



Annual Report to the People of St. Francis of Assisi Parish For Year Ending June 30, 2010

THE SPIRIT AT WORK

My fellow parishioners:

The members of our Pastoral Council and I are pleased to present this report on the ministries, activities and finances for our parish for 2009-2010.

In 2008, more than 150 parishioners were involved in a year-long process of creating a new Pastoral Plan to guide our parish. This strategic plan was completed in September 2009 and will run through 2014. We have now finished our first year of its implementation.

Our prayer and hope is that this plan will guide us to more clearly hear Christ's call to be his followers, and as a community, to be a sign of Christ's grace and kingdom in our world.

This report highlights just some of our accomplishments – with the help of God – in the past year. I think it clearly shows that we are a community blessed with active and engaged members who want to put the Spirit of God to work in a meaningful way. There is always more to do, but I am proud of these accomplishments and of the generous, faith-filled family we have here at St. Francis.

May God bless you,
Fr. Jim McDougall
Pastor

MOVING TOWARD A DEEPER FAITH

The Spirit moves in mysterious ways, but most often it seems, through the intervention of other people. At St. Francis, our parishioners have many opportunities to enrich their faith, and to interact with each other through parish ministries and activities.

To help people connect more deeply with the parish, and ultimately to the Body of Christ, the parish focused on several initiatives. Some of these included:

- Greater emphasis on small groups, which met during Advent and Lent to share faith experiences and/or study a spiritual book (seven groups with a total of 75 people met in the fall; plus 14 groups with 122 people met during Lent)
- Introduction of the Gallup Strength Finder, a tool to help people discern and use their greatest talents to help build up God's kingdom here on earth
- Welcome gatherings, now held twice a year for new parishioners
- Ongoing study and worship opportunities, including Taize prayer, meditation and scripture study groups, lectures and classes, and the Parish Mission with Mark Price showing us the lives of several apostles



STAYING IN TOUCH

It's a fast-paced world and people want easier access to information. St. Francis has kept up with technology developments in many ways, including:

- Greater communication efforts and the use of technology to make it easier to sign up for an event online, access information, or utilize social networking (many ministry leaders now use the blog format on their web pages)
- Improvements to the parish website to provide spiritual and educational resources, including information from Liguorian, Jesuit Media Initiatives and other sources.
- Training for 16 members of the Video Ministry, which produces the live Internet broadcast of the 10:30 a.m. Sunday Mass



Video Ministry broadcasts the Sunday mass.

SERVING GOD AND SHARING WITH THOSE IN NEED

St. Francis reminded us to preach the Gospel always, but not with mere words. We honor our patron saint – as well as the Gospel values of Jesus – by reaching out in service to others. Our social ministry projects are so numerous, they would fill several pages. This year especially, as greater community need arose, our parish stepped up to offer career networking and counseling programs, job fairs and money-saving initiatives.

Other highlights included:

- ✦ Creation of the Christmas re-gifting box, which brought in 500 gifts for local organizations
- ✦ Efforts by the Peace and Justice Committee to conserve energy around the parish and to promote a greener lifestyle
- ✦ Increased assistance to migrant farm workers, plus a greater number of families in need of food, transportation or housing expenses
- ✦ Increased outreach through the Bereavement Ministry, which offers support for people experiencing grief and loss



PROTECTING OUR FINANCIAL RESOURCES

Our parish members share generously to provide St. Francis with a strong financial base. To make sure these gifts are used in the most responsible way, the Parish Finance Council offers input into the budget development process and continues to regularly review financial statements.

This past year, the council formed a Fiscal Management Sub-committee. This group is just getting off the ground, but is expected to take an active role in assuring that the parish adheres to Diocesan policy and sound fiscal procedures. (The parish will send its complete Annual Financial Report to parishioners later this year).

The Stewardship Committee also plays a role in the financial health of the parish. Stewardship efforts focused on helping people to discern their talents through the Time and Talent brochure, plus providing information about direct debit possibilities and the financial state of the parish during “Treasure weekend.”

EDUCATING AND STRENGTHENING GOD'S FOLLOWERS

Growing in faith is a life-long journey. St. Francis provides learning opportunities for people of all ages, from youth and high school-age through adult activities. The parish also operates and nurtures an accredited school that sets a strong foundation for academic success, as well as Catholic values.

- **At St. Francis School**, the principal and staff continued to develop and enhance the curriculum and quality of education offered. This past year they reviewed the ongoing accreditation requirements, in preparation for the committee's visit next fall. To fulfill several long-term goals, the school moved forward with accelerated math and foreign language improvements.



- Because a greater number of school families are in need of scholarship help, the Development Committee has worked to enhance the School Endowment fund by seeking support from a wider circle of possible donors. This also includes efforts to build a major gifts program.



- **In Religious Education**, the staff and catechists worked to provide more opportunities for Middle School youth, including the creation of a regular middle school youth group. The staff is also developing educational resources for catechists, including the possibility of online formation classes. *(Photo left: middle school students on retreat)*



- **For high school youth**, the programs centered on feedback from the students and direct planning and input to give them a voice in activities and direction for the High School Youth Group. The group increased collaboration with the eighth graders in religious education and the school to encourage them to continue their religious formation after Confirmation. The students continued working on ways to build community, since students come from many different high schools.



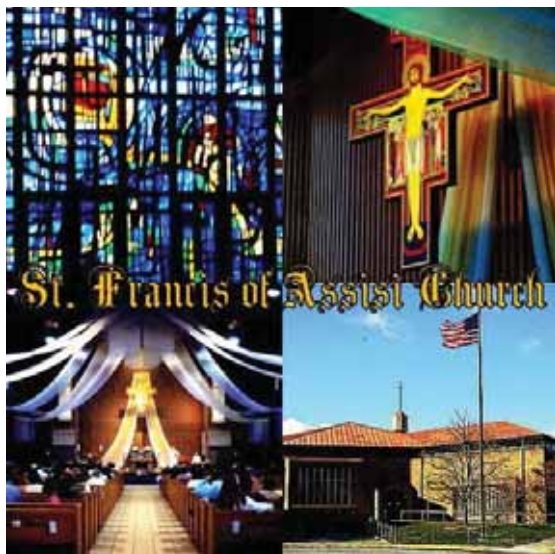
QUICK FACTS ABOUT ST. FRANCIS

Registered parish households: approximately 2,700
Number of people in the parish: 6,800
Liturgical ministers: 280
Choirs and musical ensembles: 7
New Catholics through RCIA: 32
Baptisms: 129
Confirmations: 144
Marriages: 31
Deaths: 47
Students in religious education: 710
School enrollment: 440
Active ministries/volunteer opportunities: 87
Food collected for pantries: approx. 2,500 bags of groceries
Meals prepared for Alpha House and Delonis shelters: 1,400
Assisted living and nursing homes served: 8



The Spirit is at work in all of us here at St. Francis.

We value your feedback and ideas for continued achievement. Please contact Fr. Jim at frjim@rc.net.



Photos by Joseph Moffatt

MISSION STATEMENT

We, the people of God of St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Parish, guided by the Holy Spirit are called to continue the mission of Jesus Christ.

We dedicate ourselves to the fulfillment of this mission by proclaiming the Good News of the kingdom of God, by living in love and fellowship, by seeking nourishment in God's Word and in worship and prayer, and by dedicating ourselves to the service of others.

Relying on the power of the Holy Spirit, we pledge ourselves to be living witnesses of God's presence to the world.