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Parish

Mary's Home: Our Lady of Snows Catholic Church

Deanery

Southwest

A. ACTIVE STEWARDSHIP: What do we offer to foster a spirituality of stewardship through active stewardship?

We have many who volunteer of their time, talent, and treasurer to our parish. We strive to continue to encourage many more parishioners to get involved as they join the parish and to remain involve throughout various life stages. When an extreme need is identified, more parishioners tend to step up.

B. HOSPITALITY / WELCOMING: What do we offer to foster a spirituality of stewardship in our hospitality and welcoming of new parishioners?

Many in our church feel we are a welcoming community. Many new ideas including parish shirts and welcome cards/gifts for newly married, newly baptized, and those joining the parish. It would also be a positive to recognize these individuals in the church announcements, in addition to already having them in the bulletin.

C. DIVERSITY: What do we offer to foster a spirituality of stewardship with a diverse population?

Our parish demonstrates great stewardship with the diversity within our parish, which is primarily different ages of people. One area of improvement is to better understand the cultures of our international priests and how to best work together. We would also like to learn more about how to best welcome our foreign priests so that cultural differences do not hold back our communication or progress as a parish.

D. COMMUNICATIONS: What do we offer to foster a sense of co-responsibility, transparency and accountability through parish communications?

Our parish uses many different communication methods including email, social media, announcements and bulletins. The new Dioceses websites will be a very helpful tool as soon as it can be fully utilized with various information. The possibility of combining our parish bulletin with our neighboring parish of Sacred Heart would be a positive to keep parishioners more aware at both locations.

E. FORMATION FOR MEMBERS OF PARISH COUNCILS & COMMITTEES: What do we offer to foster a sense of co-responsibility, transparency and accountability for our parish councils and committees?

This may need to be an area of research to learn how other parishes determine these leadership positions and build people toward election to these councils/committees. It would also help to post all council and committee minutes for the parish to read.

F. FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY: What do we offer to foster a sense of co-responsibility, transparency and accountability around fiscal responsibility?

Our finance committee strives to serve our parish well. This could improve with minutes of their meetings being posted. Other areas of improvement include letting parishioners know more about electronic giving, how to sign up for envelopes, and bring back children's envelopes to encourage tithing from an early age. Another improvement area would be to have all families engaged in the parish picnic and one other fundraiser per year. Additional financial education for families and possibly a generic parish endowment would also assist families to give more easily to the parish.

G. SACRAMENTS: What do we offer to foster a personal experience of mercy at and during the celebration of sacraments in our parish?

Many of our sacraments are great celebrations of all life stages. The parish strives to support each member no matter the occasion for joy or the occasion of loss. Some ways to continue to improve this area would include:

If baptisms are not occurring during Mass, it would be great to announce the family. The same for weddings.

Information for funerals needs to be more readily available to families during this difficult time.

Continual need to recruit teachers at school and teachers for PSR and confirmation classes.

RCIA has not occurred for a few years and information on the timeline needs to be communicated to parish members.

Need for additional opportunities for reconciliation (currently only Saturday at 3:30?). If possible, all OLOS, PSR, and confirmation students should have the opportunity for reconciliation two - three times per year. The Parish Penance service has been missed by parishioners and we hope it can be re-established soon.

H. HOLY ORDERS / CONSECRATED LIFE: What do we offer to foster a personal experience of mercy in the discernment of holy orders and religious life?

Our parish offers Totus Tuus to allow students to learn more about holy orders. We used to always pray for vocations and likely need to reinstate this practice. It would be a great opportunity to have our Diocesan vocations priest to come for weekend masses each year. Encourage vocations through our school and through our financial support of seminarians in the US and in dioceses across the globe, especially seminarians in India from Father Alex's diocese.

I. MARRIAGE: What do we offer to foster a personal experience of mercy within marriages?

Our parish communicates opportunities for various marriage prep and marriage enrichment opportunities in the bulletin. Our parish has trained marriage prep facilitators. There is more we could do to recognize newly married couples and to follow up with support.

J. WOUNDED MARRIAGES: What do we offer to foster a personal experience of mercy in troubled marriages?

Bulletin announcements for various opportunities within the Diocese. There may be interest in various support groups. This is an area we could use support from the Diocese.

K. CHILDREN, YOUTH, ELDERLY, SUFFERING: What do we offer to foster a personal experience of mercy for key segments of the parish, such as youth, Catholic schools, elderly, and those suffering?

Our parish thrives on our youth with an active parish school and a large PSR and confirmation classes. We strive to encourage youth and provide for their needs to experience events like NCYC. We could do more in this area as volunteers are often difficult to find to work with youth. One area of improvement could be in regular youth events that would include a short devotion and then some recreational activity and food as a way to get youth from across the community to our church.

Our Catholic School is the center of the town and a pride point for many in our parish and community.

While elderly are welcomed at our parish and checked on regularly, there is more that we could likely do in this area. Some past activities like cookie care packages or meal trains, need to be revived.

L. FACILITIES AND ENVIRONMENT: What do we offer to foster a personal experience of charity regarding facilities and environment?

Our parish has excellent facilities with a committee that takes care of a variety of needs, often without anyone knowing it. The broader community uses our facilities for a variety of events: bowling alley, playground (donated by Miller County Health Dept), pickleball courts. The playground was funded in part by the Miller County Health Department because of how much the community uses the facilities.

M. CARE OF CEMETERIES: How do we foster a personal experience of charity through our cemetery?

Our cemetery is a point of pride for our parish and community. The cemetery is well cared for with work days by the K of C and with parishioner care. The annual lighting of the cemetery for All Souls Day draws many to our cemetery, including non-parish members.

One point of improvement would be to include the seeding/straw as a part of the regular maintenance. With many people from out of town or with elderly spouses, it can be difficult for each individual to care for the plot. It would be another way our parish takes care of the suffering if this was something the family did not have to worry about.

N. DISASTER RESPONDER TEAMS: Does our parish have an active disaster responder team?

No

O. CATHOLIC CHARITIES: How do we foster a personal experience of charity through our relationship with Catholic Charities?

We do not have a specific relationship with Catholic Charities.

Has your parish pastoral plan changed?

No

Based on your parish's review, how can the Chancery help your parish in its pastoral work?

Please continue to offer Virtus and other online resources for trainings. Additional trainings for parish council and mass ministries would be greatly appreciated, especially if available through online, asynchronous methods.

The new youth director is great at engaging with parish leads.

The Chancery offers many services to parishes. How can we best educate members on these services? How do we best engage with Catholic Charities?

What guidance do you have for a Disaster Response team? We have many parish members who are active as volunteer firemen in our community who would be willing to serve, but we are unaware of this process.

Any assistance with additional visits from the Vocations Director to encourage parishioners to pray and give to seminarian development.