



**New Church Dedication Weekend  
March 12-14, 2004**

*Keepsake Bulletin*

**Church of St. Gregory the Great  
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*"Where there is love, great things happen!"*

## ***WELCOME TO YOUR NEW CHURCH BUILDING***

To the Greatest Parishioners in the World:

Since 1998 we have been talking about the possibility of a new house of worship for the Church of St. Gregory the Great. So many people have said to me, "Thank you, Fr. Rich." But it is I who must say "Thank you" to all of you...to the hundreds who volunteered thousands of hours to the project...to the hundreds who pledged and donated to our Building Fund...to all of you who faithfully gathered Sunday after Sunday to worship in our Church of the *Holy* Transition in the Parish Center...to all who work in our Parish Office, Religious Education Office, School and GLDC Pre-School who took on extra responsibilities while patiently re-arranging schedules...to our Maintenance Staff who went above and beyond the call of duty moving chairs, cleaning floors and so much more. As you can see, it takes a whole community of faith to build a church.

Through all this hard work, sacrifice and generous giving of time, talent and treasure, we have built a beautiful church that we can be very proud of. This church will give glory to God and be a sign to

the local community of our faith in Christ Jesus.

May this new church building help to gather and form us into the living Body of Christ.

With much love,  
Fr. Rich

### **NOW YOU KNOW**

#### **Fun Facts about our new Church**

Our new altar weighs in at 6,800 pounds.

All of the beautiful marble you see in the Sanctuary and Gathering Space is from Pietra-Santa, Italy, a town in Tuscany.

In our church there are 889 pieces of steel. All that steel weighs 158 tons.

3,820 bolts are holding all that steel together.

The 10 wooden beams above you are each 90 feet tall, weighing 6 tons each.

The wood decking (between the beams) consists of 2,581 pieces of wood. If laid end to end, the wood decking would measure 26,830 feet (just over 5 miles!).

Outside, we have 82,558 bricks (go ahead and count 'em!).

## MILESTONES

### WHILE BUILDING A NEW HOUSE OF PRAYER & WORSHIP FOR THE CHURCH OF ST. GREGORY THE GREAT....

**January 30, 1996:** A Task Force meets begin an evaluation of our space.

**September 20, 1998:** The New Church Steering Committee meets for the first time.

**September 10, 1999:** The Building Campaign begins with a \$2.5 million goal (as of March, 2004, \$4.2 million has been pledged! Thank you!)

**April 14, 2001:** We celebrate the last Easter Vigil in the old church

**Trinity Sunday, June 10, 2001:** Transition Sunday! The last Mass is celebrated in the church at 12 Noon; after the Liturgy of the Word, everyone processes out of church, the doors are closed, and all process to the Transition Church in the Parish Center for the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

**September 11, 2001:** A day we will all remember; a thousand people gather that evening in the Transition Church to celebrate Mass and pray.

**Feast of Pentecost, May 18/19, 2002:** Groundbreaking Weekend! After all the Masses people see for the first time drawings of the windows, altar, font, etc.

**August 1, 2002:** Colored glass from Germany arrives in Jersey City and work begins in the Rambusch studio on our new windows.

**October, 2002:** The back half of our existing Church is taken down.

**November, 2002:** The foundation is laid for the new Church.

**January 1, 2003:** We begin a year long celebration of our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary as a parish!

**March 19, 2003:** The war in Iraq begins.

**April 25, 2003:** Steel, glorious steel!  
The first steel beams are put into place.

**May 13, 2003:** Ten wood beams journey from upstate New York, down the New Jersey Turnpike and arrive here on our grounds.

**July, 2003:** Our beloved Associate Pastor, Fr. Damian, returns (with a permanent visa) to St. Gregory's after an extended visit in Ireland.

**November 3, 2003:** The altar and ambo are delivered to the new Church.

**November 4, 2003:** First sections of the stained glass windows are put in the new Church.

**November 16, 2003:** We celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the parish with a beautiful Mass and dinner dance.

**January 5, 2004:** Installation of the pews begins.

**February, 2004:** Work on the Prayer Garden begins.

**March 6, 2004:** The large Creation Wall is completed.

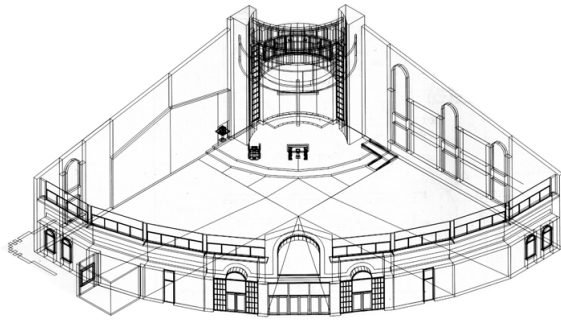
**Sunday, March 7, 2004:** Sunday Mass is celebrated for the last time in our Transition Church.

**Monday, March 8, 2004:** The St. Gregory the Great window is installed over the front doors of the church.

**Thursday, March 11, 2004:** The tabernacle is installed.

**Friday, March 12, 2004:** Evening Prayer is celebrated in the new church honoring the 1400<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the death of St. Gregory the Great.

**Saturday, March 13, 2004:** Our new Church is dedicated by Bishop John M. Smith, the bishop of the Diocese of Trenton.



### ***IN GRATITUDE TO GOD***

We have a brand new beautiful house of prayer and worship. Let us rejoice and give thanks! As part of our thanksgiving, let us remember that there are so many people in our country, and here locally, who are in need of dignified housing. Therefore, in thanksgiving for the many blessings God has given to us as a parish community, the Church of St. Gregory the Great will tithe 10% of its collection this Dedication Weekend and make donations to both **Martin House** (a ministry that builds houses for the poor) in Trenton and **Visitation House** (a home for the developmentally challenged) in Yardville.

### ***THANK YOU, ST. JOACHIM!***

*The Church* of St. Joachim, that is! Fr. Jeffrey Lee, St. Joachim's dynamic pastor, and the wonderful staff (especially Kathleen Zuccari) and the good people of St. Joachim, Trenton, have all been **PHENOMENALLY GOOD** to us these past three years. They have allowed us to celebrate our weddings in their church while our new church was under construction. Their hospitality and graciousness will never be forgotten. Please, while you are giving thanks this weekend at Mass, say a few prayers for the Church of St. Joachim.

### ***THANK YOU, MR. HIGHAM***

There are so many people to thank for helping to build and finance our new church. None is more deserving of our thanks, however, than Mr. Joseph Higham. Joe served as the chairperson of our New Church Steering Committee. He has been with the project since day one. There have been at least 5,000 meetings, and Joe attended 4,999 of them, including the first way back in 1996. We are all so grateful to Joe's unswerving commitment to the project. Thanks, Joe! We will always be grateful.

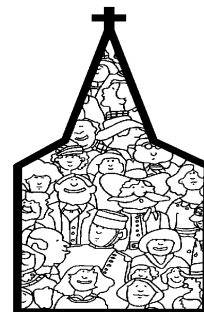
### ***In Remembrance***

#### ***MR. JOHN TOMASZEWSKI***

At the very beginning of the Building Project, Mr. John Tomaszewski served as our Parish Business Manager.

He was an ardent supporter of the new church and worked tirelessly to get the project off the ground. Before he was able to see any construction begin, John died suddenly in October of 2001.

We cannot let this Dedication Weekend go by without fondly remembering our good friend, Mr. John Tomaszewski.



# TAKE A CHURCH TOUR

## The PLAZA

Long ago, the church building was in the center of town. It was the gathering place for the people of the community. Church buildings were prefaced by a large gathering area, called a piazza in Italy. We have tried to emulate this by creating a large plaza area in front of our new church, leading up the front steps and then leading up to the front doors. We hope people will feel free to stop and mingle with one another before and after Liturgies. When we gather well, we pray well.

## The GATHERING SPACE AND BAPTISTERY

As you walk through the front doors of the church, you immediately enter a large, open area – perfect for meeting friends and making new ones before or after Mass.

Our Gathering Space is also the Baptistry, the place where infants and adults alike will be welcomed into the Church, becoming disciples of Jesus Christ, through the living waters of Baptism.

### *Baptismal Font and Pool*



The first thing you'll notice is that the font and pool stand in a direct line to the altar in the sanctuary. It is through Baptism that we are invited to the Lord's Table to celebrate Eucharist with the people of God.

The font/pool is made of the same marble as the altar, again emphasizing the relationship between the two. All sacramental life of the Church flows from Baptism. The font sits on three columns of marble, (recalling the Trinity, in whose name we are baptized. A little later you will again see these three columns supporting the altar.

On the floor of the Baptismal Pool is a beautiful mosaic of the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove descending (recall how John Baptist said of Jesus, "I saw the Spirit coming down on him from heaven like a dove," (John 1:32) and how the disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit at the first Pentecost (Acts 2).

The Church of St. Gregory the Great is a Spirit-filled community of faith. Our Mission Statement reminds us that we are "called by God and empowered by the Holy Spirit to form disciples of Jesus Christ."

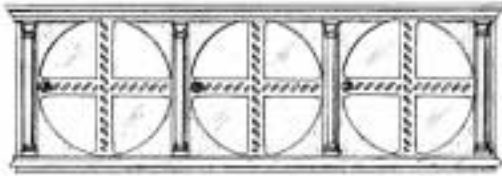
### *Our Lady, Seat of Wisdom*

As you face the font upon entrance, to your left you will see the beautiful statue of Our Lady, Seat of Wisdom (Sedes Sapientia). Mary humbly bows her head to the Son of God, the Word Made Flesh, as she so tenderly holds the infant Jesus close to her. One can see the special relationship between Jesus and his mother.

### *Seasonal Prayer Niche*

Just opposite the statue of Mary, Seat of Wisdom, is our Seasonal Prayer Niche. This space will be decorated according to the liturgical year. So, for example, here is where our Nativity scene will be housed, accessible to everyone for prayer and reverence. Right now we have placed here model of our new Church, created many years ago by John Foley, a member of our parish.

## Ambry



As you approach the doors leading to the nave of the church, don't forget to observe the wooden ambry to the right of the center doors. The ambry is where the blessed oils are used for the sacraments throughout the year. Once a year during Holy Mass at the Chrism Mass, the Bishop blesses the oils and then distributes them to every parish. There are three oils: Oil of the Sick (for the Anointing of the Sick); Oil of Catechumens (for those coming into the Church); Sacred Chrism (for Confirmation, Ordinations, and the Anointing of new Churches and their altars).

## *St. Gregory the Great Window*



Before leaving the Gathering Space to enter the nave, take a look behind you and you will see overlooking the front doors a beautiful window depicting St. Gregory. In Christian art, St. Gregory is always represented with a dove, generally whispering in his ear. You will notice we varied the theme a little, with a dove touching his lips, symbolizing the Holy Spirit inspiring him. The window uses the same dynamic style as found in *The Creation* window and in the baptismal pool. At night, you will see the image of our patron shining over the parish campus.

## The NAVE

The Nave refers to the space between the church entrance and the sanctuary; it comes from a Latin word meaning "ship." We wanted our nave to lift up one's spirit to the Lord God, and at the same time create a sense of unity within the congregation.

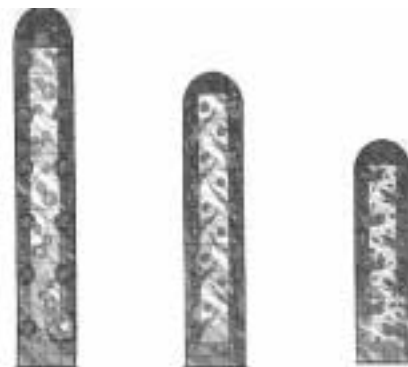
### *Center Aisle*

The wide, generous center aisle calls and invites the community to the table of the Lord. The wide aisle gives plenty of room for processions, especially during weddings and funerals.

### *Dedication Line*

Can you find the thin line that runs across the center aisle? This line is the footprint of our old church. On the "old church side" of the line you will see written, 1954, the year our original church was dedicated. On the "new church side" is, of course, 2004.

### *Windows Telling the Story of St. Gregory the Great*



Facing the wall closest to Mario Drive, you will see three large windows. The window on the left, closest to the sanctuary, depicts a bird's eye view of people gathered around a table. The center column of light is the table and the dense circles of red are people. Tradition has it that every day, Gregory would feed the hungry at his own table. This particular day Gregory noticed there was one extra, upon investigation the hungry stranger turned out to be Christ himself (lower right hand corner).

This reflects the teaching of Christ that He is to be found in the least of the brethren, "*For I Was Hungry and You Gave Me Food*" (Mt 25:35). St. Gregory is represented in each of the windows by a star, see if you can find him.

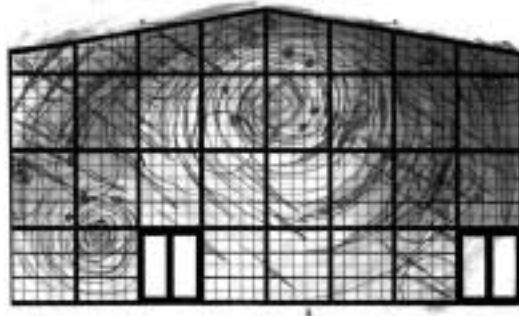
The center window is a side view of a column of light; angels are seen ascending and descending or dancing. The window recalls a legend that St. Gregory, trying to avoid election as Pope and wanting to pursue a simple monastic life decided to leave Rome. He made a plan with his friends to hide in a wine barrel (an empty one!) and have them roll him past the guards, right under their noses. When they got close to the city gates something extraordinary happened – a column of light shone on the barrel with angels surrounding it. Upon checking out the contents of this remarkable barrel who did they find hiding there but St Gregory, curled up inside!

The last window to the right depicts a series of hands reaching out for help, for alms, indeed if you look careful you will see coins falling. This represents St. Gregory's generosity and concern for the poor. He came from a noble family but chose the monastic life and over a lifetime gave away his family's wealth to the needy. Finally, towards the end of his life he even gave away a gift from his mother, a silver platter; see if you can find it.

### ***Music and Education Window***

St Gregory gave his name to the chant of the Church and was a renowned teacher and scholar, as well as a reformer of the liturgy. In the parish named after him we have endeavored to continue those traditions in our elementary school, religious education program, pre-school, youth ministry and adult faith enrichment programs, and also in our liturgical celebrations. This window recalls the themes of Education and Music represented by a harp, a lute, an inkwell, a pen and a book.

### ***Creation Window***



On the left hand side of the nave is a huge window – it's impossible to miss. This window connects the new church to the old one. The idea of joining the two buildings with a window came from St Albert's in Huntingdon, PA. People see many things in this window but the artist entitled it "*The Creation.*" It is a series of dynamic swirls and colors. In it you will find The Holy Trinity, the planets and the colors of the liturgical season.

## **The SANCTUARY**

The Sanctuary is that space immediately around the altar.

### ***Altar***

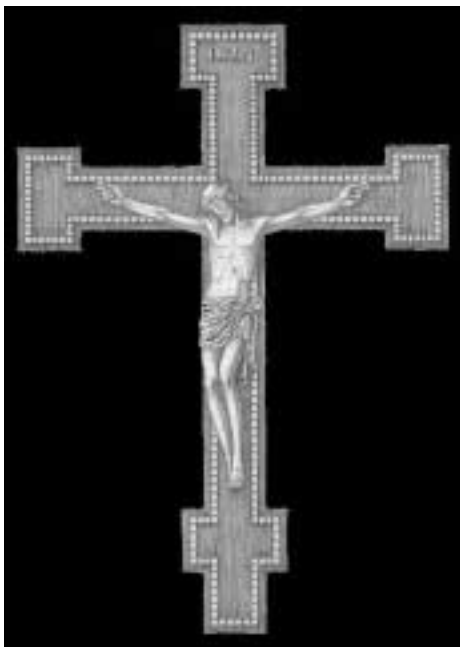
"What will the new altar look like?" This was the first question asked our Interior Design Committee because everything else in the church (color, material, windows, etc.) would ultimately relate to the altar. After many a meeting, it was decided the altar should be marble, permanent and strong. We wanted an altar that would remind us that Eucharist is both a sacrificial offering and also a sacred meal. So, our altar has legs (three columns at each corner), as opposed to a solid base, just like your kitchen table at home. Yet, it also has a larger column in the center, suggesting an altar of sacrifice. Some have already given various interpretations of the columns. One has said the center column is Jesus Christ; the 12 smaller columns represent the apostles, and therefore, us, the church.

### *Ambo (lectern, pulpit)*



To the right of the altar is the ambo, the place where the Word of God is proclaimed. The same marble used in the altar is again used here to demonstrate the close relationship between the Table of the Eucharist and the Table of the Word, as Vatican Council II called them.

### *Crucifix*



Much consideration and deliberation was given to the style and design of a cross/crucifix. The obligation to have a cross in the sanctuary could have been fulfilled by the processional cross, as was the practice in our old church, but the final consensus was that the parishioners would prefer a cross on a larger scale. The question of scale and location resulted in a hanging crucifix above the

altar. The silhouette of the cross is made of mahogany and is Franciscan in style, recalling the illuminated cross of San Damiano, Assisi. The outline is delineated by gold mosaic tesserae. The corpus on the cross depicts the crucified Christ. The cross, a unique piece, was hand carved by Signore Matteo Moroder, in Ortisei, Italy, an area renowned for wood carving and artistry. Look closely at the processional cross it is a miniature of the crucifix above the altar. We hope that the cross, the preeminent sign of God's mercy, will remind us of His great love, call to mind His redeeming sacrifice and invite us to take up our own cross each day and follow him.

### *Tabernacle*



Coming from a Latin word meaning "tent," the Tabernacle is the container or cupboard in the church in which the Eucharist is reserved for the sick and for adoration and devotion outside of Mass. Our Tabernacle door carries the same cross you will see on the Presider's Chair, the Ambry and the four dedication crosses placed throughout the nave marking the places where the bishop and priests anointed the walls of the church. The Tabernacle sits on a marble pedestal and small altar. This single Tabernacle goes through the "Creation Wall" into the daily chapel where it can be accessed from there, as well, during liturgies throughout the week.