

# St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish – Update #3

## March 2024

As the final of communications about the comprehensive study of building options and a strategic ministry plan which began in September of 2023, this update provides information from the concluding meeting of March 19, 2024. The final draft of the plan, which also includes the full survey results, is available on the parish website.

### Who participated in the Parish Survey?

The parish survey was conducted in late January and early February. Here is some key information about those who responded to the survey.

- 369 respondents – this number represents approximately 1/3 of the 799 households in the parish
- 98.6% of the respondents were registered parishioners
- 71.1% of respondents have been parishioners for 11 or more years
- 64.4% of respondents are age 55 or older
- 6.8% of respondents were under the age 35
- 69.8% of respondents attend Mass weekly
- 14.4% of respondents attend Mass “several times a year” or “not at all”
- 71.6% of respondents felt at least somewhat knowledgeable about the building study and future planning

### What did the survey reveal?

The survey provided clear results for future planning.

- Building Options – 55.6% of respondents favored staying at the present parish site to renovate and add any needed facilities. The parish is still in conversation with Aquinas Catholic Schools about a possible location in Holmen. The current parish site is not large enough to accommodate a school. The parish Building Committee will address this issue at future meetings with parishioners.

- Capital Campaign – No matter which building option is finally chosen, a capital campaign will be necessary. About 62% of respondents indicated a “willingness” to participate in the campaign. 26.4% are unsure and 12.4% are not willing, mainly because of fixed incomes or having already contributed to the \$1.5 million-dollar restricted building fund in the past. These results indicate strong support for a capital campaign.
- Future Ministries – The survey revealed that the most preferred priority for the future should be increasing Mass attendance and parish involvement. This was followed by the need to enhance faith formation opportunities for all parishioners. These preferences reveal that parishioners are looking for parish growth.

What connects these three survey areas is the realization that the parish's ability to grow is limited by a lack of space to conduct ministries. Parish growth and ministry participation cannot happen without new facilities. The parish has contemplated such action for nearly 40 years.

### What is included in the strategic ministry plan?

The plan will be developed in four priority areas.

1. Mass attendance and parishioner involvement – Efforts are planned to improve welcoming efforts, opportunities to meet and socialize with fellow parishioners, and to involve more parishioners in liturgical, faith formation, and outreach ministries. There will also be increased efforts to improve communications with parishioners and the Holmen community.
2. Enhance and expand faith formation for all ages - Existing programs for children and adolescents will be enhanced. The possibility of a Catholic school at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton is being actively explored. Two study groups will be established. One will study and make recommendations about opportunities for younger families at the parish. This includes looking at daycare needs, support for young mothers, and starting a young adult ministry for those in their 20's and 30's. The second study will focus on adult faith formation. This includes the potential for small faith sharing groups, parish-based retreats, Bible study, and guest speakers.

3. Expand outreach activities – The food pantry is well known in the Holmen area. This outreach ministry is challenged by its lack of storage space. New facilities will allow for more storage and the potential to serve more people in the area. The Young at Heart senior group will be expanded, and new facilities will allow for more activities and regular events. A study group will also look at the introduction of Stephen Ministry to the parish. The ministry is a one-on-one care ministry for people seeking the healing comfort and support the Church can provide.
4. Building new space for growth and supporting it - A Building Committee will be appointed to shepherd the task of funding and building new ministry space. This group will be responsible for working with the finance council on developing building plans, conducting parish meetings, directing a capital campaign, and overseeing the construction project.

### A “Thank You” and an Invitation

“Thank you” to all those who participated in the survey and parish meetings. You have helped shape this plan in many ways. A special “thank you” to those members of the Planning Committee who devoted their time and talent to the refinement of the plan and brought it, faithfully, to a conclusion. Finally, an invitation to all parishioners to see this moment as one of the most significant times in the history of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton. This is your opportunity to become involved in some way and to help your parish grow. We are all called to serve the Church and may God especially bless those who answer that call.