



*Our Lady of Lourdes Church*  
*PO Box 719*  
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*Seaford, DE 19973*

September 3, 2017

Dear Parishioners:

We went through a long process of identifying our needs and create a master plan of our future parish campus which would best serve the needs of our parish family in the short and long term. "Taking Our Past Into The Future" was adopted as the overall vision statement for this great adventure. The Master Planning Committee and Capital Campaign Committee collected ideas and needs from all ministries in the parish, consulted staff, reviewed all pertinent historical related documentation and presented a concept of what our new church campus could look like.

As you know, Mrs. Deborah Fols, from our Diocese, recently conducted for us an "Affordability Study" on our proposed plans for our future campus. The study included confidential interviews with parishioners, two focus groups – open to the entire parish, and an analysis of the results.

Mrs. Fols presented those results to our committees on August 24<sup>th</sup>. The following summarizes her major findings:

- Parishioners admire and appreciate the work done thus far by the Master Planning and Capital Campaign Committees;
- There is a high level of support for updating facilities to ensure the parish's future, agreeing something needs to be done;
- The vast majority of respondents indicate they would support a capital initiative both financially and with volunteering their time.
- Majority of the parishioners perceive the current plan as a combination list of "wants" and "needs" and beyond financial capacity of the parish. Reasons for limited financial capacity being loss of generous parishioners due to death or relocation, influx of a population unable to offer notable financial support, a misperception that local retirees possess assets that can easily be directed to the proposed project. **Therefore prioritize the projects and focus on only urgent needs.**
- A few questioned if the parish is using ALL its existing facilities, like the church basement, parish hall, etc., to their fullest capacity;
- There is concern about the demographic changes in our parish's geographic area which may negatively affect our parish life and finances – retired population on fixed incomes, loss of industry, and increasing younger parishioners with limited resources.

She concluded her report saying:

There is strong agreement and support to move forward with a less costly and scaled down project to address specific components of the proposed project – components viewed as urgent and necessary. Upon the completion of a plan that will address the urgent needs, the parish should proceed with a capital (pledge) campaign which could become a unifying parish effort and a catalyst for future parish growth and vitality.

Fr. Paul and I want to thank all of you who took time to participate in this study and share your honest opinions with Mrs. Fols. As with any project, there are a multitude of opinions; we will consider all of them and strive to find the best 'fit' to meet the needs of our parish as a whole that is within our financial means. We will work as quickly as possible to present a revision to the Diocese and hope that we will be able to make our dream come true in the near future. Please keep our committees in your prayers and ask our dear Lord to guide us as we continue this journey.

*Fr. Clement Vadakkedath, C. Ss. R.*

Pastor