



What Are Our Gifts - Parish Family 26

Sacred Heart		Saint Monica	
Categories	Totals	Categories	Totals
Community	193	Community	157
Welcoming	164	Welcoming/ Hospitality	73
Priests	117	Church Doctrine/ Morality /Traditional Teaching	70
Homilies/Sermons	102	Serving/ Ministry	67
Music	83	Sacraments/ Mass/ Confession	64
Catholic Identity/ Faith Journey	83	Priests	46
Ministries	79	Homilies	44
Parishioners/ People	57	Adoration	43
School	45	School/ High school	40
Church Environment	33	Prayer/ Personal Growth in Faith/ 20 min of Prayer	38
Family Aspect	32	Music	27
Sacraments	30	Liturgy	19
Liturgy of the Mass	28	Coffee and Donuts	19
Daily Mass	12	Activities/ Speakers	18
Events	11	Sense of Home over time	12
Doctrine	11	Friends of the Needy	12
Adoration	11	Daily Mass/ Daily Rosary	11
Faith Formation (Adults & Youth*)	10	Church Building/ Open Church/ Availability	8
Leadership/Staff	7	Diversity of Congregation	8
Rosary Group	7	Faith Formation	7
Mass Options	6	Family Friendly	6
Men's Group	3	Bible Study	5

Stations of the Cross	3	Knights of Columbus	5
St. Vincent de Paul	2	Youth Groups	5
Carpe Diem	2	Peace	4
Women's Group	2	Walking with Purpose	3
Knights	2	OCIA with Father Nagel	3
Parish Festival	2	Church Staff	1
Bible Study	2	Communication	1
Coffee Donuts	2	Stability	1
Book Club	1	Serving the Homebound	1
Jubilee Reach	1	Altar Serving	1
Easter Mass	1		

Sacred Heart		Saint Monica	
<p>The reflections from Sacred Heart parishioners paint a vibrant picture of a faith community rooted in love, connection, and spiritual growth. The overwhelming sense of welcome and community fosters an environment where individuals from all walks of life feel at home, both physically and spiritually. The leadership of Fr. Nagel and Fr. Joseph, with their complementary approaches, provides a balanced and inspiring foundation that resonates deeply through their homilies. The music and ministries further enrich this community, offering avenues for worship and service that draw parishioners closer to God and one another. These strengths highlight the beauty of Sacred Heart Parish as a place where faith thrives, friendships flourish, and every individual is valued. This is a true testament to the power of a united, Christ-centered community.</p>		<p>Saint Monica Catholic Church is a place of community that supports personal growth in faith through opportunities for sharing with and serving others. It is a faith community that values tradition, reverence, solid doctrine, families, and inspiring and relatable clergy. It appreciates personal connections, and opportunities for service and formation. We are proud of what our parish offers in terms of access to Daily Mass, the Sacraments, Eucharistic Adoration, hospitality, education through our school, faith groups, activities, speakers, ministries, accessibility, and more.</p>	

Note

Both Sacred Heart and Saint Monica received some constructive feedback from survey responses that is not highlighted in this document, but will be addressed in future stages of the One Parish Planning process.

Community

In reflecting on what are our gifts, parishioners at both Sacred Heart and Saint Monica overwhelmingly identified their top pick as being community. At Saint Monica, parishioners referenced community both in terms of the relationships between individuals, focusing on intimacy and personal connection, and on collective community and a sense of church family. Responses described how the strong charism of community at St. Monica supports and allows for parishioners to grow and share in their faith. Additionally, it creates a place where people feel belonging and a sense of home. One person explained how “feeling the intimacy of the community... makes me WANT to come and grow in faith”. At Sacred heart, many stated, “This feels like my home.” identifying the parish as both a physical second home for many and a spiritual home for souls. Over the years, many friendships have been fostered or formed. Regardless of their time at the parish—whether sixty years or two, parishioners shared a strong sense of community.

Welcoming/Hospitality

Attendees of both Saint Monica and Sacred Heart also identified a strong charism of hospitality. From Saint Monica, newcomers and long term parishioners alike shared experiences of being welcomed by the parish and feeling a sense of home. There were many comments that talked about a “sense of acceptance and kindness”, feeling “invited”, and being a “welcoming church with smiles and open arms”. Similarly, members from Sacred Heart acknowledged the strong sense of inclusivity and open arms extended to a diverse range of parishioners, new and old, who support one another on their faith journeys. Many parishioners reported feeling accepted regardless of their backgrounds, cultures, or faiths.

Priests/Homilies/Church Doctrine/Liturgy/Sacraments/Adoration

In addition to their gifts of community and welcome, Saint Monica and Sacred Heart parishioners highly value their Catholic identity. The parish communities responded with different emphasises on various categories, but both identified the impact and importance of their priests, homilies, Catholic church doctrine,

liturgy, sacraments, and adoration. These aspects of our Catholic faith are viewed as foundational elements to both parishes.

Comments from Sacred Heart acknowledged that Fr. Kurt Nagel and Fr. Joseph Akor have been the bedrock of this parish. Parishioners are deeply grateful for the balance provided by having both Fr. Nagel and Fr. Joseph at Sacred Heart, and value the presence of both priests and their unique approaches to homilies. Many connect with Fr. Joseph's consistent message of love, emotional resonance, and deep devotion to Jesus in his homilies. At the same time, Fr. Nagel's emphasis on knowledge, logic, and everyday connections inspires reflection long after Mass. Parishioners cherish Fr. Joseph's blessings for children and birthdays, while others appreciate Fr. Nagel's practical prayer tips. Responses expressed that, regardless of the presider, the homilies help them connect with the Gospel and apply it to their families, themselves, and their lives.

Similarly, many people from Saint Monica wrote about the great importance and impact of our priests and their homilies, how they "always leave Mass with a good message that [they] try to put into practice throughout the week". Of even greater importance to Saint Monica than their appreciation for inspiring and faithful clergy is the reverent and traditional celebration of Mass which their priests offer. Saint Monica parishioners overwhelmingly highlighted the strong traditional Catholic identity at their parish, with the upholding of church doctrine and morality. Responses to the survey included comments such as "Traditional Catholic experience centered around the Eucharist", "beautiful liturgy and adoration. Good theology and homilies", and "Staying true to doctrine".

Service/Ministry

The gift of ministry and the opportunity for service is a shared value across both parishes. Various ministries at Sacred Heart have been a highlight and asset for many parishioners who appreciate the opportunities to volunteer and participate. These ministries provide parishioners with a sense of service and opportunity. The men's group, women's group, St. Vincent de Paul, Carpe Diem, and other outreach programs were frequently cited as positive influences in parishioners' lives.

Some parishioners at Saint Monica referenced the gift of ministry in a generalized way. Others also did so through mention of specific groups and ministries that provide service in our community, such as Friends of the Needy, and Knights of Columbus. Additional comments mentioned parish groups, ministries, and programs that both serve the parishioners and allow them to

serve others, and described them as having a significant impact on individuals and families. Examples include faith formation, choir, coffee and donuts, youth groups, bible study, and Walking with Purpose.

Music

Music is a beautiful part of the liturgy and brings many parishioners closer to God. Parishioners at both Sacred Heart and Saint Monica have an appreciation for music. The choir, band, pianists, and accompanists were all highlighted in survey responses from Sacred Heart indicating the fact that music is a strength that many parishioners there are grateful for. Parishioners believe that music has guided them through Mass and deepened their connection to their faith. Although not as prominent, music was also a recurring theme in the responses from Saint Monica, and is recognized as an important aspect of faith and community life there.

Schools

Both Sacred Heart and Saint Monica appreciate the gift of a strong parish school that, as Saint Monica parishioners stated, has “high standards”, and is a “living gift of faith”. A sentiment that seems to resonate with parents is “I am proud of the education that my children received”.

Conclusion

Both Sacred Heart and Saint Monica strongly identified their top gifts as having a strong sense of community and hospitality. Additionally, parishioners highly value the Sacraments, specifically the sacrifice of the Mass, as well as various aspects of liturgy such as music and sound doctrine. They appreciate their priests and their homilies, opportunities for adoration, their schools, and numerous ministries and groups across both campuses including but not limited to coffee and donuts, rosary groups, bible studies, and women’s and men’s groups. Both parishes highlighted a distinct sense of Catholic identity with a focus on personal growth in Faith.