

ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC COMMUNITY
BUILDING OUR FUTURE: TOGETHER IN FAITH
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



1. What is the goal of the capital campaign?

- a. The goal of this campaign is to strengthen and sustain our St. Mary's Catholic Community by investing in essential improvements to our school and religious education building, the school/parish hall, and our parish offices and shared spaces. These updates focus on critical needs such as windows, electrical systems, lighting, and accessibility so our campus can continue serving families for generations.

2. What are the estimated costs for each part of the project?

- a. We are committed to transparency, and we are happy to share the current estimated ranges with anyone who asks. What is important to know is that construction numbers are always estimates and can evolve as projects move through design, permitting, and construction.
- b. A helpful comparison is a home remodel. Most people know that early estimates often adjust before work is finished.
- c. Here's the current *tentative* range of costs for the proposed work:
 - i. Windows: approximately \$500,000
 - ii. Electrical: approximately \$850,000
 - iii. Lighting: approximately \$150,000
 - iv. Kitchen and Hall Improvements: \$125,000–\$150,000
- d. If anyone has detailed financial questions, Father John or a campaign leader is always happy to meet personally.

3. Why don't the cost figures appear in the case statement or other written materials in the appeal packet?

- a. The numbers are still fluid at this stage. We want the focus to be on why these improvements are needed and how they will benefit our parish community. Anyone who wants more detailed information is welcome to ask, and we are glad to share it.

4. Why don't you include diagrams, renderings, or images showing what the projects might look like?

- a. We are still in the early design phase. Right now, the emphasis is on explaining the needs and the vision. Once plans become more defined, we will share visuals as they become available.

5. What are the ADA upgrades being considered for access to the school and parish hall?

- a. Accessibility is a priority. One concept under review is adding a lift to make it easier to move between the street level and the hall by converting one of the two State Street staircases into a walkway that leads to a lift platform. If that option is not feasible, we will continue studying other ways to ensure our campus is more welcoming and accessible for everyone.

6. Why don't we just move or rebuild the school somewhere else?

- a. The Diocese and Bishop Peter have been clear that St. Mary's Catholic Community should remain at our current campus. Relocation was evaluated, but it would be cost prohibitive and is not in alignment with Diocesan direction.

7. How were the priorities for the campaign determined?

- a. The parish conducted a full professional evaluation of the entire campus with architects, structural engineers, construction experts, and mechanical and electrical engineers. These assessments identified the most urgent needs. Parishioner survey feedback confirmed the top priorities, which are improvements to the school and religious education building and parish office and meeting space.

8. Why now?

- a. After years of study, planning, and discernment, parish leadership believes the time is right. Waiting longer risks rising construction costs and continued strain on our facilities. Moving forward now is the most responsible path for the future of our community.

9. Why are the cost estimates still ranges rather than fixed numbers?

- a. Construction costs naturally shift during design and permitting. Our goal is to provide realistic and responsible ranges based on the expert evaluations we have received. These will continue to be refined as plans take shape.

10. What is being done to ensure good stewardship of donor funds?

- a. Stewardship is at the heart of this campaign. To ensure that every gift is handled properly, two full-time staff members and one campaign cabinet volunteer are working together to oversee all campaign finances. All contributions are deposited into a dedicated campaign account, and all campaign-related expenses are paid directly from that account. No campaign funds are going to the Diocese for this project. We are approaching every step with care, transparency, and a commitment to using each gift exactly as intended.

11. Why not build the parish office first and handle the school later?

- a. Parishioner feedback made the priority clear. The school and religious education building are the greatest needs. The parish office would follow, and our hope is to complete both within this campaign, depending on the total funds raised.

12. Is this the only campaign we will do, or will there be others in the future?

- a. This is the only campaign currently planned. Whether additional efforts are needed years from now will depend on how much is raised and the long-term needs of our parish.

13. When will fundraising and construction take place?

- a. The campaign is underway now. Parishioners may make three-year pledges, or a shorter period if they prefer. School improvements would likely occur during summer months. New windows could be installed as early as summer 2026.

14. Will church services or school operations be disrupted?

- a. No significant disruption is expected. School work will take place in summer, and office improvements will not interfere with worship or ministries.

15. Will tuition increase because of the campaign?

- a. No. The campaign funds capital improvements and does not affect operating budgets or tuition.

16. How is the school doing on enrollment, and what does the future look like?

- a. St. Mary's School has grown by double digits for the third year in a row, which is an exceptional achievement at a time when many schools are facing

declining enrollment. We have an outstanding staff and a vibrant community. This campaign helps ensure our facilities reflect the quality of our people and programs.