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Saint Francis of Assisi Initiates Restoration of Historic Church through Living Our Mission Campaign

BY ALEX PREVITERA

For over 120 years, Saint Francis of Assisi has brought the gospel of Jesus Christ to the people of Staunton and the surrounding area, not only by the words and deeds of its parishioners, but also by the physical presence of the church itself.

Designed by the famous architect T.J. Collins and clad in a unique greenstone, it has stood as light to the world. For years the church's exterior stone has been rapidly deteriorating. The parish committees and engineering experts have studied this issue extensively and found it necessary to restore the church's exterior.

Saint Francis's participation in the Living Our Mission capital campaign is allowing this project to become a reality.

Due to the extraordinary needs facing the parish, Saint Francis is receiving back over eighty percent of funds collected up to its campaign goal of \$1,800,000 (four times the usual parish offertory amount) and ninety percent of funds raised over that goal. By initiating this campaign now, the parish will be able to take significant steps towards restoring the church by -

- Replacing the failed exterior stone with granite stone of the same general color;

- Reinforcing the structural walls of the church directly behind the facade of granite;

- Repairing the bell tower substructure and replacing the facade with granite stone;

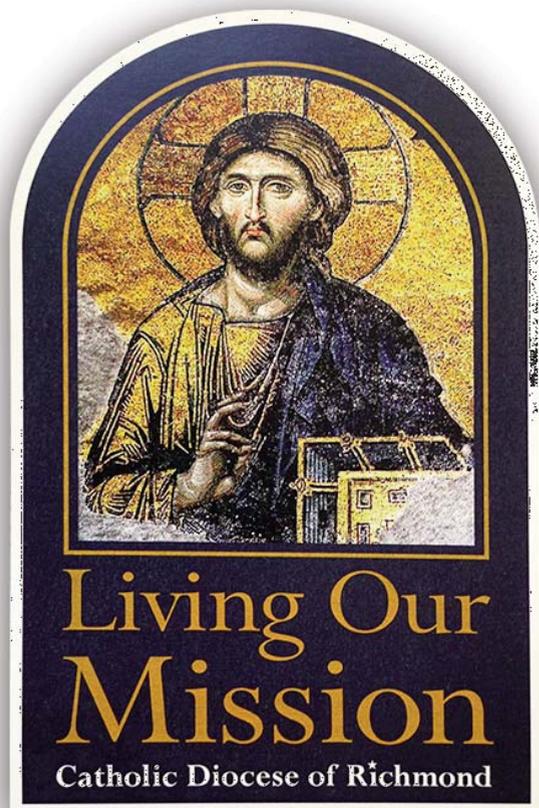
- Reengineering the drainage system of the water shed from the roof to eliminate future water damage to the structure;

- Completing other prudent repairs that arise as the project proceeds to ensure that the restoration provides a permanent solution to the current problem and a permanent church structure.

Mr. Greg Ridenour served as Chair for the campaign and explains why he wanted to become involved in this endeavor.

"I wanted to be involved in the campaign because it ties everything together - both geographically speaking, the local parish and whole Diocese, but more importantly generationally, building on what has gone before and setting the stage for success in the future."

In a span of only a few months, with the leadership of Fr. Joseph Wamala, an international priest from Uganda, as well as Mr. Ridenour and many other parishioners, Saint Francis was able to come together in raising \$1,868,224.



"The Living our Mission Capital Campaign has been a great and challenging experience for me. I had never dreamt of raising an amount four times the annual income of the parish. Thanks to the sacrificial generosity of my parishioners, great lay parish

leadership led by Mr. Greg Ridenour and the wise counsel from our campaign firm - Greater Mission", said Fr. Wamala.

To learn more about the Living Our Mission campaign, please visit livingourmission.org.