



Hundreds of churchgoers line up for the grand opening of Visitation Parish in Comber Dec. 2. The parish hopes to bring together Catholics in an area where community churches have closed in recent years.

New church opens in Comber

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

The estimated cost of the church is \$5.2 million, half of which has been paid for, said Annette Rondot, chair of the parish advisory board.

Rondot said further fundraising and pledge campaigns throughout the parish will continue to pay for the remaining cost.

Inside Visitation Parish there are artifacts on display from the four Lakeshore churches that have closed in recent years. Religious paintings, statues and a pipe organ have been taken from Annunciation Parish in Stoney Point, St. Joachim Church, Our Lady of Lourdes in Comber and Holy Redeemer in Staples.

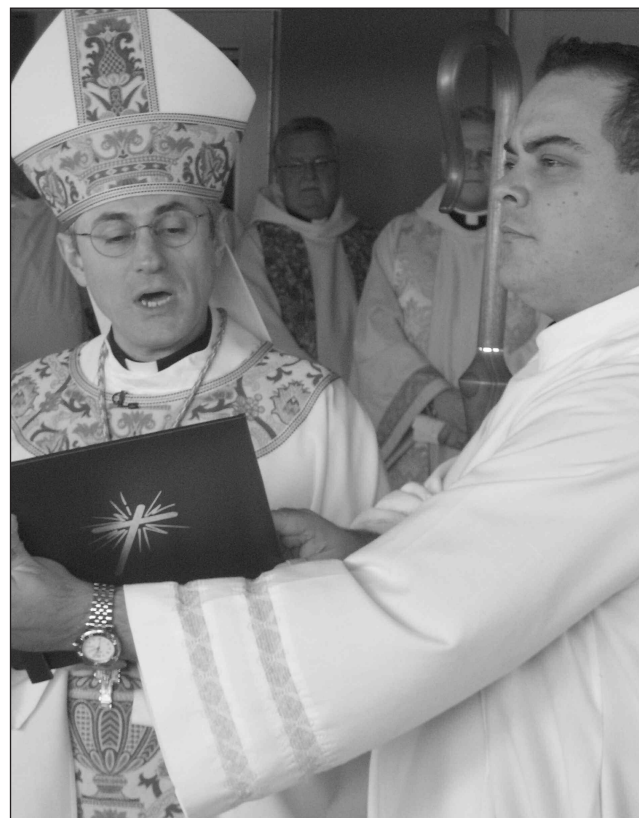
It's been a 10-year process of planning, fundraising and building, and now is a time of hope, said the full-time priest of the new parish, Dwayne

Adam. "I'm just overwhelmed that a vision that started 10 years ago comes to this kind of completion today," Adam said. "For me it becomes a moment of hope. Though we have had to close some of the places we've worshiped in previously, it is a very hopeful time as we open a building that now permits us to welcome all of those people. We wanted to recognize that we're bringing four distinct communities together – Comber, Staples, Stoney Point and St. Joachim – in this new parish."

After the service, outgoing Lakeshore Mayor Bob Croft commended Adam on his work in opening the new parish.

"If it wasn't for Father Dwayne's dedication and leadership, we wouldn't be here today," said Croft, whose comment was met

by a standing ovation for Adam. The London Diocese is currently considering its options for placing for sale the four closed parishes.



Rev. Ronald Fabbro, Bishop of London, left, and Fr. Chris Gevaert, greet parishioners outside Visitation Parish.

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