



Office of the Bishop  
Diocese of Toledo

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**Letter to the Faithful Following the Three-Year Anniversary  
of Installation as Bishop of Toledo**

22 November 2017

Dear Friends in Christ,

All good greetings in the Lord! In this season of thanksgiving, having recently marked the third anniversary as your bishop, and as we prepare to enter into the new liturgical year at Advent, I write with profound gratitude to all of you who make up this local church, all our lay faithful, consecrated religious, deacons and priests. This letter comes to express my gratitude, to update you on recently achieved progress to ensure best stewardship of our diocesan patrimony and to continue to encourage you in vibrantly living your faith.

**Witnessing Your Faith.** How edified I have been to witness your fidelity to Christ and his Church, and in particular, that through your prayer and good works, together, we are embracing and realizing our diocesan mission to foster holy disciples, holy families and holy vocations through intentional prayer, fasting and alms giving. How encouraging it has been to see up-close your Catholic faith lived out during my parish pastoral and canonical visits; to know young couples benefiting from diocesan marriage preparation and enrichment; to see youth excited about living for and in the Lord; to observe the outpouring of generosity in response to recent national disasters and increased support of the Annual Catholic Appeal; and to acknowledge your ongoing charity in promoting our outreach to the poor and needy. How profoundly grateful I am for your tremendous prayerful support during my nine months of service as apostolic administrator of the Diocese of Cleveland, and how thankful I am once again to be fully dedicated to serving here at home with you.

**Teaching, Governing and Sanctifying.** In my [November 21, 2015](http://toledodiocese.org/announcements/letter-to-the-faithful-following-the-one-year-anniversary-of-my-appointment) (<http://toledodiocese.org/announcements/letter-to-the-faithful-following-the-one-year-anniversary-of-my-appointment>), letter to you I highlighted my primary duties as your bishop: to teach, govern and sanctify. Soon after arriving here, with the help of staff and outside legal and financial experts, I learned that there were significant weaknesses in the financial health and organizational structure of the diocese. This immediately required us to focus on the second of these duties, the governance of the diocese. The Pastoral Center staff and I have been working diligently to manage our resources and responsibly and proactively safeguard our mission going forward.

With great assistance and full support from the College of Consultors, the Finance Council, Senior Staff and our outside consultants, we have made every effort to maximize the oversight and stewardship of the patrimony of the local church during the past three years. With this letter, I am pleased to inform you that we are in a much healthier financial position today with debts receding and our historical practice of deficit spending significantly curtailed. In addition, we have initiated a new organizational and managerial structure to improve the governance, transparency, security and oversight of the assets of the diocese. While most may not notice these changes on a day-to-day basis, it was critical that we put these safeguards in place to best serve our mission.

**Restructuring in Service of the Pastoral Mission.** On November 1, 2017, the diocese formally separated its temporal affairs (financial and administrative departments) from its pastoral and ministerial programs. In effect, by putting a secular corporate structure in service of our pastoral mission, we provide greater checks and balances on the administration of our resources, while ensuring the diocese will be able to continue to sponsor its existing pastoral and evangelical programs and ministries. We are making certain that we meet or exceed current best business practices and standards for fiscal transparency that you and all the faithful of Northwestern Ohio deserve. We are also employing the best civil and canonical structures to ensure that our diocese is able to excel in its mission of service for years to come.

As part of the recent restructuring, the diocese has established a number of new legal entities as separate trusts and nonprofit corporations recognized under both canon and civil law (in the state of Ohio). These entities will serve to hold, administer and govern diocesan assets according to the highest standards of stewardship. This form of organization, and the improved institutional controls that have been implemented, dramatically increase the protection of our resources that are dedicated to specific purposes such as health care, property and casualty insurance and real estate. As a result, the temporal/financial affairs of the diocese will now more effectively and efficiently serve her pastoral mission. What is more, to ensure transparency and good governance, I have appointed clergy and laity alike to serve in roles of oversight as trustees, advisors and consultants. The new trusts are:

1. The *Diocese of Toledo Deposit & Loan Trust* accepts deposits from the diocesan entities, holds those assets in trust, and uses those assets to make loans to diocesan entities at competitive rates. This trust is primarily for parish loans for capital improvements, acquisition of property and certain operational purposes.
2. The *Diocese of Toledo Property and Casualty Trust* holds and administers assets in order to sponsor, operate and maintain coverage for potential losses for unemployment, workers' compensation, and property and casualty coverage.
3. The *Diocese of Toledo Properties Trust* administers properties held in trust for the benefit of the Diocese and parishes.

4. *The Diocese of Toledo Perpetual Care Trust* provides for maintenance and upkeep of the Diocesan (non-parish) cemeteries: Calvary, Mt. Carmel and Resurrection. This trust is designed to become self-sustaining through increased sales and actuarial studies.
5. *The Diocese of Toledo Health and Benefits Trust* holds and administers assets in order to sponsor, operate and maintain the medical, dental and vision healthcare benefit plans for employees and priests.

The three newly created corporations are: *The Roman Catholic Diocese of Toledo in America* which oversees pastoral/ministerial programs; *The Diocese of Toledo Management Corporation* which oversees temporal/financial affairs and the *Diocese of Toledo Cemeteries Corporation* which governs and oversees day-to-day management of the three diocesan (non-parish) cemeteries.

**Strengthening Stewardship for a Bright Future:** I am convinced that through this new restructuring and by establishing and improving our financial stewardship practices, we will enhance our ability to: (1) minister to our people, (2) meet our mission and goals, (3) direct our funds where they can be best utilized, and (4) lay the foundation for improving our fundraising capabilities. These efforts increase our fiscal prudence, serve to enrich our ministries and further enable us to preach and proclaim the Gospel throughout the entire diocese.

Please know that these enhancements have been made for the good governance of the diocese and were undertaken to ensure that, together, we can now move forward in deepening and enriching our spiritual lives to better serve God and our neighbor. My enthusiasm and joy in serving as your bishop is stronger today than it was when I first came to this family of faith three years ago. I invite you once again, with me, to make the weekly sacrifice of praying, fasting and giving alms so that our common mission may be realized in fostering holy disciples, holy families and holy vocations.

Please be sure of my deepest gratitude, my continued prayers and my enduring love for each of you. I hope you are encouraged to receive this update which is a sign of great promise for our future and of our ongoing commitment to fulfill our mission of proclaiming Christ and His Gospel here in Northwest Ohio.

Sincerely yours in Christ Jesus,



Most Reverend Daniel E. Thomas  
Bishop of Toledo