

A LETTER FROM FR. GENE DODA



Dear Friends,

The third chapter of the book of Ecclesiastes begins, "There is an appointed time for everything and a time for every affair under the heavens."

As a member of St. Thomas Parish, I want you to take a faith walk with me around our parish campus. Start off in front of our corner church building. Look to the far left and note the date on

the cornerstone- May 9, 1880. Walk down St. Thomas Street past our 1941 school building, as you round the corner see how our 1959 school building stretches down Second Street. Listen as the school bell rings and the children go rushing through the main doors to start another day.

As you stroll down the sidewalk you notice the bronze plaque on the 1980 Uhen Center recalling Basketball, Volleyball and Soccer games, Christmas and Easter Masses, Wild Game Dinners and Country Fair Activities, all current and past memories of the community we call St. Thomas. A quick look across the street where the old Reesman house once stood is a new parish parking lot with a large utility building that serves our maintenance department and stores all the "extra" stuff that our parish uses for Country Fair and other annual activities.

As you walk along our church parking lot and turn right on Weber Street you can stand and face the new St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church proudly bearing a 2007 cornerstone. Every Saturday and Sunday greeters open the doors as people of faith gather to praise God just as our ancestor did back in the early 1850's.

With our tradition as a foundation we look to a grace filled future!

Rev. Eugene J. Doda, Jr.

COMMITTING TO OUR FUTURE

We are blessed with a vibrant parish that welcomes everyone! Our Mission Statement reflects our dedication to our faith as individuals and as a parish community. With the Holy Spirit as our guide, we affirm Jesus Christ as the center of our faith. Through the Church we are ready to serve all people as the Body of Christ.

Throughout the years, this parish has opened doors for a great many people. It has been the home of the major spiritual and communal events of our lives. In our sacramental celebrations of baptism, first communion, confirmation, reconciliation, marriage, anointing, and funeral masses, we mark together the most important moments of our lives, as well as the lives of our grandparents, our parents, our children and our friends. Most particularly, our celebrations of the Eucharist draw us together as one people, one body that is nourished by the Body and Blood of Christ.

With our tradition as a foundation we look to a grace-filled future! We are set to embark on a campaign to secure the future of our parish and its ministries, and help to fund the archdiocesan initiatives of Catholic education and lifelong faith formation by participating in the Faith In Our Future campaign.

We hope to accomplish much. As you read through the campaign information, you will see how 60% of the funds



raised will stay with our parish, helping us to fulfill our obligation to financially support our faith community and its ministries. In addition, the remaining 40% of funds raised will support archdiocesan initiatives benefitting Catholics throughout southeastern Wisconsin. These initiatives include strengthening Catholic education and faith formation within 211 parishes, providing scholarships and other support for our 134 Catholic

COMMITTING TO OUR FUTURE (CONT.)

elementary and high schools, expanding the John Paul II Center's ministry of training adult Catholic leaders and supporting our seminary where new priests are being prepared for their life's journey.

Living our faith to the fullest each and every day is the challenge posed to every Catholic in our archdiocese. By participating in Faith in our Future, we take one more step on our journeys towards living as good and faithful stewards. When we accept with gratitude the gifts our God has given us, and return a portion to Him as our tithes to the church, we answer the call each of us received at our baptism to live as His disciples.

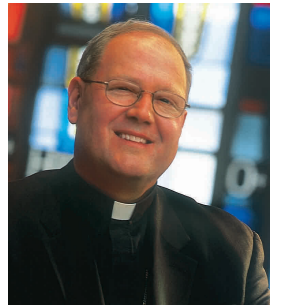
By our generous response to our God and to each other, we hope that, with prayerful courage, we will come together to support the Faith in our Future campaign for the benefit of our parish and of Catholics throughout our archdiocese.

FACTS ABOUT FAITH IN OUR FUTURE

- A \$105 million fund-raising campaign for Catholic education and faith formation.
- A joint effort between parishes and the archdiocese.
- Response to pastoral priorities established by Archbishop Timothy Dolan.
- \$63 million allocated to parishes for individual parish initiatives.
- \$42 million allocated to the archdiocese to strengthen Catholic education and faith formation.
- Enhances Catholic education and faith formation of youth and adults at parish and archdiocesan levels.
- Builds awareness of faithful stewardship.
- Parishes participate in one of four waves occurring between July 2007 and June 2009.
- A sacrificial gift, beyond present commitments.



FAITH IN OUR PARISHES A Message from Archbishop Timothy M. Dolan



Thank you for your partnership in one of the most important ministries we share: educating and forming our youth and adults in the faith! Learning has been a part of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee since its beginning more than 150 years ago. Today, we carry on a remarkable and diverse educational mission together.

Our mission encompasses 211 parishes where 50,000 youth attend parish-based religious education programs. Our mission includes 134 archdiocesan Catholic grade and high schools educating over 34,000 students. Beyond educating Catholic students, Catholic schools open their doors to all who seek a quality, faith-based education. And, our schools strengthen the broader community by producing future leaders equipped not only spiritually and academically – but possessing the values, morals and ethics necessary for effective leadership in our community. Our seminary is forming 41 young men for the priesthood, and many adults are training for the diaconate and lay ministry. All 700,000 Catholics in southeastern Wisconsin have ongoing opportunities for faith formation.

Sounds impressive, doesn't it? But the real question is how do we build on that for our growing Church? How do we meet the need in our parishes for expanded ministries?

The answer is *Faith In Our Future*, a \$105,000,000 campaign to fund Catholic education and faith formation. *Faith In Our Future* is our response to the many blessings God has given us. It is an opportunity to become more faithful stewards of God's abundance, as well as to raise critically needed funds.

Since parishes are the heart of Catholic education and faith formation, *Faith In Our Future* will direct the majority of funds to parishes. Your parish can address its most essential capital, endowment and ministerial needs, keeping in mind the pastoral priorities of Catholic education and faith formation.

For our part, the archdiocese will utilize our share in supporting education and faith formation with direct subsidies, expanded services and endowments that benefit our parishes, our schools, our seminary, and the educational initiatives of the archdiocese.

Embarking on this campaign is bold and exciting! Why? Because we have faith in Our Lord Jesus Christ who invites us to learn and teach in His name; we have faith in our parishes where Catholic education and faith formation begins; and, we have *Faith In Our Future* because Jesus Christ is with us today and always!

I invite you to reflect prayerfully and purposefully on your participation and respond generously to make this campaign a success.

All contributions will be held in the *Faith In Our Future* Trust for the use and purposes set forth in the *Faith In Our Future* Campaign and for no other purposes. This campaign funds Catholic education and faith formation within the Church of southeastern Wisconsin.