

Parish Self-Assessment for St. Luke Parish

“We Walk by Faith”

I. Introduction

St. Luke Parish was established in 1986 and the current facility was dedicated in 1993. It is a multicultural community located in Virginia Beach on Salem Road between Elbow and Landstown Roads. The area has experienced slow but steady growth over the years with the pace increasing recently. We have a Pastor and a Permanent Deacon assigned to the Parish fulltime. Fr. Salvador Añonuevo has been the Pastor since March of 2003. Deacon Lawrence Illy was also assigned to St. Luke in March of 2003.

In 2002, when Fr. Salvador was appointed Administrator (5 months before being assigned as pastor), there were 172 registered families. The parish currently has approximately 712 registered families with:

- 2,249 members
- 842 women
- 762 Men
- 645 Children

Breakdown of the above figures:

- Children and Youth: 645
- Young Adult 18-30: 493
- Adults 31-59: 897
- Senior 60+: 214

Demographic information:

- Asian: 877
- Black: 12
- Hispanic: 702
- Native American: 1
- White: 488
- Other : 169
- Total: 2,249

- Note that the numbers above do not include many that attend Masses at Saint Luke, but are not registered parishioners. Based on the We Walk by Faith survey, 31 percent of those responding were not registered at Saint Luke.

Needs with regard to membership:

- Encourage all attending to register.
- Develop a Stewardship Program to utilize everyone’s time, talent, and treasure.
- Obtain more participation from the current membership in the Parish Ministries.

II. Word

Faith Formation: The Religious Formation program has undergone changes in the past five years. The children's Faith Formation Program uses approved Diocesan material. Grades K thru 9 use RCL Legacy Parish Edition of First Faith. The program is a spiral form of learning.

The Sacramental Programs are preparing the students for the sacraments they will be receiving.

- First Reconciliation and Eucharist are using the RCL program.
- The Confirmation Program is using RCL: the Mystery of God and Understanding the Creed for the first year and the YM Central Program and supplements with other programs and materials for the second year.
- The Children's Liturgy of the Word is now using The Children Lectionary with additional activities to enhance their understanding of the Word, replacing "Seeds" and is now a year-round program.

Currently under construction:

- RCIA is currently undergoing review for change to extend it year-round.
- Adult Faith Formation is being considered.
- Topics will come from The United States Catholic Catechism for Adults.
- Studying the Scriptures using RCL Echoes of Faith.
- Updating Sacramental preparation for Baptism and Marriage.
- Updating our requirements and preparation program for Quinceñera.

Needs of the Faith Formation program all center on the lack of space.

- Need of classrooms
- Library to have a resource center

Future plans for Faith Formation:

- Inviting guest speakers
- Parish Mission – *(We held our first Parish Mission November 15th to 19th. Fr. Eddie Winkler of Cross International was the facilitator and he focused his presentation on Eucharist, Reconciliation and Healing in preparation for the Advent Season. The Mission was relatively successful with an attendance of 50-70 each night.)*
- Strengthening the Religious Education Committee
- Whole community catechesis

III. Worship

Since the assignment of the clergy in 2003, the following were added to the Parish life:

- Daily Mass seven days a week beginning with the Liturgy of the Hours except on Sundays.
- All Parish meetings begin with the Liturgy of the Hours.
- The second Saturday of the month at the 5PM Mass we have a Youth Mass with the youth choir providing the music
- Monthly Filipino Mass at 7PM on the First Saturday of the Month
- B-Lingual Liturgies on Holy Days (English and Spanish)
- TriLingual Liturgies (English, Spanish, and Filipino) at midnight Christmas Mass, Feast of Saint Luke, and on Pentecost.

- Simbang –Gabi Novena of Masses beginning December 15th and ending December 23rd.
- Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament Monday and Tuesday 6PM to midnight and Wednesday 6PM to 7AM Saturday morning.
- After the Saturday 7AM morning Mass there is Anointing of the Sick.
- First Friday Liturgy at 7PM with overnight Eucharistic Adoration vigil with Benediction at 6:45AM and 7AM First Saturday Mass.
- Stations of the Cross on Fridays during Lent with a soup supper to follow.
- Days of reflection during Holy Week
- Power Rosary after the daily Masses. Prayer with physical exercise.
- Pilgrim Statue of the Virgin Mary from home to home weekly.
- Divine Mercy Novena every year, beginning on Good Friday and ending on Divine Mercy Sunday.
- Yearly celebration of Divine Mercy Sunday
- Outreach to those discerning for the priesthood and religious life.
- Homilies are rooted in Scripture and Theology of the Catholic Church, which connects to real-life experiences of the parishioners.
- Alignment with the General Instruction of the Roman Missal.

Needs:

- Improvement of the choir at the English Masses.
- Increasing choir music program that offers a variety of traditional and contemporary Catholic liturgical music.
- Increase participation of Parishioners in singing.
- More participation in bilingual and trilingual liturgies.

IV. Community

St. Luke Parish community is a friendly, welcoming and inclusive community with an ethnic diversity of parishioners.

- The worship space has been recently remodeled for those with physical handicaps.
- Additional handicap parking spaces have been added for easier access to the building
- Involved in ecumenical dialogue, hosting scriptural studies on a rotating basis.
- A strong Community Fellowship i.e. Power breakfast after the daily 7AM Mass and rosary, anytime community gathers outside liturgy there is food provided by the parishioners.
- Established the “Men Health Club,” a group of men focusing on health-related issues and improvement of health.
- A Woman’s Club assisting in parish functions, programs, outreach, and ministries.
- Knights of Columbus Council, Pope John Paul the Great Council #13784 is based at Saint Luke.
- Ladies Auxiliary of the K of C (open to all women registered in the parish or a wife of a Knight) is also based at the parish.

V. Service

St. Luke has a strong Pastoral Care program attentive to the needs of the whole community to include the surrounding community.

- Visitation to those who are hospitalized, shut-in, ill, dying, and their families.
- Visit nursing homes and other facilities where we visit, sing and play music.

- Caroling at local Nursing Homes during the Holiday Season.
- The Community needs to communicate the need to Parish Office of those who are hospitalized and shut-ins.
- Outreach to Eastern Shore Hispanic Ministry and the Migrant Ministry.
- Helping Hands Ministry

Outreach to the Community (Social Ministry)

- Obtain food throughout the year and delivering it to the food pantry of our sister Parish, Holy Spirit
- Preparing food baskets for distribution during the Thanksgiving and Christmas season.
- Collecting toys during Christmas for Foster Children and those who are less fortunate.
- Meals on wheels
- Regularly scheduled at a local soup kitchen
- Financial donations to disaster area cause by natural disasters, i.e. Tsunamis, hurricanes , floods

Major Need stated repeatedly: Lack of space. Current building is a multipurpose space consisting of:

- Small office space
- Restrooms
- Sacristy with minimal storage
- Very small Adoration Chapel
- Large multipurpose area, which is our worship Space and is also used for fellowship, Religious Formation, Meetings and socialization.

VI. Plans for renewal and meeting parish needs

Short term Plans

- Reviewing and updating of Saint Luke’s Strategic Plan.
- Increasing financial commitment from the community to allow breaking ground on a new worship space within the next five (5) years.
- Investigate implementing Adult Faith Program to establish “Whole Community Catechesis” for the parish so that all members of the parish are supported in their own faith formation.
- Expand the Pathway training for catechists at all levels of formation to meet diocesan guidelines.
- Develop plans/approaches to increase reverence at liturgies.
- Review and assess our stewardship/welcoming programs.
- Develop approaches to encourage those who attend liturgies to become registered members of the parish.
- Expand the content of the Marriage Preparation Program.
- Expand the content of the Baptism Preparation Program for parents and godparents.

Long Term Plans

- Break ground for a new worship space.
- Reach out more to marginal Catholics with special adult formation programs/presentations (e.g., annulments for divorced members, adult confirmation, and special ministries).
- Establish a plan to keep financial giving at a pace to help the needs of a growing parish community.
- Establish small Christian communities.

VII. Diocesan Support

Diocesan Support would:

- Provide information on vocations to the priesthood and religious life via programs, retreats, and presentations from the Office of Vocations.
- Provide educational accessible opportunities to develop lay leadership.
- Provide leadership in developing and implementing Whole Community Catechesis.
- Provide support for developing a strong Young Adult Ministry program.
- Offer education and guidance to enhance sacramental preparation for Baptism and Marriage.
- Provide leadership in developing inter-parochial collaboration.

VIII. Conclusion

Until recently, Saint Luke was linked with Holy Spirit through the sharing of its pastor and a parochial vicar. The parish has supported inter-parochial activities with Holy Spirit parish during this past year, such as parish mission, youth retreat, food pantry, Simbang Gabi, ecumenical programs, etc.

Saint Luke will continue to work with Holy Spirit on inter-parochial activities (Food Pantry and Religious Formation), but as each parish now has their own pastor, Saint Luke's pastor can now provide 100% of his time and energy to Saint Luke.

Knowing the desire of the diocese for more inter-parish collaboration, the parish actively supports local area planning activities involving neighboring parishes. Currently the parish participates in regional reconciliation services, share bulletins, and other information about programs in neighboring parishes.

The Youth Program coordinates inter-parochial events, e.g., retreats, Youth Mass, and Adoration

The parish publishes the times for Masses and for the Sacrament of Reconciliation at neighboring parishes to provide more sacramental opportunities for our parishioners.

The We Walk By Faith process has provided the parish with the opportunity to assess our parish programs and activities. We, at St. Luke, are committed to and challenged by our mission to live and give witness to our faith in Jesus Christ and His Church.