St. Gertrude
PARISH

CASE STATEMENT

Building for Mission

History & Explanation of Growth

St. Gertrude Parish was founded in 1923, and the Order of Preachers (the Dominicans) has served the parish since 1927. St. Gertrude School was established in 1934 and was immediately entrusted to the Dominican Sisters of St. Cecilia. From our humble beginnings over a century ago, we have grown into an exciting community of over 2,000 families. Mass attendance has increased over 50 percent in the past three years, and new families continue to join every month! The parish has over 60 ministries, allowing parishioners to learn the faith and live the Gospel through service and community. Our school has significantly grown, reaching 400 students—our highest enrollment in 20 years.

What Needs to Be Done?

We are very grateful to God that our parish is flourishing, yet our parish facilities have not kept pace with our tremendous growth. We desperately lack adequate meeting and gathering space, which forces our 60 ministries to compete for just four meeting rooms. In addition, our parish and school staffs have grown so much that our offices do not have enough space for everyone.

During our feasibility study this past May, we used projected costs that were developed from estimates during our master planning efforts. Our architects have since provided updated costs for the projects: it will cost $39 million (due to contingency costs, permits, and other factors) to complete all the projects we are undertaking to address our parish's space needs. We have prioritized the projects based on our feasibility study responses and are focusing on the four priority projects below. These priority projects total $24 million. To complete these four projects, we will seek to raise, through our Building for Mission campaign, a minimum of $24 million, which takes into account current costs and anticipated inflation until the time of building.

Priority Projects

- **Parish Center Expansion – $11.2 Million:** This expansion will provide for adequate meeting and office spaces for parish staff and ministry groups and include dedicated Catechesis of the Good Shepherd atria. A portion of these funds will be used to reconfigure the currently separate parish office and school office spaces into a single reception location to better serve the school and enhance its safety requirements.
- **Narthex – $5.9 Million:** We will transform the current outdoor space between the church and the Parish Center into a fully-furnished indoor narthex. This space will function as a natural post-Mass gathering area and serve as a warm, welcoming place with access to the church, parish and staff offices, and meeting rooms in the expanded Parish Center. It will also serve as an overflow area for Masses on Holy Days and other special occasions, and it could be utilized as a cry room during Mass.

- **Convent – $4.7 Million:** The Dominican Sisters of St. Cecilia have generously served our school children and their families for nearly 100 years. For the past 26 years, the Sisters have resided in a typical house, not a convent as required by their Order and vocation. Their current house is too small and does not support the needs of religious life, and it is a safety risk for them to have to cross Miami Avenue multiple times per day. We have the opportunity to purchase properties adjacent to the parish for roughly $2 million. For an additional $2.7 million, one of these homes can be expanded upon to meet the requirements of a convent for the Sisters, which will enhance their community life and allow them to live out their vocation in a more suitable way.
- **Church Updates and Parking – $2.2 Million:** Every week, many people visit our church building to receive the sacraments, pray, and attend liturgies and events. To accommodate the faithful, we will improve the overall functional flow of the worship space. This will also include making the parking lot safer for our school children, who walk across the parking lot to access the gym.

Future Projects

We prioritized all of our projects based on our fundraising capacity, but we are still planning for the future of the campus. The priority projects above address the immediate and pressing needs of meeting and office space, as our parish community identified. These future projects, while important, do not directly address the need for more space. If our capital campaign exceeds expectations, we will undertake the following future projects to enhance the parish as funds become available.

- **New Gym for St. Gertrude School – $7.4 Million:** If we are able to raise this additional amount during the course of the campaign, we will build a new gym adjacent to the school.
- **Current Gym Renovation – $5.8 Million:** Only after the completion of the new gym and if funds become available through this campaign or future fundraising efforts, we will renovate the current gym to be a large functional space for the parish use. It will include a warming kitchen, renovation of the current bathrooms, creation of additional meeting spaces, and much needed parish storage.

Conclusion

This effort is not about meeting wants; it is about addressing the critical needs identified in our parish strategic planning process and our clergy and staff's continued reflection 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 a deeper way for decades to come.