



St. Thomas Aquinas Parish

1502 Sara Rd. SE, Rio Rancho New Mexico 87124
505-892-1511

Dear fellow parishioners,

We, the leadership of our parish, **want to give you an update on the Build My Church project** for building us a new House of God here at St. Thomas. Here is where things stand:

- **The Archdiocese has approved us to build our new church**, at the cost of nine-million dollars, provided we can put 50% down in cash.
- We right now have \$4,700,256 in the Building Fund, which of course **is more than the 50% needed**.
- The Archdiocese entering Chapter 11 proceedings has complicated things. The good news is that **our designated donations for this project are protected** and held in a parish account of the Archdiocese Deposit and Loan. This is a separate entity from the Archdiocese of Santa Fe that is undergoing chapter 11 reorganization. The donations for this campaign are specifically designated for this building project and not for other uses, which adds another layer of protection.
- However, **the Archdiocese of Santa Fe will not approve the start of any new building projects for any parish, until the Chapter 11 reorganization is completed**. As frustrating as this is, it makes sense: The Archdiocese has been advised by their lawyers not to enter into major new financial commitments when everything is “up in the air”.
- **How long will the Chapter 11 reorganization take? Only God knows**. Looking at the other seventeen dioceses in the United States that have gone through this process, it could be one to three years. It all depends on how complicated the legal process gets, and at this point, no one can foretell what will happen.
- However, the Archdiocese has allowed us to proceed to construction documents (the “schematic design” documents), and to get all plans completed **so that as soon as the Chapter 11 proceedings are finished, we can “put the shovel in the ground” and start building our church**.
- **And we have been busy doing that!** We have been working with architects and construction experts to modify our plans for the church to make sure it will cost no more than nine-million dollars, and still meet the fundamental needs of the parish that we identified seven years ago in our parish-wide consultation, that many of you remember.



St. Thomas Aquinas Parish

1502 Sara Rd. SE, Rio Rancho New Mexico 87124
505-892-1511

- So, do we want to keep giving money to the building fund? Of course! **The more money we put down, the less money we must borrow** – money that we must pay back. And the sooner we pay that money back, the sooner we can look at the other parts of the parish plant we want to build – offices, classrooms, meeting rooms, and so forth.
- **God must really want this new church, because the devil keeps putting roadblocks in the way!** We can never thank you enough for your great patience in all this. With God's grace, we shall build a new House for God and His family in our parish, that will provide for our needs far into the future! We beg your prayers for this great project. **We continue to praise and thank our Father for all He has done for us in Christ and press forward with the Christ-given mission of our parish: to "catch fish and feed sheep" – to win souls for Jesus, and to nourish them into mature disciples.**

If you have any questions concerning these matters, please feel free to contact our business office at 892-1511.

Your servants in Christ,

Msgr. Douglas A. Raun, Pastor

Mr. Michael Gonzales, Business Manager

Mr. Shaun Herrera, Chairman, on behalf of the members of the parish Pastoral Council

Mr. David Heil, Chairman, on behalf of the members of the parish Finance Council