



St. Mary Church

Building Community Together

General Questions

Q: Why do we need a Parish Ministry Center?

A: A Parish Ministry Center will allow us to develop our ministry life because we are currently constrained due to a lack of adequate meeting space. Having adequate space will allow us to provide more spiritual programs and ministries for all age groups. We envision this Center as a place where parishioners grow in their relationship with God and the parish community. We believe God will do great things through this Parish Ministry Center!

Q: What kinds of activities will take place in the parish hall?

A: The parish hall is very large and will have partitions for multipurpose usage. We envision ministry events like speaker programs, retreats, large group youth events, parent meetings and many other types of spiritual enrichment opportunities. Social events like pancake breakfasts, fish fries, and coffee and doughnuts after Mass will now be possible. We will also be able to provide funeral luncheons. A kitchen with appropriate equipment will be connected to the parish hall. On Christmas and Easter we may have some overflow Masses in the parish hall to handle overflow crowds.

Q: How will our Religious Education program benefit by having classes at St. Mary's?

A: We currently have 1,300 children in our kindergarten through 7th grade Religious Education program. One session meets on Tuesday and two sessions are held on Wednesdays. We have been renting out Marlowe Middle School in Huntley for \$50,000 a year. There will be great benefit in moving the program over to

our parish because the children will be more connected to the church. We will be able to have Mass and other liturgical activities with them. In our present situation we don't have access to audio/visual equipment. Having the program in our own facilities will allow us access to that technology and help us to program in a much more creative, interactive way for the benefit of the faith development of our children.

Q: How will the new Parish Ministry Center benefit the Confirmation Program?

A: We have almost 400 8th graders and high school students who participate in our two-year Confirmation Program. The 8th graders meet late Sunday afternoon and the high school youth meet early Sunday evening. We use every square inch of the building with these groups! Larger, improved facilities will help us to minister to them in a much more resourceful, life-giving way.

Q: Will all these rooms have multipurpose usage?

A: Yes! Sound proof partitions are planned for most of the rooms. This allows us to use them for religious education classes. Opening up the partitions allows for larger groups to meet.

Q: Is there a basement included in the new addition?

A: There will be a basement underneath the Eucharistic Adoration Chapel and bride's room. This will be connected to the lower level underneath our gathering area so we won't need to add another elevator. This area underneath the chapel and bride's room will be used for mechanicals and storage. There will be ample room for storage in the new addition and adequate meeting space. The cost of adding a basement for the whole building was cost prohibitive.

Q: How will the youth room be utilized?

A: It will be beneficial for our youth ministry program to have a space that is “youth friendly” and designated for youth activities like retreats, bible studies, and fun social events. We look for imaginative ways to keep our young people connected to the Church. This large area has a partition so that it can also be used to create two religious education classrooms when RE is in session.

Q: *Will there be a stage?*

A: We are planning on having a portable stage in the parish hall that can be used for different types of events and programs.

Q: *What is a Eucharistic Adoration Chapel?*

A: A small Eucharistic Adoration chapel will provide a space where parishioners can go to spend some quiet time with the Lord. Parishes that have Adoration chapels find that there are many blessings that come about because of them. We’ll continue to have the Blessed Sacrament in the Tabernacle in our large church in addition to having the Blessed Sacrament in the Adoration Chapel.

Our large church is very busy. We have many Masses on the weekend and during the week. In addition there are many funerals, weddings, rehearsals and other activities in the church. Many people stop by the church at all times of the day and evening to pray and spend some time with the Lord. At times that is not possible because of all that happens in the church.

Q: *Are we going to have a Catholic elementary school sometime in the future?*

A: A Catholic elementary school may be a possibility in the future. Our parish leadership discerned that at this point in our parish life, the Parish Ministry Center with its various components would best serve the needs of the whole parish.

Q: *What impact will the location of the Parish Ministry Center have on parking and the flow of traffic?*

A: We are taking a fresh look at our parking lot and exploring ways to add parking and improve the flow of traffic in and out of the lot.

Q: *Is there going to be a new parish in our area anytime in the near future?*

A: The diocese does plan on a new parish about a mile and a half north of our parish sometime in the distant future. That will probably be years away because our area is not growing much in light of the housing crisis in our country.

Q: *Should we wait to do this project until the economy recovers?*

A: The feasibility study we conducted in May found that there is strong support for the project. We know that some will not be able to participate in the campaign because they are experiencing unemployment, underemployment, sickness, or some other life struggle. We are hopeful that most will be able to support the Parish Ministry Center plan and bring it to fruition.

Q: *When will the construction begin?*

A: That all depends on how well the fundraising goes. The Rockford Diocese does not want parishes going deeply into debt, so they ask parishes to have pledges that match the cost of the project and have sufficient cash in hand. The diocese looks at all the factors and determines when a parish has sufficient

resources to move forward. If everything goes well, we are hoping for a Spring, 2012 groundbreaking.

Q: How much did our church cost and when was the debt retired?

A: Our church cost \$11 million to build and was completed in November of 2001. We were able to retire the debt on the church in February of 2010. Because we have a very generous parish, we were able to pay off the debt well ahead of schedule.

Q: Will the parish hall be available to rent to outside groups?

A: The parish hall will be a busy place, and most of the usage will come about from parishioner events and activities. We don't plan on renting the space for wedding receptions. There may be times when an outside community group requests a space to meet. If we can accommodate those needs, we'll seek to do so at a minimal cost.

Q: How will gifts be recognized?

A: All gifts to the campaign will be recognized. We'll have a brass book and donors will be recognized in alphabetical order on the brass pages. We'll also be recognizing the donors from previous campaigns.

Giving to the Campaign

Q: Who will be asked to support this campaign?

A: Each individual or household will be asked to prayerfully consider a sacrificial gift to this campaign.

Q: When will the campaign start?

A: The active phase of the campaign will run from September 2011 through

January 2012. In order to visit all parishioners, we ask you to promptly accept the visit from the campaign volunteer and make your pledge at that time or shortly afterward. We also ask you to serve as a campaign visitor, so we can accomplish our goal of personally visiting as many families as possible.

Q: Why emphasize personal visits?

A: Home visits emphasize the personal nature of giving, allow for a thorough presentation of the need, give potential donors the opportunity to ask their own questions and allow visitors to express their enthusiasm. In addition, personal visits place a greater emphasis on stewardship, allowing the volunteer to share his/her own faith experience and participation.

Q: Why am I asked to consider a specific amount?

A: Parishioners need to know what levels of support are necessary to raise \$5 million or more. A gift amount is suggested for each household to prayerfully consider. No judgment is made on the level of gift you or others make. **The true test of your gift is whether it is planned, proportionate and sacrificial.**

Q: If St. Mary Parish has 5,000 registered households and the goal is \$5 million, why don't we ask each household to donate \$1,000? Why am I asked for a greater amount?

A: Simply put, successful campaigns don't achieve their goals through mathematical fundraising. Our parish is like most; 80% of parish support comes from 20% of the parish. Numerous parish households have a weak connection and don't support the parish. That is why evangelization and outreach are so important!

A goal of \$5 million cannot be reached without a number of substantial pledges and others at lesser levels. Some parishioners are blessed with ample resources, and others are not. The important thing is that our gift be planned, proportionate to our means, and reflect a spirit of sacrifice in thanksgiving to God. Some households may not be able to make a gift due to personal circumstances. After prayerful consideration of the request made by a volunteer, please reflect upon your gift by answering two questions. Am I proud of my gift? Does it reflect my love of God and my parish?

Q: What if I choose not to give the amount requested?

A: Matters of giving are questions of priorities. Your family is unique unto itself; however, you are asked to prayerfully consider a specific gift. Whatever your response, it should be one of choice and sacrifice.

Q: I dislike pledging. Why am I asked to make a pledge instead of a one-time gift?

A: You can make a one-time gift; however, the success of the campaign rests largely on pledges that are payable over five years. In addition, by making a pledge, you are able to donate more than would be otherwise possible in a one-time gift.

Q: I would like to pledge, but our budget is especially tight this year. How can I still participate?

A: The campaign pledge period is structured over five years, and you can determine when you want to start payment of your pledge.

Q: When do I begin paying on my pledge?

A: You determine when to begin the redemption of your pledge. It is very

important when filling out your pledge card to put that information on the space provided.

Q: We have been transferred to this area and will probably move in a few years. Why should we contribute to a campaign that will not directly benefit our family?

A: More than likely, you have been the beneficiaries of facilities in this parish as well as in others. When you move and join another parish, you will benefit from the generosity of others in your new parish.

Q: If I move, what then happens to my pledge?

A: While we would encourage you to fulfill your pledge, the decision is entirely your own.

Q: Will I need to maintain my weekly Sunday contribution?

A: Yes! Weekly offerings are used for the normal operating expenses of the parish. We depend on these contributions to maintain the parish and its programs at its present level.

Q: What if my financial situation changes and I am not able to fulfill my pledge?

A: Should financial difficulty arise, making it impossible for you to continue your payments, please notify the parish office to this effect.

Q: Will my gift remain confidential?

A: Yes! The only persons knowing your pledge information are the volunteer, campaign secretary and the individual who records your gift. These individuals have been instructed to keep all donor information confidential.