

Synopsis Report – St. Mary of the Woods Catholic Church



1. Interviews with approximately 37 lay leaders representing 21 lay leadership households.
2. 562 persons participated in study, representing more than 400 households – 70% of 567 giving households.
3. 877 potential giving households; 567 participating giving households.
4. 567 participating giving households gave the \$1,287,452 total receipts in 2021. Among these giving households, 98% of this total came from 429 households (these gave \$1,260,520, yielding an average household gift of \$2,938). The remaining \$27,000 of the total receipts of \$1,287,452 in 2021 was given by 138 households, yielding average household gift of \$196 annually. Summary? The lion-share of parish financial support (98%) each year is coming from approximately 429 families or slightly less than half the parish membership 877 (49%). There are no recorded gifts in 2021 from 310 member households.
5. Majority of participants in study (75%) have been members of the parish for longer than 16 years. Most of the participants fall within the three middle-aged groups with the largest representation from those between the ages of 30 – 44 (almost forty percent – 40%). The remainder of the participants are generously spread between the ages 19-29, 45-59, and 60-74.
6. A notably high percentage (over 90%) of the respondents are “Moderately Happy” to “Very Happy” w/parish’s programs and ministries.
7. “St. Mary School,” “Trinity High,” and “Music, Mass, Liturgy” were ranked as parish’s “greatest strengths.” Half the participants rank “School Facilities” as the # 1 need for “strengthening and/or expanding.”
8. When asked whether parishioners believe building a new school is the “right plan,” nearly 3 out of every 4 participants said, “I believe it is the right plan.”
9. Sixty percent (60%) of the respondents said “Yes,” to the question of whether they would provide financial support in a capital campaign to build a new school. Only fifteen percent (15%) said “No” and thirty percent (30%) was as yet “Undecided.” The report clearly demonstrates that there is little opposition to building a new school. However, there are many who expressed reticence toward the entire plan but mostly out of sheer “sticker shock” or the feeling that \$12M is beyond the financial capacity of the parish.
10. Some parish households during a feasibility study will indicate an amount they would consider giving over regular offertory giving in a capital campaign. When these notable gift amounts are combined with the church’s financial potential in a capital campaign, \$7M to \$8M becomes very achievable. This is based on the actual numbers indicated by parishioners. The largest precampaign gift identified is from one household equaling \$5M. There are a minimum of 5 additional households indicating gift amounts in the \$100,000+ range. Another 340 additional households indicated varied gift amounts. Collectively, therefore, the parish would most likely receive in a 3-year capital campaign between \$7.1M and \$8.1M.
11. 15% of the respondents said they would consider including the parish in their will and/or estate plans. 50% “Undecided.” This may be a real growth possibility.
12. With the findings in this report, Generis recommends St. Mary of the Woods Catholic Church make immediate plans to move forward in a capital campaign for the building of a new school. Preparation for the campaign would include work on the development and refinement of a compelling vision, the finalization of the building and construction plans, the submission of all plans to the Diocese for their approval, and a presentation of the finalized plans to the entire parish as a kick-off to the capital campaign. Generis is pleased with the outcomes of this study and is very optimistic that the parish will experience a memorable, inspiring, and successful capital campaign.

Dated: May 2022

Steve McSwain, Generis Senior Generosity Strategist