



PROMISE FOR TOMORROW

THE GIBSONS OF WINCHESTER OPEN THEIR HEARTS BY GIVING BACK

St. Mary's Couple Supports the Mission of Church Through Promise for Tomorrow



Craig and Nancy Gibson

Craig and Nancy Gibson of Winchester view *Promise for Tomorrow* and the more than 25,000 individuals who have made a commitment to the Archdiocesan capital campaign as an opportunity to change history. Such a commitment, they point out, demonstrates an incredible show of confidence on the part of these individuals – a commitment that will benefit greatly the fabric of Archdiocesan life.

A Tradition of Service

The Gibsons, who have been parishioners at St. Mary Parish in Winchester since 1986, demonstrate their love for their faith with their steadfast involvement in parish life at St. Mary's. Both served as directors of the parish's marriage preparation program, and currently team-teach St. Mary's second-grade religious education class. "Preparing these children for their First Holy Communion is a lot of fun," enthuses Nancy who is a former member of the St. Mary School Board and who also serves as a Eucharistic minister for the parish.

Indeed, the Gibsons' tradition of service continues with their son, Craig Jr., 16 1/2, who is an altar server at St. Mary's. Craig Jr., the oldest of the

Gibsons' three children, is a sophomore at St. Sebastian's in Needham and proud holder of his newly awarded driver's license. His sisters are Kate, 15, a freshman at the Newton Country Day School of the Sacred Heart, and Caroline, 4 1/2, a preschooler at the Walnut Park Montessori School, also in Newton.

It was at his daughter Caroline's christening four years ago that Craig, with the encouragement of his family and pastor, stood up and made a profession of faith, formally converting to Catholicism following an increasing level of involvement with St. Mary's. Today, Craig serves as capital campaign co-chair at St. Mary's, chairs the parish's Stewardship Commission and is one of the leaders of a new men's prayer group at St. Mary's.

Promise for Tomorrow

The Gibsons' support of St. Mary's has continued with *Promise for Tomorrow*, as well. Currently the parish has reached 54 percent of its goal of \$710,000 with what the Gibsons describe as "immediate, generous responses." St. Mary's most pressing need is the interior and exterior restoration of the church.

"We are delighted to support Father Dick and know that there is something that we can do to make a difference," comments Nancy, with regard to St. Mary's pastor, Father Richard Messina, or Father Dick, as he is known. "We are happy to share the gifts we have."

Biblically Based Parish Stewardship

For the Gibsons, their participation in *Promise for Tomorrow* is an extension of how they incorporate biblically based parish Stewardship, or the giving of *time, talent and treasure*, into their lives. "Giving back embodies a way of life we were raised to appreciate in everything we do," explains Craig. "Giving back is so gratifying."

In fact, giving back to and being involved in Catholic education and

health care are embedded in the Gibsons' set of values. "It is so important to us to receive God's gifts gratefully and become a living example of giving back. We are teaching our children that," adds Nancy, who also serves on the board of directors of St. Sebastian's, Newton Country Day School and Dana Farber Cancer Institute.

It is clear that the Gibsons find their board activities gratifying, based on the notion of biblically based parish Stewardship. Craig Gibson recently started a new company as another means of providing Stewardship services to parishes. "We need to convey a message that is spiritually centered and Stewardship oriented," he says.

The Gibsons have worked closely with Father Dick since his arrival at the parish nearly 10 years ago. "Father Dick was immediately well received," Nancy recounts. "We continue to be supportive in any way we can to advance the mission of the parish."

A Look to the Future

Craig points out that in these challenging times it is easy to walk away from the many needs in the Archdiocese, but, he observes, the needs continue. "The safety blanket provided by our Archdiocesan institutions, especially with cutbacks at the state level, is more vital than ever," he says. "Do we walk away from these needs? Or do we support them so that our institutions will have funds for the future and be able to continue to provide opportunities?"

"The case for supporting *Promise for Tomorrow* is extremely well laid out and clearly articulated. The needs are critical, while our resources are shrinking. Those who are the most needy will not receive the health and education services they require. Our future will be brighter and better if we invest in the future, shoring up short-term operational needs in the face of government cutbacks," Craig says.

"A lot of good will come out of *Promise for Tomorrow* by having an open mind and an open heart and by giving prayerful consideration to the opportunity to support the mission of our Church," agrees Nancy. "It can only get better from here."