

“Christ Our Life” Campaign reaches the \$10 million mark

goodwill of parishioners extends halfway across the world to mission parish in San Lucas

New Ulm – Day by day, dollar by dollar, the “Christ Our Life” Campaign is making positive changes throughout the Diocese of New Ulm. From new roofs to renovated buildings, parishes are using the campaign to address much needed projects. But the impact of the campaign isn’t isolated to the borders of our diocese. In fact, the goodwill is stretching halfway across the world.

Five churches in the New Ulm diocese have decided to designate a portion of their campaign funds to the outreach mission in Guatemala. St. John, Morton; St. Patrick, Kandiyohi; St. Thomas More, Lake Lillian; Our Lady of the Lakes, Spicer; and St. Mary, Willmar, have committed to raise dollars for families they’ve never even met.

“It was important for us to tithe 10 percent of our parish income from the capital campaign because it enabled us to enter into and approach the campaign from an

attitude and spirit of abundance rather than scarcity,” said Fr. Steve Verhelst, pastor at four of the involved parishes.

Since the early 1960s, dioceses in Minnesota have responded to the request of Bishop Angelico Melotto to support the Diocese of Solola in Guatemala. Fifty years later, only the Diocese of New Ulm still has priests actively serving there on a regular basis. They operate the San Lucas Toliman Mission. The mission offers programs that support and care for people living in poverty. And priests and parishes from the Diocese of New Ulm continue to offer their help, year after year.

“New Ulm helps those living in poverty receive an opportunity to live a life worthy of dignified human beings,” said Msgr. Greg Schaffer, a priest of the Diocese of New Ulm and director of the San Lucas Mission Office. “Those receiving this blessing by the diocesan community of New Ulm

Over \$10 million in contributions to date



<http://dnucampaign.steiergroup.net>

are forever grateful for the care and concern of others.”

The Church of Saint Mary in Willmar made the decision to tithe 10 percent of its campaign proceeds to share with the San Lucas Mission, as well as with local food pantries and other organizations that support people in need.

“So often we choose to live life through the lens of ‘not enough’: not enough time, not enough energy, not enough resources, not enough money,” said Fr. Verhelst.

“An attitude of abundance enables us to live life through the lens of sharing what we do have so that there is enough for everyone.”

Church of St. Mary parishioner Joe Eikmeier said supporting the San Lucas Mission has benefited the parish in many ways. Some parishioners have visited the mission to experience the work that the church has been funding, he said.

“It is also gratifying to see the concern that many of our parishioners have for the needs of not only those in the mission in Guatemala, but also in other parts of the world – such as Africa and Asia – where our parishioners have sent their support,” Eikmeier said. “Since so many areas of the world are lacking in the resources with which we have been blessed, it becomes necessary that we as Catholics aid those in need, as we are able.”

Msgr. Schaffer added that the

global ministry is a direct reflection of the work of Jesus Christ and the teachings of the Bible. While on earth, Jesus commanded his disciples to transmit his teachings for generations to come.

“Our social teaching and doctrine as Catholics is profound and clear in teaching us how to live and serve God,” Msgr. Schaffer said. “And those acts of kindness and sacrifice are continually applied in so many different situations the world over. As a diocese we work to make ourselves better, so as to improve our world, realizing and appreciating that our God is a God of compassion and mercy for everyone, always,” he said.

For more information about the “Christ Our Life” Campaign, contact Wayne Pelzel at the diocesan Office of Development, 507-359-2966; wpelzel@dnu.org.