

Soon after being elected Pope, Pope John Paul II began to contemplate what the Lord was calling him to as Pope. Now we know that the Lord called him to accomplish many things as Pope, but Pope John Paul II received the understanding that one of his main missions was to lead the Church into the new millennium, across the threshold of the year 2000.

He chose as the theme of this crossing into the new millennium this very Gospel that we heard today, *duc in altum*, Jesus' command to Peter, "Put out into the deep." To Peter, humanly speaking, this didn't make any sense. He was a professional fisherman. He knew what he was doing. He had been at it all night long and no fish. Jesus tells him to go out again, put into the deep – *duc in altum* – and, well, we heard what happened, an overwhelming catch of fish.

Pope John Paul II saw this as a command of the Lord to the whole Church as it entered the new millennium. Put out into the deep:

- Be bold in your proclamation of the Gospel.
- Do not be timid in listening to the Lord's command.
- Seek out new ways to fish for souls.
- Trust that Jesus who calls us to His work will make it fruitful even when we think it not humanly possible.

It is in this spirit and with the command of the Lord to Peter to put out into the deep that I wish to share with you the decision regarding the building of a new church.

After the open parish meeting in November, I asked parishioners to write me by letter or email, sharing their thoughts with me about whether we should build a new church or renovate this one.

Overwhelmingly, the letters I received were in favor of building a new church.

After consulting with the Parish Finance Council, the Parish Pastoral Council, and the Building Committee, and after extensive prayer, I believe the Lord is calling us to "Put out into the deep" – to pursue the building of a new church. This is a challenging course, but if the Lord desires it to happen, one way or another it will.

The timetable for beginning is not yet set, and there is still some discerning to do regarding the best time to fundraise, but I will keep you all apprised as we continue to make progress.

Please continue to keep this in your prayers and please continue to open your hearts and minds to the Lord's call to our parish to "put out into the deep."

Given by Father Mark Gurtner at Our Lady of Good Hope Catholic Church, Fort Wayne, Indiana, on the 5th Sunday of Ordinary Time, 2013.