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Capital Campaign Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

How has Saint Mary served the Community?

Saint Mary's was created in 1865 as a German Catholic Church and School. Originally, both the church and school were housed in what is now called The Monsignor Specht Center, which now houses the Saint Mary Museum on the first floor and visual arts and music classrooms for the Saint Mary School are located in the second floor. The present church was completed in 1868 and remains the iconic identity of historic German Village. Although the Parish is more diverse now, Saint Mary's provides a place of worship and education for 53 different ZIP codes in Central Ohio. Saint Mary School is the only Diocesan Catholic school serving the entire South End of Columbus, downtown Columbus, and the near North, West, and East sides.

Why is the Church closed?

Saint Mary Church was closed to the public on October 7, 2016 when it was discovered by structural engineers the roof trusses in the church had shifted after decades of wear and fatigue, and then had shifted more dramatically after lightning struck the church on August 25, 2016. There was much media coverage of the lightning strike and subsequent closure, albeit a temporary one.

Who has assessed the damage thus far?

In close consultation with the Diocesan Building Office, a highly-respected structural-engineering firm was brought to inspect the structural integrity of the entire church. It was determined the church was structurally weakened and was not safe for occupancy.

How long will the project last?

Part 1 of the project is church **stabilization**, which was completed in mid-May 2017. From this point forward, the **repair** and **restoration** timeline is predicated on Saint Mary's raising sufficient charitable funding to keep the work moving. It is estimated Part 2 of the project, which is church **repair**, will begin in late summer 2017. Part 3 of the project is **restoration** which will begin in winter 2018 with a projected re-opening date of November 2018.

Where is Mass being held?

Mass is currently being held in the school gymnasium, with the exception of Funeral Masses, Weddings, First Holy Communion, etc. which are being celebrated at St. Leo's Church on Hanford Street, and occasionally at Holy Family Church on West Broad Street.

Why aren't we moving all Masses to St. Leo's?

St. Leo's is home to the Korean Catholic Community and their Mass schedule conflicts with some of our Mass times. Like the Israelites of ancient times, we are "in a foreign land" but our exile will end and there will be great joy when beautiful Saint Mary's is repaired, restored, and re-opened.

Who at Saint Mary Church is making the decisions on the Campaign and its building project?

Fr. Kevin Lutz, Pastor, and members of the Church Finance Committee are working in close consultation with a team of volunteers on the Campaign Steering Committee to help guide our parish through this project. We are also working in close consultation with the Diocese of Columbus Building Superintendent's Office, and all plans are reviewed and approved by Bishop Campbell and Bill Davis of the Diocesan Finance Office.

What is the relationship of the Diocese of Columbus to this project?

Our Church has secured permission from Bishop Frederick Campbell to move forward on the design and construction timeline. Father Lutz, the Finance Committee, and members of the Saint Mary staff have all been in constant communication with the appropriate offices of the Diocese of Columbus. The Facilities Office has been and will continue to be involved in each stage of the façade study, planning and design. Permission to move forward with our Capital Campaign was granted by the Diocesan Finance Office and Development and Planning Office.

How Can Parishioners Provide Feedback on the Restoration and Building Campaign?

A Facebook page and a capital campaign Website are being opened in early weeks of the summer. All Parishioners and members of the broader community will be emailed a link to a Parish Campaign Survey for the repair and restoration of the Church. The Parish will also conduct a Feasibility Study to gauge donor interest for the potential to launch Phase II of our capital campaign for a School Expansion. There have been two Town Hall meetings open to all and there are committees open to any and all interested members of the community.

What is a Capital Campaign?

A capital campaign is a special building-fund appeal financed and conducted by Saint Mary Church to pay for the stabilization, repair, and restoration of our historic church. During a capital campaign, parishioners and members of the broader community will be invited to make a financial pledge above and beyond our current giving to the parish's weekly offertory and Bishop's Annual Appeal.

Who is leading our Capital Campaign?

Parishioners **Peggy and Mike Hartshorn** have been gracious enough to step forward and Co-Chair our Capital Campaign. The Hartshorns need assistance from fellow parishioners and the local community to complete the key slots on the Campaign Steering Committee.

How Can I Support the Church and School?

Everyone is asked to pray for the success of this project. Aside from the momentous undertaking in 1865 when Saint Mary's being created as the third parish in the Diocese of Columbus, this project is the most significant undertaking in the 152-year history of our parish.

How Can Local Businesses and Residents of German Village Show Support?

A beloved pastor of Saint Mary Church once said of his parish's proud standing in historic German Village: "While not everyone belongs to Saint Mary's, Saint Mary's belongs to everyone!"

Businesses that have a close connection to Saint Mary Church and School have already begun supporting the Campaign with cause-related marketing promotions. If you own a business, or operate a restaurant, etc., and would like to promote the Saint Mary's capital campaign with proceeds on sales, please contact our Director of Development, **Sheila Lutz** at (614) 648-2016.

When Will the Fundraising Begin?

Some charitable gifts have already been offered to Saint Mary's to sustain the Church through its Part 1 stabilization. However, the official fundraising appeals will not take place until the Campaign Steering Committee completes its work of developing a fundraising plan to ensure our approaches are timely, realistic, and achievable. A Feasibility Study for the Church repair and restoration will not be conducted because the nature of that project is not an option.

How will appeals be conducted?

A capital campaign of these proportions has never been conducted at Saint Mary Church, let alone the entire Diocese of Columbus, so we are conducting our appeals in sequences and phases. Pledges can be paid over a five-year time period in order to raise funds beyond the normal operating budget. These funds will be used to pay for the stabilization, repairs and restoration of our Church and any new construction if additional funding is available and donors are interested.

Is an Expansion of Saint Mary School part of this Campaign?

A school expansion is being discussed and carefully evaluated. Any expansion of the school is wholly dependent on Saint Mary Church being repaired and restored first. So all of the work in the Church must be concluded and all of those invoices paid in full. At that point, Phase II of our Campaign might be possible and that will be dependent on sufficient donor interest which will be determined through a Phase II School Expansion Feasibility Study. Architectural and artist renderings are being developed in the event donor interest is sufficient.

How much money do we need to raise to reopen the Church?

The Diocesan policy on all capital projects that require a capital campaign is to have 100% of the project pledged, with a minimum of 50% of the goal on hand in cash gifts, and the remaining balance in *bona fide* pledge agreements.

Was there an Emergency Loan provided?

Yes. Since this was an unexpected emergency, the Diocese of Columbus loaned Saint Mary Church \$500,000 for Part I of its project to stabilize the Church. All funds from this loan were held at the Diocese and all invoices were paid through the Diocese. That loan must be re-paid before Part 2 and Part 3 of the project can begin.

Why isn't the damage covered by insurance?

The church is over 149 years old and engineering studies concluded the trusses have been shifting for many years, if not decades. This is an issue of age and fatigue, and, as such, is not covered by insurance. The August 25, 2016 lightning strike might have moved the trusses farther but only to the extent there was a pre-existing condition. Insurance did cover replacement of the Church's sound system and the Parish computers which suffered a total loss from the lightning strike.

Why do the Stained Glass windows need restored?

Upon a closer inspection of the Church's historic stained glass windows by a local expert, it was determined the glass has started to sag and the leadin is failing. The frames are also deteriorating and must be replaced soon or a total loss could be experienced.

How much should I give to the capital campaign?

There is no expectation placed on anyone to make a pledge for a specific amount. Our leadership is respectful of each family having different financial means and abilities to give but we are striving for 100% participation. A commitment to the Saint Mary Campaign is an expression of our faith and love for each other and therefore of the Lord.

Is a gift to the Campaign in addition to my weekly Offertory and Bishop's Annual Appeal?

Yes, a gift to the Campaign would be separate, and is considered above and beyond your Sunday Offertory and the Bishop's Annual Appeal. Tithing from our parishioners provide the funds necessary to maintain the current level of operations, including staff salaries, utilities and maintenance of our buildings and grounds. It is essential that your Sunday donation continues at its present level, to pay for the programs and daily needs of Saint Mary Church.

Is my contribution to the Campaign tax deductible?

Yes, a charitable gift to Saint Mary Church is tax deductible to the fullest extent provided by law. This requires the donor to itemize deductions by using the appropriate tax forms. Parishioners are encouraged to consult their accountants and financial advisors to ascertain the tax advantages their gifts may create – especially gifts of appreciated stock and securities.

Is my Campaign pledge legally binding?

A pledge is not legally binding; it is merely a statement of your intentions. If a family's financial situation should change, you will always have the ability to amend your pledge, simply notify the Saint Mary Parish Office of the change.