

**Most Reverend David Allen Zubik  
(2003-2007)**

When Bishop David Zubik received the call to become the 11<sup>th</sup> Bishop of Green Bay, he recalled that he thought he heard the Apostolic Nuncio tell him “Greensburg,” the neighboring diocese of Pittsburgh. As soon as he understood “Green Bay,” he had to check the map to see exactly where our diocese was located.

Once he got over the surprise of his appointment, Bishop Zubik immediately arranged to come to the diocesan grounds to meet the staff and priests of his new diocese. People soon discovered that he was a man of deep faith and prayer and an individual with boundless energy and care for each person he met.

Born on September 4, 1949 to the late Stanley and the late Susan (Raskosky) Zubik in Sewickley, Pennsylvania, he grew up in Good Samaritan Parish in Ambridge, Pennsylvania. . His coat of arms depicts the image of a bridge to acknowledge the significant impact of bridge building of his hometown.

Bishop Zubik arrived in the Diocese with considerable credentials, including administrative secretary to the former Bishop of Pittsburgh, Bishop Anthony J. Bevilacqua (now retired Cardinal Bevilacqua of Philadelphia); Director of Clergy Personnel; Associate General Secretary and Chancellor of the Diocese of Pittsburgh; the Vicar General and General Secretary for Bishop Donald Wuerl of the Diocese of Pittsburgh; and an auxiliary bishop for more than six years. A 1971 graduate of Duquesne University, he earned an M. Div. degree in 1975 from St. Mary Seminary, Baltimore. Ordained to the priesthood in 1975 by Bishop Vincent M. Leonard on May 3, he was ordained a bishop by Archbishop Donald W. Wuerl (then Bishop) on April 6, 1997. Both ordinations occurred at the St. Paul Cathedral in his home Diocese of Pittsburgh. Later in his priesthood, he earned an M.S. Ed. in 1982 at Duquesne University, Pittsburgh.

It is the combination of Bishop Zubik’s personal characteristics and his extensive background that enabled him to be a compassionate shepherd, a challenging visionary, a competent administrator, and a tireless co-worker on behalf of his beloved Church. Installed on December 12, 2003, he maintained his Episcopal motto of “Nothing is Impossible with God” as a manifestation of his total acceptance of his call to be the eleventh Bishop of Green Bay.

**Shepherd**

Bishop Zubik emulated the image of Christ as the Good Shepherd. From his first arrival in Green Bay, he was constantly on the move to be present personally at all significant events in the life of the Diocese. He became popular with the teens early in his episcopacy by presiding at a school-wide Mass at each of the Catholic high schools. At that Mass, he gave them a “gift” of an extra day off during the school year – an unexpected gesture of generosity that was appreciated by students and staff alike.

Bishop Zubik constantly rearranged his schedule in order to accommodate special events that arise in the life of the Diocese, such as the dedication of new churches, the closing liturgy for churches that are being reduced to the secular state, the installation of new pastors, and the

Masses of Christian Burial of priests and parents of priests. When a diocesan staff member lost a loved one, he presided at a special Mass of Remembrance so that the diocesan campus community could gather in prayer for and with the family of the deceased. Bishop Zubik proactively created frequent and meaningful dialogue with the administration of the Catholic colleges, particularly with the theology faculty of each college. Each quarter, he met with the administrators of the Catholic hospitals to continuously collaborate about serving those who are sick and addressing the ever-changing areas of health care and the implications of Catholic moral teaching. Bishop Zubik made himself available to the press within the community in order to address the timely issues of the Church and use those opportunities to promote and support the work of the Diocese and for the advocacy of the poor and disenfranchised of our society.

Of great significance as a shepherd, he never wavered from the open invitation that he gave to any victim who has been hurt in some way by ministers of the Church. In spite of his many other pressing duties, he took the time to meet personally with such individuals regardless of the difficulty of the issues and the feelings of pain and anger of those who have been hurt. In an invitation for broader reconciliation for those hurt by the Catholic Church, he presided at a Service of Apology in 2006 at the Cathedral in which he personally apologized on behalf of the Catholic Church to those who were offended and asked for their forgiveness.

### **Visionary**

In a rapidly changing world, Bishop Zubik led the Church of Green Bay by addressing the current needs of the faithful while maintaining the tradition of the Catholic Church. He orchestrated a thorough study and overview of the diocesan pastoral and administrative structure. This study, undertaken in extensive collaboration with the Bishop's Advisory Council, the presbyterate and parish leadership, resulted in the development of a new mission statement, a set of core values and a vision statement. With this new foundation in place, the diocesan staff was reorganized to be able to focus on the attainment of the restated mission in a manner that embraced those core values. With the reorganization came the recruitment of new leadership from within the Diocese to assist him with much collaboration in achieving the common vision for the Church of Green Bay.

In order to address the evolving complexities of the shifting population and to fully utilize the leadership capacities of our pastors, he oversaw the 2005 parish strategic planning process that laid out a five year plan for 15 regions within the Diocese. As a result of this plan, local parishes had a road map to follow to effectively meet the needs of the faithful. He recognized the difficult consolidation decisions that ultimately landed on his desk. Through active listening, collaborative discussion, careful study, and fervent prayer, he made the required decisions, while trusting in the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Of significant nature within these overall plans came the consolidation of the Manitowoc parishes, the Chilton parishes, and the Oshkosh parishes, just to name a few.

Bishop Zubik also commissioned a strategic review of Catholic education within the Diocese. It produced a long-range strategic education plan that focused on religious education, Catholic schools and adult faith catechesis. The *Faith Alive* project for the Green Bay area was initiated as a call for closer parish collaboration within parish clusters in order to more effectively serve the faithful and for the movement of the independent parish Catholic schools into a unified Catholic school system.

Finally, in order to give parishes an opportunity to revitalize themselves and to provide the broader Church of Green Bay with the resources to support the parishes with diocesan-wide programs, he launched the successful *Advancing the Mission* campaign in 2005. It established four endowments, Leadership Development, Evangelization, Lifelong Catechesis, Priestly Retirement Care. These endowments will serve the needs of the Diocese for many years in the future.

After witnessing frequent gatherings of women within the Diocese to focus on their own spiritual growth, Bishop Zubik challenged the men of the Diocese to undertake a similar program. This resulted in the annual *Esto Vir* conference. It draws over 600 men to a day of uplifting spiritual growth. The new organization named Bishop Zubik its first “Man of the Year” for “challenging men to live extraordinary faith and leadership in everyday life.”

### **Administrator**

Drawing upon his considerable administrative skills, Bishop Zubik oversaw the enhancement of the Safe Environment programs within the Diocese. He showed his unwavering commitment to the protection of the children and vulnerable adults through the establishment of new “Promise to Protect” policies, affirming the requirement that the consultative internal and external review committees are given all relevant information so as to ensure that just actions are taken on behalf of those individuals who bring forward credible allegations of being abused by Church personnel.

Upon Bishop Zubik’s arrival, he inherited a corporate/legal structure that was very sound and functional. However, due to the inevitable change in laws and regulations within the legal environment, he commissioned and oversaw the restructuring of the diocesan corporations. As a result of this restructuring process, he recruited 52 laypeople who were subsequently elected to the Boards of Directors of the various diocesan corporations. With the corporate restructuring came greater fiscal accountability and a directive to operate with a balanced budget.

### **Tireless Co-Worker in the Vineyard**

Recognizing that prayer and God’s presence is at the heart of everything we do as Church, Bishop Zubik demonstrated enthusiastic leadership in using the Liturgy of the Hours as the common prayer to begin meetings and always invited those present to share their own particular prayer needs. This reflected his own personal spiritual life of daily Mass, the Liturgy of the Hours and his Marian devotion in the prayer of the rosary. This spirituality was exemplified in his role as presider at parish and other diocesan events, particularly celebrating as many Confirmation liturgies as his schedule permitted. He was particularly effective at bringing together the faithful in such liturgies as the Chrism Mass, the Rite of Election, ordinations, commissionings, Rural Life Day Masses and Right to Life liturgies.

It is not surprising that this co-worker in the vineyard was enlisted to use his talents to advance the Catholic Church within the United States. While Bishop of Green Bay, Bishop Zubik served on the Administrative Committee of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and the Chair of

the Committee of the Laity that was responsible for the composition of the “Co-workers in the Vineyard of the Lord: A Resource for Guiding the Development of Lay Ecclesial Ministry.” Bishop Zubik was a member of the Board of Directors of St. Mary of the Lake Seminary in Mundelein, Illinois, the Episcopal Advisor to the National Association of Church Personnel Administrators (NACPA), on the Board of Directors of Relevant Radio, a member of the USCCB Audit Subcommittee and the National Advisory Council.

On July 12, 2007, Pope Benedict XVI named Bishop Zubik the twelfth Bishop of the Diocese of Pittsburgh. He was installed on September 28 in St. Paul Cathedral, the same Cathedral in which he was ordained as a priest and bishop.

As shepherd, visionary, administrator, and co-worker in the vineyard, Bishop Zubik helped the faithful of the Diocese of Green Bay to advance the mission that Jesus entrusted to His Church. Inspired by the motto “Nothing is Impossible with God,” Bishop Zubik personally and intimately embraced the restated mission statement and led his people to boldly proclaim the Gospel, prayerfully worship in Word and Sacrament, and compassionately serve the poor.

*Deacon Timothy G. Reilly*