



Lift High *the Cross*

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN



Saint Rita Catholic Church • Santa Rosa Beach, FL



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Dear Friends,

It is a holy privilege to serve as pastor of Saint Rita Catholic Church in the coastal community of Santa Rosa Beach. My faith journey has its roots in the Florida panhandle, and it is a joy to live among you as a priest.

The history of Saint Rita Parish is closely connected to the broader church in northwest Florida, the Diocese of Pensacola-Tallahassee, which is celebrating its 50th anniversary. We have all been witness to the development of South Walton County. Now, standing on the shoulders of those who have laid a foundation of faith, the Holy Spirit is prompting us to grow as a family in charity as well as in number along this expanse of Scenic Highway 30A.

I invite you to join me in the response to Lift High the Cross. This is a call to make our Catholic presence known among our beach neighbors and to be more visible as a sacrament of grace. Our task is to expand our campus by building a parish grade school, serving grades K through 8, to ensure the passing on of the faith to future generations. We also wish to broaden access to these sacred grounds with a new main entrance from Highway 98, along with additional parking surfaces.

This moment inspires generosity as a way of life, requiring sacrificial giving. I ask that you not so much give to a need, but remind yourselves of the need to give. As our material good is intended to benefit our spiritual wealth, please prayerfully consider how your contributions will have eternal consequences. May God bless Saint Rita Catholic Church and grant success to the work of our hands.

Yours in Christ,

Father James Valenzuela
Pastor, Saint Rita Catholic Church



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Our Challenge

- To keep up with the needs of a rapidly growing parish community by enlarging the campus infrastructure in our master plan.
- With the existing Saint Rita parish facilities completed on our church (2000), rectory (1993), pre-school (2007) plus the Family Life Center (2020), there is critical need for next-stage planning and development.
- There is no Catholic school located in Walton County, the state's third-fastest growing in one of the nation's fastest growing states.
- School choice in Florida matches a growing desire for parental control over curriculum, yet is not currently available to our local Catholic community.
- Walton County's public schools are exceptional but generally operate at or beyond capacity.
- The existing parking and routing configuration into the Saint Rita campus has been largely overgrown as Mass and special event attendance has continued to grow.
- An official entranceway onto the main vehicular artery, Highway 98, has been a goal for years by both parish leaders and parishioners, citing safety and ease of access.
- Our excellent current Pre-School can accommodate only a small number of parish families, both in terms of ages served or space available.

Our Response

- To make a significant financial investment in the future of our parish, our families and our broader community.
- Saint Rita has amassed strategic parcels adjacent to Highway 98, immediately to the north of the church, that will accommodate the planned new infrastructure vision for our future.
- The first stage of construction will be on a new main entrance connecting Highway 98 directly to an area near the front entrance to the Church itself.
- Concurrent to that process will be the addition of new paved parking adjacent to the new entrance.
- Expand our current Pre-School model to a full K-8 school, commissioned to open in Fall 2029.
- These exciting developments to the Saint Rita campus will provide additional access, better security and mission-driven education for the parish.



WHY NOW

A Call to Stewardship & Opportunity

Saint Rita is the **fastest-growing parish in the Diocese of Pensacola-Tallahassee**, reflecting both the vitality of our faith community and the expanding population around us. Two key realities make this moment uniquely suited to pursue a Catholic school:

- **Community Growth and Unmet Need:** Walton County is currently the third-fastest-growing county in Florida, with public schools at or beyond capacity. Yet there is no Catholic school within Walton County. We will offer a program that unites strong academics with the formation of moral character, discipleship, and faith.
- **Parental Empowerment Through School Choice:** Florida's education funding model now provides parents with the freedom and financial means to choose the best educational path for their children. Each student in Walton County qualifies for over \$8,000 annually in state scholarship funds, making Saint Rita Parish School both spiritually enriching and economically viable for families.

OUR VISION

Forming Minds, Hearts, and Souls

Saint Rita Parish School will embody the Catholic mission of **integrating faith and reason**, cultivating academic excellence, and nurturing students to become **joyful witnesses of Christ** in the world.

This is more than a building project — it is a **commitment to form the next generation of disciples**, rooted in the Eucharist, guided by truth, and inspired by love.

Together, through prayer, generosity, and perseverance, we can make Saint Rita Parish School a lasting beacon of **Catholic education and community renewal** in Walton County.



PROJECT OVERVIEW

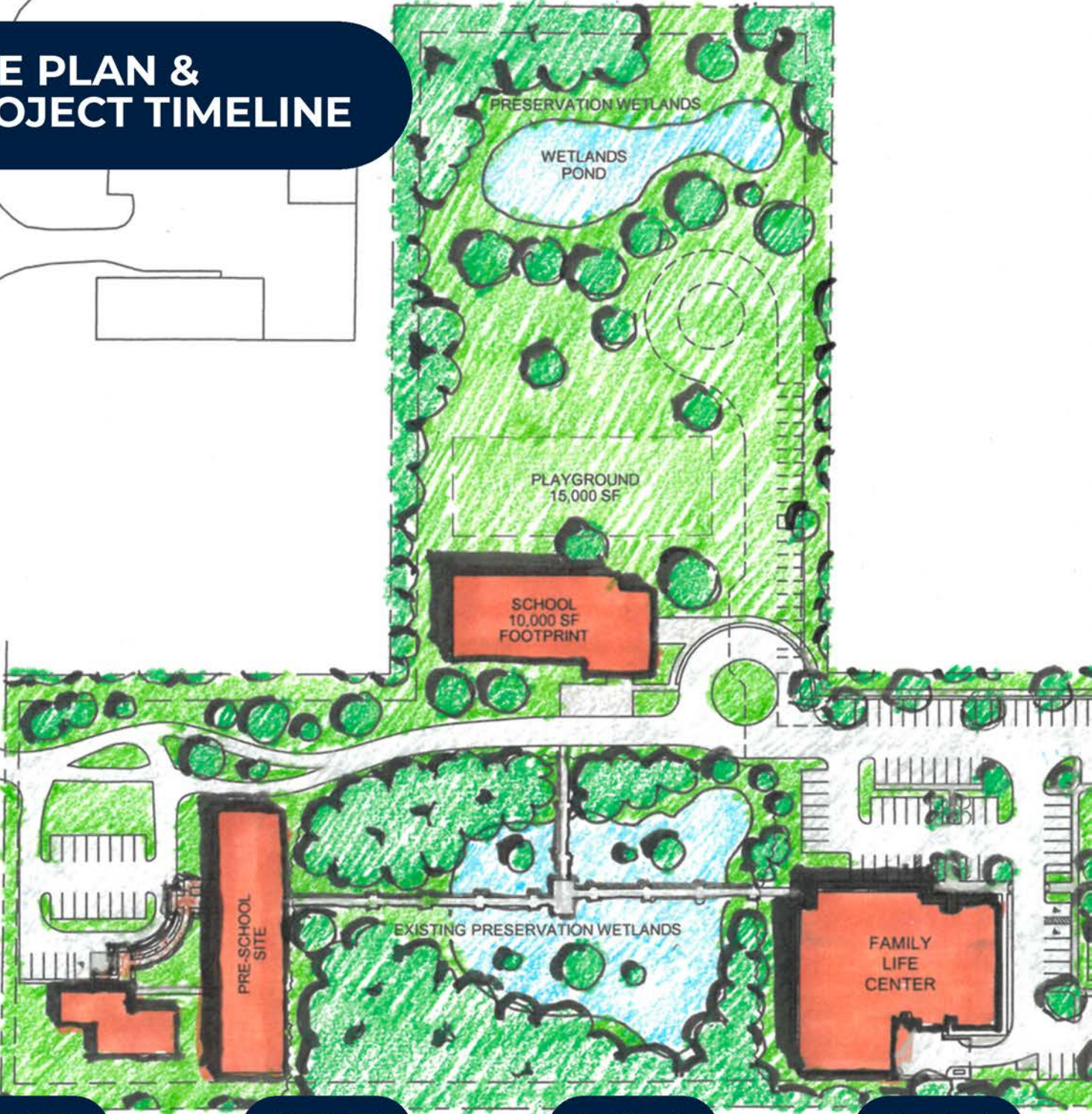
Cost Estimates

PROJECT PHASE	ESTIMATED COST
Land Loan Balance	\$2,200,000
Engineering, Architecture and Site Preparation	\$800,000
Main Entrance Construction	\$800,000
School Construction	\$12,000,000
Furnishing, Technology and Equipment	\$500,000
TOTAL ESTIMATED INVESTMENT	\$16,300,000
SAINT RITA'S CAMPAIGN GOAL	\$8,000,000



SITE PLAN & PROJECT TIMELINE

MOLL DRIVE



2021

Vision for Parish School Commences

2023

Parish Feasibility Study confirms interest and donor potential

2024

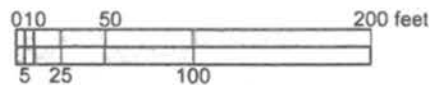
Land adjacent to current facilities campus is purchased

2025

Steering Committee is formed and Campus Development Plans take place



CONCEPTUAL
MASTER PLAN
AS OF 2/20/2026



2026

Capital Campaign begins and Engineering work begins

2027

Enrollment for K5 Classes begins for Fall Opening

2028

Main entrance and Parking Expansion is completed; Grade 1 begins Fall '28

2029

Enrollment for K5 through Grade 8 begins for Fall Opening

HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED

and Pledge Your Support

Saint Rita seeks to raise \$8 million through the efforts of this campaign. Every member of our parish community is integral to our success in reaching this goal; therefore, each family or individual is asked to consider making a pledge to the campaign to the best of their ability.

Each family or individual is asked to prayerfully consider a pledge to be paid over a period of up to three years. Additionally, if a multi-year pledge is made, we encourage a 10% down payment to assist our parish in beginning the efforts enumerated above. However, each family or individual is encouraged to participate in whichever way works best, and the 10% down payment, while helpful to the parish, is optional.

Throughout the **Lift High the Cross Capital Campaign**, Father James, the campaign committee, and volunteer workers will reach out to fellow parishioners to further communicate our vision and encourage your involvement. Our efforts are aimed at giving all members of our parish family an opportunity to participate.

During this campaign, we are asking everyone who calls Saint Rita home to:

- Pray for the success of the campaign;
- Be an ambassador for our parish by getting involved, enthusiastically sharing this information with fellow parishioners, and encouraging them to get involved;
- Make a sacrificial pledge.

In Deuteronomy 16:10 we are reminded that -

“the measure of your own free will offering should be in proportion to the blessing the Lord has bestowed on you.”





Whether you participate by attending a campaign reception, responding at Mass or by mail, or by graciously receiving a call from a fellow parishioner, it is your active involvement that will make this campaign a success. The gift plans in the chart below are provided as a suggested guideline when considering your pledge. However, gifts of any size are needed and appreciated.

SUGGESTED GIFT PLANS

Total Gift	10% Down	3 Annual Payments	12 Quarterly Payments	36 monthly Payments	Weekly Sacrifice	Daily Sacrifice
\$250,000	\$25,000	\$75,000	\$18,750	\$6,250	\$1442	\$205.48
\$100,000	\$10,000	\$30,000	\$7,500	\$2,500	\$576	\$82.19
\$75,000	\$7,500	\$22,500	\$5,625	\$1,875	\$432	\$61.64
\$50,000	\$5,000	\$15,000	\$3,750	\$1,250	\$288	\$41.09
\$25,000	\$2,500	\$7,500	\$1,875	\$625	\$144	\$20.55
\$15,000	\$1,500	\$4,500	\$1,125	\$375	\$86	\$12.33
\$10,000	\$1,000	\$3,000	\$750	\$250	\$58	\$8.22
\$7,500	\$750	\$2,250	\$562	\$188	\$43	\$6.16
\$5,000	\$500	\$1,500	\$375	\$125	\$29	\$4.11



PLEDGING INFORMATION

- Payments can be made over a period of three (3) years.
- Pledge payments are in addition to your regular weekly offering contribution. Your pledge payments to this campaign will be used for the construction and furnishing of Saint Rita Parish School, as well as the construction of the main entrance and parking expansion for the Church.
- Please make checks payable to Saint Rita Catholic Church and please note **Capital Campaign** on the memo line.
- Pledge payments are fully deductible for tax purposes.
- You may return the pledge card in the weekly collection, to the parish office, or by mail.



If you have any questions about the campaign or making your pledge, please contact the parish office by calling 850-267-2558 or by sending an email to LiftHightheCross@SaintRitaParish.org.

METHODS OF PLEDGING

Pledges via Check or Electronically Online

Simply complete your pledge card by noting the amount of your pledge and suggested down payment of 10%. Be sure to select your method of payment (Check, Debit/Credit Card, Bank Draft), and frequency of payments (i.e., monthly, quarterly, or annually). You may return the pledge card in the weekly collection, bring it to the parish office, or return it by mail.

If paying by check, please make checks payable to *Saint Rita Capital Campaign*. You will be sent payment reminders and a special payment envelope in accordance with the payment plan you choose. If you would like to make your pledge online, please scan the QR code or you can visit our website www.saintritaparish.org.



Gifts of Stock

Make a bigger impact by donating long-term appreciated securities, including stocks, bonds, and mutual funds, directly to the Lift High the Cross Capital Campaign. Compared with donating cash, or selling your appreciated securities and contributing the after-tax proceeds, you may be able to automatically increase your gift and tax deduction. If you would like to initiate a donation of stocks or other securities, please contact John Kennedy at the diocese via email development@ptdiocese.org or calling **850-435-3530**.

Gifts of Property, Life Insurance, Annuities, Wills or Bequests

There are different ways to support Saint Rita both today and in the years to come via planned giving. Families or individuals can make gifts of real estate, personal property, automobiles, life insurance, estate bequests, annuities or charitable remainder trusts. For substantial gifts of property other than marketable securities, the IRS requires an appraisal. Please contact John Kennedy at the diocese via email development@ptdiocese.org or calling **850-435-3530**.

IRA Contributions*

An IRA owner, age 70 ½ or over, can directly transfer tax-free gifts up to \$100,000 per year to an eligible charity. Speak with your financial advisor or make a notation on the pledge card so we may provide you with the necessary information and connect you with the campaign's gift acceptance staff.

***Please confirm current tax law with your tax advisor or the IRS.**

PEOPLE WHO MAKE IT HAPPEN

We would not have come this far in our campaign without the assistance of a special group of dedicated people. They continue to provide us with the tools and direction we need to be successful. *Special thanks to the Finance Council, Steering Committee, Parish Staff and our dedicated Campaign Volunteers.*



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Please pray with us...

Heavenly Father,

We incline our hearts before Your divine providence with gratitude and thanksgiving for the many blessings You have bestowed upon the Saint Rita Parish family of faith.

In Your eternal wisdom You are now calling us to grow in charity and in the number of believers formed by Your Word and Sacraments.

May the Holy Spirit inspire our endeavors to broaden our service to the Gospel and to build a Catholic school to educate future generations according to Your holy will.

Through the intercession of our patroness Saint Rita, model of trust and perseverance, may we respond generously to Your love for us and be courageous in lifting high the cross.

Through Christ Our Lord.
Amen.

Saint Rita Catholic Church
22 Saint Rita Lane • Santa Rosa Beach, FL 32459