

Dear Parishioners,

In all circumstances give thanks, for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus (1 Thessalonians 5:18). I am writing today to provide you with an update on the Feasibility Study conducted by The Breton Group this past fall. The study assessed our community's willingness to support a capital campaign to address the space needs for St. Robert Catholic School, faith formation and other parish ministries as these programs continue to grow. What a blessing that we have such vibrant ministries that necessitated this study!

I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to each of you for your patience during this process and for providing your valuable input regarding the proposed campaign. Your thoughtful input helps to shape our steps moving forward and provides the foundation upon which we are building our plan for the future of our parish and school community.

Below is an overview of the findings identified through the feasibility study and recommendations:



REPORT FINDINGS

- o Most people interviewed are generally in favor of Catholic school education and recognize it as an effective means to pass on the Catholic faith.
- o There was a general feeling that more information should have been shared about the school since it opened. Without that knowledge, the needs of both the school and faith formation program for additional space and the associated costs took many by surprise.
- o There is an interest in learning more about parish support, tuition plans, and future financial support from the Trustees.
- o Even with a match from the Trustees, which was lauded as abundantly generous, the size and scope of the proposal made it difficult for people to commit to a project of this size.

REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

- o While the timing is not right to move forward with the full scope of the project as originally envisioned, the parish and school should move forward with an assessment of current space utilization and the creation of a master plan to find solutions to urgent space needs and account for the anticipated continued growth of all these vibrant ministries.
- o St. Robert should establish a task force with representatives from parish and school leadership, including faith formation, the school board, and the Finance Council, to develop a master plan to address the expansion of school enrollment and facilities through eighth grade, interim facility options as we grow, and related topics for sustainable growth.
- o The pastor, school trustees, leadership councils, and diocesan leadership should begin the process to transition St. Robert to a parish school.
- o Develop and implement a communication plan as we move through these processes so our parish and school community continues to feel educated and engaged.

While the timing is not right to move forward with the full scope of the project as originally envisioned, there are a lot of positive recommendations that came from this opportunity to discuss our future together. There is interest and support for the continued expansion of the school and other parish ministries, and it shows parishioners' desires to ensure the Catholic faith continues to be handed down to future generations.

A task force has been formed and is currently developing a plan to implement these recommendations. The task force and finance council have assessed that officially transitioning St. Robert to a parish school is a financially-sound investment with all the start up costs already covered by the Trustees.

Recently, Liz Peters, our principal, attended the Ada Township Planning Commission Meeting and gained zoning approval for our 6th-8th grades. We envision that this expansion will move us from an enrollment of 108 students to an overflow capacity of nearly 200 students. Enrollment for the 2023-24 school year is well underway, and she is busy with school tours for all grade levels. We are excited that many younger siblings will be joining us next year.

Again, thank you for your prayers, patience, and valuable input that have helped and will continue to help guide us through this process for the future of our faith community. Please feel free to reach out via email, conversation after Mass, or by setting up an appointment through the parish office if you have questions about the project.

Fr. Tony Russo