

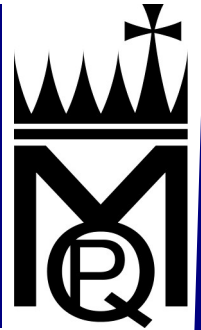
Feasibility Study Report

Mary Queen of Peace Parish

120 South 34th Street, Billings, MT 59101

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www.maryqueenofpeacebillings.org



Pastor's Letter

Thank you to everyone who took part in the campaign feasibility study by means of personal interviews or the survey. The study has provided valuable input for parish planning and our new facilities. In seeking to make good decisions, the Pastoral Council, Finance Council, and Building Committee benefited greatly from your input.

The study indicates that members are generally happy with the direction the parish is going. It shows continued support for our plans to build new facilities on S. 27th and a willingness to support a second capital campaign. What also surfaced are concerns about our parish finances and our ability to afford new facilities.

I am asking parishioners to do four things at this time:

1. Pray for our parish and its leadership
2. Continue to study the plan and campaign
3. Attend informational meetings
4. Volunteer to help with the campaign

The campaign is much more than raising money for our new church. MQPP is still, to some degree, three different communities. **I strongly believe that this campaign has the potential to bring us all together as one.** This will be my focus throughout the campaign and I ask that you make it yours.

Building a stronger community begins with getting involved, even if it's just attending one meeting or making 5 phone calls. To get the most out of this campaign as parishioners and as a parish, we all need to get involved.

Be sure to read this entire newsletter with the findings and recommendations from the feasibility study. We are bonded together by a common future and I ask that you pray with me for the future of our faith community. May the Lord guide our growth in faith and our service to all God's people.

In Christ,

Fr. Jose Marquez



Leadership votes to proceed with campaign

On January 21st, a joint meeting of the Parish Council, Finance Council and Building Committee met with Bill Cordaro of Stewardship Partners & Resources (SP&R). Bill presented the findings and recommendations from the recent feasibility study. The leadership had a lot of questions and raised many concerns. **After much discussion and discernment, the leadership voted unanimously to proceed with a second capital campaign** to help pay for the construction of a new sanctuary, gathering space, restrooms, and parking lot at the new site off S. 27th.

Bill explained in detail one of the findings of the study that indicated that the parish is supportive of moving forward but isn't very excited. It may be that the parish is still struggling with creating a strong sense of community after merging the three different parishes just a few years ago. What got the leadership very excited was Bill's explanation of the ways a capital campaign has the capability of bringing a community together by focusing on a single goal and getting a lot of people involved.

With this information, the leadership committed itself to focus more on building a stronger community at MQPP and less on the raising of the money. They are asking fellow parishioners to see this campaign as an opportunity to bring the entire parish together, asking that those with misgivings consider setting them aside for the sake of our faith family.

Making an investment in our community will be at the center of the second campaign with Commitment Weekend set for May 20-21.

Parishioner comments from the recent Feasibility Study Report

"I appreciate all the work the leadership is doing their unflinching optimism."

"What I like about MQPP is the Thursday adoration and the prayer groups."

"Be more transparent - Honest."

"Father Jose renews my faith each week."

"I want to avoid having this campaign becoming a point of contention for the parish. We need be sure to give good information and to work together to accomplish our goals."

"We have been members of MQPP for a little over a year and have found the parish to be very welcoming and to have many different programs to participate in."

"MQP is there for me and my friend & family."

"We need to generate a lot more excitement about the plan."

"Keep communication clear, simple, & compelling so that there less likely to be false rumors and information that needs constant attention."

"I receive more here than anywhere I have been."

"We are improving every year. We have more prayer opportunities. We have something for everyone."

"I think this study is a very helpful process for our parish. It is a way to get a pulse on the parish."

Feasibility Study Findings and Recommendations

What did we expect to learn from the study?

The study was conducted to assess the following:

1. The level of support for moving forward with our plans to construct new parish facilities
2. The level of support for conducting a second 3-year capital campaign to raise the money needed
3. The amount of money that is possible to raise in a 3-year campaign
4. How to design a campaign that best meets MQPP's needs
5. The obstacles to conducting a successful campaign

How many participated in the study?

78 people (5 non-parishioners), representing 62 households, participated in the study. 53 people representing 44 households participated in the online/written survey; and 25 members representing 18 households participated in confidential interviews with SP&R. **The total number of parish households who participated in the study represents 10% of 570 total church households.**

The Report: (Note: The percentages represent a combined percentage of persons who agree or strongly agree with the statement on the survey and in the interviews. When appropriate, the percentage from the 2014 feasibility study is provided in [RED] and the average of other SP&R's past church studies is included in {GREEN}).

Contact the office if you would like to see report's executive summary.

Summary:

MQPP has experienced several changes in the last 3-5 years:

- New pastor
- Worship at one location
- Changed Mass schedule
- Lost 30% membership

Given this, MQPP is in very good condition.

- Membership has stabilized
- Settled into one location
- Welcomed Fr. Jose

Study Finding:

1. 81% said their spiritual needs are being met. [75%] {81%}.
2. 76% believe MQPP is providing ample opportunity for community and fellowship [65%] {80%}.
3. 70% expressed confidence in parish leaders to make the right decisions. [47%] {76%}.
4. The biggest challenges facing MQPP in coming years are: ensuring the financial stability of the parish (58%), selling the current church properties (41%), and growing parish membership through evangelization (36%).
5. 77% expressed support for moving forward with plans to build the new church on South 27th Street.

77% want to move forward with our plans

70% supported the idea of conducting a capital campaign

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Campaign Questions and Answers:

Q: Why are we considering a campaign at this time?

In 2014, MQPP launched the first capital campaign to raise money for our new parish facilities to house your faith family. At the time we were told that the fundraising effort for the new facilities would take two or more capital campaigns. The first capital campaign comes to an end in May of 2017 and we want to keep the momentum and energy going. This was confirmed when the recent feasibility study survey revealed that 70% of parishioners support moving forward with the second campaign now.

Q: Have the projects been prioritized?

Yes, the priority is to start with the construction of the new sanctuary, gathering space, and parking lot. Land preparation has already been done at the new site on S 27th.

Q: When will we be asked to make a commitment to the campaign?

Commitment weekend for this campaign is set for May 20-21.

Q: What can we expect during the time leading up to the Capital Campaign?

We know making a commitment to the capital campaign will be a sacrifice for us all. We are asking parishioners to pray that God might guide our decisions. We want to make this a spiritual journey more than simply an economic decision. We

can reflect on what it means to be good stewards of God's gifts, knowing that these gifts are to be used for God's Kingdom on earth. You are asked to do your part.

1. Volunteer for the campaign - attend the Volunteer Meeting on February 25 at 9:30 am.
2. Attend parish informational meetings.
3. Speak with fellow parishioners and family.
4. Read the newsletters.

Pray for our parish leadership, asking the Holy Spirit to guide them in their decision making process.

Q: Where can we go to get more information about the plan and campaign?

The parish website at www.MaryQueenOfPeaceBillings.org has the latest information available. You can also contact our parish Business Administrator, Matt Low. He will help you with your questions.

Q: Who conducted the Feasibility Study?

Bill Cordaro of Stewardship Partners & Resources (SP&R) led the effort. Bill is a lifelong Catholic and has been doing studies and campaigns for over 12 years. He assisted us with the last campaign. When doing a campaign, Bill focuses on three goals:

1. Raising the necessary money
2. Building a stronger parish community
3. Promoting the transformative power of stewardship

Findings and Recommendations Continued from page 2

6. 70% support conducting a second capital campaign in the spring of 2017. [46%] {70%}.
7. Respondents want more information before being asked to make a pledge. Frequently cited:
 - What is the general financial health of MQPP? (43%)
 - What is the level of support for a second campaign? (33%)
 - What is the level of support for the plan to build a church? (31%)
 - What are the long-range plans for MQPP? (30%)
8. 72% of respondents indicated they would be willing to make a financial commitment to the campaign if their questions are addressed. [53%] {77%}. **72% would make a pledge to a campaign**
9. 33 households offered \$104,000 if the three-year capital campaign were today. This is an average offering of \$3,152. These are not commitments. [\$5,447] {\$2,700}
10. The two most frequently mentioned reasons for contributing to a future campaign are: because they feel God has first blessed them (42%) and because they believe in the mission of MQPP (33%).
11. Two most frequently mentioned reasons for not contributing are that people do not know or agree with where the money is being spent (30%) and they cannot afford to make a commitment (26%).
12. Suggested factors that might prevent MQPP from conducting a successful campaign include members' personal finances, negativism among a group of parishioners, shrinking membership, lack of clear communications and lack of financial transparency about parish finances.
13. 19 [37] persons (24% [27%]) of total survey respondents indicated a willingness to help with a campaign.
14. With regard to parish support through planned giving, 10 [10] households answered "yes," 19 [22] "maybe," and 1 [4] said they already do.
15. There were several people identified as good leaders for the upcoming capital campaign.
6. The offerings during the study were generous, but there were fewer larger gifts offered than often accompany a feasibility study.
7. There are many members who are on limited or fixed incomes and may not be able to make cash commitments to a campaign.

Current Church Financial Condition: Numbers are for 2016.

1. 571 [722] households – a drop of 21%
2. Offertory income for 2016 was \$258,401 [\$307,550].
3. 224 households (39% of parish) contributed \$188,205. (National average is 50%)
4. The average contribution = \$844
5. 161 non-parish households contributed \$30,147.
6. Over \$40,049 was received through the offertory via cash.
7. Average Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) for 89% of parish was \$54,553 in 2012. (Zip codes: 59101, 59102, 59105, and 59106*)
8. AGI for MT is \$53,401.
9. Average offertory contribution from all households is \$442, representing 8% of AGI for 89% of parish (less than average Catholic contribution of 1% to 1.2% of AGI).
10. When considering the \$90,000 parish annual contributions to current campaign, the percent of AGI is 1.1%.

*City-Data.com

Endowments and Savings and Debt:

MQPP has an Endowment Fund with \$57,708. It has a savings account with \$252,382. The parish has no debt.

2014 Capital Campaign:

1. 142 current households pledged \$298,400 and have paid to date \$236,800.
2. The average pledge was \$2,100.
3. 58 non-parishioner gifts were received, totaling \$42,450.
4. 88 households have left the parish since the start of the first campaign.
5. 10 households pledged \$25,600 and 5 of them contributed \$8,600 to date.

Primary Concerns:

1. Parishioners are weary of changes. Even though there is support, there is a general lack of excitement for the future. **Concerns: Lack of excitement & financial transparency**
2. People are concerned about general parish finances and lack of financial transparency.
3. Some respondents think the plan may be over-ambitious or not needed. Some still question the wisdom of moving when the current situation is meeting their needs.
4. There is a small, vocal fraction of members who are not supportive of the plan.
5. Some parishioners want to be convinced that the plan is a viable plan before making a financial commitment.

Recommendations:

1. There is support to conduct a capital campaign.
2. Use the campaign to excite and unify the parish.
3. Prayer should lead the campaign.
4. Parishioners should be closely involved in the design and implementation of the campaign.
5. Educate parishioners about the budget.
6. Special effort should be made to solicit larger donations early in the campaign.
7. Members' questions and concerns should be addressed throughout campaign.
8. Address concerns of those on fixed incomes and find alternative ways for this group to participate. **Use the campaign to excite and unify the parish**



Mary Queen of Peace Parish
120 South 34th Street
Billings, MT 59101



Results of recent
feasibility study
enclosed

Make an investment in the future of
our faith community by
sharing your time with the campaign

VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED

No skills required - your time (2-3 meetings over the
next few months) and willingness to see our faith
community become stronger
is all that is needed.

Attend the Campaign Volunteer
Meeting and learn how you can impact our
parish's future!

Saturday, February 25

9:30 am in Parish Hall

Contact the parish office for more information

Findings Continued from page 3

9. Non-cash donations of personal property, crops, stocks and bonds should be encouraged throughout the campaign.
10. The planned giving effort should be created after the solicitation period of the capital campaign.

SP&R believes that in a
quality three-year campaign
focused on principles of
good stewardship, prayer,
and significant membership
involvement,
MQPP has the capacity to
raise an additional
\$250,000 to \$300,000 in
a second capital campaign.