

**St. Thomas More  
Feasibility Study - Summary Report  
Prepared by: Parish Development Consultants**

**December 2016**

Thanks to all parishioners who participated in the recent **Parish Feasibility Study**. The study sought input from parishioners on plans to accomplish a variety of capital improvements and enhancements to our Church building and repave the parking lot. A second purpose was to identify levels of financial support and potential leadership candidates for a future capital campaign. To date, we have received 353 responses. A summary of responses to the questionnaire is outlined below.

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How long have you been a parishioner at St. Thomas More? **Average was 26 years.**

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How would you rate of overall satisfaction with the parish?  
**97% responded with Very Satisfied or Satisfied**

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Are you familiar with the parish's current needs?  
**70% responded "Yes"**

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What is your reaction to the Needs Statement? (Please review the needs statement)  
**62% responded "Favorable"**  
**33% responded "Mixed"**  
**5% responded "Unfavorable"**

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Are there any of these projects that you feel should be given priority?  
**Top Comments: Renovating the Church/Sanctuary**  
**Repaving the Parking Lot**  
**Safety Issues**  
**Keeping the warmth of the wood**

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Are there other areas of need not included in the Needs Statement that you see as a priority?  
**Top Comments: Sound System needs to be improved**  
**Include a Ramp or hand rails to the Sanctuary**  
**Fixing the HVAC system in the Church - Very Noisy**  
**The carpeting is stained and dirty**  
**The wood signs need to be replaced**

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With regard to your own involvement, would you . . . Give to a campaign  
**89% responded "Yes or Maybe"**

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Significant gifts will be needed in order for the parish to undertake this project. If you were to consider making a financial commitment to the campaign, could you estimate the size of your gift?  
**A total of 101 families estimated their potential commitments ranging from \$500 to \$25,000 totaling \$322,500 in multi-year pledges.**

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Any other thoughts or Miscellaneous Comments?  
**Top Comments: Very happy to be a parishioner here**  
**Thank you for asking my input**  
**Continue to embrace the youth of the parish**  
**Younger families are not involved enough to take a leading role**  
**What is the role of the Diocese/will they help?**

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## **AREAS OF CONVERSATION**

### **Case Statement of Need**

A majority of parishioners agree with the need to update the interior of the Church, renovate the Sanctuary and repave the parking lot. Most agreed with the need to repave the parking lot and commented on the cracking, flooding and lack of proper lighting. On the proposed renovations to the Church, most agreed with the need to paint, replace the flooring, improve the lighting and update the kneelers and pews. Many commented on the need to improve the sound system and remove the box design that surrounds the interior of the Church.

On renovating the Sanctuary to one level, some parishioners had questions about the costs, reasons and need to renovate. The reasons stated for the renovation included, eliminating the current multi-levels to reduce the risk of trips and falls and to provide more usable space, combined with placing the tabernacle and stained glass windows in a more prominent place in the Church. For many parishioners, once these reasons were explained and additional details and visuals shown of the newly renovated space, most supported the need. Many commented on how they would be happy to have the Tabernacle and stained glass windows more prominent and visible during mass. Parishioners encouraged the use of a large piece of the current marble as a memorial to past donors and smaller pieces that can be given to families.

#### Project Costs/Priorities:

For the benefit of parishioners, we shared an estimate of \$1.0 million as the total projected with the cost of repaving the parking lot at \$350,000 and the renovation of the Church and Sanctuary at \$650,000. Parishioners were made aware that the parish will solicit multiple bids to achieve the best possible cost. A majority of parishioners want the parish to be fiscally responsible and not incur debt or jeopardize the current stability of parish finances. When asked about priority, more families supported the renovation of the Church as first priority and suggested that repaving the parking lot wait till the funds were available from the campaign. The suggestion is to separate the proposed needs into two or three phases and include a cost and timing estimate for each phase.

#### Parish Community/Pastor:

Parishioners feel a strong sense of belonging and mentioned many times the warm, welcoming and friendly feeling at the parish. The parish overwhelmingly supports Fr. Antony who is seen as very spiritual, well respected and sensitive to the needs of the parish community.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The results of the Feasibility Study indicate that St. Thomas More is in a very good position to conduct a capital campaign and has taken important steps toward sharing key information with parishioners regarding the needs of the parish. The participation rate of 15% (344 out of 2,367) has ensured that a good number of parishioners have been consulted. A solid majority of 62% reacted favorably to the statement of need, while 33% had a mixed response, this number shows a percentage of parishioners that agree with the overall need but have concerns about some of the proposed projects or wish to learn more about the specific details.

Taking into account the annual income of the parish, support for the case and the early indication of \$332,500 in pledges, we believe the parish has the potential to raise between \$1.0 and \$1.2 million in multi-year pledges. We feel confident that the parish could expect between a 13% to 21% rate of participation among all registered parishioners (active/inactive) who would make a gift to the campaign. To reach a goal of \$1.0 million in pledges, there would need to be a participation rate of 17% (400 gifts) with an average pledge of \$2,500 paid over a three to four year period. To achieve the average gift needed for success, the campaign will need to ask parishioners to pledge a minimum gift of between \$2,500 and \$3,000 over a period of four years. With a 10% down payment, this type of gift would range between \$47 and \$56 per month over a four year period. We recommend that parishioners be able to make pledges payable over a three to four year period and the parish should continue to seek additional gifts during the pledge redemption period. Establishing a follow-up committee will be vital to solicit parishioners who need more time to make a decision and new families who join after the active phase of the campaign is complete.