



OUR
SHEPHERDS
OUR
FUTURE
CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

WHY NOW?

Bulletin Series: Issue 1

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Diocese of Grand Rapids recognized a challenge it faced. In the coming years, there would be a shortfall in the funds needed to educate an abundance of young men, from the diocese, who want to become diocesan priests. The diocese embarked on the *Our Shepherds – Our Future* Capital Campaign in September 2018 to address this need.



It is with confidence in God and the faith and hope of all of you we resume the *Our Shepherds – Our Future* Capital Campaign for the future of our diocese following a pause to account for the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic has affected all of us in its own way. It has also shown us – and – continues to show us how vital our priests are as shepherds.

By working together, clergy and laity alike, we can help support and prepare our future priests to shepherd the faithful in West Michigan and ensure a dignified retirement for priests who have faithfully served over the years. Their needs remain.

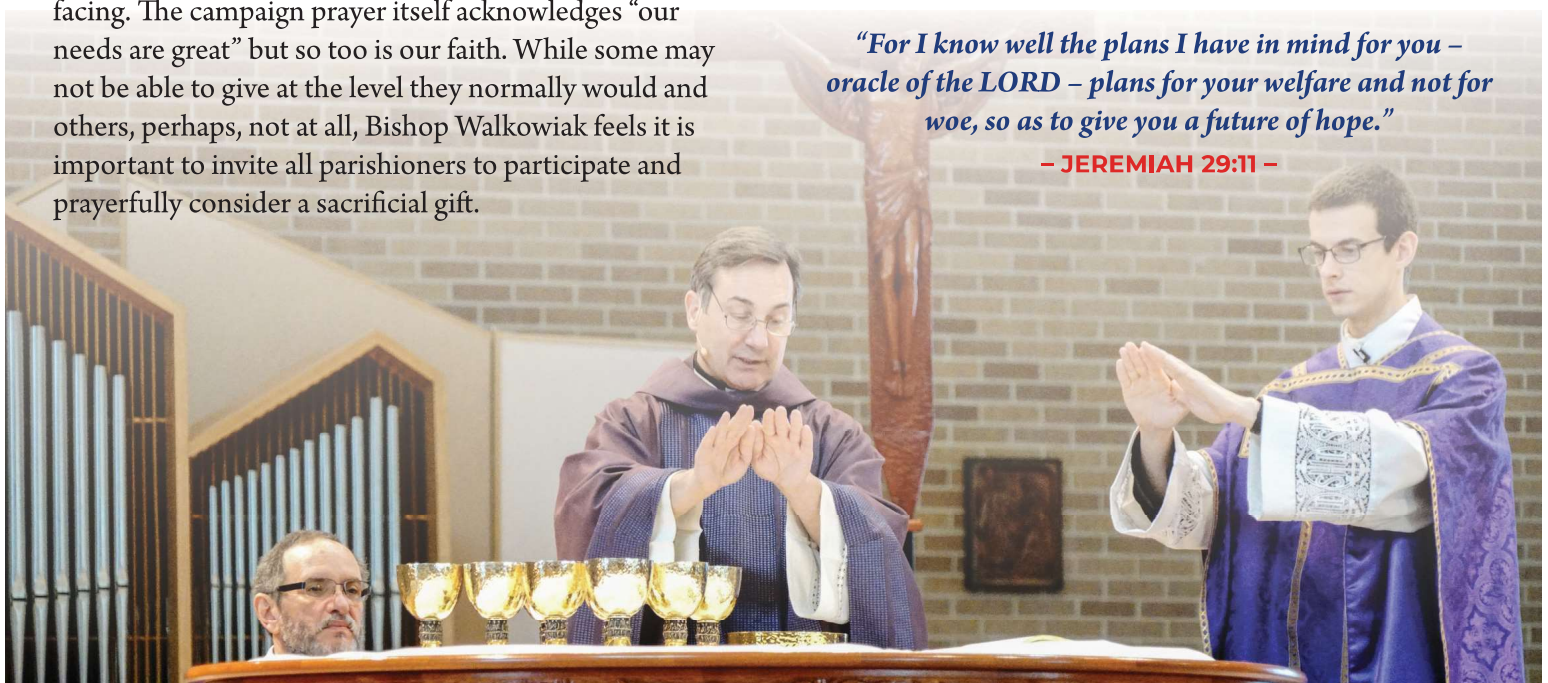
In gratitude, we celebrate the cumulative success of waves 1 and 2 through the support of thousands of generous donations. Soon, our parish, along with the other 39 parishes identified in the third and final wave will kick off our part of the campaign on May 1.

We know that you and others have questions. For the next four weeks you will find answers in these inserts to some of the most frequently asked questions regarding aspects of this campaign. As you review this information, consider the important role that priests have played and continue to play in your life and your formation in the Catholic faith. You are invited to find more detailed information by visiting grdiocese.org/our-shepherds-our-future.

Please understand both campaign and diocesan leadership recognize the unique circumstances of our present time, as well as the challenges many people are facing. The campaign prayer itself acknowledges “our needs are great” but so too is our faith. While some may not be able to give at the level they normally would and others, perhaps, not at all, Bishop Walkowiak feels it is important to invite all parishioners to participate and prayerfully consider a sacrificial gift.

“For I know well the plans I have in mind for you – oracle of the LORD – plans for your welfare and not for woe, so as to give you a future of hope.”

– JEREMIAH 29:11 –





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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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Who will be asked to give?

Over the course of the campaign, every registered parishioner will be sent information on the campaign and asked to prayerfully consider making a gift. Additionally, everyone who is attending Mass on a given Sunday will be invited to participate, whether registered or not.

What happens if our parish doesn't reach its financial goal?

Parishes will not be assessed as long as a good faith effort has been implemented by its pastor, staff and volunteer ambassador team. A good faith effort has been defined as working with the diocese and the Steier Group to implement the recommended campaign model.

Why does the diocese need a campaign? Doesn't the CSA already pay for seminarian education and priest retirement?

Seminarian education is an initiative common to both the CSA and the *Our Shepherds – Our Future* Capital Campaign. The CSA is the annual operational budget of the diocese, which provides for our many ministries and programs. The *Our Shepherds – Our Future* Capital Campaign is needed to address immediate needs over and above the diocese's operational budget. Funding seminarian education and securing a dignified retirement for our clergy, which the CSA is unable to accomplish, will ensure the health of these critical initiatives for our diocese.

Will we receive reminders about our pledges during our three years of the campaign pledging period?

Yes, regular giving updates and reminders will be sent.

Can I give online?

Yes! Visit www.GRdiocese.org, scroll down to the *Our Shepherds – Our Future* Capital Campaign logo, then click on the icon **GIVE NOW**.

How do you determine the pledge amounts that families are asked to consider?

Individual factors including contributions to parish offertory, historical giving to the diocese and the amount you may have suggested if you participated in the campaign feasibility study were combined with national data to determine suggested request amounts. You know your financial responsibilities and obligations best; this amount should be a guide to begin your discernment.

Through this campaign, we are asking everyone to consider supporting these initiatives in a meaningful and sacrificial way and in a manner that works for each household. The amount requested is NOT an expectation. It is an invitation to participate at whatever level is sacrificial and meaningful to you and your household. We are grateful for your thoughtful discernment.

Where will donors send their gifts, and where will the money be kept?

Donors' gifts and pledges will be processed through the campaign corporation, *Our Shepherds – Our Future, Inc.* Endowed seminarian education funds will be held with the Catholic Foundation of West Michigan. Restricted funds for seminarian education will be held in the corporation and disbursed to the diocese for the restricted purpose of covering seminarian education costs. Retirement funds will be transferred to the Diocese of Grand Rapids Priests' Retirement Plan, administered by the Michigan Catholic Conference.



If you have a question that was not answered, please submit it to Annalise Laumeyer, diocesan director of communications: alaumeyer@grdiocese.org or your pastor.