



THE CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF ARLINGTON

OFFICE OF DEVELOPMENT

# Spring Update

SPRING 2009

## Please Share Our News

This newsletter contains information for pastors, parish administrators, parochial vicars, and parish staff on parish and diocesan development programs. We hope that parishes will share this newsletter with their finance councils, parish councils, and *Rooted in Faith - Forward in Hope* campaign leaders.

## Offertory Program Provides Economic Stability for Parishes

This past year was a true testament to the success of the Offertory Program in our diocese. As we close out 2008 and track the first quarter of 2009, we find that the majority of the parishes that conducted the fall renewal effort for the Offertory Program show a slight increase in giving, or are holding steady. During a time when many faith-based organizations are experiencing a sharp downturn in revenue, our parishioners are showing that they have our Church as a top priority!

Last fiscal year, the overall Offertory income for the diocese increased by 9% to \$83.5 million. By continuing to conduct the renewal process for the Offertory Program each year, parishes have been able to ride out the current economic storm with a consistent level of giving from their parishioners.

We encourage all parishes to consider implementing a new or renewal program for parish offertory this year. For more information about the diocesan Offertory Program, please contact Jeanne Combos at 703-841-2764 or [j.combos@arlingtondiocese.org](mailto:j.combos@arlingtondiocese.org).

## Now *That's* Good Stewardship!

One parish implemented the Offertory Program for the first time last fall! Recognizing that times of economic strife can also be opportune times to reflect on Christian stewardship, Our Lady of Angels Parish in Woodbridge launched their Offertory Program in October 2008 and experienced a 15% increase in Offertory for the months of January and February 2009. Talk about a success story! We are hearing stories from parishes that indicate parishioners continue to be eager and willing to support their parish, despite the economy.

## Is Your Parish PCI Compliant?

**What is PCI?** Parishes that currently use or are considering using an in-house database electronic fund transfer (EFT) application, bank or other online transaction service should be aware that they must adhere to guidelines of the Payment Card

Industry (PCI) Security Standards Council. In response to further banking regulations, the Patriot Act, and multiple threats to the security of credit card information, the major credit card companies developed the PCI Security Standards Council. The security standards imposed by this council are accepted by all major credit card companies and are required of all merchants (i.e. parishes) that accept or store credit card information.

**Does my parish have to be PCI compliant?** YES. Any organization processing, storing, or transmitting credit card data must adhere to the PCI DSS (Data Security Standard) regarding the processing, storing or transmission of credit card data and the physical or electronic storage or use of credit card information in either real time or recurring payments.

**What do parishes need to do and when?** As of October 1, 2008 all new merchants (including churches and schools) must demonstrate they are PCI compliant. Contact your bank or service provider that processes your transactions to determine what action you may need to take. Organizations that do not adhere to PCI DSS are exposing themselves to penalties and the inability to process donations. More information on how to become PCI compliant can be found at: [www.pcisecuritystandards.org](http://www.pcisecuritystandards.org).

**Below are just a few questions to help determine if your parish is PCI compliant.**

*In the event of a fire, or other catastrophic incident, does our parish or provider have an off site data system to maintain offertory collection for those enrolled?*

*Where is sensitive financial data/ information (personal account numbers and credit card numbers) stored?*

*Depending upon the EFT program or system, are church insurance requirements adequately addressed to cover potential liability issues?*

*What auditing procedures and reporting are in place to monitor and reconcile electronic giving?*

By taking the steps necessary to protect cardholder information, parishes not only provide a secure platform for receiving payments, but they provide a solid foundation upon which a successful EFT Offertory giving program can be built.

**SAVE THE DATE**  
**to attend one of the annual**  
**Parish Development Luncheons:**

**St. Timothy, Chantilly:**

**May 19, 11:30 – 1:30 PM**

**St. Raymond of Penafort, Springfield:**

**May 20, 11:30 – 1:30 PM**

## **2009 BLA Exceeds Goal**

Amidst a recession, the 2009 Bishop's Lenten Appeal (BLA) shot out of the gate with a force this past January, with early projections tracking closely to the very successful 2008 BLA. To date, the 2009 BLA has received \$11,077,716 from 38,213 pledges, exceeding its goal of \$11,000,000.

We are grateful to pastors, parish administrators, parochial vicars, parish staff and BLA committee members who assisted with the BLA campaign in their parish. Your efforts at the parish have been key to the success of the appeal this year. In these uncertain times, it is heartening to know that the faithful of our diocese continue to support their Church so generously.

This year, a \$500,000 matching gift was made available to the diocese. We believe that this incentive has played an important role in the success of this year's BLA. For every dollar that each parishioner donated above their prior BLA gift amount, the challenge gift matched up to \$500,000 with an equal donation to the Catholic Diocese of Arlington – essentially doubling their increase. The matching gift funds will assist the diocese in two key areas including additional funds for the diocese's Tuition Assistance Program and support for Catholic Charities. We have received many positive verbal and written comments from parishioners who were encouraged by the incentive and increased their pledge because of it.

The BLA is vital to each parish and our diocese to sustain the many programs and ministries such as: Catholic Schools, Religious Education, Youth Ministry, Family Life and Respect Life offices, Hospital Ministry, Multicultural Ministries, Campus Ministry and other evangelization efforts. This appeal also supports vocations programs, seminarian education, the permanent diaconate program and many others.

We expect to mail the 3rd BLA Letter later this month to parishioners who have not yet renewed their support to the BLA this year. Please keep placing reminders in your bulletins for parishioners who are paying monthly to their BLA pledge. Every pledge makes a difference!

## **Continued Progress** **with *Rooted In Faith* -** ***Forward In Hope***



Thank you to the pastors, parish administrators and parish staff who have assisted us in our latest *Rooted in Faith - Forward in Hope* Capital Campaign Redemption effort this past winter. In early December, letters from Bishop Loverde with updates on the campaign and its progress went to those parishioners who had a balance on their pledge. This redemption effort resulted in over \$265,000 funds collected and over 300 parishioners resuming regular payments on their pledge who had not made a payment in over a year.

The *Rooted in Faith - Forward in Hope* Capital Campaign raises funds for both the diocese and parishes. Your help has been vital as we continue to work together to encourage the payments of parishioners and to update our pledge records.

To date, over \$94 million, or 88%, of the almost \$108 million in pledged funds has been paid. Almost \$34 million has been returned to parishes, with total pledged funds of over \$40 million designated for parishes. These funds include money for construction of new churches, other facilities, or special parish projects. It is important that parishes continue to remind parishioners about the importance of completing their pledges, since 20% - 50% or more of these collected funds will go directly back to parishes.

As we near completion of the campaign pledge payments, diocesan projects are progressing well. This progress includes: completed renovations to Christ House in Old Town Alexandria; the opening of Pope John Paul the Great High School; groundbreaking on the Priest Retirement Home last October; and the Spirituality Center, located in White Post, Virginia, currently under renovation.

In March, Catholic Charities dedicated and opened the Saint Margaret of Cortona Family Transitional Residence. The residence, a small apartment facility in Woodbridge, Virginia will serve up to 13 families with the time and support they need to reestablish independence after they have exited an emergency shelter. Catholic Charities will provide participating families with low-income housing and varying levels of assistance during the precarious twelve to twenty-four months following their departure from an emergency shelter. St. Margaret of Cortona staff and volunteers will offer a wealth of Life Skills and Financial Literacy classes, employment training and personal case management to each resident.

# Encouraging Parishioners to Think Ahead

The Planned Giving Office continues its effort to raise awareness of and increase gifts made through estate planning. Thanks to all those parishes which have been placing bulletin announcements about bequests and other planned giving options – you are making a difference! We just sent a fresh list of draft announcements and we will soon be sending parishes and schools a new flyer which may either be inserted into the bulletin or displayed on a table in the church vestibule and/or school office.

In this year's Bishop Lenten Appeal paid-in-full thank you letters, we included a brochure that gives more information on planned giving with the option to receive the *Catholic Estate and Personal Planning Workbook*. To date, we have received almost 100 requests for the workbook.

A primary goal of the Planned Giving office is to encourage all parishioners to take care of their families by planning their personal affairs and estates now, rather than postponing things until they are under the stress of an unexpected illness, sudden death of a loved one, or a steady health decline brought on by age. By encouraging our parishioners to think ahead, we may help them discern how they would like to pass the light of faith onto the next generation.

Please be sure to let our office know of any parishioner who has indicated to you that they have left a planned gift to your parish, parish school or the diocese. That way, we can properly recognize their support and include them in the Catholic Heritage Circle.



## Planting Seeds in Planned Giving

It is very likely that we may not see the fruits of our planned giving efforts until many years down the road. The seeds we plant today may blossom weeks, months, even years later. Below are just a few examples of seeds that were planted, and have recently come to fruition:

- An active parishioner at Saint Raymond's parish recently indicated his intent to leave a \$5,000 bequest to the parish.
- Another parishioner, who received the Catholic Estate and Personal Planning Workbook over a year ago, last month called to request a list of attorneys so he may include the Church in his estate planning.
- William McNally, a longtime parishioner of the diocese who passed away last year, bequeathed an unrestricted gift of real estate to the diocese.

Please continue to promote planned giving in your parishes and schools. A small announcement today can lead to financial security in the future.

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Please contact our staff with questions relating to any of the above programs.

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