

Feasibility Study
Report &
Recommendations

Executive
Summary

Holy Trinity
Catholic Church
Shreveport, LA

GRACE Philanthropy Services
October 6, 2025



HOLY TRINITY
CATHOLIC CHURCH

Shreveport, Louisiana

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Unlock Greater Impact

Introduction

GRACE Philanthropy Services (“GPS”) is pleased to present our findings and analysis to Holy Trinity Catholic Church (“Holy Trinity”) based on the in-person and virtual individual and family interviews, a parish town hall meeting, and published online and written surveys from August 18, 2025, through September 24, 2025.

It is a pleasure to collaborate with Father Duane Trombetta, George Sirven, Albert Barro, Gwen Youngblood, and the entire leadership of Holy Trinity on this feasibility study project. The outstanding level of engagement, cooperation, hospitality, and candor extended to GPS during the entire study is genuinely appreciated and certainly helped produce this report. We are most grateful to serve your wonderful Catholic community.

Since 1856, Holy Trinity has stood as a beacon of faith, service, and sacramental life in the heart of Shreveport, Louisiana. Today, Holy Trinity carries that mission forward with gratitude, hope, and a bold new vision for the future.

In 1873, a Yellow Fever Epidemic struck Shreveport and claimed 25% of the population. Five heroic priests stayed to serve the sick and dying, aware they might lose their own lives. The Five Priests of the 1873 Yellow Fever Epidemic . . . Fr. Jean Pierre, Fr. Isidore Quémerais, Fr. Jean-Marie Biler, Fr. Louis Gergaud, and Fr. François Le Vézouët . . . are known as the Shreveport Martyrs. By decree of Bishop Francis I. Malone of the Diocese of Shreveport, Holy Trinity was consecrated in October 2022 as the Minor Shrine of the Shreveport Martyrs. Holy Trinity now welcomes pilgrims to pray for the advancement of the Cause, and to request favors from God through the Five Priests’ intercession.

Holy Trinity feels the time is right for the parish to enhance parishioners’ worship experience and ministry. Accordingly, a Long-Term Pastoral Plan was crafted with an overall vision to construct a new parish hall and minor shrine visitor center, to include a museum and gift shop dedicated to the Five Priests. The plan also calls for developing a new parking facility to better accommodate a growing number of visitors.

The Long-Term Pastoral Plan is comprised of three sequential and complimentary phases budgeted at \$5.0 million. Phase I, called “Our Parish Present,” includes exterior weatherproofing, re-sealing, and gutter repairs to the church; interior plaster repairs and light renovation to the church; select improvements to showcase the church and accommodate increased visitor traffic; demolition of the former Greyhound bus station;

construction of a new parking facility on the bus station site; and, securing the underwriting necessary through a professionally managed capital campaign.

Phase II, called “Our Parish Future,” includes design and construction of a new 7,150 SF parish hall and minor shrine visitor center; a museum and gift shop dedicated to the story and legacy of the Five Priests; new parish offices, meeting rooms, and restrooms; music practice room and commercial kitchen for parish and diocesan use; and, preparations for future growth in pilgrimage and devotion to the Shreveport Martyrs.

Phase III, called “Our Parish Eternal,” includes restoring the rectory to serve again as the parish priest’s residence; renovating the Marian Courtyard; constructing a columbarium and dignified space for memorial prayer and repose; refurbishing the official marker designating our church on the National Register of Historic Places; and, establishing a legacy endowment for perpetual care, operations, and mission advancement.

Study Methodology

GPS was retained in June 2025 to conduct a feasibility study analysis and evaluate the potential to raise \$5.0 million in support of Holy Trinity’s Long-Term Pastoral Plan. GPS Principal David Popen began work in late June 2025 and concluded efforts in late September 2025.

GPS and Holy Trinity drafted a preliminary Case for Support Letter in the early weeks of the study effort, and it was reviewed, refined, and approved by Father Trombetta in early August. Other important study support materials were finalized in June, July, and August 2025. GPS also completed comprehensive research and wealth capacity analysis of parishioner and other Catholic benefactor giving in July.

Holy Trinity leadership and GPS worked collaboratively to develop a prospective list of over 100 parishioners and area Catholic benefactors to be invited to participate in the study’s in-person interviews. David conducted 43 confidential, in-person interviews involving a total of 54 parishioners and non-parishioners of Holy Spirit. GPS utilized a detailed interview questionnaire comprised of 11 specific and general questions to guide each discussion. GPS also utilized a preliminary Gift Plan illustrating the levels of financial support typically required to successfully raise \$5.0 million.

Each interviewee was assured confidentiality at the onset of each discussion to encourage candid responses. Interviewees were also assured that the meeting was not a solicitation for

funding, but that feedback on the proposed plan was critical to the process. Most interviews lasted approximately 55 minutes.

A Town Hall meeting was held on the evening of Tuesday, August 19, 2025. All parishioners were invited to attend. The meeting was held at 5:30 p.m. Approximately 60 individuals and families attended the Town Hall meeting.

A nine-question survey form was made available during the town hall meeting. A QR Code was included so that parishioners could access and complete the survey online if desired. Holy Trinity also inserted the survey in its newsletter and posted it on its website from August 19, 2025, through September 15, 2025. Father Trombetta encouraged parishioners to complete the survey often from the pulpit. A total of 30 parishioners completed the written and online survey. All responses from the survey are tabulated and incorporated into the study results.

This report includes the input of all 84 interview respondents (54 in-person interviewees and 34 survey respondents).

Key Findings

Nearly-two thirds (62%) of in-person interviewees and survey respondents **have been associated with Holy Trinity** for ten years or longer. More than one-third (37%) have been active with Holy Trinity for more than 20 years, with 11 parishioners (14%) involved over 40 years of their lives. Conversely, nearly four of ten study participants (38%) have been involved with Holy Trinity for less than 10 years. The study was strengthened by involving participants with such a broad range of time associated with Holy Trinity.

Almost two-thirds (63%) of interviewees **participate in** one or more **ministries of the parish**. Those ministries most appreciated and involved in include Parish and Finance Councils, Alter Society, Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, and Knights of Columbus.

What parishioners and non-parishioners overwhelmingly **appreciate most** about Holy Trinity is Father Duane Trombetta and his personal, caring, and loving nature. They greatly value Father Trombetta's spiritual leadership. Parishioners and non-parishioners also appreciate the architectural and interior beauty of Holy Trinity Church. The tradition and history of the Church greatly resonates with many. Parishioners in particular consider each other as family and appreciate the intimate sense of community. Being at Holy Trinity

Church is an extension of home for many. Interviewees also value the Minor Shrine of the Shreveport Martyrs and the Church's downtown location and relative ease of access.

Forty-seven percent (47%) of the in-person interviewees listed at least one **challenge facing the parish**. Those most frequently cited include a lack of a natural or specific parish neighborhood, lack of a parish hall and a place to meet and hold events, an older parish demographic and lack of young families, and a perceived lack of security and safety given Holy Trinity's downtown location.

Over one-half (52%) of the in-person interviewees listed at least one **opportunity ahead for the parish**. Those most frequently cited include building a parish hall and hosting weddings and bereavements, expanding parish ministries especially youth programs, a unique branding opportunity surround the Five Priests, and the opportunity to grow Holy Trinity's parishioner base.

Growing, diversifying, and better involving the congregation is top of mind for most parishioners. They believe expanding ministries through improved and enhanced facilities will heighten the worship experience and also better position Holy Trinity to attract new and younger parishioners. A new parish hall and visitor center will not only bring the parish closer together but also contribute greatly to improving the image, attractiveness, and vibrancy of downtown Shreveport.

Every in-person interviewee offered a **reaction to the Long-Term Pastoral Plan** as presented in the Case for Support Letter. Ninety percent (90%) reacted positively to the overall plan. Only one parishioner reacted somewhat negatively citing he/she is "not a fan," four other interviewees reacted with a big of caution or skepticism.

Specific reactions cited most include "*Love it! . . . Very Impressed! . . . Awesome . . . Great . . . Very Beautiful.*" Others want to make sure Holy Trinity has a 'Plan B' in case the plan must be reduced in scope. Others feel the plan needs design changes and most of these interviewees would like to see a bigger parish hall. Still others ask for greater connectivity between ministry needs and capital needs.

Moreover, 96% of interviewees say they support the Long-Term Pastoral Plan. The other two interviewees (4%) are "unsure" at the time of their interview. When asked to rank or prioritize the three phases of the Long-Term Pastoral Plan in order of importance, 96% of interviewees rate Phase I, "Our Parish Present," as their number one priority. Phase II, "Our

Parish Future,” rates second again by 96% of interviewees and Phase III, “Our Parish Eternal,” rates third by 100% of interviewees.

The most frequent discussion points among interviewees concerning Phase I include identifying a crosswalk from the new parking lot to the Church campus over Marshall Street and whether to keep or remove the Greyhound bus station sign. The most frequent discussion points among interviewees concerning Phase II include whether to build a larger parish hall to include a larger commercial kitchen, larger museum and gift shop, larger bathrooms, and more storage. Others would like to make the parish hall more “Catholic” in appearance. The most frequent discussion points among interviewees concerning Phase III include whether to include a columbarium on the campus and whether a \$1.0 million endowment is sufficient and should be raised during the capital campaign or later when campus improvements are complete.

Slightly under two-thirds (65%) of interviewees prioritize no **other needs or projects** other than those contained in the Long-Term Pastoral Plan. The remaining 35% offer at least one additional need/project they would like to see the parish prioritize if funding support is available. Specific ideas offered include more youth ministry, more campus security and safety in the form of perimeter fencing, and taking advantage of the branding opportunities surrounding the Five Priests.

Conversations surrounding the idea that new branding opportunities exist for Holy Trinity are particularly interesting. Several creative branding and promotion ideas were floated by interviewees specifically regarding the physical location of the Holy Trinity campus and the Minor Shrine of the Shreveport Martyrs. These interviewees opined that rather than keep the Greyhound bus station sign as is, it might be more impactful to make it a sign displaying the Five Priests.

Others recommended Holy Trinity work with the City of Shreveport to name or designate its particular area of Marshall Street the “Five Priests District” or “Five Priests Point” or something akin; thereby taking advantage of the fact that the church campus is already in a designated historic district and creating a more purposeful sense of place surrounding Holy Trinity’s unique history and tradition.

Ninety percent (90%) of interviewees and survey respondents **endorse the parish moving forward with conducting a capital campaign**. This is significant since many of these parishioners and Catholic benefactors are key financial supporters. Only one parishioner is

not in favor of moving forward with a campaign and the balance (seven parishioners or 9%) are “unsure” at this time.

When asked if **\$5.0 million is an achievable funding goal**, 53% said “yes.” Another 38% of interviewees and other Catholic benefactors are “unsure” when asked about the feasibility of raising the tested goal. The other seven (9%) feel the \$5.0 million goal is not achievable and feel more comfortable with a goal range of \$2.0 million to \$3.0 million.

Most parishioners and area Catholic benefactors who participated in an in-person interview or who responded to the survey plan to **support the campaign with a financial pledge**. A remarkable 96% of interviews and survey respondents say they will support the campaign with a financial pledge of support. Two survey respondents say “maybe” and only one said he/she would likely not support the campaign financially. Nearly all (92%) those who plan to support the campaign financially provided GPS with a financial indication.

Everyone interviewed said they would pray for the success of the campaign. When asked either in-person or through the survey instrument whether the parishioner or area Catholic benefactor would **volunteer to help the campaign** in some capacity (as a leader, advocate, or other role), 72% framed their response positively with 41% or 33 interviewees and respondents stating “yes” and another 31% or 25 responding “maybe.” Only 22 or 28% said “no” to volunteering to help the campaign effort and 64% of these individuals are survey respondents.

GPS Recommendations

Based on the study findings and our experience, GRACE Philanthropy is confident that Holy Trinity demonstrates sufficient “asking rights” with its parishioners and other area Catholic benefactors to immediately proceed with a capital campaign.

Parishioners and area Catholic benefactors consider church restoration, parish hall construction, and other campus improvements as compelling and urgent needs. They endorse the Long-Term Pastoral Plan as an effective and appropriate solution to these needs. Holy Trinity’s pastoral and lay leadership are considered effective, capable, and enthusiastic. Sufficient financial capacity exists within the parish and greater Shreveport Catholic community to fund the plan. And, a promising number of volunteer campaign leaders are available and interested in supporting the funding effort.

GPS is also confident that by adhering to the following recommendations Holy Trinity can improve its asking rights and achieve maximum fundraising success:

1. For planning purposes, GPS recommends Holy Trinity consider a minimum campaign goal of \$5.0 million, pledged over a five-year period or less, as realistic and attainable at this time.
 2. GPS estimates that a minimum of six (6) months are needed to complete the campaign and successfully reach the minimum goal or even potentially oversubscribe the campaign and reach a higher challenge goal.
 3. We recommend launching the campaign effort as soon as possible to capitalize on the interest and momentum generated by the Feasibility Study. An immediate start will build upon the base of information shared with parishioners and other potential donors during the interviews and will promptly position the campaign in relation to other competing interests.
 4. Cultivation and solicitation should begin in the early stage of the campaign with the top 10 to 15 potential lead donors. These donors will immediately impact the likelihood of reaching or even exceeding the minimum recommended goal. GPS further recommends that this early top donor solicitation phase be “quiet” and Holy Trinity and counsel reassess the campaign goal after the top 15 solicitations are realized. Based on this assessment, Holy Trinity and GPS can plan forward taking the campaign “public” with the campaign announcement weekend.
 5. The Long-Term Pastoral Plan and its three phases test well though should be refined and strengthened. A refined plan based on key input and suggestions received from interviewees will generate greater financial and parishioner support. We recommend that parish leadership and its architect work closely with counsel at the onset of the campaign to further refine the Long-Term Pastoral Plan, its projected renovation and construction scope and features, and confirm its projected costs. Holy Trinity might consider forming a plan revision task force comprised of key potential donors and parish stakeholders to assist in refining the plan or at a minimum to endorse plan refinements.
 6. GPS will work with Holy Trinity to draft a compelling Case for Support that effectively presents the refined plan of work, its updated budget, its ‘value proposition,’ and which provides sufficient answers to key questions posed by parishioners and other benefactors during the study. The Case for Support forms the basis for all campaign solicitation materials.
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7. Counsel recommends utilizing a \$5.0 million Gift Plan for the campaign that will stimulate broad-based sacrificial support. This Gift Plan must challenge the entire parish and others to support the campaign at levels that will be sufficient to reach and exceed the minimum recommended goal and possibly achieve a greater stretch goal. This will require a strong number of lead-tier gifts and strong support at the mid-tier level.
8. Naming Opportunities related to new construction features and outdoor campus amenities should be developed and offered as encouragement and recognition for donations.
9. With the assistance of our professional counsel, Father Trombetta must take a pivotal role in meeting individually with as many potential major donors as Father's schedule allows. To achieve seeing a larger number of prospects, a plan to schedule smaller intimate dinners or gatherings for very small groups of lead tier prospects will be employed.
10. Lay leader support is critical. Involved and influential parishioners and other members of the area Catholic community will allow the campaign to broaden its access throughout the parish and area catholic community, which will afford Father Trombetta the opportunity to engage more families. Recruitment of these leaders should begin immediately with support of counsel.
11. We recommend that parish leadership begin communicating to parishioners and other Holy Trinity benefactors and stakeholders the results of the feasibility study by publishing an Executive Summary of the study in the parish bulletin. Also, please post the complete Feasibility Study Report & Recommendations on the parish website. It is vitally important that parishioners understand that their input is taken into consideration as Holy Trinity plans forward. Communication, transparency, and involvement are key to going forward.

Final Thoughts

We find Holy Trinity Catholic Parish and its surrounding Catholic community to be comprised of highly engaged, faith-filled, and committed people. Let us express our sincere thanks, gratitude, and honor for the ability to serve your wonderful parish and Catholic community.



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