

Parishes build on *Encountering Christ* excitement for significant projects



St. Paul Chong Hasang Parish in Harker Heights is building a new religious formation center and supporting *Encountering Christ* with funds raised through its *Building a Legacy for Our Future* campaign.

When Bishop Joe Vásquez announced his plans for *Encountering Christ*, Father James Misko realized the campaign was an opportunity for St. Louis King of France Parish in Austin to replace its aging activity center while supporting the diocese.

“We thought that if we were going to put forth the energy and the effort required to raise that kind of money, then we would go all the way and try to do something really big,” said Father Misko, pastor and vicar general for the diocese.

St. Louis is one of several parishes in the diocese conducting an independent parish campaign to raise extraordinary funds for parish projects — two to three times the parish offertory or more — alongside *Encountering Christ*. These independent campaigns have *Encountering Christ* as a component, with parishes contributing the same percentage of their assigned goal for the shared ministries in the diocesan case statement.

Through *Missio 2020*, St. Louis will address four pillars through its \$7.5 million goal. Along with building a new parish activity center, the existing center will be renovated into a performing arts center with a theater for the school, a new social ministry center will be built as an addition to the parish offices, and the parking lot will be expanded.

St. Paul Chong Hasang Parish in Harker Heights decided to combine its need of a new religious formation center with *Encountering Christ*. “We were planning to have a capital campaign,” said Buzz Gilliland, the parish’s business administrator. “Our current building is not sufficient to house all of our students.”

Parishioners have contributed 118 percent of *Building a Legacy for Our Future’s* \$2.4 million goal, which has already allowed St. Paul Chong Hasang to begin construction on a 7,200-square-foot religious formation center to better accommodate the more than 300 children enrolled in faith formation. Fulfilled campaign pledges have also eliminated \$300,000 in debt incurred from building a parish center, and the remaining funds will be used to bolster the facility maintenance fund and finish securing the campus with wrought iron fencing, as well as benefit *Encountering Christ*.

“Everyone understood the needs the diocese identified in the *Encountering Christ* campaign,” he said. “Our parishioners have always been responsive and very generous with the church.”