowments would be used for.

He talked with his parishioners about parish needs, Catholic schools, social service, and catechesis and evangelization, but what really drew their hearts was a "commitment to taking care of elderly priests, especially those they didn't even know, who gave their lives in service to the Church, and also, support for the seminarians," he said.

But what was most meaningful for Father Tim was the precious time he spent with his parishioners, whom he often met with one-on-one as he brought his pledge request to them and sent them home with the advice to pray over it and let the Holy Spirit guide their decision.

"At times, I was drawn to tears," he said, as he came to really know their stories, their hardships, for the first time, and to experience their generosity of heart. "It was an incredibly affirming process," he acknowledged.

Now that *Faith to Move Mountains* has been completed in his parish, Father Tim looks back and considers it "a spiritually nourishing program," that has taught him and his parishioners what happens "when you take a great leap of faith believing the Lord is there with the safety net."

Funds for a strong future

Campaign priorities for the \$75 million *Faith to Move Mountains* campaign goal:

Parishes: \$22.5 million

... *to ensure* that our parishes have the necessary resources to teach, prepare, and nurture the next generation of Catholics. Through campaign rebates, parishes will have 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.

Diocesan Assistance Fund for Parishes: \$7.5 million

... *to provide* emergency assistance to parishes that find themselves in immediate and pressing financial need. Approximately 40 percent of all parishes have received this kind of support at one time or another in the past 15 years. These funds will make it possible for parishes to maintain fiscal stability as they work to recover from setbacks and shortfalls while meeting the spiritual needs of the congregation.

Ordained Ministry: \$20 million

... *to support* seminarians, retired priests and the permanent diaconate program. To help educate seminarians, a priestly formation endowment will be established; increasing the current endowment for retired priests will help provide for the growing

number of retired priests, and funds will support new measures to strengthen the formation for permanent deacons.

Catechesis and Evangelization: \$5 million

... *to ensure* the vibrancy of faith for future generations by bolstering parish catechetical programs, adult faith formation efforts and broader evangelization efforts and resources.

Catholic Schools: \$15 million

... *to augment* existing restricted endowment funds and be incorporated into the Foundation for Student Achievement endowment 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

Social Services: \$5 million

... *to integrate* the principles of Catholic social teaching through emergency assistance, anti-poverty initiatives, education, advocacy and counseling. A restricted endowment will be created to enable the Diocese to award grants to parishes and Catholic Social Service agencies to address social service issues, including disaster relief.

For more on the campaign priorities, go to www.FaithtoMoveMountains.org.

How can I help my parish?



Hightstown ministries work toward Church's bright future

The way Father Patrick McDonnell sees it, there are two ministries in St. Anthony of Padua Parish, Hightstown, that are "thinking outside the box" and have found ways to help the parish reach its \$695,000 *Faith to Move Mountains* campaign goal.

In addition to making their own personal pledges toward the campaign as parishioners, Father McDonnell, pastor, said that members of the parish Bakery Ministry and Knights of Columbus council have come together as ministries to pledge a combined \$30,000.

The Bakery Ministry is looking to raise \$20,000 "in dough" through the selling of specialty breads and pastries that include Falanga bread, napoleons, rosetti, soppressata bread and prosciutto sticks.

On the first Sunday of the month, the Bakery ministry members transform the newly-built community room into "The Bakery," which has become a popular place where parishioners and members of the local community can venture to sample and purchase an array of unique and tasty baked goods purchased from a specialty bakery in Brooklyn.

Funds from this all-volunteer ministry, established some five years ago, go directly to support parish projects and have already significantly helped in paying off a bank loan that financed parish construction and refurbishment.

"It's a win-win all the way around," said Sheila Conway, assistant to Father McDonnell, who founded the Bakery ministry.

"As a ministry of St. Anthony's, the people of the Bakery are very proud of the amount of money they have raised for the Church. By taking on the pledge commitment to the *Faith to Move Mountains* campaign, I believe the workers have given themselves a purpose for all their hard work and early hours," Kazin said.

The \$10,000 pledge to *Faith to Move Mountains* made by the Hightstown Knights of Columbus council is another example of how the members are always at



The Bakery Ministry in St. Anthony of Padua Parish, Hightstown, has pledged \$20,000 toward the *Faith To Move Mountains* campaign.

Joe Moore photo

the ready to help their parish and their Church.

"We always try and do whatever we can to help," said past grand knight and current council trustee, Tony Humphreys.

At St. Anthony of Padua Parish, Humphreys said the Knights made a \$25,000 donation towards the renovations that were made in and around the parish complex, and once again, they are helping out with a pledge to this new campaign.

Humphreys said the benefits of *Faith to Move Mountains* will serve the Diocese well into the future by setting up endowments and making wise investments that would help to contribute toward evangelization efforts, "which are critical," and helping to take care of our retired priests and religious.

Faith to Move Mountains "requires a lot of good financial planning and the Bishop is a good financial planner and he has a lot of vision," Humphreys said.

If you wish to assist your parish in *Faith to Move Mountains* efforts ...

- Contact your parish office to ask about volunteer opportunities, such as outreach to other families, organizing receptions or helping with the in-pew solicitation weekend.
- Share your support and enthusiasm for the *Faith to Move Mountains* campaign, and encourage the support of fellow parishioners.
- Pray for the campaign's success in your parish and across the Diocese, remembering that persistent prayer is the prayer that moves mountains:

Lord Jesus Christ, you gave us faith to move mountains.

We pray that you strengthen our faith, so that every prayer on our lips

and every work of our hands may give glory to your name.

Walk with us on the pathways of life, illuminated by the light of your truth, so that we may see with the eyes of faith how hope lifts us up

and how love always leads us to you who live and reign

with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever. Amen

- Bishop David M. O'Connell, C.M.

Haitian community offers creative support for campaign

The Haitian Ministry in Our Lady of Sorrows-St. Anthony Parish, Hamilton, is looking to do its part to support the *Faith to Move Mountains* campaign.

Through hosting fundraisers, the ministry is hoping to raise a minimum of \$40,000 "which will be contributed under the umbrella of our parish, Our Lady of Sorrows-St. Anthony," according to Gerald Charmant, parish Haitian ministry coordinator.

One example of a fundraiser is the upcoming December "White Affair" which will include a dinner and live entertainment.

A religious element of the "White Affair" will focus on the meaning of the color of white in the liturgy, said Charmant.

Msgr. Thomas Gervasio, pastor, diocesan vicar general and moderator of the curia, explained that the *Faith to Move Mountains* campaign is one way that the Haitian community can "strengthen its ties to the Diocese of Trenton."

"Over the years, the Diocese had financially

supported the work of the ministry, and now the parish assumes the expenses. The Haitian community, through its support of *Faith to Move Mountains*, is expressing its gratitude for all the Diocese has done," Msgr. Gervasio said, adding that the parish overall has raised more than \$900,000.

"The Haitian community exemplifies joy in living the faith and they are delighted to support the work of the Diocese in their own unique way," said Msgr. Gervasio. He said that other events, along with the White Affair, are being planned by the Haitian community to benefit the campaign.

Charmant noted that there are more than 5,000 Haitians of various faith traditions residing in Mercer County, with more than 200 Haitian Catholics who regularly attend the weekly Sunday Masses that are celebrated in Creole in St. Anthony Church.

The Haitian Ministry's "White Affair" will be held Dec. 19 starting at 8 p.m. in the lower church hall of St. Anthony Church, 626 South Olden Ave., Hamilton.



For a video message from Bishop David M. O'Connell, C.M., as well as additional information on the campaign, please visit www.FaithtoMoveMountains.org