

**State of the Parish Report
Sacred Heart Parish, Pullman, WA
October, 2019**

The Pastoral Council has committed to making an annual state of the parish report. This is our first effort.

Sacred Heart in Pullman is a generous and active parish; we are centered on the Eucharist, and have a strong Faith Formation team. We also have some very significant challenges before us.

Let me start by briefly speaking about the Pastoral Council. Many of you may not know what the Councils' job entails. We help plan for the future of the Parish, by reviewing, evaluating, and making changes as circumstances evolve. Our Parish is first and foremost on our minds, along with **growing our Faith and expanding our parish in a safe environment.**

How are we doing financially? Sacred Heart finances are in good shape for the 2018 to 2019 year. Sacred Heart currently has \$86,337 in unrestricted assets, \$541,339 in the remodel/new church fund, and \$46,017 in the improvement fund for maintenance and capital improvements. Parish operating income was \$22,149 more than parish expenses last year. That is good.

How are plans for future parish building going? They are still in progress.

In 2015 a parish Exploratory Committee evaluated our now 84- year-old physical campus. They listed serious issues back then.

In June of 2018 the Pastoral Council surveyed parishioners. 84% supported beginning the design of plans to build new church facilities, either onsite, or elsewhere. A building committee was formed last year. The committee spent the past year looking at property around town and near the church. It has been unable to purchase land next to the church. They did find available land north of Wawawai Road, and are in the process of negotiating to put down earnest money, and then hire a firm to do a feasibility study of the land. The study will show whether the land is suitable to build on, and about how much it might cost. The time frame for this study is 120 to 180 days.

At the same time, the committee will hire an engineering firm to find out whether our current church, and any of the rest of the buildings, can be saved and renovated for a reasonable price. The money from our upcoming auction will help pay for the two studies: of the new land, and of the current buildings.

As soon as the studies are completed, we will hold an all-Parish meeting to present the results and begin to decide how to move forward.

Liturgical Life at Sacred Heart is very healthy. We added a monthly Youth Mass and a third Sunday liturgy. The youth requested a period of Eucharistic Adoration especially for them. We will work with them to provide this liturgy. Last January we hosted the interfaith celebration of Martin Luther King Junior Day. This was enthusiastically received. We look forward to expanding our ecumenical involvement.

Has attendance at Mass been growing? Mass attendance was relatively steady over the last decade. Sometimes up a little, sometimes down. But overall steady. Many parishioners have expressed concern about Catholics they know who do not attend Mass. This is a reality that we need to continue addressing.

How are we growing our faith? We have a strong Faith Formation program for children, and our Youth Group is thriving. However, many parents have expressed concern about how to hand the faith on to their children. We need to increase our ability to assist parents.

The RCIA process is back in our parish. Nine people were received into the church at Easter Vigil this year. Four adults are in the program this fall. We are reaching out to young adults with Theology on Tap and social activities. For all adults we have Disciples in Dialogue, various Catholic education series, a men's prayer group, and women's Bible study.

How are we reaching out to the community and beyond? – Our Caritas Committee restarted last year. It researches charities and gives away a percentage of parish income. The Prepares group, which helps families with babies and young children, is fairly new. Our St. Francis Guild does direct service to the poor. The Eucharistic Outreach ministers visit Bishop Place, Regency, Avalon and the homebound each Sunday, and Mass is celebrated at Bishop Place the first Friday of each month. We invite community members to our neighborhood barbecue and Oktoberfest. Knights of Columbus, Catholic Daughters, Helping Hands, the Social Justice ministry, Family Promise, the LGBT Catholic Outreach Potluck, and Lentil Fest booth, all reach out beyond the parish.

How are we increasing the Safety & Security of the parish? Last spring a committee formed. They are working on improving first aid kits and classroom safety, upgrading fire detection, and implementing emergency planning. There is a significant list of things still to be done.

What changes have been made to the church itself? The church is now open 24/7, security cameras are in place, the sound system was upgraded, there is a TV in the annex for viewing Mass, and the parking lot was patched. Soon we hope to add a hearing assistance system for the church.

Volunteers are an essential part of our community. At this time, we would like to **Thank** all the volunteers who helped in any way, with so many activities this past year.

How can we improve in the future? One of our goals is to reach out to those who are alienated by the sex abuse scandal. If you, or someone you know, would like to talk about this issue, Father Steve would love to have a cup of coffee with you. A further area of needed improvement is hospitality. We are always trying to help new members feel welcome, and we are committed to finding new ways to improve this outreach.

Many years ago, others had a **vision**. They built a church, not just for themselves, but so all of us would have a place to gather as a community, and to practice our faith. It is now time for us to create a new vision, not just for ourselves, but for the future.

If you have questions about things in this report, please contact a council member or Fr. Steve (list of members is on the parish website).