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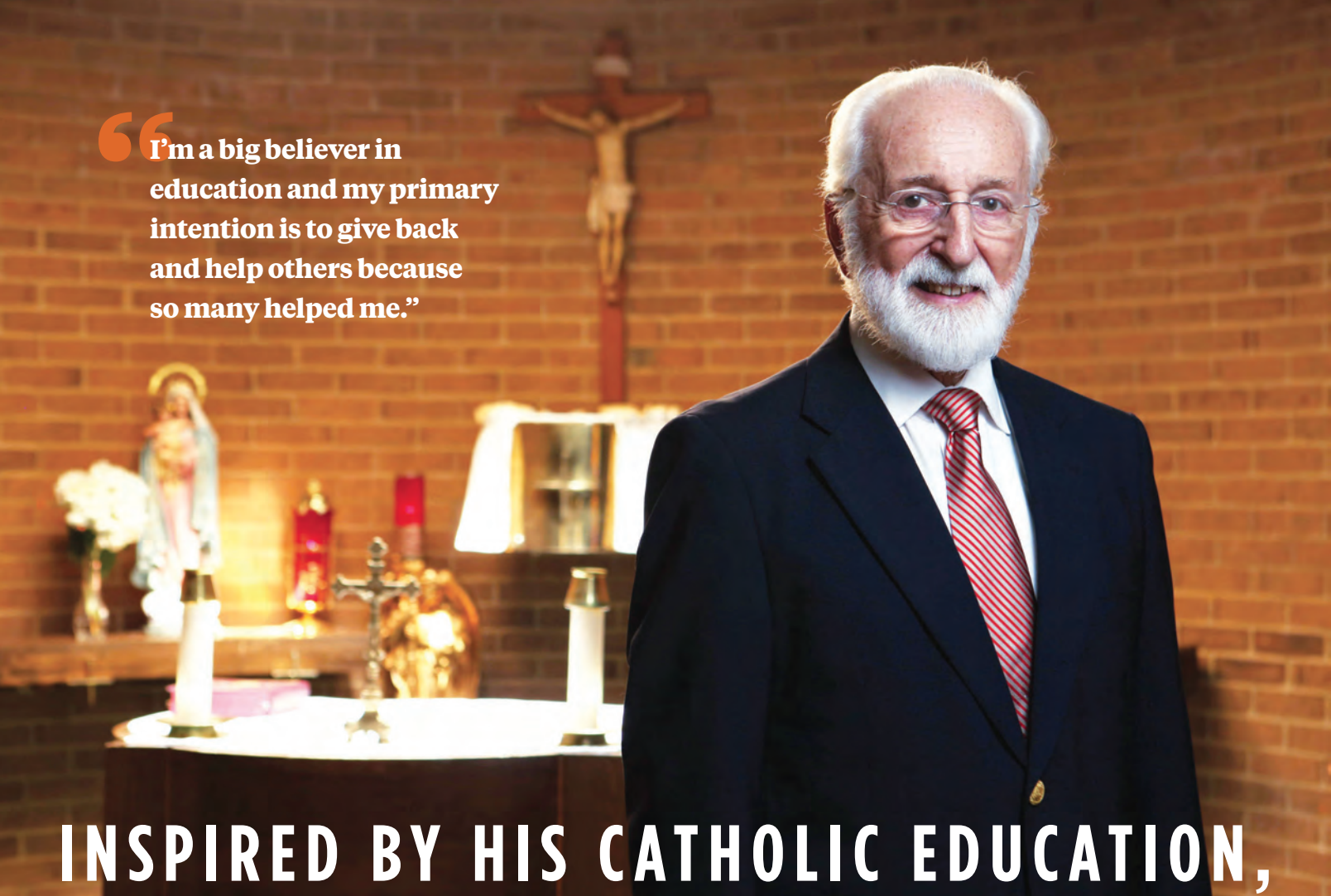
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A MOVEMENT TO ENCOUNTER JESUS IN THE EUCHARIST



“I’m a big believer in education and my primary intention is to give back and help others because so many helped me.”

INSPIRED BY HIS CATHOLIC EDUCATION,

Dick Gadomski supports current and future students

BY JAMES DOWD | PHOTOGRAPHY BY KAREN PULFER FOCHT

Entrepreneur and philanthropist Richard (Dick) Gadomski has long been a faithful supporter of the Catholic Church and Catholic education in Memphis and the Mid-South area. And now he is increasing his support through a new pledge that will benefit future generations.

Gadomski has committed to donating \$1.2 million to his parish, The Church of the Holy Spirit, the Catholic Diocese of Memphis (CDOM) and toward Catholic STEM education. He will make this donation through The Gadomski Family Foundation, where he is the founder and president and his daughter, Dr. Regina Healy, and his son-in-law, Jay Healy, are directors.

“I’m a big believer in education and my primary intention is to give back and help others because so many helped me,” Gadomski said. “My education at Christian Brothers University prepared me to

become successful in business and I want to do something that will help young people have some of the same wonderful educational opportunities that I did.”

A meeting last year with Sister Mary Lawrence, principal at St. Paul Catholic School, inspired Gadomski to elevate his giving. His visit to St. Paul led to a donation to that school, and then served as a catalyst for a \$400,000 gift that will be divided into annual contributions of \$100,000. The first installment, which was received in early 2022, will be distributed to schools throughout the diocese to support STEM programs.

“When COVID hit, everything changed and we were struggling with our scholarship campaign,” Sister Mary Lawrence said. “I reached out to Mr. Gadomski, and he came by our school and said he was impressed by what we’re doing at St. Paul. That visit led to a very generous donation to help our STEM (Science/Technology/Engineering/Math) programs.”

Gadomski’s \$100,000 donation to St. Paul is designated for STEM education, and the funds have enabled the school to hire a full-time teacher dedicated to growing STEM educational offerings.

“Having someone completely focused on STEM is a wonderful benefit for our students and allows us to develop an age-specific curriculum,” Sister Mary Lawrence said. “A child in kindergarten has different

needs from a student in eighth grade and our STEM teacher addresses those needs. We're also excited about helping our students identify their own gifts and pursue those gifts in ways we weren't always able to do before."

Gadomski traces his passion for helping young people to his childhood in Chicago, where he benefited from the influence of Catholic educators.

"I wasn't the best student by any stretch of the imagination, but the Christian Brothers saw something in me, and they never gave up on helping me get the best education possible," Gadomski said. "I've always attributed my success to their influence and their unwavering belief in me even when I didn't believe in myself."

Gadomski's donation will provide annual grants that all the schools in the diocese may apply for and may range from \$2,000 to \$15,000 annually per grant. Needs and funding will be lower in some areas, such as preschool, and higher in schools that have more robust STEM education programs.

"We contacted our diocesan schools and encouraged them to apply for grants and to be creative and innovative in thinking about how to maximize STEM education in their classrooms," said Nic Antoine, diocesan superintendent of Catholic schools. "The goal is to provide exemplary STEM education throughout a student's time in each of our 15 Catholic schools and have them matriculate to Christian Brothers University to continue their education."

For Gadomski, the focus on STEM education reflects his educational and professional background. After a successful engineering career at companies including Humko in Memphis and BASF in Germany, Gadomski founded Process Systems Incorporated, an engineering, fabrication and construction company. He sold PSI in 1998 when it had grown to more than 500 employees and \$100 million in annual sales.

His philanthropic outreach in the Mid-South will enable future generations to gain solid educational foundations that will help them lead successful lives and develop positive changes in the world.

"The demand for engineering students and for STEM education is greater now than it ever has been, both in our country and around the world," Gadomski said.



Dick Gadomski with his wife Floe, his daughter Regina and her husband Jay Healy. ▶



"STEM is the future and we're preparing students here to be successful in an increasingly global market. The demand for nurses and doctors and engineers and people in all kinds of scientific areas continues to grow and people who study in these areas and develop new technologies are changing the world."

Fortunately for Memphis students, beginning at an early age and throughout their scholastic careers, new opportunities will now be available to them. And somewhere along the way another young Dick Gadomski may be gaining a STEM-inspired education that will change the world.

"STEM introduces students to problem-solving and making connections that illustrate the genius of God," Sister Mary Lawrence said. "We as His children get to experience that genius in many different ways, and this beautiful gift will help our young people explore more deeply the many facets of this amazing world that God has given us." †