



St. Gertrude  
PARISH

# CASE STATEMENT

## *Building for a Vibrant Future*

St. Gertrude Parish was founded in 1923 as a mission church. Since 1927, the Order of Preachers, more commonly known as the Dominicans, has served the parish, bringing its special charism of preaching and teaching the Gospel and reverently celebrating the sacred liturgy in the tradition of St. Dominic. St. Gertrude gained full parish status in 1944, and the parish has continued to grow ever since. St. Gertrude School was established in 1934 and was immediately entrusted to the Dominican Sisters of St. Cecilia. Over the years, the original school was expanded several times, until the new school building was constructed in the early 2000s. The Parish Center was added in the 1980s and is the locus of the ministerial and communal life of our parish.

From our humble beginnings over a century ago, we have grown into an exciting community of over 2,000 active families. Mass attendance has increased over 50 percent in the past three years, and new families continue to join St. Gertrude Parish every month! The parish has over 60 established ministries with the hope of adding even more to allow the faithful of the parish to engage in learning the faith and living the Gospel through service and community. Our school now has over 360 students, and we anticipate adding even more students next year. We look forward to a vibrant future, building on our faith-filled and historic past under the guidance and leadership of the Dominican Friars.

### **Why Now?**

We are so grateful to God that our parish is flourishing. However, our parish facilities have not been able to keep pace with our tremendous growth. We desperately lack adequate meeting and gathering space, leaving our 60 active ministries to compete for just four meeting rooms. In addition, our parish and school staff have grown so much that our offices don't have enough space for everyone. This has resulted in our parish staff working out of separate buildings and the sharing of individual offices between multiple staff members.

One of the beautiful aspects of our weekend Masses is how many people remain outside after the liturgy, visiting with each other and the friars. However, during inclement weather, this beautiful community-building time is lost due to the lack of indoor space for such gatherings.

Our five weekend Masses are full to the brim. A full church is a beautiful blessing, but it also creates some significant logistical difficulties. Currently, the vestibule serves as a sort-of "cry room," but it was not built for that purpose—it is far too small and is also the only way to access the restrooms. Our church organ, which is mostly electronic and was bought as a temporary solution, is beginning to fail and is in need of a lasting replacement.

In this era when school safety is more important than ever, we have come to realize that having school children crossing a busy parking lot all day, every day, to attend gym classes is a significant vulnerability and one that needs to be addressed.

Finally, the Dominican Sisters of St. Cecilia, who have generously served our school children and their families for nearly 100 years, are in need of a new convent. Their current house is too small and was not built for the rhythms of religious life. A new convent will enhance their community life and create a more suitable living situation for them.

This effort is not about meeting wants; it is about addressing the critical needs that have been identified by our recent parish strategic planning process and the continued reflection of our clergy and staff over the past several years. It is about providing the physical facilities so that every parishioner can participate in the life of our parish, live the Gospel, and celebrate the sacraments, allowing each person to encounter Jesus Christ in an ever deeper way for decades to come.

## Looking to the Future

The projects we are considering include:

- Renovating the current gymnasium and expanding the Parish Center into adequate meeting and office spaces for parish staff and parish ministry groups. This would include relocating all of the current parish offices from the school building to the Parish Center. This move would not only provide more space for our growing Catholic school, but also increase the safety and security of our students by limiting the number of people who currently enter the school building for non-school reasons.
- Constructing a new gymnasium attached to the school. This would increase safety and security for our students, as they would no longer need to cross our busy parking lot.
- Creating a narthex connecting the church and the Parish Center. This will be a welcoming and clear entrance to the church and act as a natural post-Mass gathering space, which will not be dependent on the weather, as the space currently is.
- Updating the church building, increasing the amount of confessionals, expanding seating if possible, creating a dedicated “cry room,” and other projects.
- Purchasing and installing a new organ for the church.
- Purchasing or constructing a new convent for the Dominican Sisters.

To determine whether a capital campaign with a potential goal of \$12 to \$20 million, depending on which projects are advanced, is feasible, we have engaged Greater Mission, a respected Catholic development firm, to conduct a parish-wide feasibility study. Over the next several weeks, parishioners will be invited to provide confidential input. Your honest feedback—your hopes, concerns, and level of potential support—will guide our next steps.

## Your Voice Matters

This is a moment of shared stewardship. The generations before us built and preserved these sacred spaces with faith and sacrifice. Now it is our turn. Your participation in this study is critically important. All responses will remain confidential. Together, through prayerful discernment and open dialogue, we will determine the path forward for our St Gertrude Parish community.

Thank you, in advance, for your participation. We look forward to hearing from you.