



# ARCHDIOCESE OF BALTIMORE

DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT SERVICES

March 14, 2013

Rev. Mark Logue  
Our Lady of Sorrows  
101 Owensville Road  
West River, MD 20778

Re: Maryland Stormwater Remediation Fee

Dear Rev. Logue,

I write to draw your attention to a new State-mandated fee presently slated to take effect on July 1, 2013, and to encourage your participation in public discourse on this topic. While it has only very recently begun to garner broad attention among landowners, the Maryland General Assembly in 2012 adopted legislation (House Bill 987) requiring ten Maryland counties and Baltimore City to impose and collect a new Stormwater Remediation Fee, intended to fund the implementation of local stormwater management practices aimed at the reduction of runoff into tributaries that feed the Chesapeake Bay.

The State legislation afforded each jurisdiction latitude in crafting the specifics of the local fee structure(s), along with appropriate credits and off-sets for stormwater management “best practices”. The eleven impacted localities are in varying stages of planning and implementation, but all of the proposals contemplate an assessment that will be based upon the aggregate square footage of impervious surface area contained within a given property (or parish campus, in our case). Impervious surfaces generally include the footprint of all structures, parking lots, sidewalks, driveways, and any other manmade materials that do not let water penetrate the ground. At present, there are no exemptions for non-profit, religious or charitable organizations, and the financial impact could be significant, particularly for those parish campuses that include large volumes of impervious surface area (e.g., parking lots, playgrounds, large worship and hall facilities, etc.).

With respect to Anne Arundel County specifically, the County Council is considering legislation to establish a fee structure generally described as follows:

- Base rate of \$85 per year, for every 2,800 square feet of impervious surface contained within a particular property;
- Off-sets and credits for certain technologies and best practices; and
- County legislation known as Bill No. 2-13, which would implement the new fee, is eligible for a vote as early as Monday, March 18.

While we all share a desire for a clean and healthy Chesapeake Bay, I encourage you to think carefully about the toll that this might exact on parish finances, beginning with the fiscal

year that commences on July 1. Scarce resources diverted to new and as yet unspecified stormwater fees are resources lost for the faith-based activities that are core to the Church's mission. We believe that it would be appropriate for local representatives to hear from you on this matter, and we encourage you to voice your concerns. With a significant outpouring of grass-roots feedback, perhaps we can advance an agenda to mitigate the burden of these new fees on the parish, either by exempting non-profits or by having the fee capped or set at a reasonably low rate. The County Executive and your Council representative should hear from you as soon as possible about how an additional fee imposed on the parish would affect the many services provided by the parish to the community. Contact information for them can be found at "Government" tab at [www.aacounty.org](http://www.aacounty.org). You might also encourage parishioners or any other property owners to register their concerns as well.

I enclose a letter from Archbishop Lori that was sent to a number of elected officials voicing concerns about the fee. If you have questions or wish to discuss the Stormwater Remediation Fee legislation or process in further detail, please feel free to contact our Archdiocesan legal counsel, David Kinkopf or Ryan Potter, at 410-727-7702, and they will be happy to provide assistance.

Sincerely,



William J. Baird, III  
Chief Financial Officer  
Executive Director of Management Services