

IMMACULATE PARISH Owensboro, Kentucky Capital Campaign Case for Support Statement

Established in the Marian Year of 1954, Immaculate Parish has been following the example of Mary who willingly responded to the Divine calling to give birth to the Christ child. Our parish has chosen “Respond” as the name of our capital campaign. It is our hope this challenge will inspire a similar Marian response to God’s will in our lives.

That call is to *RESPOND*...from the Latin *respondere*...the prefix *re* meaning “again” or “anew” or “once more,” and *spondere* meaning “to promise” or “to commit.” Hence, the word “respond” means “to commit anew” or “to promise again.”

Making a promise, as well as the renewing our promises from time to time, is something familiar to all of us.

For example...

- When signing with holy water, a person is responding again and again to their baptismal promises.
- When a couple repeats wedding vows at an anniversary, they are renewing promises to each other.
- When, during the liturgy, we renew our calling to be faithful to Christ, we are truly responding.
- When we pray the “Our Father...” we recommit our promise for God’s will to be done.

This capital campaign is, therefore, about our response as followers of Christ. While the parish needs to raise substantial financial support for facility updates and upgrades, the capital campaign is not really about fundraising. It is about faith-raising instead. In fact, if all we succeed in doing is raise money, we have missed both the point of the faith campaign and our calling to be responsive to the leadership of Christ.

***Our financial goal may be to raise \$2.5M or more for church improvements,
but our spiritual goal is to raise the faith of our people to higher levels of devotion to Christ.***

As this spiritual goal is reached, the financial resources will most certainly follow.

The Immaculate Parish capital campaign is an opportunity Christ is giving to our parish to connect with Him, His Church, and His mission of evangelization in the world. It’s an invitation to join hands and hearts and, together, renew our promise to be Marian-like in our service to Christ and to the Father’s will.

Plans for our campaign have been long in coming, delayed more than a year ago by a worldwide health crisis that forced us to push the pause button on our parish plans. The suffering from this pandemic has impacted almost every family, some worse than others. But no one has escaped its debilitating blow.

God has been faithful, however. As He has in the past, God has responded again to the pains and prayers of people by granting His presence, peace, and power to prevail.

Today, a faint light of hope at the end of a dark tunnel of suffering seems to be shining ever brighter. While hardly out of the woods just yet, the pandemic appears to be losing its grip. As a consequence, we give thanks to God by honoring our past and by committing to our future.



Our Bold Plans Begin to Unfold...Today

With the recent release of our feasibility study results, a few noteworthy facts have made clear to parish leaders that Immaculate is ready to move forward with renovation plans and needed updates. Here are a few of those facts:

- 441 parishioners participated in our parish feasibility study regarding the capital campaign (64%).
- The majority of parishioners agreed we should have a campaign and proceed with facility upgrades.
- The entire plan is estimated to cost \$3.2M to \$3.5M.
- The parish's recent feasibility study revealed our current fundraising capacity to be \$2.0M to \$2.5M.
- Prioritizing facility needs enables us to fund first the most pressing facility needs.

In concert with our architectural firm, Entheos Architects, parish leaders have prioritized facility needs and architectural plans have been developed. What follows are our "First Mile Priorities" and our "Second Mile Priorities." How far we go in reaching the end of mile two will be determined by congregational pledges.

FIRST MILE Priorities...\$2,500,000

The feasibility study made clear our first priority should be the Church building itself. For years, we have known of certain limitations and challenges within our building. So, our first objective is to address many of these needs we have lived with for years in our church.

1 - Enlarged Narthex or "Gathering Space" - \$650,000

A place to "meet and greet" is one of our more obvious needs. The current Narthex, for example, gives us a very limited and confining space to meet and greet both before and after Mass. Parishioners have little choice but to converse with each other in the church itself while others may be praying and preparing for Mass.

A larger Narthex would make engagement with each other easier without sacrificing the spirit of sacredness inside the church itself. Further, an enlarged Narthex would enhance the friendly, welcoming spirit which we are called to be to our parish and community. Further still, an enlarged Narthex will serve as a more suitable place where parents might escort their children when necessary but without leaving them feeling as if they are completely separated from others or from the Mass itself. The enlarged Narthex will also include a new walkway and entrance from the back parking lot making access to the parish church more convenient.

2 - Enhancements to the Church Interior - \$1,850,000

While beautiful and functional in many ways, our plan includes enhancements to the church that will make the interior worship space feel more sacred, warmer in winter, cooler in summer, and the church will be more liturgically correct. These improvements will enhance the feeling of God's presence.

For example, the current configuration of the Altar and the sanctuary places the priest-presider and other ministers who carry out liturgical roles farther from the worshippers than necessary. Further, accessing the Altar, including the areas around the Altar, is difficult to navigate for some parishioners, especially those with physical challenges. Church plans include enhancements, therefore, which will bring the Altar and all liturgical functions closer to the assembly. The Tabernacle will remain in its present location. In addition, while the current HVAC system is relatively young, the air-handling systems are not. Air-handling systems will need to be updated to eliminate unwanted noise and moisture in the church.

Here's a More Detailed Breakdown of the "First-Mile" Enhancements...

- Construct a ramp to improve accessibility to the sanctuary platform.
- Replace and install new lighting throughout, making it much brighter for worshippers.
- Relocate the baptismal font to the main entryway, reminding us of our first step on the faith journey.
- Create more space in the Tabernacle area for private prayer outside the celebration of Mass.
- Enhance the statues of the Blessed Mother and the Sacred Heart of Jesus (or, St. Joseph).
- Investigate and address the air-handling system problems.
- Install new, matching ceiling treatments, eliminating water stains and improving sound.
- Remove/refinish/reconfigure pews and replace kneelers.

These priority enhancements in First-Mile objectives will strengthen our facilities, improve the worship experience, and extend for years both the life and service of our church and internal systems. A contingency has been included in the \$2.5M figure which could be possibly applied to the cost of liturgical furnishings (Altar, Ambo, Presider's Chair, etc.), estimated at \$90,000 to \$100,000. Once church renovations are close to completion, however, and actual costs are precise, furnishings may be included in the \$2.5M figure or the furnishings may be made available to parishioners to fund as special gifts above-and-beyond their capital campaign donation. Finally, decisions regarding how furnishings are funded will be determined by the parish when the actual costs are known.

SECOND-MILE Priorities...\$600,000

Two primary plans make up our Second-Mile Priorities and they are described below.

Generally, all entryways into the church are uncovered. This means, whenever there is rain or inclement weather, worshippers and guests coming to Mass, attending a wedding, or gathering for a funeral service are likely to get wet. While some have managed to overlook minor inconveniences like this, others feel we should eliminate them altogether.

1 - A New "Drive-Thru" Canopy Including Site Work at the Main Entrance - \$330,000

A canopy over the current circular drive will make it possible for parishioners to arrive and/or leave Mass or any parish function without having to navigate inclement weather. By removing an inconvenience as simple as this, however, we invite greater participation in parish functions even when the weather is not cooperating. This also enables us to send a very positive message of welcome to the community at large. It demonstrates that we want to make everyone's experience of Mass consequential, convenient, and comfortable.

2 - Expand the Narthex with a New Addition on the Southside of the Church - \$270,000

Providing a new and expanded entryway on the south side of the building will make the south parking lot more accessible to parishioners. Further, this expanded entryway will be large enough to house a small "Vesting Room" next to the gathering area of the Narthex. This provides our priests a dressing room near the entrance for their liturgical vestments as well as the ability to greet parishioners and guests at the door. It also frees needed space for storage and liturgical preparations in what is the current sacristy.

Provided pledges and funds are available, they will be applied to these "Second Mile Priorities." With the rising costs for materials and construction today, the entire plan could be \$3.5M. Again, however, our plan is to be fiscally responsible and undertake only what our parish demonstrates it is willing to fund.

In summary, God has given us a good plan. Parish leaders believe it is time we RESPOND to the call to enhance our church facilities and, by doing so, honor our past and commit to our future.

Here is What Are We Asking of You...

We are inviting you...

...To Respond with prayer for our parish, our parish leaders, and our capital campaign.

...To Respond with participation in our effort to preserve the life of our facilities.

...To Respond with generosity and so honor our past and commit to our future.

...To Respond with encouragement to parishioners for the call to commitment.

For over three years, we have been praying and planning for the future of Immaculate Parish. With the onset of the pandemic, however, we were forced to push the pause button on our plans. Yet, for all its trouble, the pandemic has given us time to carefully review and edit our plans. Consequently, this plan will better prepare our facilities for the new realities of our expanded faith life.

Therefore, we invite you to join with the Immaculate Parish family in this ambitious endeavor...

- May our journey together in generosity truly be a faith-raising experience for each.
- May the vision of this capital campaign unite us with resolute hearts to go forward together.
- May every household truly honor our past and commit to our parish's future.

May the Marian spirit of service lead you to generously RESPOND.

Gratefully yours,

Fr. John Vaughan and the Capital Campaign Team