



A Message from Father Chris

We live in a world filled with abundance of opportunities, possessions, and comforts that surround us daily. And yet, Jesus reminds us that true wealth is not measured by what we have, but by how we use what we've been given. The Gospel calls us to see beyond ourselves, to recognize the sacred value of every person, and to respond with generosity and love.

Our parish was founded over 30 years ago on this very spirit of welcome and hospitality. From humble beginnings in a school gym to the vibrant community we are today, St. Paul the Apostle has always been a place where people are invited to come just as they are and to be seen, known, and loved.

Now, we are being called to take another step forward in faith.

Together with parish leaders and members of our community, we have discerned a vision for our future, a vision rooted in beauty, accessibility, and connection. Through the *Ignite the Future: For Us, For Them, For Him* Campaign we aim to raise over \$3,000,000, we hope to renew our sacred spaces and strengthen our ministries. This is not simply about renovation; it is about creating a parish home that reflects the dignity of every person and the presence of Christ among us. Our campaign will focus on:

- ❖ **Beautifying Our Sanctuary**, so that all who enter are drawn into reverent worship and prayer,
- ❖ **Transforming Our West Entrance**, ensuring accessibility for all,
- ❖ **Expanding Our Upper Gathering Space**, to host celebrations, outreach, and fellowship, and,
- ❖ **Centralizing Parish Administration**, to better serve our growing community and free up space for ministry.

We are not only building for today, we are building for tomorrow. This is our moment to leave something lasting for the next generation. Just as others built this parish for us, we now have the privilege and responsibility to ensure that St. Paul the Apostle continues to be a place of welcome, worship, and witness for decades to come. A place where our children and grandchildren will encounter Christ, grow in faith, and find community.

I invite you to pray with me for the success of this effort. May we be generous not just with our resources, but with our hearts. May we see this campaign not as a burden, but as a sacred invitation to build something lasting, something beautiful, something that honors the value of every human person.

With gratitude and hope,

Fr. Chris Ciastoń
Pastor, St. Paul the Apostle



The background of the entire page is a photograph of a church building. The top portion shows a dark, domed roof against a clear blue sky. Below the dome, the church's facade is partially visible, featuring light-colored stone or brickwork. In the foreground, there are several trees with bright yellow and green foliage, suggesting a spring or early summer setting. The trees are out of focus, creating a soft, natural backdrop for the text.

History of our Parish

In 1991, a local archdiocesan committee began discussing how to best serve communities in Northeastern Illinois. The Gurnee parish was founded by Father Farrell Kane and supported by a group of faithful volunteers with a vision to welcome people – coming just as they are.

The parish held weekend liturgies in a local school gym with folding chairs and a portable tabernacle, celebrating its first Mass in March 1992 as the Warren Township Catholic Community – a name chosen to ensure that parishioners from Gurnee and beyond all felt welcome. Three weeks later, after the parish chose the name St. Paul the Apostle, the new name was printed in bulletins alongside names of members who hosted daily Masses, ministries throughout the week, and baptisms on the weekend.

Welcome and hospitality have been part of our sacred mission since our founding, and moving into our new building in 1998 ushered in a new season of parish life by letting us expand our parish ministries, increase education and spiritual formation, and host larger celebrations as a whole community.

Today, we reflect on this history and more recent growth with deep gratitude, and look forward with hope as we plan new ways to continue St. Paul the Apostle's legacy of faithful hospitality and welcome.

Our Vision for the Future

At St. Paul the Apostle, we are blessed with a rich legacy of welcome, worship, and community. Now, we look ahead with hope and purpose—ready to build upon that legacy for the generations to come.

Through beauty, accessibility, and thoughtful design, we aim to renew our parish home so it can continue to serve, inspire, and unite.

We are called to be stewards of what we've received. By investing in our gathering space, sanctuary, entrance, and parish offices, we ensure that future generations will find a place where faith is nurtured and community is formed.

Let us build not only for today, but for tomorrow.