

Auburn-N. Cayuga Ministry Survey Comments

Fall 2017

Note: Negative comments referring to particular individuals have been deleted. They have been shared with the appropriate pastor for his own use as well as, where appropriate, to share with those he supervises.

Holy Family

- Our parish needs to invite new, young families as many of our members are growing older
- Homilies are a little too long with too many points covered. I can't retain all.
- Father John Gathenya is a very good shepherd to the parishioners of Holy Family. He stresses the importance of community and sharing our faith with each other. He is approachable to people of all ages...the children love him! He is also a great confessor. We are blessed to have him.
- Pastor is very kind and considerate of his people. Always has time for someone when it is needed. A very competent leader of his flock.
- Homilies should be limited to 7-10 min. on Sat. & Sun. Weekly music selections are repetitious
- CMA is too high; we need better communication regarding financial matters and current projects.
- Parish is very welcoming of new parishioners. Pastor is always ready to lend a helping hand and is very accommodating.
- Shorten the sermons [5 minutes at most] and perhaps more parishioners would feel involved.
- When I leave Mass, I do experience a sense of peace in my heart and a simple message that I can live out during the week.
- Holy Family has been my parish for 40+ years. The people are welcoming and I'm proud to be a member of the Mother Church of Auburn.
- I like my church and my priest. It is nice to see some dedicated, engaged families with young children. It is wonderful to see the children of all ages participate in the Liturgy of the Word. I also enjoy seeing the children of John Paul II Academy attend mass at Holy Family on Fridays.
- Holy Family church does a great job of keeping tradition through various community building activities. They are enjoyed by all. Father John is the most welcoming priest in Auburn and is a great Shepherd for the sacrament of reconciliation.
- Some of the questions in the survey are quite vague.
- Would love to see more participation in the choir at Holy Family.
- WORD: 4. Our churches need to attract more youth. 12. Tyburn should be included in the bulletin's directory right on the front page along with St. Joseph's school. Completed survey through Sacred Heart but attend Mass throughout City of Auburn.
- Many of the problems our parish faces are not within the control of the parish. The Church as a whole is losing people to cynicism and scandals. Too many have lost trust in the Catholic Church.
- I think my Priest is doing a wonderful job

- We have the best Priest.
- None
- Let pastoral councils be deliberative rather than consultative. It is OUR parish long before and long after the clergy are appointed. We pay the bills, we should have a bigger role in decision MAKING!
- We are blessed to have Father John as our Pastor. He is incredible in his Homilies and knowledge. It seems, even that Holy Family is the Mother Church of Auburn, we feel like we are treated second to St. Mary's.
- The Catholic Schools in our community, St. Joseph and Tyburn Academy offer a much needed alternative to the public school and nurture the individual student's spiritual growth as well as academic growth in a very peaceful and joyful environment.
- The diocese has too much control over the decision making of the individual parishes.
- The parish will never be the same without Father Shaw!

Our Lady of the Snow – St. Joseph

- Many of the questions were written awkwardly in this survey. I often wanted to give 2 different responses to the same question. -"Not Applicable" would have been a better choice than "Don't Know" for a number of questions -I felt very saddened when I finished this survey and realized that this is the most negative survey about our parish/church/or even religion in general, that I have ever given.
- I would love to know if some of the above are being done as we never hear. Our bulletins are not fulfilling the need to know, they are very vague compared to other churches we have visited. We have been attending another church in Auburn to get our spiritual fulfillment for the week, more so than attending our own parish.
- OLS is a small parish but outreach is needed to survive. I would welcome the continuation of Small Christian Communities like we did some 10 years ago.
- Even though Our Lady of the Snow is one parish with 3 churches, many parishioners of the 3 churches seem to still think of their own church singularly.
- The ministry of our parish is limited by the age of parishioners.
- Mass never ever starts on time.
- It is obvious that our parish is, somewhat, in limbo. We have lost many former members, many through death, but many due to the decline in offerings our church once had. Religious education appears to have been a key piece in the maintenance of our population. As with many parishes, we carry an aging population with few signs of future generations. I do feel, as a parish, we are often neglected by our diocese. I am aware of the concerns of embezzlement and other such ills, but I feel that we are being asked to support ourselves, yet not have the ability to make financial decisions without approval from entities with little or no understanding of our parish. There have been hurt feelings and a growing feeling of distrust in the decisions made by those in higher places. We have been blessed with a priest who is knowledgeable and well read in both scripture and more contemporary writing. He is obedient to the bishop. Trying to balance things has been challenging and often times unsuccessful. It has been difficult to understand some of the decisions the DOR has doled out.

- Survey reflects our home parish; attending church in Auburn now we have found it to be much more positive and responsive to our needs.
- Was invited by a member of another religion to attend a shower for refugees in the Syracuse area. The food was good. Met the minister, visited with people I knew outside of their church. I thought this was a great idea especially during those down times of winter. It was actually the first time I met my friends' fellow church members and the minister.
- Lack of priests have contributed to the decline of the Catholic Faith in this area

Our Lady of the Snow – St. John

- The church community is welcoming.
- The local parishes are extremely important to our aging family. Need to keep our local churches open to retain our parishioners
- Any thoughts about obtaining Priests from other countries?
- Very important to work on the vocations to the Priesthood. I see little to no efforts to help save our church. Please keep the individual churches open!

Our Lady of the Snow – St. Patrick

- While all of these may be important, the most important problem we have is no religious ed program. We had a very viable program with volunteers. Several were teachers by profession. We had a Christmas pageant involving the younger children. We had a St. Patrick's breakfast and Irish music, people on committees had some say in decisions.
- Well you asked for it...first of all this site (not the survey) only acknowledges Weedsport's existence. OLS would represent the worship sites that exist more appropriately. This omission does a dis-service to all in northern Cayuga county. The questions in this survey are poorly answered by a word or two. It does not reflect the heart of our parish. Our parish has diminished over the last 6 years. Our once vibrant rel. ed. programs are gone, then replaced with a selective half-baked program. Our current program is not even a hint of what existed. We asked for more training for Eucharistic ministers and readers for masses. After 2 years we are still waiting. Many envelopes were not being used because many families left to get religious education for their children elsewhere. To their credit they did not wait for the half-baked program. Our giving is also down. The rest of the story... many took issue with how recommendations and input from parish groups were blatantly ignored. So our attendance is lousy, funds are down, in short things do not look good in OLS. I am using this forum because it is the option have to talk to the committee. An easy to find phone number would be my choice of connection. I feel our parish is being presented in the worst possible light. At least based on what I've been told. St.Pat's has been my church for a long time. There are great people but you wouldn't know that from the numbers or this survey. Also tried to read the minutes. I could not get to them. Admittedly, I am not well versed in this computer "communication". Connie Colonnese
- Our Lady of the Snow does not have any identifiable lay leaders. The future of any church is its young people. We have very few and no programs to bring them "into the fold"
- The future of our parish is with our children. Religious Ed. and family centered programs need to be the focus. Religious Ed needs to be available at each church

- St. Pat's church community has always taken care of our church with volunteers. At a time of sickness, surgery or loss, the parishioners provide meals, transportation & loving support. We are active in all phases of charity. Until 6 years ago we had an active Religious Ed. program. We always had qualified teachers for all grades. When our Religious Ed. classes were discontinued the families with children left for other parishes. We lost a large number of parishioners at that time. Our children were our future. Children looked forward to being in the annual Xmas play. This was one of the first of St. Pat's traditions that were discontinued. 6 years ago we had up to 30 children that would be singing at mass and who were in the Xmas play. The young families that wish to have their babies baptized are required to attend mass a month plus before the child is baptized. This is very difficult for a mother who may be married to a non-Catholic. The pressure is great on them and they either put off Baptism or not at all. It is so sad knowing there are children 2 and 3 yrs. old that are not Baptized for this reason.;
- For some time now, I have been concerned about the lack of a formal Religious Ed Program in our Parish. Chrissy is a wonderful person and I know she is trying to get folks involved in online program. However, I have heard from parents that they find this program lacking. Between 5-8 years ago, St. Patrick's had an active, formal Religious Ed Program for kids in grades K-8. This program was under the Directorship of the Religious Ed. Coordinator of Northern Cayuga Cluster. The classes were held on Sunday mornings after mass. I was a Catechist in the program for over 25 years and as I recall we had an average 20-30 kids enrolled each year with somewhere between 5-10 in the annual 1st Communion Class. Sometime in the past 5-8 years or so, this program disappeared. I am not certain what happened. When asked, the Parishioners and Catechists were told the program was being "revamped" and would begin in the future. The formal program never returned. It seemed to take quite a bit of time before an alternative program was offered. Meanwhile Catechists who offered to continue teaching were turned away. Also I began to notice several families with children who were enrolled were no longer attending Mass at St. Patrick's. They had moved to other parishes where a program was given. I am aware that families at St. Pat's can now enrolled in parent directed, on-line Religious Ed. Classes. I am pleased that these classes require parents to be involved but those who have tried it find it lacking, one reason being that there is no interaction with other children. Currently, St. Pat's barely has any families with school age children attending Sunday Mass. Last year there was one child for 1st Communion. Children are our future is a cliché but it is true and sadly we have lost our children. Our pews are way too empty. We are a church of old folks. Some blame faithless Catholics but I also blame us as the Church. We dropped the ball on serving our children and now are suffering the consequences. How can we claim to be working and praying for vocations when we don't even offer a viable Religious Ed. to our children.
- Our parish has deteriorated, in participation, in active members, in the fact there is no religious education. There is nothing to offer young families, a great loss.
- Fr. Darling is an excellent homilist in my opinion. He does the best he can. He is limited by age and health. I feel that the diocese has taken over the direction of the parish and left no local decision making. I do recognize the many good things the diocese has accomplished. ex: computerizing the cemetery, investment of parish funds and centralizing office functions. This parish is an aging, declining in numbers parish. I don't know what its future is. If St. Patrick's in Cato is closed I doubt that at age 77 I'm going to travel very far to church. Wolcott/Red Creek is a viable option for me.

- Several questions are not representative of how the parish truly operates. This is an autocratic organization. When fewer folks are in attendance at mass, more communication is needed to enhance the input of the parish.
- Would like to have religion class back and more children welcomed back into the parish.

Sacred Heart

- WORSHIP: 6. Too old fashioned. I like the Penance Services the most-not one on one. Update Sermons to everyday living from Bible readings
- WORSHIP: 4. Miss Penance Service 6. needs to discuss present- not in today's ways.
- Survey was very poorly done. Repeat of questions, if I don't answer with the best possible answer then you already have your answer to the multiple questions you're asking. Which means any question without a top answer, needs improvement.
- My children went through religious training about 10 years ago - I was very disappointed - it was all geared towards parents - it was all taught above my kids and they got little out of it. Religious studies may have changed but when my kids attended it was not helpful for them.
- One suggestion: Is there any way we could encourage those who attend mass to not depart after communion and stay for the whole Mass! I don't do surveys without signing my name. Ellen DelloStritto
- What is most troubling to me is that people leave after communion which, in my opinion, shows a lack of respect for Father Mike. What has happened to the practice of saying three Hail Mary's after Mass for the next person who has passed. I think the issue needs to be addressed to remind people and maybe they will stay a few extra minutes and show some respect.
- Fewer and fewer people come to church. I think the church would be revitalized if priests could marry and women be ordained.
- Parishes should be CLOSED NOT COMBINED AND SERVED INDIVIDUALLY. Many fewer churches in Auburn would make people come together, worship together and have a common bond. Combining has poor effects on all parishioners.
- The parishioners of Sacred Heart Church are very giving and supportive towards important needs such as hurricane relief services, other disasters. I feel the people should be more welcoming to new parishioners of our church because this gives newcomers the impression that Sacred Heart is a caring and loving parish. Also the parishioners of Sacred Heart should not "talk" during Mass especially after communion. Many people seem to have the mindset that mass is over and this is not true. If there is a way a message could get out to the community without "offending" anyone this will be a plus.
- I attend mass at a few churches, Sacred Heart and our Lady of the Snow. I enjoy them both.
- I would like to see specific mention during the mass of current issues such as 1. the disaster in Puerto Rico and the need for a much greater response from the leader of our country. 2. the outrageous attempt to exclude immigrants and any individuals of a specific faith or ethnicity entrance & welcome to our country. 3. the exclusion of the poor, the disabled and the disadvantaged from adequate healthcare. I believe these are Christian issues and should be addressed directly and often during Sunday Mass.
- Fr. Mike is fantastic.

- Sacred Heart is an active, vital parish. I would be interested in knowing just what the Priest, Deacon, and lay pastoral associate do other than Mass on Sunday. This is an area where more lay leadership could be involved and Sacred Heart is an active, vital Parish. It would be helpful if the council would be more transparent. It may be helpful if opportunities for lay participation were published and training, if necessary, made known.
- I love being a part of the Sacred Heart community and hope that more parishioners can take a more active role in help with the various ministries.
- Inclusive and welcoming community. Diocese' policies toward women - as clergy, parish managers, and spiritual guides - are disrespectful and thoroughly misguided.
- I find it hard to support Tyburn when they advertise that math and science teachers need not be certified. As a retired teacher, I know that the Regents is difficult enough with a certified teacher.
- Sacred Heart Parish in Auburn, NY is my parish and my answers are based on my experience.

St. Ann

- WORD:1 Too "Mainstream" not enough "Outside the box." 4. Very few young people. 11. as is John Paul II Academy. All Catholic Schools should be equally supported. Too much goes to select few. WORSHIP: 1. Excellent Homilies but Mass ritual is somewhat lacking in innovation. SERVICE: 9. Most in need of improvement. The concept that Christianity is the best path is more archaic than it ever was. Jesus said do as he did; never said to create a religion or that other spiritual paths were not as good.
- Do not mandate churches purchase the Catholic Courier and have envelopes printed by diocese
- WORSHIP- 1. St. Ann's too loud before Mass 4. Can we have group Reconciliation like churches do before Easter for Penitential Service. COMMUNITY 1. Maybe have greeters at doors before Mass.
- Fr. Brown is spiritual, kind and says a beautiful Mass and homily.

St. Alphonsus

- Why are able and healthy priests forced to retire at an early age?
- It takes two to tango. When staff and volunteers are stretched thin, the parishioners should realize they also have a duty to get involved, offer solutions, be the initiators, etc.
- More support for the older members of our parish.
- Sometimes the music used at mass is unfamiliar to the congregation. The organist should do more teaching of how to sing new hymns so the participation will increase.
- Wish there was a mass later than 4 or 5 pm on Saturdays.
- I find myself attending weekly mass at other parishes as I am not getting what I call "the message". The homilies are not pertinent to today's world. There is not "take away" message & are way too long. I recently read The Dynamic Catholic and the author clearly states that after 7 or 8 minutes you lose people's attention. And the book states that the 2 reasons people go to mass are for the homily & the music & if either of these is done poorly then folks stay home. I continue to volunteer at my parish for both bingo & counting & continue to contribute. People

like to be recognized. I have submitted a couple of suggestions but feel that was a wasted effort. In general, I feel the church needs to listen to the people since it is the people's church and the pastors do not OWN the church. I am not certain how long it will be before I join the church I normally attend on Sundays but suspect it won't be long. My son's family left our parish since the needs of their children were not being met. I am happy to have the opportunity to voice my feelings.

- I wish they didn't have the idea of peace be with you. Shaking of the hands causes germs from people who are sick. I don't do it at all. I have been sick one too many times, and I'm not about to get sick all over again. It would be nice if they cut that right out
- I'm not sure why the parish enrollment has decreased.
- I feel Father is doing a wonderful job at St. Alphonsus . We are hoping he stays with the parish for many years to come.
- Need better Staff.
- STOP running out of hosts during communion and running out of wine. It seems very embarrassing.
- Many new groups and programs have begun recently, exciting.
- Youth groups are done very well in many Protestant churches. The kids love coming and build a sense of community with their peers. I think the Catholic Church could benefit from looking at churches that are growing and hear what people want/need while not modifying the true Catholic beliefs.

Ss. Mary & Martha – St. Francis

- Many of the areas listed I am not really aware of how the parish is performing. As a senior citizen and my children and grand children do not live in this area I have not had an opportunity to experience how the parish handles area concerning the youth. I just know I do not see many young people in our church.
- Recommend one Sunday morning mass at 9 am due to limited priest and poor mass attendance with the 2 masses we currently have. Music needs to be a blend of traditional and contemporary. People do not sing when the music does not touch their hearts.
- In order to be relevant to younger people our churches' websites need to be clear and well organized. Money should be invested in this. I would really love if at least one church in Auburn offered confession on a week night. There are times I would like to go but it's very hard on a Saturday. We need to have more outreach to lapsed Catholics. We need to reach out to parents after baptism. Need to reach out to people at Christmas and Easter masses. I think offering a small book or pamphlet like "A Minute in the Church" on these holidays to each family and asking that they read it and then pass onto another family member with questions would be helpful. We need to find ways to engage the population under the age of 50. We have a large Latino population in our county due to farmworkers. We need to be reaching out to these people and offering rides to mass on a weekly basis.
- I am happy with my parish, but i am truly unaware of how weddings and funerals are celebrated, as some of these questions haven't pertained to me.
- I believe all of the parishes and priests should have more involvement in St. Joseph School. The diocese should allow community members to help the school thrive instead of not taking

advantage of local community members who want to help the school. The diocese holds their control of the school too close to their chest and I am afraid the school cannot survive this way. Please find us nuns or priests to help run the school!!

- Homilies sometimes hard to understand. Music: Does not promote participation when young girls sing.
- Tyburn Academy is a Catholic Institution in Auburn and should have representation on the Pastoral Planning Group.
- Our church is very well run with a lot of extra opportunities to participate in rosaries outdoor, special masses for St. Perigrine, Our Lady of Fatima, holy hours, and all feast day ceremonies very fervent and holy like Easter and Christmas. Many opportunities to pray and get closer to our Lord.
- It must be hard for our religious leaders to get to know and spend time with parishioners with their full schedules. I know them because I'm involved with several ministries. But those who are only able to attend weekly mass long for the parish priest of yesterday.

Ss. Mary & Martha – St. Hyacinth

- We have no CYO concession stand now because we have to count and recount all that we sell. This is volunteer work; we're not getting paid. Have mass at our church even if it's only one...tired of switching
- St. Hyacinth - the kneelers are noisy and create disturbances and distraction
- I attended Catholic School and so did our daughter. I feel that because we have not invested in providing priests and nuns in our Catholic Schools and making school affordable, we have been steadily losing parishioners. Young children need structure and discipline. We should be spending more money to get more dedicated priests and nuns to keep our schools open. We should not be wasting money on paying people to figure out how to close down the schools and churches our parents built and we now support. We should not be hiring outside auditors who charge hundreds of dollars every time they come. We should also be able to have those who become priests from our area stay in our area. The church has become more of a business. We were better off when churches were each on their own. The money we spend on CMA would be better spent on our own local church. We don't need films and brochures explaining our religion. It should show by our actions, by more beautiful services like 40 hours devotion where in the past the church was full. Let's get back to basics.
- 1. Sometimes new volunteers are intimidated by other members, afraid they will say something wrong if they ask a question or want to be involved. No volunteer should ever be turned away and not feel uncomfortable that they might not know the right protocol. 2. At other parishes across the different states the ushers always at the back of the church welcome parishioners, visitors, and always make you feel at home. Sometimes around here certain people will talk to you and other people ignore you. That is not the Christian Spirit.
- With the \$6.55 million dollars from the CMA our top priority should be getting more priests. Closing schools and parishes is not the remedy. You only lose children and adults.
- I pray for all of you on the planning group team. Please work for all of us in the Auburn Catholic community so NO church is closed.
- I would like to see more youth and music programs offered.

- How come the Catholic School of Tyburn Academy is not involved in pastoral planning. St Joseph Catholic School is involved.
- WOULD LIKE OUR PAST FAVORITE HYMNS AND POLISH HYMNS
- More resources and time devoted to families... parents with young kids, children, teens and young adults. They are the future. Put some money, resources and staff there. Make the parish a welcome place for them instead of the old people complaining about them. Have a family Mass advertised at a specific time each week held at a parish. Let's help young families by supporting them with programs and helping them find community.

St. Mary

- I'm not the best with multiple choice surveys as my thoughts/concerns/ideas cannot be expressed as to why I chose what I did. Throughout this survey, I tried to focus on what I truly believe all churches and communities need as members live on. First, we need members to carry our faith on. It seems like so many people are not bringing the youth to Mass and are not focusing on our youth, when our youth are the future of our faith. In this survey, I noticed 2 questions about Catholic Education in Auburn...one for St. Joseph School and one for Tyburn Academy. I wish more was done to emphasize the importance of Catholic Education and the values it gives our youth, especially in today's world. Without our youth, without emphasizing our faith and teaching our youth, our faith community will continue to dwindle and I fear what can happen as a result. Please, emphasize Catholic Education in Auburn. I see St. Joseph School is a member of this committee. Please think about Tyburn Academy and perhaps make them a member of this committee as well. I understand they fall in a different category with the diocese, but I firmly believe St. Joseph School and Tyburn Academy should be one of the top priorities in this realignment process. I've supported both schools, and I think it's imperative that everyone works together to make sure both are successful. If either closes, the other will close soon after (look at recent trends), and I fear what that will do to our faith community as a whole. Speaking of our youth, I see there is some interest in a new youth group forming. I have seen some of their overall objectives and I believe this is another step in the right direction for the youth in our community. A few other topics that I think would help our faith community. We know that sadly, many marriages end in divorce. I'd love for there to be more opportunities for married couples to grow in their marriage and to provide spiritual counseling for couples, a place to address issues many have in marriage so folks don't feel as if they are the only couple experiencing these issues. Perhaps it can be a place or group to go to that addresses many of the issues and helps folks before they reach the point of considering divorce. I know there are Marriage Encounter Weekends, I know there are Retroville weekends, but, I really think our faith community would benefit from a group or community that formed and met every so often to address these needs. Last, I've heard folks talk about Mass in general, and I think there is a need to be simple too. Our churches are beautiful and the music is extravagant, but somewhere along the way we have lost some of the beauty of simplicity. Maybe we can have some of the music be the music we all grew up on, instead of always having new music that folks do not know. Or, maybe we can have some incense in Mass, but sometimes folks fill up on the amount that we've had and can't focus on the Mass because they are having trouble breathing. That's not to criticize the beauty of it all, but to think about the beauty in simplicity too. I love our church, our pastor, our faith community, but I've heard some folks feel more at one with their faith in a simplistic manner with music they can relate to.

- more missions
- Too much talking in Church; no variety of times for confessions
- I have been a member of St Mary's parish all my life. I have received all the sacraments from baptism to matrimony (49 1/2 years) In closing, I have never had a reason to leave this wonderful parish of ours.
- familiarity with parishioners
- too much music anonymity-Priests don't know people by name
- don't care for the Latin music
- By every metric, since 1955 the church is failing. No one would run a business like this, yet church leaders think it is okay.
- Sometimes while at mass people have no respect for someone sitting in quiet prayer. People shouldn't have to be told to be quiet. I was brought up to not speak in church about outside happenings and it's very troubling to see such rude behavior even out of older adults who should know better.
- Reconciliation- a variety of times would be helpful. More opportunities for single parents and senior citizens.
- I love St. Mary's in Auburn and think all do a fine job. There are just a couple of areas which could be looked at for change. All the personnel here are wonderful, helpful and sincere. We are blessed to have them. Our church is beautiful thanks to dedicated pastors keeping on top of things. St. Mary's is a big part of my life. Kathleen
- There is a need to bring the children, teens, young adults more into the church. Music needs to more uplifting and updated to draw in the younger people.
- Need to get young people involved. Bring back e.g. the Children's Mass, young musicians, involvement w/ parish activities etc.
- Make all Catholic churches standardized. Some churches stand after Lamb of God, some kneel. Some raise their arms during Our Father prayer and some do not. These are just two examples. There are many, many more. There seems to be no standardization at all in the diocese. If we are all Catholics, we should be able to go to any Catholic church in the area or in the United States or the world for that matter and have the exact same Mass. We can't even accomplish that in Auburn so I can't imagine what the rest of the diocese does. Masses in other parts of the country do different things than we do here. WHY are we all not standardized?
- What is parish doing to evangelize our youth and build the church for the future?
- To have continued welcome and inclusion to all who worship at St Mary's
- Just a quick thank you to Father Lioi and Father Eric for leading our parish. :-)
- I believe a much greater effort needs to be made to involve the parishes in the promotion of Catholic education.
- Music should be softer prior to mass. Organ drowns out choir
- Organ at St. Mary's sounds beautiful but is being played way too loud. The choir is being drowned out!
- Music should not be a priority, but spirituality and participation in prayers (AND SONGS) must be sponsored and enhanced.

- The tabernacle should always be kept in the center of the altar as he should be kept in the center of our lives. The sacrament of regular and frequent confession should be urged. The sacrament of confession should be held on more days than just Saturday or one day per week.
- What do we do for single adults? I believe the Crucifix is frightening to children.
- There is a need for a more upbeat and positive selection of music and hymns to be used before, during and after we celebrate Mass. Right now it is very serious and downbeat. Lighter more positive music would provide an uplifting experience, rather than a feeling of the "Phantom of the Opera" atmosphere.
- Catholic schools HAVE to be given priority over keeping parishes open. If we do not invest in Catholic education then the churches will continue to decline.
- I think we need to do a better job in our evangelization efforts. We need to find more effective ways to make people realize that we still need God in the twenty first century.
- Overall good job but always have to be vigilant to needs
- Should we lose a priest, it is difficult to imagine how any of the foregoing questions can be improved. Vocations will not increase without individual encouragement of the young by our priests, times of confessions will necessarily be reduced beyond their already minimal levels, and preaching will not improve or hold to its currently-high level. Pastors want to be with and care for each sheep of their flock, but when there is one shepherd for two thousand sheep, he cannot possibly be expected to know their names, let alone care for each one. Elimination of waste and expenses at the diocesan level would easily provide for the support of many new priests, who could then labor in the vineyards and save the world in a way that diocesan finance czars, lawyers, and bureaucrats simply do not.
- Overall St Mary's is a great parish with wonderful leadership. It is a catch all for the region. Parishioners come from over 15 miles away. It is difficult to bring them into the active life of the parish. Sadly our support for children is lacking. We need to find ways to make Masses more appealing and to build relationships between parishioners. I've attended Masses for 13 years, rarely does anyone speak to me. I do serve on committees. I think the dinners at the Knights of Columbus are a great start to build relationships and build bridges. We have a long way to go.