

# **“What are our gifts?”**

## **Survey Synthesis Report**

### **North Snohomish Parish Family 5**

**St. Mary, St. Cecilia, Immaculate Conception, St. John Vianney**

**Sunday July 12, 2026**



**Compiled by: Parish Family Advisory Council**

# **“What are our gifts?”**

## **Synthesis of Survey Responses**

Parish Family 5: Immaculate Conception, St. John Vianney, St. Mary, St. Cecilia

July 2026

### **Questions posed to parishioners:**

1. “How have your experiences in our parish (and your experience of the parish’s gifts and charisms) brought you closer to God? What has been spiritual impact of your participation in our parish?”
2. “If you had to describe the main gifts and charisms of our parish to a newcomer in one sentence, what would you say? What is your favorite part about being a parishioner? What stands out to you as something to be proud of?”

### ***Introduction***

Parishioners in our North Snohomish Parish Family were asked to complete a survey reflecting on the gifts and charisms of their parishes. The results of the surveys highlighted various themes of what is valued most among parishioners for maintaining a flourishing spiritual life in their parishes. Members of our Parish Family Advisory Council read all the survey responses that were received from parishioners and then synthesized the common themes that emerged among the responses to draft this report.

We received a wide variety of comments and feedback in survey responses, some of which were unrelated to the questions in the survey. In order to be as precise as possible in preparing this synthesis report, the Parish Family Advisory Council was intentional in utilizing only the responses from parishioners that directly answered the survey questions. Parishioners who had additional feedback that was unrelated to the survey questions will have the opportunity to voice this in the “Opportunities and Challenges” listening sessions that will be held in the fall.

Several overarching themes emerged in reviewing parishioner’s responses detailing the gifts and charisms of their parishes, as well as the experiences that had brought them closer to God through their participation and contributions to their church. This synthesis report highlights

the responses that the four parishes have in common with one another and has categorized them into themes like the accessibility of the sacraments, involvement in parish ministries, a welcoming and supportive community, and food and fellowship. We have also included a brief synthesis of each of the individual parishes' responses after the overall parish family synthesis.

## **Parish Family Synthesis**

### ***Accessibility of Daily Mass, Confessions, and Adoration***

The availability of daily Masses, confessions, and adoration to parishioners was frequently mentioned as a gift of their parish that has contributed to deepening their faith and bringing them closer to God. Many respondents wrote in particular about the sacrament of confession, appreciating the availability of this sacrament during the week and at Sunday Mass. One parishioner wrote, "I am grateful for Mass and for the sacraments. Certainly, this community has caused me to pray more. Especially for the community itself."

### ***Getting Involved in Parish Ministries***

Parishioners frequently responded that their involvement in different parish ministries has played an essential role in bringing them closer to God. Some of the highlighted ministries that parishioners take part in are the Knights of Columbus, homebound ministry, being an extraordinary minister of the Eucharist, participation in the Mary's and Women's Guilds, music ministry, and St. Vincent de Paul.

One parishioner noted regarding the spiritual impact of their participation in their parish that "volunteering in different areas has given me the opportunity to visit with people, to hear how they live out their Christianity, share our challenges to being faithful, and offer prayer support for one another." Another wrote that "being involved in the parish allows me to realize how blessed my life is and to see and learn of the many different difficulties so many members are experiencing. The welcoming and encouraging attitude at [my parish] makes one want to care more, pray more and help in any way that is needed."

### ***Welcoming and Supportive Community***

Among each of the parishes, respondents noted how welcoming parishioners are when asked about the main gifts and charisms of their parish to a newcomer. Upon entering the churches, people are greeted with a smile. Those who are new to parishes in our parish family have been made to feel as though they are at home from the beginning.

Along with friendliness and a welcoming community as prominent characteristics of each of the parishes, people have also found a support system among their fellow parishioners, describing that they are “helpful in little ways that go a long way when you struggle to navigate well on any given day.”

### ***Food and Fellowship***

The meals shared between parishioners that are often put on at the churches after Mass by groups like the Knights of Columbus and Mary’s Guild, are highly appreciated by the community. Respondents highlighted these shared meals as something that they are proud of and one of their favorite gifts of their parishes. Coffee hour with donuts was also mentioned in survey responses as a positive experience that builds community. One parishioner wrote that his favorite part about being a parishioner is “watching a new generation growing and chasing each other around the coffee tables.”

## **Syntheses of the Individual Parishes**

### ***Immaculate Conception Church – Arlington***

When parishioners at Immaculate Conception were asked what experience of the parish’s gifts and charisms had brought them closer to God, one of the most common responses was the cherished music at Mass. One parishioner said, “Our music/choir is the best! It very much brings me closer to God because the music is relatable.” Participation in church ministries and activities like bible study, being a lector, eucharistic ministry, and Mary’s Guild were also mentioned by many. The welcoming nature and friendliness of fellow parishioners was highlighted when reflecting on experiences of Immaculate Conception that have deepened their faith. One parishioner wrote, “Since I became a member of this parish in 1983, I was welcomed with open arms. The people were so friendly and were there to answer questions I had about anything.”

Parishioners at Immaculate Conception spoke highly of the warmth and welcoming nature of their parish. One person wrote that “this church presents a friendly, welcoming, and spiritual feeling to all those who enter its doors.” Another said, “the family that we have created within our church is amazing. It feels like home.” Parishioners also wrote of the meals after Mass, noting them as something that stands out to be proud of; one parishioner mentioned that “getting to know folks/priests at the dinners after Mass has made us feel a part of the community.”

### ***St. John Vianney Mission – Darrington***

When reflecting on what experiences of their parish had brought them closer to God, parishioners at St. John Vianney Mission in Darrington cited examples like gathering for the Mass in their small, intimate worship space and the supper that is held after each Mass. Fellow parishioners are warm and accepting of one another. God’s presence can be felt by parishioners whenever they are at church and they feel His presence stay with them even after they go home, touching them in their daily lives. The accessibility of the Mass at the Mission due to its location in the remote town of Darrington has made it so that SJV parishioners can attend Mass regularly.

Some of the main gifts and charisms that St. John Vianney parishioners noted of their Mission were the community’s welcoming and inclusive nature. Everyone knows each other intimately and cares for one another. Newcomers and visitors are extended the same hospitality and treated like family when they visit SJV. Parishioners are proud of how their Mission has continued to thrive for 110 years now, despite facing challenges like being located in a small town and experiencing difficulties in the past with securing priests to minister to their community. They help others to see and understand the works of faith in their personal lives. The priests were frequently cited as a gift to the community.

### ***St. Mary Catholic Church – Marysville***

Many parishioners responded that they are happy with the availability of the priests for a "joyful" Mass, frequent confessions, and adoration opportunities; all of which are experiences that have brought them closer to God. One parishioner noted: "I have felt the human warmth that the priests, with their faith and teachings, manage to transmit and reaffirm in those of us who attend." Respondents also felt that the diversity and welcoming community of kind parishioners,

as well as activities and ministries available at the church, were instrumental in deepening their faith. The *When You Pray* book and *The Little Prayer* books were also mentioned as great resources to parishioners.

When asked of the gifts and charisms of their parish, St. Mary respondents noted that parishioners are joyful and culturally diverse. The parish is rich in prayer, music, and devotional life, while also sharing multiple cultural traditions. In answering what was something to be proud of at St. Mary: "I feel at home here," seems to summarize the many comments shared by parishioners. The 24/7 access to the church and chapel, exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and plenty of confession opportunities were also mentioned by many. Parishioners appreciate a supportive community, fellowship and the many ways to get involved in the church. In addition, many mentioned the dedication of our two priests and that they love their sermons. The homilies of both priests are relatable, and "Silence means no!" sinks in.

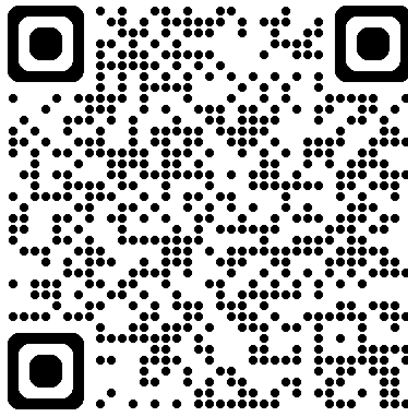
### ***St. Cecilia Catholic Church – Stanwood***

Parishioners at St. Cecilia noted that the welcoming nature of their community, especially to newcomers, has made them feel closer to God. One person expressed that “the love and welcoming community has been life changing.” Many St. Cecilia parishioners also spoke of the positive spiritual impact of their devotion to service in the parish. Respondents wrote that it helped to strengthen their faith, the more involved they were in ministries like the Women’s Guild, Eucharistic Ministry, faith formation, the Knights of Columbus, and St. Vincent de Paul. The accessibility of Mass and confession was also noted by many respondents. One parishioner wrote, “Since I have returned to regular confession, Mass, and increased my daily prayer I have felt a peace and closeness to God and my fellow parishioners.”

Some of the different gifts and charisms that St. Cecilia parishioners felt were characteristic of their parish included the community’s strong devotion to the Rosary and the Eucharist, including through the homebound ministry. Many also noted the spirit of reverence and faithfulness among parishioners as a charism of their parish. The extensive history of Carmelite clergy at St. Cecilia has instilled a Carmelite spirituality that still lives on in parishioners today even with the Carmelites no longer present. When asked what stands out to them as something to be proud of, many St. Cecilia parishioners spoke of their determination to align their will with God’s will through the challenges presented with becoming a parish family.

## ***Conclusion***

The results of the “What are our gifts?” survey responses indicate that our community deeply values access to the sacrament of confession, the Eucharist, connection with one another, friendship, hospitality, and service. Parishioners strive to continue their journey growing in faith and becoming closer to God through their dedicated participation and involvement in their parishes. Thank you for taking the time to respond to the “What are our gifts?” survey and for your continued prayers for our parish family.



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