

The Christ at Our Center Campaign

The campaign began as an effort to make necessary updates to our 30-year-old church building, but requests by the Diocese added several items to our scope.

The project includes five main components (** indicates Diocesan request):

Crucifix and Tabernacle

- purchase of new crucifix mounted on the center of the altar wall**
- refacing the back wall of the altar with a larger cutout to enhance the crucifix
- moving the marble-based Tabernacle to the altar, reinforcing the supports/subfloor as needed**
- hanging our existing Risen Christ corpus above the baptismal font

Pews and Kneelers

- removing all pews, repairing any damage and refinishing any pews with blemishes
- adding new upholstered, soft-drop kneelers to pews**
- adjusting configuration to accommodate increased space needed for kneelers

Carpet and Flooring

- removing all carpet and installing carpet tiles in main traffic areas
- installing contrasting broadloom carpet on altar & stairs to distinguish the altar
- install luxury vinyl plank flooring beneath pews and in vestibules

Sound Improvements

- creating a separate sound engineer table in the northeast corner of the church
- installing a Bluetooth-enabled hearing loop for those with listening devices
- improving choir area railings and layout

Cosmetic Improvements

- repairing window housings at south end of altar
- enhancing the recessed area at the center of our altar wall for our crucifix
- install LED lighting in remaining ceiling fixtures
- sandblast, repair and repaint front facade

What is the total cost of the project?

The project budget is approximately \$540,000, and to date, we've raised about \$120,000 from previous pledges and some initial donors. Right now, we have the funds in our Diocesan account to begin this project, but we need to fundraise an additional \$420,000.

Who is making the decisions about design and décor?

Parish staff and a committee of 10 parishioners have worked with our contractor (Daprato Rigali) and various suppliers to finalize our design choices, right-size the scope of our project and create a plan that addresses the concerns of the Diocese with our own parish needs in mind.



How do I make a donation? Can I sponsor the crucifix or other elements of the renovation?

A pledge card is included in this mailing, and we are asking that pledges be received by January 31, 2026. If you would like to make pledge payments quarterly, monthly, or through a donor-advised fund or qualified charitable distribution, please reach out to Fred Schlick at businessmanager@st-irene.org. One-time donations can be made through WeShare by visiting www.st-irene.org/christatourcenter. We gratefully welcome major gifts to our renovation. Please contact Fred Schlick for more opportunities.

Didn't we already fundraise for carpet?

Yes! We raised enough funds in prior campaigns (which were then delayed by COVID and staff changes) to cover the flooring portion of our campaign. That money will be used to complete the carpet line item, though prices have increased since our initial budget.

Why do we need to have kneelers now? Will we have to kneel at Mass?

Guidance from the Diocese has evolved since the church was built in 1995. Because we are going to remove our pews for the flooring, the Diocese has asked us to include kneelers in our renovation. We are called to kneel at Mass before the Blessed Sacrament, which includes the consecration of the Eucharist. Those who are unable to kneel are not obligated to do so. According to the USCCB, "[faithful] should kneel beginning after the singing or recitation of the Sanctus (Holy, Holy, Holy) until after the Amen of the Eucharistic Prayer, except when prevented on occasion by ill health, or for reasons of lack of space, of the large number of people present, or for another reasonable cause."

Why do we need to move to the old church (ACL) for three months?

To provide the least disruptive environment for worship, we will move to our former church home for three months to allow the workers unencumbered access to the church for construction.

What about liturgical events and sacraments normally held in Church like reconciliation, weddings, funerals and baptisms?

Baptisms and funerals will continue to take place during our time in the old St. Irene Church. At this time, no weddings are scheduled for those months. Parish staff will work closely with parishioners to be as accommodating as possible for family events and sacraments.

What about events normally held in the Activity Center? Or Children's Liturgy of the Word/Choir/ Religious Education?

Parish events like Bunco, Hospitality, Super Bowl party and other events that only require the lower level will continue in the ACL. Events like Chili Cook-Off will be rescheduled or moved to another space. Parish staff are working with those who rent space on our campus to accommodate these changes. For our ministries, leaders will communicate any changes to normal schedules/locations.

Will masses be wheelchair-accessible?

For those unable to climb stairs, video and audio for masses each week will be simulcast in the ACL, which is ramp-accessible.

I still have questions, who should I contact?

Committee members will be available at Hospitality the weekend of December 13-14 to answer questions. Or, you are welcome to contact the parish office at 630-393-2400.