

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Andrew E. Masich  
President & CEO

## A Record-Breaking Year

As another year winds down, now is a perfect opportunity to reflect on a historic 2010. The History Center is proud to be the region's oldest cultural institution—131 years strong—and this year marked another milestone in our organization's history.

The opening of Fort Pitt Museum, record attendance and membership totals, and the launch of the *Vatican Splendors* exhibition present an ideal opportunity to reflect on milestones in the History Center's legacy.

- **1879** – After three decades trying to get re-started following the disastrous fire of 1845, the Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania – the parent organization of the History Center – finally takes root to honor the 125th anniversary of the French & Indian War.
- **1915** – After years of meeting in temporary locations, the Historical Society breaks ground for a new building on Bigelow Boulevard in Oakland.
- **1931** – At the height of the Great Depression, the Historical Society completes an addition to the Bigelow Boulevard building.

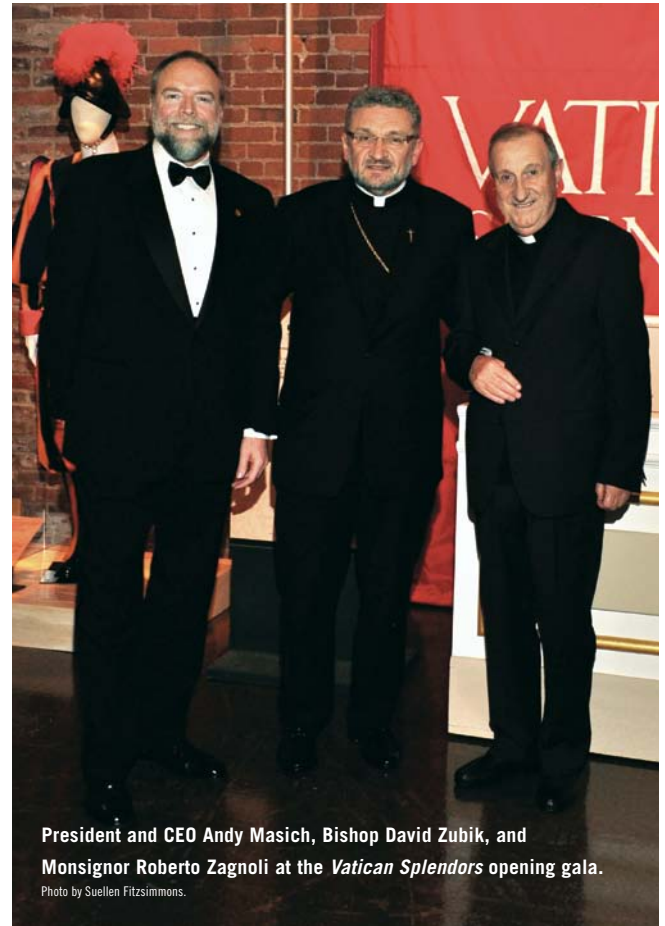
- **1996** – The Historical Society is reincarnated as the Senator John Heinz History Center and moves to the former Chautauqua Lake Ice Company building on Smallman Street in the Strip District.
- **2000** – The History Center becomes a Smithsonian affiliate, providing unparalleled access to the world's largest museum collection and programs.
- **2004** – The new Smithsonian wing opens, which nearly doubles the History Center's size and includes the Western Pennsylvania Sports Museum.
- **2010** – The History Center begins management of Fort Pitt Museum, which adds to a "museum system" that includes the Sports Museum and

Meadowcroft Rockshelter and Historic Village.

- **2010** – *Vatican Splendors*, the History Center's largest exhibition in 131 years, opens to rave reviews and breaks all previous attendance records.

**An unprecedented number of school groups visited the History Center this year.**

Photo by Lisa Dundon.



President and CEO Andy Masich, Bishop David Zubik, and Monsignor Roberto Zagnoli at the *Vatican Splendors* opening gala.

Photo by Suellen Fitzsimmons.

Once the final tallies are completed, the History Center will have welcomed nearly 225,000 visitors in 2010 and increased its active membership to more than 6,000. This is the best evidence we have that we are connecting with our audience.

Thank you for your continued support of the History Center. Working together, we are making history here in Pittsburgh! And best wishes for a happy holiday season. ☀

