

Announcement at Mass – Sept. 17, 18, 24, 25, 2016

Good morning/evening everyone. My name is , I am a member of the Accessibility Fundraising Committee, the AFC. Today we are announcing our Capital Campaign kick-off, Foundation for the Future! The official Campaign launch is October 1st, 2016! This thermometer showing our progress will be updated monthly.

In January 2016, we introduced the AFC Committee members who had begun meeting in November 2015. In May 2016 we provided the Parish with an update of our activities and in August 2016 a 'Frequently Asked Questions' document was distributed at the weekend Masses.

Over the past 10 months, we, the AFC, have spent in excess of 100 hours investigating and looking at all options as to how to raise a half a million dollars. All of the committee members have been very dedicated in trying to make this happen.

Today, our goal is to inform you of the proposed plans moving forward to achieve our goal of a Church accessible to all. St. Patrick's Parish is blessed with an amazing number of dedicated volunteers – volunteers who are active in many different Faith Ministries, volunteers who clean the church, volunteers who provide their time to St. Patrick's, volunteers who are assisting a refugee family adjust to life in Canada, volunteers who participate in organizations such as St. Vincent de Paul, the Knights of Columbus, the Catholic Women's League, St. Patrick's Friends of the Church, and many more. These volunteers are essential to our Faith Community. The question we are asking some of these individuals is not "How Christian are you?" but rather "How are you Christian?" Are you working for the good of the entire St. Patrick's faith community? Are you bearing false witness against other parishioners? (The 9th Commandment). Are you a hindrance or a help to this project?

We are sure that there are many of you scratching your head right now and wondering why we are asking these questions. We, the AFC, would like all parishioners to be made aware of the roadblocks that have been put in our path since the AFC was formed. Our focus has remained positive. We have been working with the Diocese of St. Catharines (following their policies and procedures), working with our Pastor, Father Mario, and with the Finance Council to whom we report. Questions submitted have been answered as quickly as possible, an FAQ sheet was recently distributed at all the masses, yet miss-information is shared by some and innuendo persists. This project is not one that will or can be put aside. It will move forward as there are many individuals who recognize that our Church must be safe, accessible to all who enter our doors, and must have its structure maintained.

Our main responsibility over the past several months has been to co-ordinate and develop strategies to achieve our goal of raising \$500,000. This is the amount needed to complete the renovations necessary to make our Church compliant with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (2005) and address the many structural issues with our Church building.

As of August 31st, 2016 there is approximately \$108,000.00 in the Accessibility Renovation account. The money that has been raised to date is from the generosity of the parishioners, the school

children, the CWL and the Diocese. You may recall that Bishop Bergie committed to a \$5000.00 contribution for every \$100,000.00 we raise and he has stayed true to that word with us having received our first \$5000.00 just last week. We the AFC, would like to take this opportunity for everyone here to give themselves a round of applause in recognition for these funds already raised. Just imagine how well the parish will do once the campaign has been officially launched next week.

Recognizing the importance of starting the project sooner than later a business proposal was submitted to Bishop Bergie requesting approval for a loan so that construction would begin in early 2017. This proposal was approved by Bishop Bergie and a letter of support has been issued by the Diocese. The Finance Council is currently negotiating a building loan.

Our plans to continue to raise money in 2017 are as follows:

1. Specific donation envelopes. These have been designed and are currently at the printers. The envelopes will be placed in the pews for use the weekend of Oct. 1st and 2nd, 2016 and will be available on an ongoing basis.
2. A cash lottery. Ticket sales will commence on October 1st, 2016 and end on December 31st, 2016. 499 tickets will be sold. The cost is \$100 for each ticket and there will be twelve (12) monthly draws for a cash prize of \$1,000.00 each month starting on January 14th, 2017. We expect to raise at least \$28,000.00 from the lottery.
3. A raffle for 2 handmade Muskoka chairs, donated by a parishioner, Declan Arneaud. This draw will be held in late spring 2017 so that the winner can enjoy the chairs next summer.
4. A donation request letter will be sent to parents of students attending St. Patrick's and Notre Dame Schools. This will be in cooperation with the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board (BHNCD SB).

We are positioning our parish to be a 'Foundation for the Future' and look forward to another 150 years for our faith community.

If you have any questions or comments please contact us at the email addresses listed in the Church Bulletin and on the FAQ sheet. There are copies at the back of the Church for anyone that has not already picked one up. A written note in an envelope may be placed in the Church collection or in the suggestion box. Your question/comment will be discussed at the next AFC meeting and a response provided shortly thereafter.

Thank you for your attention and dedication to our Parish.