

# ***Diocese moves forward with construction of Catholic Pastoral Centre and Cathedral as part of Holy Family project***

**By Kiply Lukan Yaworski**

Plans to move forward with construction of a new Cathedral and Catholic Pastoral Centre were recently presented in a series of meetings across the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon. The project was discussed at a meeting of priests and Parish Life Directors Jan. 15, and at a number of deanery meetings beginning Feb. 5.

The cathedral designation will be given to the new Holy Family church to be built on 5.5 acres of land adjacent to St. Joseph Catholic High School in northeast Saskatoon.

The existing St. Paul's Cathedral on Spadina Crescent has for many years been too small to function as a cathedral for diocesan celebrations such as the Rite of Election, the Chrism Mass or ordinations. St. Paul's will continue to operate as a parish in downtown Saskatoon, and will be given the designation of "co-cathedral" in light of its historic significance.

A chronic lack of space at the existing Catholic Pastoral Centre and Chancery Office next to St. Paul's has also prompted a decision to pursue the construction of a new pastoral centre in conjunction with the Holy Family project, announced Bishop Albert LeGatt at several recent meetings.

Planning and design of the project has moved forward to the point where an architect has been hired and construction costs have been pinpointed at about \$28.5 million, reported Don Gorsalitz, who was recently hired as diocesan development officer.

Figures cited at earlier planning stages were lower, partly because the full scope of the project was not yet known, and also because the reality of construction costs to build and furnish the 65,000-square-foot building are now more realistic. The estimate includes a 25 per cent cushion, he added.

Holy Family parishioners have made significant fund-raising strides in their "Every Family" campaign to build their parish home, those attending the deanery and leadership meetings heard. The parish has secured donations and pledges for some \$8 million, with a goal of raising an additional \$8 million as a parish (including the possibility of taking on a partial mortgage). The existing building in the Sutherland neighbourhood of Saskatoon has been sold to a Mennonite congregation.

A new "Uniting in Faith" fund-raising campaign for the Cathedral and Catholic Pastoral Centre side of the project is now being launched, with major donors being approached in 2008 and a diocesan-wide parish-based campaign planned for 2009.

"What we are really doing here is building significantly our capacity to strengthen our faith community," Gorsalitz said of the Catholic Pastoral Centre project. "Our faith community serves us in many ways. Often we take for granted the various programs offered, not thinking about how and what is involved in the creation and implementation. It is also fair to say that being part of our faith community has played a large role in shaping us into who and what we have become."

Some 40 programs and services are coordinated from the Catholic Pastoral Centre, which provides support to both urban and rural parishes in areas such as adult faith formation, youth ministry, catechetics, social justice, family life, scripture study, lay ministry development, vocation promotion, and hospital ministry. It is also the home of the Diocesan Resource Library and the chancery offices.

Bishop LeGatt described some recent diocesan initiatives such as the hiring of a diocesan coordinator of pastoral services for Royal University and City Hospital, the launch of an Aboriginal stream of the Lay Formation program, the establishment of a Restorative Justice ministry office, and a more focused effort in the areas of marriage and family life through the work of the Marriage Task Force.

"The diocese provides a core of services, and a group of people offering services: so that where Christian life is truly lived – in the parishes – Christian life is able to be strengthened and people have the resources that are needed," LeGatt said, describing the work that comes out of the Catholic Pastoral Centre. "And as we look to the future, there are many ways in which we need to continue to grow."

The bishop said the diocese was proceeding in a spirit of good stewardship, trying to meet diocesan needs wisely and without extravagance, while proceeding in conjunction with another project as a way to maximize efforts and resources.

LeGatt noted that the combined use of worship space, parking, and meeting rooms between Holy Family Parish, the Cathedral, the Catholic Pastoral Centre and the nearby St. Joseph Catholic High School would mesh extremely well. For instance, while the parish would most often need meeting space in the evening, the Catholic Pastoral Centre is more likely to need it during the day, and while the high school requires the parking on weekdays, the church would require it on weekends.

At the same time, the bishop invited pastors and deanery and parish leaders to embrace the Cathedral and Catholic Pastoral Centre project as a way to foster unity and to build up the diocese's capacity for outreach and evangelization in the future.

In discussions at the Jan. 15 pastors' meeting, it was noted that the project has the potential to create a centre for the faith and for the entire diocesan community, providing "unity with people and also a structure." It also provides a way for each parishioner to be united with the larger mission of the whole church, with the diocese, and with all other parishes, the gathering heard.

There is a great potential for increased giving within the community, Gorsalitz predicted. "If the need is clearly expressed, people within our faith community will understand their important role in bringing this project to fruition," he said. "The Uniting in Faith campaign will be an opportunity for our whole diocesan family to grow and strengthen our faith community today and for generations to come."

Rev. David Tumback, pastor at Holy Family parish, reported on the progress of plans for the building, the hiring of an architect, and the efforts of committees, volunteers and parishioners to move the project forward. "The Divine Architect is very much a part of this process," he added, reflecting on the good will of those involved, and the efforts to bring together many different ideas and visions into one plan.