

OUR CAMPAIGN FOR

THE CHURCH ALIVE!

FOR ONE CHURCH *Alive* IN SIX COUNTIES

GOOD WORKS

An Impact Report to Donors – Spring 2017

URBAN MINISTRY HELPS YOUTH, PARISH



Nearly two years after arriving in Pittsburgh, **Christopher Kerfoot** is beginning to see the fruits of his street ministry. Slowly gaining the respect and trust of teens who have experienced various forms of abandonment, Kerfoot shows them the unconditional love of Jesus.

Sacrificial gifts from *Our Campaign for The Church Alive!* helped provide a start-up grant for **Dirty Vagabond Ministries**, which serves these at-risk youth from Garfield, East Liberty, Homewood and the Hill District. The ministry embraces Pope Francis' preference for "a church that is dirty because it's been on the streets."

Teens hang out with Kerfoot at the Underground youth center at **St. Maria Goretti Parish**, go on retreats, and are attending Mass regularly for the first time in their lives.

"Our parishioners are recognizing and welcoming them," said the pastor, **Father Regis Farmer**. "The kids have a spiritual curiosity... a sense of wonderment. It's causing us to step back and think about our faith."

INVESTING IN THE OLD AND YOUNG

Several parishes across our diocese have changed their local case statements as needs have changed. **St. Juan Diego Parish** in Sharpsburg is one of them.

Two-thirds of funds originally set aside for renovation of the parish hall are now being redirected for the development of a **ministry to seniors and youth**. Volunteers will be trained to provide assistance to the frail elderly, and Campaign gifts will serve to bring teens closer to Jesus and His church through Dirty Vagabond Ministries.

Their pastor, **Father Michael Decewicz**, said the finance and pastoral councils saw the importance of outreach ministry and agreed to use a smaller portion of funds for the parish hall renovation.

St. Juan Diego Parish was formed in 2009 through the merger of St. Mary, Madonna of Jerusalem and St. John Cantius churches. The latter is home to the Korean Catholic Community.

Making *The Church Alive!*

The Church of Pittsburgh is being transformed to meet modern challenges, and such change isn't easy.

Our Campaign for The Church Alive! is helping to raise awareness and resources for this important work by addressing **extraordinary and urgent needs**. Sacrificial gifts are providing greater tuition assistance for needy families, educating clergy and lay leaders, helping the poor, and spreading the Gospel.

Accountability and transparency remain watchwords of the Campaign. **Forty percent or more** of the Church Alive gifts say with the parish or successor parish to serve our local needs. **Parish funds are not transferred to the diocese.**

Many of the donations that stay in parishes have been invested in long-deferred **repair and maintenance projects**—such as replacing church roofs and boilers—which had to be completed regardless of future use of the buildings. Age-old wisdom: you take care of your home while you live in it.

The remaining portion of your gift is already at work serving the wider church beyond our parish walls. These investments strictly follow the Campaign Case Statement (see **ChurchAlivePgh.org** for details).

None of us know what the future holds, but we do know that, as our spiritual ancestors did, **we walk by faith**, confident that we are being led by the Holy Spirit to help make *The Church Alive*.

OUR CAMPAIGN FOR

THE CHURCH ALIVE!

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ON MISSION FOR
**THE
 CHURCH
 ALIVE!**

NEW PHASE FOR *ON MISSION*

More than two years of prayer, consultation and feedback are concluding as the *On Mission for The Church Alive!* planning initiative moves into its next phase.

All **188 current parishes** in the Diocese of Pittsburgh, which include **225 church buildings**, have been placed into **49 proposed groupings of parishes**.

Beginning in June, the faithful and dedicated volunteers of **On Mission Commission** and its steering committees—more than 80 lay leaders, clergy and religious members—will study all input. The commission will offer recommendations to Bishop Zubik in the fall.

After consultation with advisory boards and prayerful discernment, Bishop Zubik will announce **clergy assignments** and **final groupings of parishes** in the spring of 2018. Implementation will begin in the **fall of 2018** and is expected to take several years to complete.

All priests and deacons will begin their ministry in parishes, schools, hospitals, nursing homes and correctional institutions at the same time.

In parishes, pastors will be given “**blueprints**” to assist them in the implementation process, including the number of Masses for each grouping of parishes, estimated staffing needs, a process of combining pastoral and finance councils, development of common ministry programs, and a timeline for merging parishes.

The parish groupings will help accommodate the declining number of diocesan priests in active ministry, from **210 priests** today to a projected **112 priests** by 2025.

On Mission also will address decreasing Mass attendance and participation in the sacraments, seeking to provide more vibrant liturgies, invigorate faith formation, strengthen school and parish partnerships, increase participation of the faithful in the life of the Church, and boldly proclaim Christ in word and action.

Learn more at OnMissionChurchAlive.org.

Living the Example of Mother Teresa



Food and warmth at Catholic Charities' Susan Zubik Welcome Center in downtown Pittsburgh.

The Corporal Works of Mercy teach us how we should treat others—such as to feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, shelter the homeless—and The Church Alive! **Catholic Charities Mother Teresa Fund** provides tangible assistance.

In the names of nearly 130,000 families and individuals who support the Campaign, we have been creating a lasting endowment fund that will provide annual assistance to directly help those in desperate need. Funds help pay utility bills, medications, food and other expenses such when an old furnace or water heater suddenly breaks down.

Catholic Charities is able to leverage money from the Mother Teresa Fund by partnering with those providing labor on a project or offering materials at cost.

One client told the agency, “Everyone looks down at you, but Catholic Charities reaches down and gives you a hand up.”

Digital Connections

As more people study images on screens instead of words on paper, thanks to generous donors to *The Church Alive!* the diocese is finding new ways of taking the Gospel to the millennial generation.

A **campaign grant** is providing mobile video production equipment, a new editing suite and remote-control high-definition cameras to televise Masses from St. Paul Cathedral. The funding will lead to the creation of more short videos for social media, which are critical for reaching younger Catholics.

The upgraded video editing suite will allow for faster production and greater server capacity, and funds will support staff and volunteer training and marketing techniques to reach those who have drifted away from practicing the faith.

An earlier campaign grant allowed the diocese to convert a cable signal that reached only a few neighborhoods in Pittsburgh to add an ecumenical cable Internet channel (**ChristianAssociatesTV.org**) to serve the wider Christian community in southwestern Pennsylvania.