



NEWS ARCHIVE:

Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon

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Representatives from across the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon were among those breaking ground at an official sod-turning celebration for a new Cathedral and Catholic Pastoral Centre Dec. 17. From left to right: Garth Wruck and son Justin, 2 years, of the Trinity Pastoral Region in the Saskatoon Rural Deanery; Steven Kloster, chair of the Kerrobert Deanery and his daughters Natalie and Amanda Kloster of Macklin; Diane Cote, chair of the Saskatoon City Deanery; Theresa Winterhalt, a parishioner in the city deanery; Lynda Statchuk of the diocesan Rural Catechetics office and a parishioner in the Wadena deanery; Victor Granger of Bruno, chair of the Humboldt deanery; and Luke Hergott of St Bruno parish in the Humboldt Deanery.

Ground broken for new diocesan home

BY KIPLY LUKAN YAWORSKI

Representatives from across the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon took a turn with ceremonial shovels Dec. 17 to officially break the ground for a new diocesan home.

Construction is about to begin on Holy Family Cathedral and Pastoral Centre, the largest project in the history of the diocese, and the first cathedral to be built in Canada since the St. Boniface cathedral in Winnipeg was rebuilt after a 1968 fire..

In the midst of joyful sod-turning by several other groups, including dignitaries, builders, and a group of students from the neighbouring St. Joseph Catholic High School, the historic moment was quietly noted by a father bending to pick up a piece of the sod to keep as a souvenir for his young children.

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“Though we’re a long way from Leader and Macklin, Wadena and Foam Lake, Catholics from 98 parishes across the diocese share in our joy today,” said MC **Leah Perrault**, director of pastoral services for the diocese, during a program held in the foyer of the adjacent high school.



Leah Perrault
Director of pastoral services

It is particularly appropriate that the sod turning takes place in Advent, Perrault said, noting that as one phase of planning and waiting is ending, another is beginning. Construction on the 65,000-square-foot project in northeast Saskatoon is expected to take about two years.

“This new building is much more than a structure. It represents the growing and vibrant Catholic community in the diocese of Saskatoon. It represents the presence of God among us,” Perrault said.

“As a Catholic community, we have a long history here of serving those who are sick, those who are in need and those who look to us for an education. This Cathedral and Pastoral Centre will be the home of our ministry and our service for the next 100 years.”

Holy Family pastor **Rev. David Tumback** opened the sod-turning celebration with a prayer. The parish, which includes some 1,600 families, has been waiting for several years to begin construction of a much-needed replacement for its overcrowded building in Sutherland. “We can say one word today, in prayer and in thanksgiving: Finally,” he said.



Fr David Tumback
Holy Family pastor

“One of the blessings that I have experienced in my life is the collaboration and the work that has been undertaken by so many people of good will and of course the financial support of so many people from throughout the diocese,” Tumback said.

Holy Family parish committed itself to raise \$16 million for its new home, while parishes from across the diocese are raising \$12.5 million for the Cathedral and Catholic Pastoral Centre through a Uniting in Faith campaign that is still winding up in several parish communities.



Fr Ron Beechinor
Diocesan Administrator

“We are grateful that today another step has been taken to make this a reality,” said Diocesan Administrator **Rev. Ron Beechinor**, who also offered prayers during the celebration “We give thanks for the generous support given by the people of the diocese. Their

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interest, enthusiasm and financial support have been invaluable. Without them, we could not have proceeded with this project.”

Diane Boyko, chair of the Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools board of education, described how the separate school district was pleased to be able to facilitate the project by leasing the 5.1 acres adjacent to the high school for the construction project.



Diane Boyko
Chair GSCS

“The relationship between our division and our diocese is an extremely important one. Whether it is adult faith formation or our youth liturgy program, we collaborate and we support each other,” she said. “And in our young people, including those who are here today, we share a common hope for the future. We share a dream of a wonderful new facility that will allow the diocese to spread its wings. “

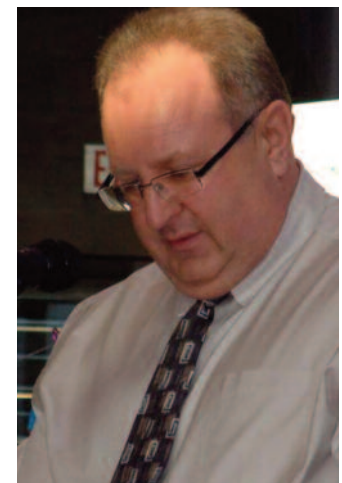
Saskatoon **Mayor Don Atchison** brought greetings on behalf of the community at large, commending the vision, the hard work, and the many volunteers and donors that have brought about the massive project.



Don Atchison
Mayor of Saskatoon

Atchison noted that the project came about without any government funding, and is happening because members of the Catholic community came to believe in the project and moved to support it. “We have many people many times who say they have good ideas but they want someone else to pay for them,” he observed. “In this case, it is you, the people of this diocese who have said ‘we believe this is a great idea, it’s something that we need to have, and we’re prepared to be involved.’ And I say congratulations to each and every one of you.”

Building committee chair **Jim Nakoneshny** described features of the building, which “will be a place where we can all gather for major diocesan celebrations and other liturgical events; a new centre that will provide leadership and support for over 40 programs throughout the diocese.”



Jim Nakoneshny
Building Committee chair

He noted that the new building will house the office of the Chancery, which includes the offices of bishop and chancellor; offices for parish and pastoral centre staff; residences for both parish and visiting diocesan clergy; meeting and conference facilities; a

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Saskatoon Mayor Don Atchison, GSCS Chair Diane Boyko, Diocesan Administrator Rev. Ron Beechinor, Holy Family Pastor Rev. David Tumback, Building Committee Chair Jim Nakoneshny, Uniting in Faith chairs Gisele and Barry Frank (l-r) were among the dignitaries breaking ground.

library and secure archive facility; areas for private devotions; and a banquet facility and community centre.

The cathedral hall will be named Bishop LeGatt Hall in honour of the former bishop, who played an important role in launching and leading the project, Nakoneshny said.

“The most distinctive feature of our cathedral is the soaring spiral roofline and the large central cross, which reaches to a height of over 175 feet. The cathedral’s design is inspired by the traditional hymn ‘Lift High the Cross’ with the building proudly proclaiming itself as a house of God,” Nakoneshny said.

“In the main body of the church, curved hardwood pews will surround the low sanctuary, providing for an intimate seating arrangement. Seating capacity is around 1,200, yet no one is further than 70 feet from the altar. When using overflow seating areas, we will be able to accommodate over 2,000 people for

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Students from St. Joseph Catholic High School join in the sod-turning celebration for the new diocesan Cathedral and Catholic Pastoral Centre.

Christmas masses or special diocesan celebrations,” he described.

“The main aisle, as well as the stone wall on which hangs the cross, will be laid in Jerusalem limestone, shipped to us from quarries in Israel. This physical connection to the Holy Land gives us a link to our spiritual beginnings and is a constant reminder of the significance of our faith journey.”

Bringing in plenty of natural light was an important part of the building design, he added. “One item of great importance in this project is the issue of environmental stewardship.



A cake to celebrate the day was cut by representatives from across the diocese: Diane Cote, chair of the city deanery; Lynda Statchuk of the Wadena Deanery; Louise Bussiere of Trinity parishes in the Rural Saskatoon Deanery; Victor Granger, chair of Humboldt Deanery; Luke Hergott of Bruno; Amanda, Candace, Natalie and Steven Kloster of Macklin, in the Kerrobert Deanery.



Our design team has worked to implement sustainable and forward-thinking design principles wherever possible. Special care has been taken in the design of the heating and cooling systems, windows, and insulation. Overall, this will be a very green building,” he said, adding that the environmentally sensitive site will also be protected.

“Our landscape architects will also work to ensure that the natural prairie landscape developed by the MVA (Meewasin Valley Authority) and St. Joseph High School is respected and maintained.”

Concluding the celebration, Rev. Ron Beechinor offered a closing prayer that the project might be a holy work. “May it bring about a Church worthy of you, a Church where we can offer you praise and worship, a Church which will be a gathering place for all the people of the diocese. May this building be a witness of the faith and love of the people of the diocese, and may the holy family – Jesus, Mary and Joseph – protect us, watch over us and guide us, keep us in their care and guide us in our journey toward eternal life.”



