



Campaign Feasibility Study Summary Report February 2019

Introduction & Methodology

Greater Mission, LLC conducted a Feasibility Study for Our Lady of the Lake's Combined Campaign as part of the Together Let Us Go Forth – Juntos Sigamos Adelante Campaign in the Diocese of Phoenix. A Gift Analysis/Constituent Study was conducted in conjunction with *DonorSearch*. A Case for Support document, study questionnaire and interview list was produced with the assistance of Our Lady of the Lake clergy, staff and lay leaders. The study consisted of input from parishioners through One-on-One Individual Interviews, Town Hall meetings and In-Pew surveys. A total of 34 individual, private interviews with 46 parishioners were conducted by the Campaign Director. Parishioners were selected for the interviews to represent various constituencies of the parish. Sixty-three (63) parishioners/couples attended five "After Mass" Town Hall meetings on December 8th and 16th and filled out a questionnaire. Three-hundred-sixty-two (362) parishioners responded to the In-Pew survey that was conducted during all Masses on the weekend of January 4th and 5th. The case tested was to raise \$4.4 million to construct a new Multi-Purpose Building and an outdoor Pavilion.

1. Key Findings: A. Appreciation and Strengths of the Parish and B. Challenges Facing the Parish

A. Parishioners most often mentioned the sense of community, friendliness and the "caring atmosphere" as one thing they most appreciate about Our Lady of the Lake. Also cited were: the priests (past and present) and the effort they make to prepare for Mass, the location of the parish, the availability of Mass times and the diversity of the parish: "we are a melting pot here." The overall "welcoming nature" of the parish, especially cited by winter parishioners, and the Our Lady of Guadalupe Festival and the Santo Nino Festival were additionally appreciated by many. There was very strong support for Father Chauncey and Father Julius. The school, the potential expansion, the traditional liturgy and the music were also cited as strengths. **B.** The most frequently cited challenges were: an aging parishioner population, financial challenges, a lack of coordination and communication between committees and ministries, getting the school up and running, the same parishioners doing everything: "committed people vs. non-helpers" and the need for better communication and understanding on how decisions are made at the parish.

2. Case for Support:

77% of the parishioners who responded were in favor of the Case and moving forward with the campaign. This is a combined total from all study sources. While support for the overall Case is strong many parishioners commented or had questions about the specifics of the Multi-Purpose Building: How big is it going to be? One story or two story? What is the timeline for construction? Also, there were questions about the outdoor Pavilion, with many questioning the "practicality" of an outdoor gathering space considering the wind and the weather. Some offered: can it be built in such a way that it eventually becomes a "real" (enclosed) Hall when the school grows to K-8? A number of parishioners were not in favor/do not understand the parish share formula and/or why Our Lady of the Lake cannot raise funds "on their own" and not be part of the Diocesan campaign.

3. Can the Parish Raise \$4.4 million?

The combined responses of all of the participants indicated that 55% felt the parish could raise \$4.4 million. As is typical in most parish feasibility studies a number close to that, in this case 40% were unsure if \$4.4 million could be raised. It is important to mention that many respondents noted that generous pledges from winter parishioners would be the key to making the goal.

4. Would you support the campaign financially?

Over 77% of those responded indicated that they would make a gift. Only 7% parishioners said they would not give and the remainder were unsure based on a variety of reasons, the most common being from people who were older, on fixed incomes or who already support "other Catholic causes."

5. Level of Giving

Three-hundred-thirty-five (335) parishioners indicated they would make a gift to the campaign in ranges as high as \$100,000 to below \$1,500. The total gifts that were indicated were over \$1,367,000 from 17% of the total parish families. The average gift

noted in the responses was \$4,080. To achieve the \$4.4 million, it will be necessary for the campaign to have a significant number of leadership pledges.

6. Would you be willing to volunteer to assist with the campaign?

The combined responses of participating parishioners indicated that 15% (67) would volunteer to assist with the campaign. Parishioners were willing to open their homes for receptions and serve in other volunteer roles-especially as Prayer Champions. These figures indicate strong volunteer support.

7. Do you have any further advice to give to Father Chauncey and the parish leadership?

Parishioners had many comments and a great deal of advice to share. Over 50 distinct comments were noted, with most being positive and supportive. There were only a few negative comments. Parishioners expressed great affection and support for Father Chauncey and Father Julius. Father Tony, the former Associate Pastor was also mentioned. Most people love the parish, feel that the ministry life of the parish is good and are proud to be a part of Our Lady of the Lake community of faith. Many indicated that the large bequest from winter parishioners Mr. and Mrs. Wright that allowed the debt to be paid off on the Church was "like a miracle" and it allowed the parish to move forward with the School. Many mentioned that Father Chauncey must take the lead in making the case for support to all parishioners and that there must be a specific and easy-to-understand communication effort to explain the details, including the parish share formula. Following are some representative quotes from parishioners:

- Make sure it is clear how the Multi-Purpose building will work in the short term and how it will be phased into a K-8 school.
- We really need the winter parishioners to participate, many have been coming here for years. They are part of our family, but will they pledge?
- We need the youth and the next generation of Catholics. We are an aging community. Supporting a K-8 school will only help the Parish and will benefit the entire Lake Havasu community.
- This will be a stretch, but it can be done through PRAYER and hard work!
- Love the idea of this campaign but we need to have everyone participate - not just the regulars.
- The message must be very clear and consistent; Father has to keep us informed every step of the way.
- Transparency and teamwork will be the keys to success.
- Drawings of the new building will really help: we can't make a decision if we can't see what we are contributing to.
- Have we figured out the parking? We need better access to the front doors of the Church for drop-off and pick-up.
- The Pavilion may not be practical- why not put those funds into the Multi-Purpose building?
- Fr. Chauncey and Fr. Julius should tell us about their hoped-for outcomes...how is the Multi-Purpose Building going to bring us closer to Jesus?

8. Recommendations

1. The findings of the Feasibility Study indicate that although there is overall support for a \$4.4 million campaign, there is a significant need to provide parishioners with detailed information about how and when decisions will be made concerning design of the Multi-Purpose building and the construction of an outdoor Pavilion as a parish gathering space.
2. The parish will need some significant major gifts of six-figures and a very high level of participation – at least 40% of all households-including winter parishioners-and a high average gift for the overall goal to be achieved. The parish share formula will need to be explained thoroughly so all understand the benefits of a combined campaign. If the \$4.4 million is achieved, it will provide \$3.5 million for the parish projects.
3. We recommend a timeline of early engagement and solicitation visits be built to begin to reach out to a minimum of 40 families and individuals.
4. We recommend that a general community outreach and public relations plan be included in the parish's campaign efforts. The new school should be positioned as an asset to Lake Havasu City.

Prepared by:

Donna Marino, Campaign Director

Our Lady of the Lake

928-855-2685, ext. 37

dmarino@greatermission.com

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