

Study Method

Purpose

The purpose of the Feasibility Study was to present to the entire parish of Saint Louis the plans for the needed repairs and renovations at the Church, Rectory, McClunn Hall, Parish grounds and security facilities to gain their perspective with respect to those needs and the relative priorities of those needs, and to gauge the level of support for a potential ensuing capital campaign for funding the needs.

Acknowledgment

Excellent preparatory work was instrumental in helping the study process move forward efficiently and effectively. We want to express special thanks to Father Staples for his leadership and preparation that set the stage for a productive study.

Focus Group Meetings

The study design called for a series of "Focus Group Meetings" to be conducted at times that would be most convenient to the members of Saint Louis Catholic Church and with a clear desire to have as many participants from the membership as possible. Toward that end, the meetings were held at times convenient for those attending Sunday Mass\ as well as Saturday evening Masses. All members were publicly and personally invited to attend one or more of the focus meetings. Invitations consisted of meeting schedules printed in Sunday bulletins, and announcements during worship services. Meeting dates and times were selected to provide the entire church the opportunity to participate and voice their opinions. In keeping with the primary goal of receiving objective input regarding the proposed plans, there was no solicitation of funds at any of the meetings.

Focus meetings were held in McClunn Hall And the school cafeteria (as schedules permitted) beginning Saturday, January 17, 2009, with the final meeting being conducted on Sunday, February 22, 2009. A total of thirty eight meetings were conducted.

Each Focus Group Meeting was conducted in a uniform manner, with a common agenda and by presenters that had developed a common message. Presenters utilized the same materials and script to give all participants a common base of information from which to draw and offer their opinions. Site plans, renderings, and estimate of costs were shown on large display boards and PowerPoint in each meeting.

A volunteer transcriber served as scribe and recorded detailed information at each of the sessions. The information provided is crucial to a comprehensive assessment of the "sense" of the membership and is included in the Appendix of this report. Detailed information from the focus group questionnaire responses is also enclosed. By utilizing this information and other input received, we have sought to objectively appraise the responses in general. This inclusive approach enabled the consultant to determine patterns and sentiments that would affect the church's ability to conduct a successful capital campaign at this time.

A complete presentation was conducted each Sunday evening in Spanish following the 5 PM Spanish language Mass. The presentation, questionnaire and Q&A session were in Spanish and translated to English for this report

Focus Meeting Presenters

At each Focus Meeting, presenters shared with attendees the information regarding the proposed plans. The presenters conducted the meeting in a manner that provided sufficient information and in an appropriate manner to spark interaction among the participants. From that point on, the facilitator maintained the engagement of the participants and maintained the momentum. The display boards containing renderings of the site plans were used to help attendees understand details such as site layout, access means and facilities.

The following gave graciously of their time and talents to make information easily understandable and appealing to their fellow church members.

Reverend Terrence Staples, S.F.O., Pastor
Reverend Mark Carrier, Parochial Vicar
Tina James
Lisa and Tom Anderson
Scott Bloch
Chris Robertson
Marvin Spychaj
Donna Roncarti and all others who worked tirelessly and endlessly throughout the study

Further Recognition

Many thanks to the support staff who availed themselves to numerous meetings and focus presentations. Their dedicated support and involvement is congratulated.

Attendance

The level of participation in the focus group meetings, as a percentage of the “active” congregation, is evidence that the plans for expansion and a capital campaign were taken seriously by the congregation. Their questions and comments reflect a strong interest in identified needs and a desire to understand the existing plans for meeting those needs. Approximately four hundred household groups comprising a diverse cross-section of the congregation attended thirty eight focus group meetings. The participants represented both longer-term members and relative newcomers.

Addressing the Prerequisites for Success

1 Proper Timing?

Of the 209 questionnaire respondents (101) of the households stated that they would become financially supportive to the campaign and (27) households needed more information. A small number (16) said no and (65) did not answer the question at all. These statistics as a group are a very positive indication of commitment within the membership to the success of a financial campaign. Overall, in questionnaire responses and in direct comments during focus meetings the consensus was that the needs identified for capital funding were appropriate and necessary.

Of the (413) who attended Focus Groups, there were (209) who completed questionnaires; of which (68) individuals indicated that they would volunteer time to the campaign (an additional (48) needed more information), (16) said no, but mostly for physical reasons. (77) Individuals of the respondents did not answer the question. These statistics as a group are a positive indication of commitment within the membership to the success of a financial campaign. Overall, based upon direct comments on questionnaires and during Focus Group Meetings, the consensus was that the needs identified for capital funding were appropriate and necessary.

2 Appealing Case?

The case for the proposed capital campaign has wide support within the congregation. An estimated breakdown of costs is attached in the Appendix of this Report.

The level of that support varies within membership groupings with respect to the needs that were presented and those that were raised by the members in the Focus Group Meetings. Broadly speaking, the needs from the perspective of the members can be categorized as follows: (SEE APPENDIX 1 FOR DETAIL)

- Saint Louis Roman Catholic Church
 - Make all necessary repairs for structural integrity and safety including;
 - Roof replacement
 - Structural support beam repair
 - School Foundation repair
 - Drainage to preclude foundation issues
 - Install adequate restrooms to meet parish and ADA compliance
 - Make McClunn usable and meet code
 - Bring Rectory kitchen up to code
 - Accessibility in Church, Rectory, School and McClunn Hall
 - Move the Tabernacle to the center of the altar
 - Remove asbestos
 - Create a safe and maintainable place of worship, education and fellowship
 - Meet all a ADA requirements
 - Open up the Parish Center into a place of fellowship and growth
 - Maintain a beautiful traditional Catholic Church

3 Influential Leadership?

Many people have already shown their leadership and willingness to help support a capital campaign. Indeed, very strong, capable and influential members of the church are engaged and are revealing a can-do spirit and firm commitment to the success of the proposed campaign. Further, 36 members by name plus the Feasibility Team, Clergy and Church Staff were identified by questionnaire respondents as being leaders who should be enlisted for leadership roles in the proposed campaign. Those already engaged in leadership roles are obviously on that list. It is evident from the feedback that there is an underlying assumption that the process will go forward. It appears there would be a tremendous lack of fulfillment if the proposed campaign were not undertaken. The overall mood was positive as the project is seen as “needed”. Most of these would likely participate in at least a specific role that met their individual preferences. These results point to an adequate number of dedicated, committed members who are willing to give of their time, talents and influence. In light of this, it can be assumed there will be a sufficient number of volunteers to begin and sustain the campaign recruitment process. At the time of this writing all selected chairs of all campaign committees have been contacted and have agreed to accept their positions,

4 Adequate Resources?

Whether or not Saint Louis Catholic Church has the ability to reach the goal of \$7,000,000 is a question that must be addressed. Given our experience, the church does not face a “challenge”. There need be acts of sacrificial generosity by all the families and members but the goal is readily achievable. Those families with above-average ability to give will be instrumental in setting the stage for reaching and perhaps surpassing any campaign goal. The appeal must be met however with financial support from all members of the church, friends and past members of the church.

Campaigns traditionally follow a formula that is skewed toward obtaining “lead” gifts from those most blessed with the ability to give. Saint Louis is not an exception to this pattern. It must be noted that this does not in the least detract from the shared importance of the vast majority who will provide less than “lead” gifts. The advantage of being able to test the goal during the early phase, or “Advance Gifts” Phase, of a campaign will help the Campaign Steering Committee in evaluating what James D. Klote & Associates believes to be a realistic fund-raising goal. In other words, the goal can be evaluated in light of the results of early solicitation.

It is significant to note that with very little detailed discussion of the estimated costs, 101 of the 209 respondents indicated that this is a campaign they would support financially. In addition, 27 respondents stated they needed more information and 65 gave no answer. It is the experience of this campaign director and James D. Klote & Associates that those with no answer or “need more information” lean toward positive positions, but are not willing to “commit”. The few negative responses were in many cases qualified by age, health or current financial stress.

Summary of Study Statistical Data

Focus Groups	
Measurement	Qty
Quantity of Family Addresses in Membership File	2418
Quantity of Average Attendees	17
Number of Multiple Time Attendees at Meetings	2
Total Number of Attendees at Meetings	411
Total Number of Attendees at Meetings (including multiple times)	413
Number of Focus Meetings	38
Number of Questionnaire Responses	209
Number of Persons Identified as Potential Campaign Leaders	29
HOUSEHOLDS Willing to Support Campaign Financially	
Answer	Qty
Yes	101
Yes, but Need More Information	27
No	16
No Answer	65
HOUSEHOLDS (2 people usually) Willing to Volunteer Time	
Answer	Qty
Yes	68
Yes, but Need More Information	48
No - Usually a physical reason	16
No Answer	77