

Focus

Msgr. Beach named delegate for stewardship

By Lou Baldwin

SPECIAL TO THE CS&T

Msgr. Francis W. Beach, who was recently appointed as the Cardinal's delegate for Stewardship and Development pro-tem, in addition to his current duties as pastor of SS. Simon and Jude Parish in West Chester, knows that it is going to be a challenging task but is looking forward to it.

"I am most grateful and humbled with this appointment to assist His Eminence and the auxiliary bishops, as we establish a new Office for Stewardship and Development, which will provide vital resources for the future of the Church of Philadelphia," he said.

This new archdiocesan office is one of the initiatives that will support the implementation of Cardinal Rigali's October pastoral letter, "Called to Conversion and Holiness," and builds on the just-completed and successful "Heritage of Faith-Vision of Hope" capital and endowment campaign.

"The capital campaign was tremendously successful with more than \$219 million raised to date," said Msgr. Beach, who chaired the priests' advisory committee for it.

"We are blessed to have been so successful in this campaign in a very distressed economy, due to the sacrificial pledges of so many

of the faithful of the Archdiocese. The funds raised through this campaign will provide necessary resources to both our parishes and the specific needs of the Archdiocese as identified in the case statement for the campaign," he said.

"Yet even though the campaign was very successful, we are conscious of the vast pastoral and temporal needs of the Church which we were not able to include in this campaign," Msgr. Beach said.

"The Archdiocese looks now to build on the momentum of the campaign and work collaboratively with our parishes, individual donors, corporations and foundations, while remaining centered on stewardship and development as a vital ministry in the Church.

The final form of the Office for Stewardship and Development is not at this point set in concrete. "We are beginning with a clean slate," Msgr. Beach said. "Right now there is no detailed plan, which gives us a lot of freedom to create a comprehensive vision and necessary resources to support the mission of the Church."

The office will eventually be a great resource to the parishes and various institutions in the Archdiocese. A search committee has been formed for the position of executive director for the office. The first meeting of the search committee was slated to take place

Jan. 5.

During the month of January, Msgr. Beach intends to meet with some of the presidents of the local universities, as well as some of the priests who have similar responsibilities in surrounding dioceses and archdioceses along the East Coast, to learn best practices and staff functions in the development programs that support the mission of their institutions or dioceses.

In the meantime, the Archdiocese is working with Community Counseling Service, which is the firm that facilitated the capital campaign for the Archdiocese, to ensure a seamless transition from the conclusion of the campaign to the establishment of a foundation for the new office.

Also, during the next few months, Msgr. Beach will be forming a development advisory group, which will have as one of its first goals to create a comprehensive vision for stewardship and development in the Archdiocese, along with strategic plans and action steps.

The Cardinal envisions that this office will provide vital services and necessary resources to parishes in the areas of stewardship and development, as well as professional workshops for parishioners and diocesan staff for grant writing, planned giving, increased offertory programs and various fundraising



(Sarah Webb)

Msgr. Francis W. Beach greets parishioners at SS. Simon and Jude Parish in West Chester, where he is pastor.

processes. It will provide support for the work of philanthropy and development for St. Charles Borromeo Seminary, the Secretariat for Catholic Education, the Secretariat for Catholic Human Services and other archdiocesan entities.

The office also intends to work collaboratively with archdiocesan groups made up of young Catholic professionals, the Cardinal's Society, which made leadership gifts during the campaign, the Stewards of St. John Neumann, the Stewards'

Alliance and other Catholic philanthropic groups.

"God has truly blessed all of us with special gifts, talents and resources," Msgr. Beach said.

"We all have a responsibility to use these gifts and talents for the Lord and for the good of His Church."

■
Lou Baldwin is a member of St. Leo Parish and a freelance writer.

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1019 N. FIFTH STREET, PHILADELPHIA, PA 19123

(215) 627-3080 • FAX (215) 627-3296

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