

## *My brothers and sisters in the Lord:*

An important event in the conversion experience of St. Francis occurred in the little church of San Damiano outside the city walls of Assisi in approximately 1206. At this time the Saint was experiencing a spiritual and psychological darkness and was involved in a painful quest for direction in life. Francis turned to God as he entered the church to pray for healing and peace. After he poured out his heart in prayer, he heard the cross speak to him, “Francis, don’t you see that my house is being destroyed? Go, then, and rebuild it for me” (L3C 13). The Saint immediately responded by rebuilding the church of San Damiano. Some suggest that Francis misunderstood the direction of the Lord and assert that he was being asked to rebuild the universal Church, not a little chapel outside the walls of Assisi.

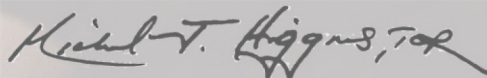
However, his early companions disagree. They point out that Francis understood very well what was being asked of him as he collected stones to rebuild the crumbling structure of San Damiano. They report that Francis was shaken by the experience of hearing the “tender and kind voice” of the Lord from the cross that directed him to rebuild His house. “Stunned and trembling, he said: ‘I will do so gladly, Lord.’ For he understood that it was speaking about that church, which was near to collapse because of its age” (L3C 13).

At this time in his life and spiritual journey he was not ready to embark on the great task of rebuilding the universal Church. He was far from able to evangelize, to preach, to write a letter, or to go on mission. He was, however, able to pick up a stone and to concentrate on the physical activity of repairing a dilapidated church. God asked Francis to do what he was able to do at the time. One marvelous aspect of this lies in the fact that, as Francis was rebuilding the church of San Damiano, God was rebuilding Francis.

The important mission to care for the house of God now falls to us. We are blessed to have a wonderful house of prayer along with a number of buildings that support our parish community and enable us to grow in our faith. We are stewards of our church and parish campus. Like Francis before us, we are called to care for God’s house here in Colleyville. With this in mind, we embark on a capital campaign – “Go and Rebuild My House” – with a focus on caring for what we have been given. This brochure shares the necessary plans to ensure that we raise the funds needed to maintain God’s house and continue to grow God’s Kingdom here at Good Shepherd. I ask you to prayerfully reflect on how you have been blessed by this community of faith. I invite you to prayerfully consider how you are able to contribute your financial gifts to this crucial effort for our parish and join me in praying for the success of our campaign.

As St. Francis challenged his followers: “I have done what was mine; may Christ teach you yours” (2C 214).

In Christ and Saint Francis,



Most Rev. Michael J. Higgins, TOR  
Pastor



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Pastor

