

Parish Self Study – Executive Summary

In accordance with Bishop Campbell's directive to all parishes within the Diocese, St. Andrew Parish participated in the Parish Self Study. The purpose of the self study is to plan for the future well-being of the diocese. A team of parishioners guided the process which included completion of an extensive data driven survey and the input of those who attended a parish-wide focus group on July 16. We at St. Andrew are fortunate to have completed a comprehensive strategic planning process in 2005. This current diocesan effort provided us with the opportunity to review progress we've made and to identify ways to enhance or build on the goals originally established through the strategic plan. A final Parish Self Study report was submitted to the Diocese on August 13. It consisted of the survey covering sacramental, strategic and sustainability areas of parish life as well as an overview, conclusions and a priority recommendation in each of the areas.

Sacramental Nature of the Parish: Data from the survey and parishioner input reveal that the sacramental nature of the parish is strong and that there are ample opportunities for worship and sacraments. We are fortunate to offer 2 daily masses and 5 weekend masses. There is strong participation in liturgical ministries. The parish offers comprehensive preparation for the sacraments and has a strong RCIA program. There are several devotions offered on a weekly and annual basis. Continuing education and renewal programs are available in many different forms. Parishioners are responsive and appreciative of all that is available to them and express interest in additional opportunities and programs. Demographics have remained relatively stable within the parish and the number of registered households has increased slightly over the past 5 years.

Conclusions drawn regarding the sacramental nature of the Parish are:

- Saint Andrew parish is healthy with regard to its sacramental nature.
- We recognize that in the future, the shortage of priests may impact the availability of sacraments and devotions.
- Strong involvement of the laity is highly valued throughout the parish. Parishioners recognize the need to further engage and develop the laity to perform current and additional roles within the parish.
- A welcoming environment and outreach to individual parishioners are essential to increasing participation in parish life.

Priority Recommendation: Establish a Sacramental Life Committee in which lay leadership in the sacramental life of the parish would be promoted and would include encouraging vocations and participation in liturgical ministries.

Strategic Nature of the Parish: St. Andrew Parish has an established mission statement and the population of parishioners reflects the demographics of the surrounding community. The parish is fortunate to have 3 priests in residence. Saint Andrew School,

the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd and the Parish School of Religion are the primary programs that minister to the children of the parish. There is a youth ministry program and new activities are being initiated for young adults and singles. The parish is engaged in a variety of social justice/concerns ministries. The parish has recently initiated a stewardship committee. The strategic plan completed in 2005 and the recently conducted feasibility study demonstrate the parish's interest and commitment to analyzing the environment in which it operates and providing parishioners the opportunity to provide input. The work of the Finance Council, Parish Council and Stewardship Committee are among several strategies established to assure effective management of parish resources.

Conclusions drawn regarding the strategic nature of the Parish are:

- Parish is served well by its advisory/monitoring bodies (Parish Council/Finance Council) and other committees and organizations.
- The strategic plan adopted by the parish in 2005 has served the parish well. To date, significant progress has been made with regard to the goals identified in the plan and several important parish initiatives have been launched as a result. The plan continues to be a relevant framework and guide.
- The current Diocesan strategic planning effort reaffirms the effectiveness of our earlier strategic planning process.

Priority Recommendation: Maintain the focus on the parish's strategic plan. Consider a process to update the plan at the 5 year mark (2010).

Sustainability Nature of the Parish: St. Andrew Parish has an active Finance Council and Parish Council that meet monthly. The parish is financially sound but anticipates increased expenses that need to be addressed. Parishioners are generous in their support of the parish, the Diocese and other charitable organizations. Current debt is related to the renovation of the parish's activity center acquired in 2006. It is anticipated that this debt will be retired through pledged monies over the next four years. Parish facilities are well-maintained but there are short and long term facility needs. A renovation of the school is being planned to include a slight expansion of space. This renovation will likely occur in phases and will require a capital campaign for funding. Membership in the parish has increased over the past 5 years despite the population of the surrounding community decreasing slightly. Parishioners are active and perform a wide variety of roles within parish life. The parish's stewardship committee has been in place for nearly a year and has developed an action plan to promote a stewardship way of life.

Conclusions drawn regarding the sustainability nature of the Parish are:

- Engaging parishioners is essential to the long-term sustainability of the parish
- Increased operational expenses from the acquisition of the new building need to be addressed.

- School enrollment is likely to fluctuate and there need to be strategies in place to address the fluctuation.
- The need for expansion of parish facilities and renovation of the school that were originally identified in the parish strategic plan are supported by parishioners as demonstrated by the feasibility study conducted last year.

Priority Recommendation: Promote stewardship parish-wide as a way of engaging parishioners and encouraging their commitment of time, talent and treasure.

Parish Self-Study Next Steps

The next step for this process will be consideration of the reports by all deaneries within the Diocese. Deaneries are groupings of parishes by their geographic location within the Diocese. Representatives from parishes within each deanery meet several times throughout the year primarily as a communication vehicle between parishes and Bishop Campbell. St. Andrew Parish is part of the northwest deanery along with St. Agatha, St. Brendan, St. Brigid, St. Christopher, St. Joan of Arc, St. Margaret of Cortona, St. Peter, St. Timothy and Our Lady of Victory.

Each deanery will consider the reports from the parishes and then submit to the Diocese priority recommendations for the deanery. The Diocese will then consider the recommendations and from these develop the Diocesan Pastoral and Strategic Plan. This process is expected to be completed by May 2009.