

January 2008

Dear Parishioners,

New Years is a time for new beginnings. I am writing to you regarding a new beginning for our parish as we discharge an old debt.

In 2002 the Diocese launched a 5-year capital campaign entitled Preserving Our Past...Building Our Future (PPBF). Many of you will remember this campaign. Its goal was to fund renovations to the cathedral as well as other significant projects (e.g., a new facility for St. Francis High School, a retirement facility for diocesan priests, and social service projects). St. Francis Parish was expected to raise \$600,000. (This amount was determined by the number of registered parishioners at the time. It also took into account that we had just finished our own capital campaign to pay off our loan from the Diocese for the 1994 renovation.) Parishioners of St. Francis pledged \$150,000 and approximately \$103,000 was received. St. Francis was one of three parishes in the Diocese that did not reach its goal; the other two were extremely poor parishes.

The PPBF capital campaign ended in July 2007. At that time, I was discreetly approached by a member of the Board of Directors of the PPBF about the possibility of working out a solution whereby St. Francis could meet its obligation. The Board of Directors of the PPBF realized that St. Francis parishioners have a deep love for the poor and suggested that our parish specify our contribution to the capital campaign to be used strictly for the poor.

After consulting with the Parish Finance Council and the Parish Council, the parish made a proposal to the Diocese to meet its fair share in the campaign. Our proposal was presented to the Diocese and they accepted the proposal.

The terms of the proposal are as follows:

1. The amount of \$450,000 will be paid to PPBF from the parish's "Harrington Fund" savings account now on deposit in The Parochial Fund Inc.
2. PPBF will then transfer these monies to The Catholic Foundation of the Diocese of Sacramento Inc. ("Catholic Foundation") which serves as the long term custodian of those endowments that are being funded via the Preserving Our Past, Building Our Future capital campaign, including the Social Services Endowment. The transfer of the \$450,000 to the Catholic Foundation will be made subject to Catholic Foundation's formal agreement to adhere to the terms of this Agreement.

3. The account will be established in the Catholic Foundation as a separate and distinct “sister” endowment to the PPBF Social Services Endowment and shall be named “Poverello Fund”. (This name was chosen, because it is an affectionate nickname for St. Francis.)
4. The Poverello Fund shall be invested by Catholic Foundation in a manner consistent with the investment of the PPBF Social Service Endowment.
5. 100% of the earnings generated on the Poverello Fund shall be retained by Catholic Foundation and added to the principal of the account until the total account reaches \$497,000. (The \$497,000 figure covers all unredeemed pledges as well as the remainder to reach the goal of \$600,000.)
6. Earnings generated after the Poverello Fund reaches the \$497,000 figure shall be distributed semi-annually and shall be allocated 50% back to St. Francis of Assisi Parish via deposit into the Parish’s Harrington Fund savings account, and 50% to the Roman Catholic Bishop of Sacramento, a corporation sole (diocese”) for “human social services” only and in no way used for social service building construction purposes, as was the restriction placed by Mr. Albert Harrington, the original donor of the funds to the Parish.
7. Once the cumulative total of the Parish’s distributed 50% share of earnings reaches \$450,000, then 100% of the earnings thereafter, and in perpetuity, will be distributed semi-annually to the diocese for “human social services” only and in no way used for social service building construction purposes, as was the restriction placed by Mr. Albert Harrington, the original donor of the funds to the Parish. (This will take approximately 24-28 years.)

As a result of this proposal, the Parish has fulfilled its fair share in the PPBF capital campaign, and the initial endowment of \$450,000 will return to the Parish for our assistance to the poor, and the Diocese will have an endowment that will generate money for assistance to the poor in perpetuity. In fact, over time, the Poverello Fund will have generated more money than any other parish gave.

I believe that this use of the Harrington Fund bequest will not only discharge the parish’s obligation to the PPBF capital campaign, but more importantly, it will also actively benefit the poor indefinitely.

May the Lord give each of you Peace.

Fr. Anthony M. Garibaldi, OFM  
Pastor