



# St. Bernard Parish

WE ARE ST. BERNARD'S. TOGETHER, WE ARE CHURCH.

## PLANNING STUDY EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### STUDY PARTICIPANTS



73

Personal Interviews



138

Mail and Online



22.81%

Total Participation



### PRIORITY OF RESPONDENTS



### OVERALL OBSERVATIONS

- There is a strong sense of community at St. Bernard and people feel welcomed and invited.
- The Priests are stellar including their leadership, ministry and sermons.
- Younger parishioners want to see how they benefit from the projects, so we need to express that in the communications.
- The economy is a large concern and that shows in nearly all studies TSG has conducted. People factored in current economic conditions when they self-reported gifts.

### KEY STATISTICAL FINDINGS



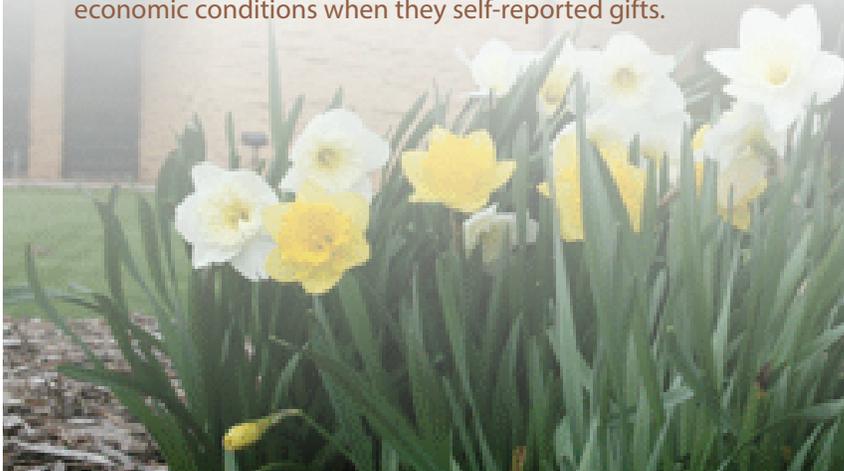
**77%** of respondents personally favor a capital campaign, including 84% of those interviewed.



**83%** of respondents indicated they would make a personal gift to the campaign, including 81% of those interviewed.



**17** respondents indicated they would serve in a leadership position.



## FUNDRAISING POTENTIAL



- Based upon the positive results of the planning study, the Steier Group recommends that St. Bernard Catholic Church immediately moves forward into the preparation phase of the eighteen-week campaign beginning the week of April 18.
- The Steier Group projects that St. Bernard will raise **\$1,300,000 - \$1,800,000 over the three-year campaign** by using the firm's recommended timeframe and approach.



## KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

### Secure Campaign Approval

- Fr. McCormick should work to receive approval from the Diocese of Joliet to move forward with a capital campaign.

### Communicate

- Share the planning study results with the parish. Emphasize the positive results, and the projected fundraising capacity. Mail the results to registered households and use other vehicles such as social media and the parish website to spread the news.
- Begin working on a list of frequently asked questions (FAQ) document to answer questions and issues raised during the planning study such as:
  - How will the multi-purpose room help grow our faith community?
  - How will families with young children benefit from the multi-purpose room?
  - How does the parish intend to use the multi-purpose room?

### Lead Donors Focus

- Consider meeting with the top five to ten potential donors to share the study results and to cultivate lead gifts. Focus on strengthening the relationship with each donor, involve them in the planning process for the campaign and cultivate lead gifts.
- Work with lead gift donors to develop challenge gifts designed to inspire others to invest in the future of the parish. Challenge vehicles could include:
  - Matching dollars to an identified level
  - A challenge encouraging participation
  - A challenge matching new commitments

### Recruit a Strong Campaign Leadership Team

- Successful campaigns feature strong leadership. Fr. McCormick, lay leaders and the Steier Group should begin identifying and recruiting a strong, diverse volunteer team. Review the self-identified names in the study and others nominated for the position. Work to solidify commitments.
- Recruit representatives from the parish council, finance committee, Men's Club and other influential parish organizations.

