



# Divine Mercy Parish

## State of the Parish – Information Report

Prepared by: Karen Marr for Parishioners of Divine Mercy Parish in preparation for Town Hall Meetings on May 25<sup>th</sup> and June 7<sup>th</sup>, 2024

Date: April 22, 2024

## PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to inform parishioners of the current state of the Parish as of April, 2024 in order to move forward with the 2024 Pastoral Priorities Plan as drafted by the Pastoral Council as well as to inform parishioners prior to the town hall meetings scheduled for May 25 and June 7, 2024. We want to consider how we can grow our Parish and create sustainable infrastructure, programs, and resources to take us into the future.

It is important to note data used in this report will be from 2022, 2023 and limited data for 2024 (Jan – April) since we were substantially shut down during 2020 and 2021 because of Covid.

## BACKGROUND

Over the last year, Fr. Vargheese and the Parish Leadership Team have been observing and assessing how the Parish works. It is important to note that neither Fr. Vargheese, nor the volunteer members of the Parish Leadership Team (currently Colleen Quinn and myself, Karen Marr joined in 2022) were involved during the initial transition and needed time to get a “feel for the land”. The day to day running of the Parish requires substantial resources and time, and often consumes much of our weekly meetings. Our first identified priority was to have clarity around the roles of the Parish Leadership Team, the Pastoral Council and the Finance Council. We invited the Archdiocese to come to each of these meetings to speak with the volunteers to help understand our respective roles and responsibilities.

Secondly, we turned our focus to Parish Identity – one of Archbishop Dunn’s priorities for 2023. We held some combined meetings of the leadership Councils (Parish Leadership Team (PLT), Pastoral Council, Finance Council and the Stewardship Committee) in order to develop a Vision and Mission for our Parish and to understand some of the current pain points and deficiencies. The draft Mission and Vision were then put in the bulletin seeking feedback. The finalized vision and mission are as follows:

### **Vision Statement**

The Vision of Divine Mercy Parish is to create a faith filled and inclusive community based on the Gospel Values of Jesus Christ where all God’s people experience compassion, justice, equity, and reconciliation.

### **Mission Statement**

By demonstrating Jesus' values of compassion, mercy, and love, Divine Mercy Parish fosters the wholesome growth and development of our community in faith and service by proclamation of the Word, celebration of the Sacraments, and by reaching out to all in need of spiritual, pastoral, and temporal help.

It is important to note the Vision and Mission may evolve as our Parish evolves and may be updated over time. It is a "living statement".

Once the Vision and Mission were in place, the Pastoral Council was tasked with developing a draft Pastoral Priorities Plan as a starting point. A Pastoral Plan, while drafted and presented by Pastoral Council, should have input and buy-in from the Parishioners and various committees in the parish to gain support for the plan, since we are all "owners" of the plan and contribute to its success.

### **PARISH IDENTITY**

Divine Mercy Parish is three distinct communities served by three churches, St. Andrew, St. Clement and St. John XXIII. We continue to have three Knights of Columbus Councils, three Catholic Women's League Councils, and two churches provide services for the Society of St. Vincent de Paul independent of each other.

We have made some strides toward a unified parish with our Pastoral Council, Finance Council, Liturgy Committee, Stewardship Committee and Music Ministry, but there is still much to do, and more volunteers are needed in important leadership roles.

We all know that volunteers are the life blood of every church. Sacristans, lectors, ministers of Holy Communion, music, decorating and altar servers are all critical to our liturgies. KoC, CWL, SSVDP, community outreach, and catechists all support the mission of Christ in loving and serving others. (Forgive me if I've left out any ministries – these were meant to be examples).

There is also another stream of volunteers critical to our parish – volunteers in professional or leadership roles to serve on our:

- Finance Council (accountants, bankers, those experienced in budget and business planning, or just with a head for facts and figures, etc.)
- Pastoral Council and Parish Leadership Team (parish focused individuals who are passionate about being disciples of Christ – these could be strategic thinkers, change managers, marketing professionals, really anyone who is willing to help our new parish grow and develop)
- Property Committee – those who oversee and look after our buildings – they could be handymen and women, contract managers, engineers, plumbers, painters – our buildings require a lot of maintenance and oversight.

All of us are challenged to live the gospel in our daily lives. We are all busy people with busy lives, but if we don't make our "church life" a priority, it will not be here to sustain us into the future.

We need to ask ourselves: do we have the courage and conviction to move forward? Can we accept the changes that have been handed to us and embrace them?

Leading organizational change always requires personal change.

We need to look inside ourselves and experience some personal change and growth before our Parish can grow and change. We can't mistake "the way it's always been done" for "tradition".

For example, in any parish, what core thing must NOT change? – the celebration of Mass – but dates and times and locations can change (with consultation of course). Mass times are not tradition, but habit. This goes for Sunday Mass, as well as Christmas and Holy Week celebrations, and "special" Masses that occur throughout the liturgical year.

## DISCUSSION

It is time to move forward and seek Parishioner feedback and ideas on how our Parish will look one year from now, five years from now and into the future. While the priority is seeking feedback on Mass times and infrastructure, we want to listen to other concerns and ideas of Divine Mercy parishioners.

We acknowledge we will not be able to make everyone happy. Trying to please everyone is a recipe for gridlock and frustration. We will endeavor to make evidence-based, reasonable decisions based on the feedback received and metrics we have. When more detailed information is required, we will seek out professional opinions where appropriate.

Here are the current facts we know:

### Attendance

Divine Mercy Parish has four weekday Masses and six weekend Masses each week, served by two priests. The current schedule, church capacity, and average Sunday Mass count is as follows:

		<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024 Jan. to Apr.</b>	<b>Max. Capacity</b>
<b>Saturday</b>	4:00 pm St. Clement	92	102	126	400
<b>Saturday</b>	4:00 pm St. John XXIII	115	132	138	500
<b>Sunday</b>	9:00 am St. John XXIII	103	156	146	500
<b>Sunday</b>	9:30 am St. Clement	126	133	148	400
<b>Sunday</b>	11:00 am St. Andrew	126	131	137	230
<b>Sunday</b>	11:30 am St. John XXIII	110	79	115	500
<b>TOTAL AVERAGE WEEKLY ATTENDANCE</b>		<b>672</b>	<b>733</b>	<b>810</b>	<b>2530</b>

You can see from the chart above, that we are seating approximately one-third of our total capacity at our Sunday Masses.

2023 Daily Mass – Estimated Average Attendance

Tues – St. Andrew 9am	15
Wed – SJXXIII Noon	30-40
Thurs – St. Clement 9am	25
Fri – SJXXIII Noon	30-40

Total average Mass attendance per week (excluding Easter Sunday and Christmas Eve/Christmas Day Masses falling on a Sunday) was 672 in 2022 and 733 in 2023. 2023 was up nine percent (9%) with the 9am Mass at St. John XXIII showing the most growth and the 11:30 am Mass at St. John XXIII showing the largest decline in attendance.

So far in 2024, attendance overall is up approximately 10.5%. You can also see that the 11:30 a.m. Mass has increased in average weekly attendance.

The Archdiocese has directed that each Parish create a Mass schedule that would be conducive to one priest. We are blessed to currently have two priests, but if we only had one, what would our Mass schedule look like?

Currently we have six Masses with an average weekly attendance of 810. With one priest, how many Masses would be reasonable to accommodate our current attendance with the occupation limits of our three churches? Do our daily Masses adequately serve our parishioners (both days and times)? Should we consider an evening Mass during the week or on the weekend? Does it make sense to have 6 Masses at 3 churches at essentially the same time when we are trying to build the Divine Mercy Parish community (i.e., two 4:00 p.m. Masses on Saturday and two 9:00 a.m./9:30 a.m. Masses on Sunday and two 11:00 a.m./11:30 a.m. Masses on Sunday)? Is 11:00 a.m.

the right time for Mass at St. Andrew Church if they are only having one Mass per weekend? All questions for consideration.

### 2024 Summer Schedule

The following schedule has been approved for this summer for the months of July and August:

	<b>July</b>	<b>August</b>
<b>Saturday</b>	4:00 pm St. Clement	4:00 pm St. John XXIII
<b>Sunday</b>	9:00 am St. John XXIII	9:00 am St. John XXIII
<b>Sunday</b>	9:30 am St. Clement	9:30 am St. Clement
<b>Sunday</b>	11:00 am St. Andrew	11:00 am St. Andrew

### Financial Overview

The parish currently has 886 registered families.<sup>1</sup> Families donate to the parish in a variety of ways: pre-authorized remittances or payments (referred to as PAR), envelopes (weekly & special) and loose cash during collection at Mass. Please note that the list has not been validated or updated for some time so this is a task that will need to be completed in the near future.

For the purposes of this report, we will review collection and financial information from 2022 and 2023. The Finance Council will be presenting the financial overview for 2023 at the Town Hall meeting. It is recognized that more in-depth financial analysis would be required for decision making purposes.

Here is a high-level summary for this report:

Approximately 36% of registered families (315) contribute financially through PAR. Contributions are approximately \$16,100<sup>2</sup> per month - \$193,200 annually with an average contribution of \$51/family/month.

Estimated weekly collection is \$10,500 which includes the PAR amount factored in (so \$3,700 PAR + \$6,800 envelopes and loose cash).

In 2023, estimated total income is \$718,600 and expenses are estimated at \$710,800. You will note from the attached Financial Reports to Parishioners for 2021 and 2022 expenditures have significantly increased (between 2021 and 2022 by almost \$200,000).

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<sup>1</sup> A family is defined as an individual or full family and counts as one contribution – and the list has not been validated in several years.

<sup>2</sup> All financial figures have been rounded to the nearest hundred dollars. These amounts are estimated from 2023 figures from January 1, 2023 to November 30, 2023.

	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023*estimated</b>
<b>Total Revenue</b>	718,849.00	797,867.00	718,600.00
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	589,929.00	784,000.00	710,800.00
<b>Net Income</b>	128,920.00	13,867.00	7,800.00

The above chart illustrates our income has remained quite consistent (In 2022 income included insurance proceeds and a bequest over \$30,000 – see financial statement at the end of the report), and expenses have significantly increased. In 2022, it is important to note the catechetical program was re-introduced under Br. Grant's leadership, and new resources were purchased for this purpose.

To accomplish items outlined in our Pastoral Priorities Plan, we will need to increase parishioner contributions and come up with other ways to generate income to compensate for the additional expenses that will be incurred.

### Buildings<sup>3</sup>

The Parish currently has oversight of six buildings: St. Andrew Church, St. Andrew Hall, St. Andrew Rectory, St. Clement Church/Hall, St. Clement Rectory, St. John XXIII Church (including hall and office/meeting space). There are regular, significant, monthly expenditures to keep these buildings operational including electricity, oil, water, phones & internet, and insurance, as well as general and seasonal maintenance (grass cutting and general yard maintenance, snow clearing, heat pump maintenance, and minor and major repairs). We must also consider any large equipment and supplies (sound equipment, general office supplies, photocopier rental and other service contracts).

There have been recent extensive repairs/costs including a new roof and hot water tank replaced at St. Clement Church, oil tank replacement at St. Andrew (required for insurance purposes), front step replacement at St. Andrew Church, just to name a few.

There is a long list of requests and requirements including, but not limited to:

- new roof requirement for St. Andrew Hall (will become an insurance issue)
- new furnace required for St. Andrew Hall
- updated “Divine Mercy” signage for all churches and St. Andrew Hall
- pothole filling/paving at St. Clement
- pothole filling St. Andrew
- parking lot line painting at St. Clement and St. John XXIII
- stained glass window repair at St. Andrew Church
- doors to be replaced at St. Clement Church/Hall (completed)

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<sup>3</sup> Divine Mercy Parish also has oversight of St. Andrew Cemetery on Caldwell Road, which is maintained through a separate Cemetery Account and is not included for the purposes of this review.

Some additional major work has been completed which was mostly covered through insurance claims with respect to flooding at St. Andrew Church, St. Andrew Hall, St. Clement Church Hall and St. Clement Rectory.

**St. Andrew Hall**, located on Disciples Way has annual expenses estimated at approximately \$13,300 (\$1,100 per month). This covers property taxes, oil, propane, water and power, insurance, and some small repairs, but does not include snow clearing or yard maintenance. The Hall is currently being used for the Carefree Clothing Give Away, Al-Anon support meetings, and parish events/meetings. The donations generated for the Parish are minimal compared to the monthly operating and maintenance costs of the building.

St. Andrew Hall is approximately 85 years old. It is not accessible by today's standards. There are no access ramps, elevators, or lifts on premise which limits participation by parishioners and community members with mobility issues. The only washroom is on the main level which has 2 classrooms and 2 offices. Most of the "social" events take place on the lower level.

As a Parish, how do we see ourselves serving the community surrounding St. Andrew church and fulfilling the Parish mission? As noted above, significant improvements are required to keep the building operational.

**St. Andrew Rectory** is a single-family home located on the same property as St. Andrew Hall on Disciples Way, Eastern Passage. This is the newest of the buildings, constructed in 2007-2008. Fr. Vargheese currently resides at this residence. Residence expenses are approximately \$15,200 per year. (\$1,300/month)

**St. Clement Rectory**, located next to the church on Gaston Road, is a large building consisting of three private suites, one on the main level and two on the upper level. Each suite has a living area, bedroom and bathroom. There is a shared kitchen, laundry, chapel, dining and living room area on the main level. The basement offers a meeting room with a kitchenette, office space (3 offices) and a washroom. There is a wired garage with some storage space on the rectory property. Our "tiny shelter" is also located on this property.

St. Clement Rectory annual expenses are approximately \$19,200 per year (\$1,600/month). This covers insurance, power & water – not snow clearing or lawn maintenance. The rectory is currently rented to a family for the very short term (May 1 to September 30, 2024) for \$1,500/month.



## Engagement & Volunteer Requirements

The Parish Leadership Team and the Pastoral Council recognize communication is a key area that needs to be improved in the parish going forward. Exactly what this will look like is still being determined. We have updated and improved our website (which we acknowledge still needs some work). We are working to update our weekly bulletin.

Currently, we do not have a good idea of how many volunteers are in the Parish. We know there are at least 19 active ministries with varying degrees of volunteers and sustainability.

We do not have a proper volunteer registry or a coordinator to manage volunteers and their Archdiocesan requirements.

We need your opinions and feedback regarding our Pastoral Priorities Plan, Parish Identity and how we move forward as one Parish. Your participation in our parish is critical to our ability to grow and sustain as a Parish. We need parishioners in important leadership roles – Parish Leadership Team, Pastoral Council, and Finance Council – all of which need new members. Other vitally important committees that need members are the property committee and the St. Andrew cemetery committee.

Volunteers are required in every aspect of our parish, from leadership and management type roles, liturgical ministries, as well as hospitality and funeral ministries. Get active and get involved!

## FINAL THOUGHTS

Fr. Vargheese often points out the primary focus of the Gospels is “change”, yet change is something we all resist, that scares us, or intimidates us. It is time to embrace change and move forward together as Divine Mercy Parish and disciples of Christ.

Here are some questions to ponder prior to coming to the Town Hall meetings:

1. Based on Archdiocesan requirements (as outlined above), what would our Mass schedule look like if we only had one priest?
2. Is our current Parish infrastructure (6 buildings) sustainable and as efficient as possible with the high costs of operation and maintenance? Will it be sufficient to serve the needs of our communities into the future? What other options may exist for serving our communities?
3. How do we move forward as one parish and grow in our mission?

Divine Mercy Parish – State of the Parish Information Report  
 May 6, 2024

Divine Mercy Parish Financial Summary Report					
Income		2022	2021		
	Sunday/Special Collections	\$ 576,728.00	\$599,816.00		
	Extra-ordinary Income	\$ 221,139.00	\$ 93,155.00		
	Covid Subsidy	\$ -	\$ 25,878.00		
	<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$ 797,867.00</b>	<b>\$718,849.00</b>		
<b>Expenses</b>					
	Church	\$ 315,874.00	\$167,413.00		
	Residence/Hall	\$ 70,610.00	\$ 32,902.00		
	Salaries	\$ 211,264.00	\$245,278.00		
	Diocesan Assesment	\$ 91,609.00	\$ 66,420.00		
	Administration	\$ 32,627.00	\$ 46,188.00		
	Other Expenses	\$ 62,016.00	\$ 31,728.00		
	<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 784,000.00</b>	<b>\$589,929.00</b>		
	<b>Net Income</b>	<b>\$ 13,867.00</b>	<b>\$128,920.00</b>		
<b>Account Balances</b>					
	BMO	\$ 352,951.00	\$330,618.00		
	On Deposit with Diocese				
	Deposit Account	\$ 386,298.00	\$423,451.00		
	St. Andrew Building Fund	\$ 106,517.00	\$110,762.00		
	St. Andrew Cemetery Fund	\$ 12,564.00	\$ 12,284.00		
	<b>Total Account Balance</b>	<b>\$ 858,330.00</b>	<b>\$877,115.00</b>		
<b>Notes</b>					
<b>1. Extra Ordinary Income</b>					
	Includes \$46429.00 in insurance proceeds and bequests of \$33,755.00				
<b>2. Expenses Church</b>					
	Includes capital project totalling \$108,452.00				
	Insurance Premiums are up \$21,039.00				
	Supplies are up \$39,152.00				
<b>3. Residence Hall</b>					
	Includes capital projects totalling \$21,363.00				
	Utilities are up \$8,714.00 (7097.00 & \$9,427.00 Verses 2,131.00 & \$5,679.00)				
<b>4. Other Expenses</b>					
	Faith formation costs are up \$12,502.00				
	Mission Costs are up \$5,605.00				
	Music ministry costs are up \$2,013.00				

<b>Divine Mercy Parish Financial Summary Report</b>						
				<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>	
<b>Income</b>						
	Sunday/Special Collections			\$ 599,816.00	\$ 589,741.00	
	Extra-ordinary Income			\$ 93,155.00	\$ 204,743.00	
	Covid Subsidy			\$ 25,878.00	\$ 97,052.00	
	<b>Total Income</b>			<b>\$ 718,849.00</b>	<b>\$ 891,536.00</b>	
<b>Expenses</b>						
	Church			\$ 167,413.00	\$ 176,333.00	
	Residence/Hall			\$ 32,902.00	\$ 23,304.00	
	Salaries			\$ 245,278.00	\$ 347,208.00	
	Diocesan Assessment			\$ 66,420.00	\$ 62,211.00	
	Adminstration			\$ 46,188.00	\$ 37,625.00	
	Other Expenses			\$ 31,728.00	\$ 19,423.00	
	<b>Total Expenses</b>			<b>\$ 589,929.00</b>	<b>\$ 666,104.00</b>	
<b>Net Income</b>				<b>\$ 128,920.00</b>	<b>\$ 225,432.00</b>	
<b>Account Balances</b>						
	BMO			\$ 330,618.00	\$ 345,134.00	
<b>On Deposit With Diocese</b>						
	Deposit Account			\$ 423,451.00	\$ 264,129.00	
	<i>(150,000.00 deposited in 2021)</i>					
	St. Andrew Building Fund			\$ 110,762.00	\$ 134,570.00	
	<i>(27,800.00 withdrawn - Convent Demolishion)</i>					
	St. Andrew Cemetery Fund			\$ 12,284.00	\$ 11,923.00	
				<b>\$ 877,115.00</b>	<b>\$ 755,756.00</b>	