



The National Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham
520 Richmond Road
Williamsburg, Virginia

Dear Disciple of Jesus and Shrine Mass Attendee,

Whether you call this Holy Place *Old Saint Bede, CCM Chapel*, or by its consecrated name- **The National Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham**, your presence with us here to celebrate and commemorate is truly gratifying. Since the 1570's, the Catholic and Apostolic tradition has been carried out in this area. The commitment by our founding pastor to establish a shrine in the U.S. after a pilgrimage to Walsingham, England in the 1930's has been largely realized. The church structure has stood for 9 decades and has been recognized as a National Shrine since 1942. That represents a blessing but also a challenge and the reason for this communication is that we need to **Restore the Holy House**. Please join me **after the 11:00 am or 5:00 pm Mass on January 27** to learn more about this historic endeavor.

Our challenge is that the Holy House is in need of a significant interior renovation. Consider the following:

- Major portions of the interior have reached the end of their intended lifespan
- Contributions to the building and maintenance fund are not adequate to cover basic operations, much less capital improvements
- Since the completion of the Ironbound Church in 2003, Saint Bede has continued to perform regular maintenance along with infrastructure upgrades on an as-needed basis with no capital campaign
- No major capital requests have been made of the parishioners attending the Shrine for more than 15 years for the maintenance of the Shrine
- Since 2013, Saint Bede has provided \$500,000 in maintenance and support to the Shrine in excess of donations to the Shrine maintenance and building fund
- As a National Shrine and a place of worship for local Catholics, students, alumni, and visitors, we need to invest in capital improvements or the facility will close

What would we be investing in?

- Modernize and bring into ADA compliance- addition of two (2) accessible rest rooms and access to the sanctuary
- Interior renovation- floors, ceilings, lighting, infrastructure- HVAC, plumbing, electrical service, insulation
- Liturgical and historic updates including tabernacle relocation, altar configuration and restoration, flow and accessibility, the Walsingham/Holy House story, and the connection to Williamsburg and the College of William & Mary

- Application for Historic Designation to potentially offset some cost

Why do we need to do this now? Can't we just continue to repair these things as needed?

- Flooring and other interior finishes are beyond their useful life and if not replaced, we would be at risk of closing the facility
- Infrastructure (HVAC, Plumbing, electrical) cannot be repaired any longer, it requires replacement
- Accessibility and ADA compliance limits attendees' participation
- Due to its extensive use, we need to work in a very tight timeframe so as to best continue our ability to meet the spiritual needs of those attending the Shrine

Restoring the Holy House will cost approximately \$1.4 million dollars. Since there are a number of practical considerations such as mass schedule during the school year, weddings, pilgrimages scheduled etc., we may need to adopt a phased approach. In addition, we do not wish to take on any long term debt for this project so we will be seeking commitments extending no longer than 3 years. I am attaching an overview of the case statement and costs involved to Restore the Holy House which can answer many of your questions.

Please make plans to join me on **January 27th after the 11:00 am and 5:00 pm Mass** to explore this project further. For the many parishioners who materially and spiritually support the mission of the Shrine, my sincerest thanks. During the coming weeks, we will be contacting individuals to make a commitment to Restore the Holy House. It is my prayer that you will join me in committing to this critical project.

Yours In Christ,



Rev. Msgr. Timothy E. Keeney

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