

Parish Self-Assessment Report
We Walk by Faith

Catholic Church of St Mark
1505 Kempsville Road
Virginia Beach, VA. 23464

Parish Contact Person—Roberta Bernardini, Parish Council Chair
June, 2008

Mission Statement

Rooted in the Word
Nourished by the Sacraments
Guided by the Holy Spirit
We the people of St Mark, are united in our desire
To serve those who are in need, to give of our gifts and talents
To build the Kingdom of God by imaging Jesus Christ

I. INTRODUCTION

The Church of Saint Mark was established in Virginia Beach in May, 1978. The first phase of the building was dedicated in October, 1984 and the community worshipped in the Social Hall until the completion of the Church in May, 1992.

St Mark's is located in the Kempsville area of Virginia Beach, very close to the Chesapeake border. Of the 1392 registered families, 21% are residents of Chesapeake who worship at St Mark's because it is geographically closer than Prince of Peace or St. Stephen Martyr. This is largely a middle-income area with a significant military population, both active duty and retired. (The largest occupation group is military—15%) More homes are being built close by in Chesapeake which may impact on St. Mark over the next few years.

The Demographic information includes the following:

Registered families	1392
(Contributing families-Approx	500
Registered members	4588
Female	2366
Male	2222

Age Groups

Under 13	784 (17.09%)
13-18	371 (8.09%)
19-25	458 (9.98%)
26-45	1365 (29.75%)
46-65	1132 (24.67%)
65+	293 (6.93%)

Ethnicity

Asian	1200 (26.18%)
Black	72 (1.57%)
Hispanic	173 (3.77%)
White	2206 (48.08%)

Miscellaneous

Ministry involvement	914 (19.92%)
Non-Catholic	456 (9.96%)
Military (Inc retired)	736 (15.15%)

II. WORD

Strengths

- Christian Formation for children and youth offers a choice of programs so parents are able to choose an option that will work best for their family
- Adult Formation is varied and has lay involvement at both the planning and presentation levels
- Service is incorporated into formation through youth service projects, (ie Souper Bowl), Vacation Bible School leaders, Workcamp
- Strong leadership presence..Deacon in leadership role adds a dimension of respect

Needs

- Stronger participation in Adult Formation
- Better advertising and promotion of events
- Classroom space

III. WORSHIP

Strengths

- Strong sense of community resonates throughout the liturgical celebrations
- Liturgy Committee plans liturgies that enhance parishioners' worship of God
- Community actively participates in all aspects of liturgical Celebrations
- * Music selected and performed during liturgy is a vital part of the celebrations
- Large pool of ministers (Eucharist, Lectors, Ushers, Choir, Altar Servers) puts many different faces before the community and does not over tax the volunteers
- * Homilies are effectively communicating the Gospel message
- * Persons with disabilities are able to access and maneuver in the worship space and adjacent areas
- Active children's church ministry enhances the worship experience for younger children in the parish

Needs

- Evaluate how to ensure parishioners have the tools they need to foster daily prayer and devotion
- Actively solicit input from Filipino parishioners in matters of liturgy planning and liturgical celebrations

IV. COMMUNITY

Strengths

- The parish's liturgical celebrations take into account the culture of the various ethnic groups represented in the parish community
- The parish sponsors programs and activities for the purpose of building fellowship among parishioners
- St Mark has established a relationship with local non Catholic Christian denominations under the direction of the Pastor
- The parish has an emphasis on assisting the poor, home bound, elderly, and those who are sick
- The parish includes and welcomes ethnic minorities in the parish community
- The parish publishes bulletins and announcements at liturgies that provide sufficient information about our parish activities

Needs

- St Mark needs to put more emphasis on making new parishioners feel at home to include a tour of the facility and newcomer get acquainted functions
- The parishioners need to be more aware of the parish web site and the web site should be expanded to furnish more information

V. SERVICE

Strengths

- The current leadership group within the Justice & Peace Committee is unmatched in vision, energy and organizational skill
- The structure of the Committee provides continuity, sharing, recruitment, and support
- Financially, our outreach efforts are very well supported both by the parish budget and various fundraising activities
- Our outreach efforts for the poor for food, clothing and shelter are numerous and well supported by volunteers and by the pastor
- Our involvement is very high in community-wide programs involving respect for life and protection from abuse
- The entire parish makes exceptional efforts to contribute to the Haiti twinning program with Maison Fortune Orphanage
- Opportunities for youth service are well integrated with the Religious Formation program

Needs

- Recruit more parishioners who are interested in becoming active in wider state and national justice advocacy issues that lie outside of direct support to the local community
- Acquire resources to develop a program that attracts people to vocations in the priesthood and religious life

VI. PLANS FOR RENEWAL AND MEETING PARISH NEEDS

Word

- Continue to use all available ways to encourage adults in our parish to take a more active role in ongoing Christian formation through better publicity and awareness of the need for lifelong formation.
- Continue to maintain, recruit and form catechists through the PATHWAYS certification program to properly staff the variety of adult, youth and children formation efforts
- Explore options to create more effective formation classroom spaces for our children and youth as well as adults and accommodate multiple meeting requirements for committee and formation gatherings
- Continue to enhance our formation program for all age groups, especially our adults with a variety of formation options

Worship

- Ensure through verbal and written communication that all parents of young children understand how Children's Church functions, the age limits and supervision of the program
- Evaluate the needs of all parishioners concerning their daily prayer and special devotions and seek to provide the support needed to enhance this
- Encourage the Liturgy Committee to meet with Filipino representatives from the three masses in regards to liturgy planning and liturgical celebrations

Community

- Plan quarterly orientation / information sessions for new and/ or continuing parishioners with representatives from Parish Council, standing committees, ministries, religious formation, and staff
- Twice a year inform the parish through announcements and bulletin inserts a description of the St Mark web page and how to access it

Service

- Plan information sessions with key speakers on state, national and international justice advocacy issues.
- Provide a yearly vocation program at St Mark with the Diocesan representative for Vocations, a seminarian (from local community), newly ordained priest, other priests from the local community and from a religious order (St Gregory)

VII. Diocesan Support

- Forward successful models of adult formation process/ programs that make this focus area the most important aspect of our formation program
- Diocesan support of our planned vocation program by encouraging and/ or providing a seminarian, newly ordained priests, local priests, a Diocesan representative for vocations