



For immediate release
February 23, 2009

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CARDINAL RIGALI ANNOUNCES HISTORIC INITIATIVE *HERITAGE OF FAITH ~ VISION OF HOPE*

Philadelphia -- Citing the immediate and long-term needs of the Catholic Church in Philadelphia, Cardinal Justin Rigali, Archbishop of Philadelphia, announced that a \$200 million capital and endowment campaign, *Heritage of Faith ~ Vision of Hope*, is underway in the Archdiocese. Cardinal Rigali appeared at a news conference today at Saint Barnabas Parish in Southwest Philadelphia.

“This extraordinary initiative is a direct response to the challenges facing our parishes and Archdiocesan ministries,” Cardinal Rigali said. “Because our needs are great, our aim is high. Our plan is to raise at least \$200 million to be used exclusively to meet six specific goals: the strengthening of parish life; access to a high-quality Catholic education for children; the restoration of the historic treasure that is the Cathedral Basilica of Saints Peter and Paul; an investment in priestly formation and campus improvements at Saint Charles Borromeo Seminary; the pension and health care needs of retired priests, and outreach to our less fortunate brothers and sisters in the region by providing vital human services.”

In 2008, the Archdiocese of Philadelphia celebrated its Bicentennial. At the news conference, Cardinal Rigali said that the Jubilee celebration presented an opportunity to assess the most pressing needs and promising opportunities of the Church. *Heritage of Faith ~ Vision of Hope* was developed as a comprehensive plan to support those charitable, educational and pastoral needs. The Cardinal acknowledged the challenge of a fundraising endeavor during such a troubled economic time. “The economic realities of the present are a cause of anxiety for everyone,” Cardinal Rigali said. “Some may argue that now is not a good time for this endeavor. But the needs of the Archdiocese cannot wait for the future. They require our response today. The remarkable early results of *Heritage of Faith – Vision of Hope* indicate that this is the right response and the right time. I am pleased to announce that just over \$43 million in pledges and gifts already have been received.”

Bishop Joseph P. McFadden, Auxiliary Bishop of Philadelphia, outlined the details of the campaign during the news conference. “*Heritage of Faith ~ Vision of Hope* is an exceptional priority of the Archdiocese. Each of our 269 parishes will participate, and each will benefit from the campaign,” Bishop McFadden said.

Over the next 16 months, parishes will introduce the plan in phases, or ‘tracks’, that will last about 16 weeks each. Every Catholic household will be asked to prayerfully consider making a sacrificial pledge to *Heritage of Faith ~ Vision of Hope*. Twelve parishes piloted *Heritage of Faith ~ Vision of Hope* last fall, including Saint Barnabas Parish, which reached 135 percent of its goal. Collectively, the twelve pilot parishes received \$9.5 million in gifts and pledges, exceeding their collective goal by just over \$2 million. Currently, 57 parishes have campaigns underway.

Heritage of Faith ~ Vision of Hope Goals

Parish Life: The Archdiocese is committed to the spiritual vitality and economic stability of the parishes, therefore \$70 million will be allocated directly for parish needs. Each parish will decide how to best use its funds by developing a case statement. For example, Saint Barnabas Parish identified replacement of the church roof, repair of stained glass windows and brick-pointing of the convent as priorities. *Heritage of Faith ~ Vision of Hope* will also bolster struggling yet viable parishes with an infusion of \$10 million to the Inter-Parochial Cooperation Commission (IPCC). For forty years, the Archdiocese has devoted more than \$100 million toward financially supporting parishes that simply cannot meet operating expenses. The Archdiocese does this with the assistance of parishes with greater means, Archdiocesan resources and the IPCC endowment.

Catholic Education: Catholic education will also benefit from this campaign with \$50 million allocated. Two separate tuition assistance endowments will be established – one for elementary school students, and one for the children who attend our five special education schools. Funding will also support two previously announced high schools to provide for the growing Catholic population in Bucks and Montgomery Counties.

Cathedral Basilica of Saints Peter and Paul: *Heritage of Faith ~ Vision of Hope* will allocate \$25 million for the necessary renovations and establishment of a preservation fund for the Mother Church of the Archdiocese. Bishop McFadden said, “Our Cathedral is a site for solemn liturgies and significant events. Just last Friday, the Cathedral witnessed the seventh funeral in little over a year for a police officer killed in the line of duty. We must devote the resources to care for this home for all Catholics and landmark for our entire region.”

Saint Charles Borromeo Seminary: *Heritage of Faith ~ Vision of Hope* will allocate \$20 million for a tuition assistance endowment fund for future priests, for campus infrastructure needs and chapel renovations. Saint Charles, in addition to the formation of seminarians from Philadelphia, also serves 31 Dioceses from around the country. The Seminary is also a center of theological education for lay people and men and women religious.

Clergy Retirement: The Priests’ Pension Plan was established in the early 1990s, but anticipated needs of retired priests far exceed available funds. In addition, Villa St. Joseph, home to retired and infirm priests, is in need of structural, environmental and safety improvements. *Heritage of Faith ~ Vision of Hope* will allocate a total of \$15 million for both needs.

Catholic Human Services: The needs of hundreds of thousands of people are met annually by Catholic Human Services of the Archdiocese. Catholic Social Services, Catholic Health Care Services, and Nutritional Development Services, will each benefit from *Heritage of Faith ~ Vision of Hope*, for a total of \$10 million combined, helping them continue to care for the neediest among us. Catholic Human Services transforms, heals, empowers and nourishes people of all denominations.

“The needs of the Archdiocese are clear, and they are urgent,” said Mr. Jim Delaney, a lay member of the Cardinal’s Leadership Gifts Task Force. “The faithful of Philadelphia, me included, cannot stand by and do nothing. We must leave a strong, vibrant church to our children and grandchildren.”

Cardinal Rigali concluded, “Through the efforts and extraordinary generosity of the people of God in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, I am confident that this campaign will succeed. I am certain that through the intercession of Saints John Neumann and Katharine Drexel, the Lord will inspire us to share with others our Heritage of Faith and our Vision of Hope.”

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