

Providing *for our* Future



CAMPAIGN FOR THE CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF LEXINGTON

CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF LEXINGTON | 2024-2025 CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

INVITATION FROM BISHOP JOHN

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

I thank those who have responded so generously to the *Providing for Our Future* campaign. In the first couple years, more than \$2.7 million was donated to help reduce the debt of the Catholic Diocese of Lexington. As we pledged at the outset, these contributions are helping us respond more effectively to our region's needs. For those of you who have not responded already, I ask that you prayerfully review these materials to discern how you might be able to assist in our efforts.

As many of you know, the debt was incurred due to well-intentioned efforts for outreach and ministry in our local Church. But those investments created financial liabilities that were untenable. Through the sale of some properties and negotiating loan structure and interest rates, and now through the success of this campaign, we are making great progress in reducing the debt.

The phrase from Kentucky poet Wendell Berry — “*practicing resurrection in places of crucifixion*” — captures our mission as a diocese. As expressed in our pastoral plan: “*To practice resurrection is to live in the light of eternity and not just the present moment, it is to take seriously the promises of the Risen Christ and act as though we believe them. It is to not be discouraged by all that is wrong in our midst, but to realize that God's kingdom will ultimately be established. As Catholic Christians, we need to practice resurrection — to live now in the risen life of Christ.*”

I invite you to prayerfully consider contributing your financial gifts to this crucial effort for our diocese, as we join together in *Providing for Our Future*.



Peace and all Good,

+ John Stowe, OFM Conv.

Bishop John Stowe, OFM Conv.

ABOUT THE CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF LEXINGTON

The Catholic Diocese of Lexington serves the rolling hills of the urban and suburban areas of Central Kentucky and the mountainous and rural areas of Eastern Kentucky. The two areas exist in stark contrast but serve as places of opportunity for faith and evangelization. In Eastern Kentucky, grinding poverty exists. Economic investment is hampered by low business investment, low education attainment, and rampant addiction. Unemployment rates in Appalachia are 75% higher than the national average. While Catholics are low in number, the Church is known as a source of comfort for all.

The diocese encompasses an area the size of Maryland, Delaware, and Rhode Island combined, half of which is in the heart of Appalachia. Roman Catholics comprise around 40,000 of the 1.5 million people in our region, or 3% of the total population. Of the 59 parishes in our diocese, roughly 40 rely on external funding to meet daily expenses. The diocese supplements parishes, schools, and outreach ministries in the mountains with over \$1.2 Million each year, donated by the faithful from inside and outside our boundaries. Our need is much greater than this.

BY THE NUMBERS...

The Catholic Diocese of Lexington in Central & Eastern Kentucky Ministers To:

16,423
SQUARE MILES



50
COUNTIES



59
PARISHES

39,004
MEMBERS



THE CAMPAIGN CASE

At the beginning of the campaign the debt totaled \$11 Million. In the first year of the campaign, 511 donors contributed \$2.7 million to reduce the debt. The current debt is \$7.3 million. The debt stems from multiple projects that touch back over a decade or more in our history.

With the support and consultation from the diocesan finance council, our Bishop and diocesan finance officer have worked to alleviate as much debt as possible. This has included the sale of multiple properties and the restructuring of our debt to receive optimum interest and payment rates. This diligent work has been fruitful, but now it is time to address what remains. It is our hope that the people of our diocese will consider supporting this campaign that we have named *Providing for Our Future*.

Why Should You Support This Campaign?

The Catholic Diocese of Lexington's 40 Appalachian counties are often characterized as the "other America," where 74 percent of children live below the federal poverty line. Unemployment is high, poverty is rampant, and addiction plagues too many.

The current debt holds us back from fully implementing the mission of the Church in Eastern Kentucky, and the Bluegrass, as we prepare for our future. As one Body in Christ, we are called to discern God's will and build up the Church as a community of missionary disciples. The Word of the Lord tells us: "As each one has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of God's varied grace" (1 Peter 4:10). Our faith teaches us that our gratitude should be expressed in words of praise to God and in generosity toward those in need.

A significant portion has already been paid on the debt and we continue to monitor and negotiate its financial structure. It is difficult to invest in ministries and those we serve while we are paying such a large amount on the debt. The payments, even with the restructuring that has been accomplished, prevent the diocese from expanding necessary ministries and areas of service.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the Providing For Our Future timeline?

We are in the second year of a three-year effort.

How is this campaign different from our Annual Appeal?

Each year, the funds raised through the Annual Appeal are used for the operational costs of our parishes, diverse ministries, and outreach programs. ***The Providing for Our Future campaign is separate from our Annual Appeal, and funds raised will be used expressly to reduce the diocesan debt.***

How much is the diocesan debt?

The debt is now \$7.3 million total, divided between the costs of the expansion and renovation of Sts. Peter and Paul School (SPPS), and residual debt from the sold Catholic Health Clinic in Stanton.

What other ways has the diocese tried to pay down the debt?

The diocese continues to work closely with its finance council and the banking community to examine and restructure the total debt to receive the best possible interest rates. Even with that, the monthly payments total nearly \$700,000 per year, money that the diocese could be investing in other meaningful support for our parishes and ministries.

What measures have been established to ensure these types of investments are vetted in the future?

The diocese has established a policy that every parish or school entity must submit building plans and capital campaigns to the diocese for approval, prior to moving forward. The Bishop, Finance Office, Development Office, Building Commission, and others (as needed) are consulted before approval is given. Entities must provide valid proof of conception, design, costs, and the ability to finance projects through debt or fundraising. They also must propose a reasonable payment plan to prove that they are financially able to carry that debt load. There is strict oversight to eliminate change orders and to ensure contract compliance.

HOW WILL THE DIOCESE BETTER RESPOND TO OUR NEEDS?

- Adding resources to our *Youth, Young Adult, and Campus Ministry* efforts, engaging more young people and helping them grow in their Catholic faith.



- Expanding our *Hispanic Ministry* efforts throughout our 59 parishes and 50-county region through continued diaconate formation, increasing opportunities for clergy to learn Spanish and immigrants to learn English, lay formation programs, and more opportunities for catechesis, faith formation, and sacramental ministry.

- Through *Catholic Charities*, addressing the always-increasing need for services the diocese provides for operations and outreach in our small parishes in Eastern Kentucky such as food pantries and 'clothes closets'.



- Continue to assist our parishes who have welcomed and supported those who have come to the diocese from around the world with *Refugee Services*, providing dedicated Masses to their communities, spaces for gathering, and additional support in the way of ESL classes and emergency assistance.

- Increasing our *Prison Ministries* in the 13 federal and state prisons within the diocese (a disproportionately high number of correctional facilities) through more coordinated and structured cooperation with our parish leaders – providing support, leadership, and formation for the clergy and lay people who are visiting prisons



THREE YEAR PLEDGE TABLE

TOTAL PLEDGE	36 MONTHLY PAYMENTS	12 QUARTERLY PAYMENTS	6 SEMI-ANNUAL PAYMENTS	3 ANNUAL PAYMENTS
\$10,000	\$277	\$833	\$1,666	\$3,333
\$5,000	\$138	\$416	\$833	\$1,666
\$3,600	\$100	\$300	\$600	\$1,200
\$2,500	\$69	\$208	\$416	\$833
\$1,620	\$45	\$135	\$270	\$540

MAKING YOUR COMMITMENT

Pledge Payments

Demonstrate your faithful support with a three-year pledge. You will receive pledge reminder notices in accordance with the payment method you select until your pledge is paid in full. One-time gifts are also welcome. Please make your checks payable to: Catholic Diocese of Lexington *Providing for Our Future Campaign*.

IRA Gifts

If you are over 70 ½ years old, you may also be eligible to make a charitable gift from your IRA assets of up to \$100,000 per year with no tax complications. These types of gifts must be transferred directly and count toward your minimum required distribution. It is always a good idea to speak with your financial adviser for more information.

Tax Deductible Gifts

All gifts are tax deductible as provided by law. Receipts will be provided.

Wills and Bequests

Providing for the Catholic Diocese of Lexington in your will can have significant federal and estate tax advantages. For additional information, please contact **Robert W. Watts, CFRE** at 859-253-1993 ext. 1049.

WAYS TO GIVE TO THE CAMPAIGN



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providing-for-our-future/](https://cdlex.org/providing-for-our-future/)



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Giving Page



Mail To:

Catholic Diocese
of Lexington
Development Office
1310 W. Main St.
Lexington, KY 40508



If you are interested in giving
gifts of stock, IRA or leaving
the diocese in your will, please
contact Office of Development
at 859-253-1993, Ext. 1049



CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF LEXINGTON

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