

# Buckeystown parish to break ground on new church April 14

**By Maria Wiering**

*mwiering@CatholicReview.org*

*Twitter: @ReviewWiering*

St. Joseph on Carrollton Manor in Buckeystown is breaking ground April 14 for construction of a new \$4.7-million church, a project driven by expanding parish membership.

Archbishop William E. Lori will preside over the groundbreaking ceremony.

The church's completion and dedication in spring 2014 will mark 200 years since Charles Carroll provided land for the parish.

The only Catholic signer of the Declaration of Independence and a prominent landowner, Carroll provided two acres of his Carrollton Manor estate for a Catholic church in 1814. The deed was executed in 1819, and in 1822 Carroll's granddaughter exchanged that parcel for the current property. Parishioners constructed a limestone church on the site.

Constructed in 1871, the current church will continue to be used for small weddings, funerals and special events.

For Father Lawrence K. Frazier, St. Joseph's pastor, the new church carries on Carroll's legacy.

"In this year of faith, I think it's important to see not only how we've grown, but that we continue to carry on the tradition of Catholicism in this county," he said.

Architect Stuart Christenson of Noelker and Hall in Chambersburg, Pa., designed the new church to have a traditional look and feel, at the request of parishioners.

Hanover, Pa.-based Conewago Enterprises is the design-build contractor. The interior was designed in consultation with David Gardiner and Larry Hall of Gardiner and Hall in Bethesda.

The plan includes a new parking lot and additional office space at the parish center.

In almost two decades, St. Joseph has grown from about 250 to 910 families, and it expects its membership to increase based on Frederick County population projections, said Carole Sepe, chairman of the parish's building committee and a construction consultant.

The current church comfortably seats about 180 people. The new 11,462-square-foot space will seat 500, with the possibility of accommodating 600.

Only one of four weekend Masses is held in the historic church; the others are held

in the parish hall.

“We need a place that is a sacred space” for Mass, Father Frazier said. “We hope it is going to be an inviting and encompassing experience for the community.”

Plans to build a new church began shortly after the parish center was completed in 1997, Sepe said.

“There’s a lot more (residential) development in the southern Frederick County area. We’ve experienced quite a bit of influx of younger parishioners, too,” she said.

Parishioners have expressed a lot of excitement about the project, Sepe said.

The parish website features a countdown – in days, hours, minutes and seconds – to the groundbreaking.

“I think everybody’s really ready for a new church,” Sepe said.