



DIVINE MERCY P A S T O R A T E



Dear Parishioners of the Divine Mercy Pastorate,

Bishop DeGrood has challenged us to move away from the position of slow decline and lay the foundations for the growth of our Pastorate.

Under the Community Pillar of our Set Ablaze Pastoral Plan, we committed to “creating a plan for developing and maintaining facilities within the pastorate, such as the St. John Paul II location and church building, as well as facilities at St. Mary and Christ the King.” This endeavor encompasses our three parishes in our pastorate, including our two schools, and will be the most ambitious project we embark on during Set Ablaze.

We are already seeing foundations of growth in many areas of our Pastorate including vibrant family life, dedicated individuals teaching the faith to others, and a love for Christ and his Church. Interwoven in these flagstone qualities of our Pastorate is the aspiration to align our resources and priorities for the good of the Pastorate as a whole. With Set Ablaze, we are being asked to move beyond the scope of not only building a church for St. John Paul II but ensuring that viability is possible for all of our parishes, including St. Mary and Christ the King parishes and schools.

To guide us in this effort, we are partnering with Maximizing Excellence, LLC, a local firm specializing in strategic planning, fundraising, and organizational effectiveness. With their expertise, we will evaluate parishioner engagement, future growth and sustainability, including the location and scope of St. John Paul II parish, and other elements associated with Set Ablaze.

Our Strategic Path Forward

1. Foundation Building

- Our leadership team has already started strategic planning, setting clear expectations, roles, and timelines. We will be interacting with you throughout this process with communication channels such as our website, email, bulletin, etc.

2. Grounding and Positioning

- Over the coming months, Maximizing Excellence will analyze key data, including prior studies and donor demographics, and solicit feedback from parish representatives.

3. Developing the Case for Viability

- We will craft a compelling case statement, outlining the need, value, and unique benefits of proposed changes, which will be shared by a newly formed Pastorate Pastoral Council.

4. Testing Feasibility

- During this critical phase, Maximizing Excellence will collect input from parishioners, staff, and other key stakeholders via surveys, focus groups, and interviews. We will analyze this feedback to assess readiness and refine plans.

5. Refinement and Goal Setting

- A retreat with leadership groups will incorporate findings into actionable strategies. Maximizing Excellence will help us finalize priorities, ensuring alignment with our pastorate's vision and values.

6. Final Report and Implementation

- Maximizing Excellence will present a comprehensive report to leadership, outlining recommendations and a timeline for the initial steps of implementation.

The project is estimated to span 15 months, concluding in Spring 2026. Throughout, we will prioritize transparency and communication. You will have several opportunities to participate in surveys, focus groups, and other feedback channels. We invite you to stay informed, pray for our leadership team, and consider how you might contribute to this important task that is before us. Your engagement and prayers will be crucial as we navigate this exciting process, and I am praying for you during this time.

Guided by the Holy Spirit, this process will ensure our facilities foster unity, hospitality, and growth for all our parishioners. Future generations will look back at this time and be inspired by the faith, trust, and dedication of each and every one of you.

In Christ,



Fr. Paul Rutten
Pastor, Divine Mercy Pastorate