



DEBT RETIREMENT APPEAL

St. Mary's Visitation Parish

Questions & Answers

“And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.” Colossians 3:17

What is our Debt Retirement Appeal?

Our building program, completed in 2009, has been a tremendous blessing for our parish. We now look forward to the next chapter in the life of our parish. Our parish Mission Statement reminds us that “United in faith, we live as a prayerful people under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, called to share our gifts through Christian stewardship in our church and world communities.” With this in mind, our *Debt Retirement Appeal* is an important step as we strive to pay off our building program debt. Doing so will result in significant interest savings and position our parish well for future ministry. Through this Appeal, we also look to accomplish additional improvements to our church and property.

What did our prior building program entail?

Significant building additions were completed in March 2009. Overall, the building program provided space for us to gather as a community, improved safety, and continues to be a source of pride for St. Mary’s. Improvements to our school included a new, secure, main entrance which is more noticeable and welcoming, administrative offices, space for our successful three-year-old kindergarten and after-school care programs, extra classroom space, elevator, and a new high efficiency boiler to reduce utility expenses. To improve our church, we built a new atrium which features a kitchen, library, restrooms and gathering area. Prior to the atrium, we lacked an inviting space to stop and talk after Mass. Now, the atrium has provided a wonderful space to connect with one another, form and share our Catholic faith, and build relationships. The atrium provides space for adult ministry, large family gatherings, ministry fairs, Christian Women events, Life Teen meetings, parent meetings, funeral visitations, quad parish functions, grief support meetings, graduation socials, parish picnic overflow, and many receptions. A covered canopy entrance north of the atrium provides for a more welcoming drop-off.

How was the building program funded?

The total cost of construction was \$5.5 million. The building program was funded through the sale of our triangle lot on Watertown Plank Road (approximately 15% of total cost), parishioner contributions (44% of total cost) and borrowed funds. Our two prior capital campaigns, Faith in our Future (FIOF) and Trust in the Lord (TITL), were successful in supporting the construction and are now drawing to a close. St. Mary’s parishioners committed total pledges of \$850,000 towards FIOF and over \$2.4 million for TITL.

How much debt do we currently have?

Following are facts concerning our building program debt:

- Original loan balance was \$3,100,000.
- Current loan balance is \$2,263,760.
- Interest rates on various components of our debt vary from 3.25% to 4.91%.
- Required monthly payments are \$13,469 (\$6,190 principal, \$7,279 interest).
- Over half the debt is due to be restructured in September, 2013.

As a result of the past generosity of our parishioners, we have continually made our monthly loan payments. Through this new 3-year Appeal, we seek to raise \$2.5 million towards **retiring our debt** by June 2016. Each \$1 million reduction in debt saves the parish \$40,000 to \$50,000 in interest cost annually.

What additional projects do we hope to fund through this Appeal?

Our building and grounds committee continues to keep our beautiful campus in the best condition, balancing the needs for safety and efficiency with a limited budget. In the last four years significant capital expenditures were incurred to replace the parish well and the roofs of the senior center and gym. Going forward, the following areas of need have been identified. Addressing these needs would depend on the overall parishioner response to this Appeal.

1. Parking lot improvements (*Estimated cost \$350,000 to \$380,000*)
Our church and school parking lot has been extended past its useful life with patches and repairs along the way. A complete replacement of the parking lot, with newly installed drain tile to extend the life, is being proposed.

2. Organ Maintenance (*Estimated cost \$50,000 to \$100,000*)
For those who may not know, back in 1996 the \$500,000 cost to build our quality organ was funded entirely by a great-nephew of Franz Gruber, the composer of the Christmas carol “Silent Night.” Now, we seek to protect this incredible gift by catching up on past due maintenance, and establishing a fund to keep our organ well-maintained into the future.
3. Church HVAC updating & maintenance (*Estimated cost \$100,000 to \$130,000*)
The boilers were updated during the 2009 additions, but the remaining improvements to other components of the heating, ventilation and air conditioning system were deferred. Improving them will allow for additional energy savings and improved air quality.
4. Church sound system improvements (*Estimated cost \$50,000 to \$150,000 or more*)
New sound technology is available that will make it easier to clearly hear what is being spoken or sung during Mass. The cost of this project would depend on the level of sophistication that we can afford.
5. School Tuition Assistance Fund (*Seed money up to \$50,000*)
Some prospective students seeking a Catholic education may find the cost of tuition to be a barrier. It is important that we provide an avenue for them to attend our school.

What is the total financial goal for our Appeal?

Our goal is to raise **\$3 million or more** through up-front gifts and three-year financial commitments. Raising this amount means we will need special gifts from all our parishioners, over and above our normal contributions to the parish. Please note that ALL funds received will stay at St. Mary’s Visitation Parish to address our parish needs.

How can I make my gift to the Debt Retirement Appeal?

On April 27 – 28 as we gather for Mass, we will share more about the Appeal. At the end of Mass, you will receive an Appeal packet. Some parishioners will receive their Appeal packets earlier. Inside this packet will be your Invitation-to-Give letter, as well as your gift commitment response form. Once you have your packet, we ask you to spend several weeks praying and considering how God is leading you to respond. You are then asked to return your response form on Commitment Weekend, May 18 – 19, or mail your response form to our parish office. You may fulfill your Appeal commitment by making gift installments every week, month, quarter, or year starting July, 2013.

What is the Invitation to Give?

You may ask: "What should I consider giving so we can achieve our Appeal goals?" The **Invitation to Give** answers this question. You will receive an **Invitation to Give** letter in your Appeal packet. The letter suggests a range for the gifts we hope you will prayerfully consider. The gift we’ll ask you to consider will be challenging. Receiving gifts within the ranges hoped for is necessary if we are to reach our goal. We believe our parishioners have the right and the responsibility to make their own decisions. We also know that God is at work in our lives, helping us grow in faith and generosity.

What are the Invitation to Give options?

- 1 Match existing giving** - As a starting point, we ask you to pray and consider matching or doubling your current regular giving over the next three years. For example, if you are currently giving \$25 per week (\$1,300 a year) to the church’s ministry, please pray and consider giving *an additional* \$25 per week to our Appeal over the next three years, for a total commitment of \$3,900.
- 2 Leadership gift** - We ask those who are in a position to give more to pray and consider making a leadership gift of \$5,000 to \$25,000 over the next three years.
- 3 Legacy gift** - We invite those who have been financially blessed to pray and consider making a legacy gift of \$25,000 to \$250,000 or more.

The following giving table may be helpful in planning your gifts. Here's how a weekly gift can grow in size over a three-year period:

My Weekly Gift of:	Amounts to a Monthly Envelope Gift of:	Amounts to an Annual Gift of:	Amounts to a 3-year Gift of:
\$ 5.00	\$ 20.00	\$ 260.00	\$ 780.00
10.00	40.00	520.00	1,560.00
15.00	60.00	780.00	2,340.00
20.00	80.00	1,040.00	3,120.00
25.00	100.00	1,300.00	3,900.00
30.00	120.00	1,560.00	4,680.00
40.00	160.00	2,080.00	6,240.00
50.00	200.00	2,600.00	7,800.00
70.00	280.00	3,640.00	10,920.00
100.00	400.00	5,200.00	15,600.00
150.00	600.00	7,800.00	23,400.00
200.00	800.00	10,400.00	31,200.00
250.00	1,000.00	13,000.00	39,000.00

How do I make contributions to the Debt Retirement Appeal?

The most convenient way to make your contributions is through automated or direct deposit donations and can be initiated by contacting the parish office. Monthly Debt Retirement Appeal envelopes will be included in the bi-monthly envelope packets received by most of our parishioners. Matching gifts from an employer are also encouraged.

May I contribute gifts other than cash?

Besides cash, you may contribute gifts of property, stock, IRA's, paid-up life insurance and other securities. If you wish to discuss making such a gift, contact Cheryl Peters at (262)782-4575 or e-mail cpeters@stmaryeg.org.

May we encourage friends and relatives to support our Appeal?

Yes, please encourage anyone you think might be interested in making a commitment or one-time gift. If you would like us to mail them information and a response form, please share their name and address with Cheryl Peters at (262) 782-4575, or e-mail her at cpeters@stmaryeg.org.

How can I help make this Appeal a success?

- By attending our Appeal events scheduled throughout April and receiving your personalized Appeal packet.
- By prayerfully responding to God's gift of love with your own generosity.
- By returning your response form at Mass on **Commitment Weekend, May 18 & 19.**
- By continuing to keep your regular giving strong in support of our parish ministries.
- By praying for God's blessings on our Appeal.

What if I have additional questions?

Please call the following members of the Appeal Steering Team if you have questions or comments:

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