



November 1, 2020

This year, Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish celebrates its 65th Anniversary! Our parish and school have been pillars in the west end of Belleville for not only the Catholic community but the larger community because of the generosity of you and other parishioners like you. Over the years, our faithful have always stepped forward to meet whatever need has arisen to keep our ministries flourishing and our infrastructure safe and sound. I write today to ask for your help once again.

We now face another time when we are called upon to come together to meet our parish's needs. COVID has presented a myriad of challenges for us all. Most importantly, our ability to gather as a community has been drastically affected. Many parishioners are not able to attend the celebration of the Eucharist at Mass. Several normal fundraising events and activities have not been possible. These unique circumstances have impacted donations which normally sustain our church and school. At the same time, some much needed repairs to our church, school and grounds and new technology for the school are necessary and require significant funding.

With declining membership and Mass attendance and decreased weekly collections, we can no longer pay for capital improvements from our regular donations. To meet our needs, we are implementing a campaign, *Forward in Faith*, to raise \$350,000. The campaign will enable us to fund these projects:

- Church – Install a new roof and air conditioner; replace damaged ceiling tiles
- School – Replace outdated computers and update technology
- Repair the lower parking lot
- Brick tuckpointing and repair on the school
- Operational expenses for Covid-related expense and faculty and staff salaries and health insurance

Today, I humbly ask you to move *Forward in Faith* with us and support this campaign. All of us are living in the most unprecedented times in recent history. I recognize that things may seem uncertain...within our families, within our parish, within our diocese, and within our country. Yet, we seek to heed God's call to move *Forward in Faith* now more than ever before.

Please join your fellow parishioners by offering your prayers and financial support through a one-time gift or a pledge paid over two years. Our hope is that every parish household will take part. The enclosed materials will give you additional information on the campaign and how you can participate. We humbly thank you for your consideration of this request and your past and present support of Our Lady Queen of Peace. Know that you and your loved ones are remembered always in my prayers.

Most sincerely and appreciatively yours in Christ,

The Reverend Matthew J. Elie
Pastor