MESSAGE FROM BISHOP JARRELL

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

For more than 250 years, the Catholic Church has served the people of Acadiana, and today we remain a community of faith, built on the convictions of our ancestors and the many faithful who call the Diocese of Lafayette home.

The celebration of the Centennial of the Diocese of Lafayette will occur in 2018, and to ensure the continued practice of our faith in the generations to come, we are conducting the Centennial Campaign: Building Our Future Together. Funds from this campaign are intended to serve a fivefold purpose:

1. Strengthen our local church parishes through monies being returned to parishes for their own needs.

2. Help support our seminarians, who will serve as future priests in our Diocese.

3. Provide funds for our retired priests, who have served and guided us in the rich traditions of our Catholic faith.

4. Support the formation of our youth through two Catholic campus student centers located in our Diocese.

5. Assist parish-based social services programs that serve the disadvantaged in their community.

I hope that as you read this brochure and listen to our visitors, you will come to realize that this campaign is truly a worthy endeavor.

Please reflect upon the many blessings and gifts you have received from God, and remember that we are all called to be good stewards, by sharing our gifts with others in a meaningful way. By supporting the needs of today, we will carry on the rich heritage of our ancestors – those faith-filled people who built our churches, providing us with care and social programs that have enriched all of our lives. Your efforts now will have the same impact on our church communities for years to come.

I hope you will be inspired to join us as we ensure a bright future for the Diocese of Lafayette.

With prayers for your good health and for all of God’s blessings, I am

Sincerely yours in Our Lord,

Most Reverend Michael Jarrell
Bishop of Lafayette

Santos, Diana, Adali and Mia Zuniga
Ever since its inception as a formally established Diocese in 1918, the Diocese of Lafayette has been filled with the traditions of our region and culture. From our first church parish, St. Martin de Tours Church, established 250 years ago in St. Martinville, to our newest church parish, St. Elizabeth Church in Coteau Holmes, our Catholic values hold true and still live today through the diverse and generous members of the Body of Christ.

Our labor and fidelity as Catholics has remained constant since our ancestors first found a home in Acadiana. We share a past deeply shaped by our Catholic beliefs and traditions, which compel us to proclaim the love, mercy, and grace of Jesus Christ. For nearly 100 years, our Diocese has lived the mission of the Church.

On the threshold of our Centennial Celebration in 2018, the Diocese of Lafayette is committed, more than ever, to meeting the needs of our parishioners and community. After prayerful reflection and thoughtful planning, the decision was made to conduct a capital campaign to address these many needs in our Diocese, identifying a number of priorities: to empower our parishes, support our clergy and seminarians, to strengthen our college youth, and to reinforce our social ministries. This initiative will include financial resources for local parish communities, funds to strengthen current endowments, and resources for projects throughout our Diocese. A diocesan-wide capital campaign of this magnitude has not been conducted in more than 50 years here in our Diocese.

Meeting these needs will require a substantial financial commitment, and the Centennial Campaign: Building Our Future Together seeks to raise a minimum of $42.5 million over the next five years for the following strategic priorities:

- Local Parish Initiative
- Seminarian Education
- Priest Retirement
- Catholic Student Centers at UL Lafayette and LSU Eunice
- Catholic Outreach and Services

We are blessed with a diverse and growing population which presents many opportunities as well as challenges. Together, we can build on our legacy as a devout and generous community, energizing our Diocese to serve and evangelize future generations.

Diocese of Lafayette

"Life grows by being given away, and it weakens in isolation and comfort. Indeed, those who enjoy life most are those who leave security on the shore and become excited by the mission of communicating life to others."

– Evangelii Gaudium, Apostolic Exhortation of Pope Francis, 2013

“The Centennial Jubilee of our Diocese provides us a unique opportunity for renewal and hope. As a retired priest in the Diocese of Lafayette, I am grateful to the generous hearts of the many people who remember and support us and who have given so much to spread the Gospel message of the love of Christ.”

—Very Rev. Msgr. Robert Angelle

Our Diocese Includes:

300,000 Catholics
100,000 Registered Households
121 Parishes
28 Missions
115 Diocesan Priests
63 Religious Order Priests
37 Retired Diocesan Priests

PHOTO >

Msgr. Robert Angelle
Deacon Michael J. Richard
Centennial Campaign

**LOCAL PARISH INITIATIVES** $12,800,000 back to parishes; 30% of total goal

Our Catholic Church is universal, but it is in our own parish that each of us experiences our faith most directly and intimately. The local parish is where we enter the Church, and grow closer to God through the Mass and Sacraments. It is our spiritual home where we worship God together, enjoy fellowship, form our children and adults in our Catholic faith, and provide for those in need.

Every parish faces its own unique challenges and opportunities. Needs range from renovation and expansion of existing structures to spiritual and educational formation. Some parishes are looking to reduce debt, while others are striving to generate income to strengthen and expand parish ministries and services. Still, others may need personnel or materials to carry forth their mission.

The Diocese is the sum of its parishes, schools, and institutions. The Centennial Campaign, therefore, aims to benefit the parishes so they may benefit the communities they serve. Of every dollar raised up to the parish’s goal, 30% will return to the parish for local need(s) designated by its pastor and parish councils. Additionally, 50% of every dollar raised above the parish’s goal will also return to the parish. The Centennial Campaign: Building Our Future Together is crafted to support needs at the local level to encourage an abundant and vibrant parish life.

**SEMINARIAN EDUCATION** $10,600,000; 25% of total goal

Saint John Paul II described a priestly vocation as “...a gift from God to the whole Church. Therefore the whole Church is called to support His gift.” Here in our Diocese, God’s gift of priestly vocations is abundant.

Seminarian Education Endowment $9,600,000

Priestly vocations continue to flourish in our Diocese. At the beginning of the 2015/2016 school year, we were blessed with as many as 45 men (including 10 to 12 new seminarians) at various stages of study, which is an increase of 68% since 2010. The Diocese of Lafayette currently has the most seminarians of any diocese in the state of Louisiana. In May 2015, we celebrated the ordination of three men as transitional deacons.

Over the past decade, the Diocese has supported 127 seminarians at an annual average cost of $1 million. During that same time period, 38 men have been ordained to serve as priests, including two transitional deacons who were ordained priests in June 2015. We recognize the ongoing need to invest energy and resources into the formation of these young men.

During that same time period, we have seen a three-fold increase in the cost of educating our seminarians. This is due to the increased cost of education, as well as an increased number of men discerning the priesthood. Both of these trends are predicted to continue for the foreseeable future.

Currently, the average cost to fund a seminarian’s education (tuition, fees, room and board, books, and healthcare) totals more than $30,000 annually. An investment in their education strengthens the Diocese and fulfills the mission of the Church, as these men are the lifeblood of our Catholic future.

With an increase in our Seminarian Education Endowment Fund we can ensure the financial resources needed to educate and support our seminarians in their response to the Lord’s call. We have prayed for these vocations. We have asked God to send out laborers into his harvest. He hears our prayers. We are now called to respond to his fidelity with our generosity.

“As I reflect on my years as a parish priest, I am proud to have served a Diocese where we still value traditional Catholic teachings and the spiritual formation and development of the faithful.”

– Fr. Floyd Calais

“I am continually filled with gratitude for the faithful of the Diocese of Lafayette who have supported me and my brother priests by their generosity. I cannot stress enough the importance of their support. Without it, the years of spiritual and educational formation at St. Joseph Seminary College and Sacred Heart Seminary would not have been possible.

Every day that I offer the Holy Sacrifice, I remember the many benefactors who have loved, supported, and prayed for me and my brother priests. They will forever be remembered at the Altar of God. Thank you, and God bless you!”

– Fr. Taj V. Glodd, Associate Pastor St. Pius X

< PHOTO Fr. Taj V. Glodd Fr. Floyd Calais
I Will Give You Shepherds Seminarian Campaign  $1,000,000

Today between 75 and 80 percent of our seminarians are formed and educated at St. Joseph Seminary College in Covington and Notre Dame Seminary in New Orleans. I Will Give You Shepherds: The Campaign for Priestly Formation is now underway to strengthen these seminaries in their capacity to facilitate priestly discernment and to provide the best possible preparation for priestly ministry. Specifically, Notre Dame Seminary has undertaken extensive renovations. When these renovations are completed, the theologate will have the capacity to house 140 men and train them in technologically updated classrooms. Our local seminaries should be second to none in providing an adequate environment for graduate study and priestly formation. St. Joseph Seminary College will renovate Borromeo Hall and Rouquette Hall to expand dormitory space. The college will also construct a new library to better serve a growing student body.

As a Diocese who partners with the St. Joseph’s Abbey and the Archdiocese of New Orleans to ensure that our future priests receive an outstanding education, we share in the responsibility of our local seminaries to provide the best possible living and learning environment for the men who will serve the Diocese of Lafayette as servant leaders.

Priest Retirement  $9,600,000; 23% of total goal

Our parish priests are the center of our diocesan family. They celebrate with us in times of joy and comfort us in times of need. They help us to manifest God’s grace. When our priests retire, they remain ever faithful and many still labor tirelessly in the Lord’s Vineyard by continuing to live lives of service and sacrifice. There comes a time in life when even the most tireless of servants need to rest from their labors. As their family, we too, must remain steadfast in our devotion to their needs.

Currently there are 37 priests in retirement. In the next five years, as many as 12 priests will reach retirement age and 10 more will reach retirement age within 10 years. At present, the Priests’ Welfare Trust is insufficiently funded: only capable of providing less than 50% of today’s pension benefits being paid to our retired priests. In addition, some of our retired priests require the services of an assisted living facility, skilled nursing, or long-term care. We want to ensure that our retired priests have adequate late-in-life care, while maintaining personal dignity and independence.

We seek to increase the funds in this trust so we can pay an equitable pension to our retired priests and provide for those who need assistance later in life. After a lifetime of service, our priests deserve a dignified retirement that supports their modest daily needs. By supporting this campaign, we can demonstrate our appreciation for our priests’ selflessness and continued spiritual service to the people of the Diocese of Lafayette.

“The faithful of Lafayette had a profound impact on me in my years in college, and their sincere support has been a constant part of my journey to the priesthood. Even with the large number of men studying for the Diocese, I have never found myself isolated or without support, and I have never been in serious need.

Each day that I serve in the ministry and each step I take toward priesthood fills me with a sense of gratitude and responsibility. The unbelievable education I have received from St. Joseph Seminary College and Notre Dame Seminary is one of my greatest treasures and has made me the man I am today. It has equipped me with a love of God’s people and an ever-increasing knowledge of the faith that I hope to impart to others.”

– Deacon Alexander Albert
CATHOLIC STUDENT CENTERS AT UL LAFAYETTE AND LSU EUNICE
$5,250,000; 12% of total goal

A Catholic Student Center serves as a welcoming presence of the Church on a university campus, giving students an opportunity to develop a more Christ-centered life during their collegiate years. At a time when our young people are confronted by an aggressive secularism and a myriad of anti-Catholic values, campus ministry provides a respite from these challenges, as well as a place of formation into mature disciples of Jesus Christ. This ministry prepares our young Catholics not to withdraw from the wider culture, but to engage it and instill it with the truth of the gospel.

Our campaign will allocate a percentage of funds to subsidize building a new Catholic Student Center at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette and a dedicated Chapel at Louisiana State University in Eunice.

Catholic Student Center at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette  $5,000,000

Our Lady of Wisdom Church & Catholic Student Center is the presence of the Roman Catholic Church on the campus of the University of Louisiana at Lafayette and home of the Ragin’ Cajun Catholics Student Ministry. Their mission is to form lifelong Disciples of Christ who are committed to prayer, the sacramental life, authentic Catholic formation, sacrificial service, vocational discernment, and Christian stewardship. Since 1923, the Newman Club (now recognized as the Ragin’ Cajun Catholics Student Ministry) has remained steadfast in its goal to bring the truth and love of Jesus Christ and His Church to every student on the UL Lafayette Campus, where more than 65% of students self-identify as Catholic.

The Catholic Student Center sponsors more than 50 groups and programs for students to grow in Christ’s love; including Bible studies, the Fellowship of Catholic University Students (FOCUS), retreats, discipleship formation, university level catechesis, vocational discernment groups, and the Sacraments. The Ministry has seen tremendous growth in participation and vocations. Since 2011, 40 men and women who received formation through the Catholic Student Center at Our Lady of Wisdom have entered the seminary or consecrated life.

In response to this growth, Our Lady of Wisdom is planning for the construction of a new and redesigned Catholic Student Center built to meet the significant needs of the ministry. To realize its mission and answer the call to evangelize on the UL Lafayette Campus, the new Catholic Student Center will be built with innovation, reflecting the many pathways that lead young people to a lasting relationship with Jesus Christ.

“My involvement with the Ragin’ Cajun Catholics began when I joined a Bible study. It became, altogether, a call to action. I am now part of this dynamic community of believers and have the opportunity to share Christ’s Gospel with students on campus who otherwise don’t hear it on an everyday basis. The ministry at Wisdom restores faith in Christ and the Church and has brought great fulfillment to my life.”

—Chad Beraud, Junior, Mechanical Engineering
Catholic Student Center at LSU Eunice  $250,000
LSUE Catholic Student Center has been serving the needs of students since 1967. Each school year, activities and events are held in support of the LSUE Catholic Student Center’s mission, which is developing deeper relationships with Christ and each other so that our spiritual, intellectual, and social lives are strengthened.

Through the years, the Catholic Student Center has served thousands of students as a community center and chapel, as a place of formation and other activities, programs, and events for which Catholic college students thirst. With so much activity and use, the center is in need of major renovations. Building a separate dedicated chapel for Mass will provide a worthy and solemn place for students to worship and nurture their relationship with Jesus Christ. Renovations to the student center will bring it up to date to the ministerial needs of a contemporary student population.

CATHOLIC OUTREACH AND SERVICES  $4,250,000; 10% of total goal
Pope Francis reminds us “The measure of the greatness of a society is found in the way it treats those most in need, those who have nothing apart from their poverty.”

Our Diocese also cares for our most vulnerable brothers and sisters. Those with urgent needs that include food, shelter, and medicine. Each year our social service centers transform, heal, and nourish bodies and souls, truly loving and serving Jesus Christ in the least among us.

Several parishes throughout the Diocese serve the poor, hungry, and disadvantaged through parish-based social service centers. From Jeannerette to Mamou, and Crowley to Breaux Bridge, soup kitchens, diners, food pantries, counseling services, and healthcare programs are all being housed, supplied, and staffed through caring parishioners in our Diocese.

Through the Centennial Campaign: Building Our Future Together, the “Matthew 25 Endowment for Service to the Poor” will be established as a perpetual source of funding assistance for these critically important agencies and programs.

“For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink…”
The food pantries, diners, and soup kitchens of the Diocese of Lafayette distribute hundreds of tons of food to the poor and hungry each and every year. These agencies feed the needy through the provision of hot meals, emergency food baskets, and grocery assistance, all of which is made available through the generosity of the parishioners and benefactors who support them.

“…a stranger and you welcomed me…”
The parish-based social service centers provide counseling assistance to help the disadvantaged with job placement, rental and emergency mortgage assistance, housing referrals, and training in financial responsibility, all in an effort to lift those in need out of the depths of poverty.

“…naked and you clothed me…”
Through various Catholic service centers and thrift stores, the poor among us who are working to establish family households are provided the essentials for living. These essentials include clothing, furniture, and used appliances, all of which is made possible by the generous donations received from others throughout the Diocese.

“...The LSUE Catholic Student Center has been an immense help to my spiritual journey, and my faith in Jesus Christ. It is my hope that the proposed funding will provide similar opportunities for many students like me in the future.”
– Maggie Parks, student at LSUE
“...ill and you cared for me…”
Some of the Diocese’s parish-based social service centers provide essential medical assistance like basic medical screenings, eye and dental exams, as well as financial assistance for emergency care and prescriptions. This essential healthcare for the poor would not be possible without the generosity of their Diocesan neighbors.

Catholic Services of Acadiana (CSA), formerly Lafayette Catholic Service Centers, was founded in 1973 by the late Monsignor Alexander Sigur. CSA offers services and programs to those experiencing hunger, homelessness, and poverty. Each year thousands of individuals are helped through services provided by Catholic Services of Acadiana.

The New Life Center, an agency within the CSA network, is currently located in Opelousas, and provides emergency shelter, transitional housing, and supportive services for up to 52 homeless women and their children. The New Life Center also provides emergency and transitional housing for homeless female veterans, with or without children. In order to better serve these women and children, Catholic Services of Acadiana is seeking to relocate the New Life Center to a more hospitable and updated facility. Monies raised through the Centennial Campaign: Building Our Future Together, will subsidize the purchase and renovation of the New Life Center’s new home, which will be located on E. Willow Street in Lafayette.

Established in 1982, The Deaf Action Center (DAC) promotes the independence of the deaf, deaf-blind, and the hearing impaired in South Louisiana. The Center has made a tremendous effort to provide services, support, and advocacy for those it serves by providing education to the general public, instructing and directing individuals interested in deafness fields that serve the hearing impaired, and encouraging leadership among members of the Deaf Community. The DAC provides emergency interpretive services during times of client illness, as well as during their navigation of legal or financial matters. The Center attempts to eliminate all barriers and, in fact, serves as a beacon of hope and source of unity for persons affected and touched by hearing loss.

The current plant facility for the Deaf Action Center is nearly forty years old, and no longer serves the needs of the Center’s programs or clientele. Under the auspices of the Diocese and the Secretariat for Catholic Charities, the DAC will raze the current facility and construct a new one that will serve our deaf, deaf-blind, and hearing impaired into the 21st Century. Monies raised through the Centennial Campaign: Building Our Future Together will subsidize this much-needed facility improvement.

“Amen I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me.”
This was Jesus’ call to the Church to provide for those most in need, His least ones, His disadvantaged. Through your support of the Centennial Campaign: Building Our Future Together, you will welcome, feed, clothe, and care for Jesus, by doing so for His poor...

“So then, while we have the opportunity, let us do good to all, and especially to those in the family of faith.”
- Galatians 6:10

Catholic Outreach and Services  
$4,250,000

Catholic Student Centers  
$5,250,000

Priest Retirement  
$9,600,000

Local Parish Initiative  
$12,800,000

Seminarian Education  
$10,600,000

< PHOTO
Linda Hebert (seated)  
Deaf Action Center client, with daughter Monica Griffith.
At this important moment in our history, let us keep in mind the many blessings the Lord has given us. While God cannot be outdone in generosity, the Gospel asks all of us to give generously of our gifts in thanksgiving for God’s generosity and goodness. Your gift to the Centennial Campaign: Building Our Future Together is an opportunity to leave a legacy for generations to come. Scripture tells us that Christian stewardship goes beyond giving from our surplus. Stewardship requires sacrifice.

The Centennial Campaign: Building Our Future Together seeks your support in three ways:

1. Pray for the success of the campaign. With God’s grace, we will be blessed with a successful endeavor.
2. Volunteer to become a leader within your parish. A project of this magnitude provides many opportunities to get involved and serve.
3. Pledge a gift to the campaign. Your gift will strengthen the Diocese for generations to come.

Each person’s financial situation differs from others. The Centennial Campaign: Building Our Future Together seeks sacrificial gifts and pledges over a five-year period from all parishioners, so that our Church may continue to maintain its important role in the lives of so many. Gifts can be accepted in a variety of forms, with an emphasis on those that can be used immediately. All gifts are tax deductible to the fullest extent allowed by the law.

PLEDGES Pledges payable over five years allow donors to consider more substantial commitments than are possible with one-time cash gifts. Donors who pledge may determine payment schedules to meet their own charitable or tax needs.

PLANNED GIFTS Donors may also consider remembering the Diocese of Lafayette through a will, trust, life insurance policy or annuities. Leaving a legacy provides for future generations.

MATCHING GIFTS If your company has a matching gift program, you may be able to enhance the impact of your gift by requesting a matching gift form from your company and including it with your pledge card.

STOCKS AND SECURITIES Gifts of stock to the campaign can be a source of significant tax benefit to the donor by eliminating capital gains taxes. Any gift of stock will be sold as soon as it is received and the value of the gift will be determined at the time of transfer.

As we approach our Centennial celebration, we continue to respond to the needs of our people, and those in need within and beyond our local communities. This is an exciting time in the history of our Diocese of Lafayette. We face distinct challenges, but these challenges bring opportunities for us to embrace as we embark on the most significant fundraising campaign in our history.

Deeply inspired by our beliefs, this campaign is a celebration of a shared past. We look to the future as we share our plentiful gifts and continue to commit ourselves to the mission of the Church.

Through our participation, our stewardship, and our generosity, we can respond to the needs of our Church. Through the Centennial Campaign: Building Our Future Together we can pass our faith on to future generations, ensuring they will also experience God’s love and live in the light of Jesus Christ in the Diocese of Lafayette.

“God is able to make every grace abundant for you, so that in all things, always having all you need, you may have an abundance for every good work.”

- 2 Corinthians 9:8

“Honor the Lord with your wealth, with first fruits of all you produce; then will your barns be filled with grain, with new wine your vats will overflow.”

- Proverbs 2:9-10

Your Invitation to Join

Concept/Design: PrejeanCreative.com      Photography: JamieOrillion.com

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