
**Discernment Report to Merge Our Lady of the Snows and
Saint Francis Xavier Catholic Churches**



Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who fled to thy protection, implored thy help, or sought thine intercession was left unaided.

Inspired by this confidence, I fly unto thee, O Virgin of virgins, my mother; to thee do I come, before thee I stand, sinful and sorrowful. O Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not my petitions, but in thy mercy hear and answer me.

Amen.

New Parish Name

Executive Building Committee Members

(est. 2016)

Fr. Miguel González

Bruce Bratrude

Jorge Calderilla

Dan Covello

Suzanne Cowan

Bill Dronen

Tracy Franklin

Tony Hillock

Pam Nicklas

Fernando Torres

Jeff Walsh

Julie Walsh

Don White

Vicki White

Donna Zukowski

Discernment Report Committee Members

Barb Agnew

Dan Covello

Suzanne Cowan

Vicki White

Donna Zukowski

Introduction

Father Miguel is our appointed Shepherd who has been sent out by his Master, the Bishop, anointed with his blessing and instructions to attend to the needs of two flocks of sheep. Upon Father Miguel's arrival, as our Shepherd, he has taken a complete survey of both flocks, however, to his surmise he discovers that both are on the edge of a precipice. The Shepherd finds that to properly care for both flocks his actions need to be urgent and prudent.

To avoid the precipice, the Shepherd has called together representatives from both flocks to pursue, as a united working group, to discern the needs of a new consolidated Parish and to propose an organized and efficient pathway to move forward.

But this is not a matter of just combining buildings, it also means comingling rich traditions and bringing forth the heritage of both Our Lady of the Snows and Saint Francis Xavier which includes statues, traditions, prayer gardens and The Meadows – especially The Meadows. Every effort will be made to honor the sacrifices of our fellow parishioners and to spread the wealth and solemnity of this creation to establish a new “Via Dolorosa”.

And so, as our flock prepares to move forward as a united parish may we continue to focus and rely on the strength of our teachings and spirituality as we honor our Catholic faith and strive to build a sustainable and vibrant House of God in the Upper Valley.

Mission Statement

We are the Mystical Body of Christ formed by two parishes, Our Lady of the Snows and St. Francis Xavier. By our baptism we are called to celebrate the presence of God through the Sacramental life of the church, most especially in the Sacrifice of the Lord, which brings us into greater communion with Him and one another. Together, as one family of faith, we continue along this journey of life with our attention fixed on the goal of reaching eternal life with God forever in heaven.

Goals and Objectives

- To encourage all faithful parishioners to become actively involved in this project and to be open to sharing their time, talent and treasure in equal measure to God's generosity throughout their lives
- To create a spiritual environment, both inside and out, that adheres to liturgical standards and provides appropriate and updated spaces to allow our entire community to come together to celebrate the sacraments
- To provide an inviting facility that encourages and enhances religious education for all ages so we may have the opportunity to grow and thrive in our faith
- To build a multi-functional social hall so that faithful parishioners can gather together to bond as a community to honor life's special and ordinary moments

Analysis and Feasibility of a New Parish and Its Needs

The parishioners of Our Lady of the Snows (OLS) and St. Francis Xavier (SFX) find themselves at a precipice in regard to remodeling and replacing their current church structures. When OLS was completed in 1991, it was always the hope to expand to include classrooms for faith formation and a larger social hall and kitchen for church events. For SFX, the reality is becoming more evident that the current aging building is alarmingly unsafe and grossly inaccessible in regard to ADA standards. Answering the call to say “yes” to the directive of combining into one parish offers a solution and opportunity to embrace the building dreams for both parishes. As one collective body we will have the opportunity to revitalize and enrich our ministries, consolidate our finances and minimize our ongoing expenses caring for just one structure. In addition it will allow our priest to establish a solid home base for which to manage and minister effectively and efficiently to his many church members and devoted parishioners.

At this time, OLS and SFX serves basically four communities as each currently has an English speaking and a Spanish speaking collective in each parish. These four groups strive to volunteer to insure that there is ample representation as Eucharistic Ministers, Lectors, altar servers, CCD teachers, parish council members, etc. but we find ourselves repeatedly with a shortage of coverage. Combined into one parish community, we believe we could provide a plentiful and steady stream of dynamic ministers to bring increased vibrancy and vitality to our existing volunteer groups.

At this time, as separate entities, both OLS and SFX have consistently been unable to make ends meet to cover the financial expenses required to maintain our current structures. We have limped along for some time now but in the face of our remodeling and building desires, we cannot ignore our financial reality which is unhealthy. In our current situation neither church should realistically pursue a lofty capital campaign when the current contributions are not sufficient or consistent to care for the upkeep of what we have now which is considerable. OLS has a church building, parking lot, two landscaped acres called The Meadows which includes the Stations of the Cross plus areas for meditation and church services to maintain. SFX has a church building, social hall/classroom, a 10-acre piece of rural property, prayer garden, the church office and Father’s home to care for. Each of these holdings require not only a volunteer labor force to support them but financial maintenance as well. Funneling our contributions into sustaining one church, one social hall/classroom, one kitchen, one parking lot, one Stations of the Cross meadow/prayer garden, one office and one home makes financial sense in light of our trending income deficits.

We all know the saying that “there’s no place like home” and with this in mind it is critical that we finally provide our priest with a stable base to allow him every opportunity to proactively carry out his ministry. We need to open our minds to the unfair toll that placement as Pastor at

OLS and SFX takes on one priest. The multitude of obligations required to serve our two parishes, and four distinct communities, is an uphill challenge that has worn down many good priests who have come to serve us. We must acknowledge that despite their very best efforts to minister fully, build relationships, be reliably present at scheduled events and be reachable in emergencies has been lacking to no fault of theirs; we have asked too much and must take a heartfelt look as to what is best for our assigned Pastor. One combined church would provide a dutiful priest with a home base to plan, prepare, schedule and minister at a higher level of efficiency, focus and spiritual leadership.

Overview of Cashmere and Leavenworth

Saint Francis Xavier is situated in Cashmere, Washington which is the acknowledged geographical center of the state. The church building is located on a main entrance street of the city and has a dominating view to the west of Mount Cashmere rising to 8,500 feet. Our Lady of the Snows is located in Leavenworth, Washington which is a renowned Bavarian tourist destination town. It is located in a beautiful mountain valley sitting at the base of the eastern slopes of the Cascade Mountains in west central Chelan County.

Both communities benefit from rich and valuable orchards, established and up-and-coming prominent businesses nurtured by the Columbia River which is harnessed to provide a surplus of electrical power. We are blessed with 300+ days of sunshine which beckons residents and non-residents alike. The easy year-round access and the short driving distances from the major population areas of Western Washington make our conjoined Upper Valley a popular destination for both short and long term visits. The natural surrounding beauty, the varying four season experience plus the multitude of outdoor recreational opportunities are a significant contributor to the quality of life in this region.

Parish Histories

The history of the Catholic faith in the Upper Valley dates back to the 1860's when missionary priests would travel over Blewett Pass to baptize, instruct and counsel the Indians and early settlers of the region. The late 1880's found a one room log mission named St. Francis Xavier in Cashmere as well as the refurbishing of an old rented school building along the railroad in Leavenworth which housed their Catholic Church which was dedicated to St. Joseph.

From these early days, the Catholics of Cashmere found the need, due a growing population, to celebrate services at various sites settling into its current high-steepled church in 1915. As the population continued to increase the needs also became greater for a larger church and a school which led to the purchase in 1959 of ten acres of property on Tigner Road. From 1962, when St. Francis Xavier was elevated to the status of an established parish, until the present

day the parishioners of Cashmere have steadfastly held onto the vision of a new church through decades of starts-and-stops. Recently, this parish has sold the Tigner Road property and the rectory and have used a partial amount of those funds to purchase our current holding of ten acres of property complete with a rectory on-site on Webster Way in Cashmere. Since purchasing this asset the hay fields have been maintained, a prayer garden has been erected, a major remodel has been completed to the interior of the rectory and an adjoining church office has been established.

Since the origin of St. Joseph's in Leavenworth, this church has known renovation and rebirth on multiple sites. In 1914 a bell was delivered by rail and has continued to be enshrined in the current church bell tower. The inspiration and early action for what is now the present church began between the years of 1976-1985 and continued to gain speed and possibility throughout the late 1980's until the dream was realized in 1991 to dedicate the new name of Our Lady of the Snows, as seemed fitting for a church nestled in the Cascade foothills.

Each individual church has enjoyed their years of glory and usefulness, however, at the current time each one is in dire need of replacement (St. Francis Xavier) and remodel (Our Lady of the Snows). Though we are a generous people we find ourselves in a situation where steady collections have not kept up with the needs of maintenance nor have they provided us with a substantial building fund with which to draw from for our current needs.

Community Membership

Drawing from the 2010 U.S. Census, Cashmere had a population of 3,063 which was an increase of 7.85% increase in a ten year span of time. The Non-Latino population consisted of 71.6 % of that total while those of Latino origin were quantified at 28.4%. The population by age included those aged 0 to 4 years equaling 213; 5 to 17 year as 579; 18 to 64 years as 1,780 and the population over 65 years old was 491. Females consisted of 51.49% of the population total while males made up 48.51%. The median family income listed in the 2010 U.S. Census was \$61,062 which was up from \$34,854 according to the 2000 U.S. Census.

In the 2010 U.S. Census, Leavenworth's population was counted as 1,965 which was a change of -5.66% from the 2000 Census of 2,083. The Non-Latino population was 89.16% of the total. The Latino population was 10.84%. In Leavenworth, the population by age categories was 0 to 4 was 106; 5 to 17 years was 286; 18 to 64 years was 1,182 and the age category of 65 and older was 391. The female population accounted for 53.3% while the male population was 46.67% of the total. The median household income was in the \$50,000 to \$74,999 range.

Parish Life and Traditions

For two small churches there is much activity each calendar year and it is not understated to project that as a combined parish we would become quite a dynamic force in celebrating our liturgy and sacraments, strengthening and building upon our established organizations, continuing to build our ministries and traditions, enriching our religious faith formation and coming together to get to know one another on a personable community level.

Liturgy

In both churches there is a core group of devoted people who serve as Eucharistic Ministers, lectors, altar servers, ushers, greeters, music leaders, accompanists and social hour hosts. Each parish community has a handful of Eucharistic Ministers who do double duty serving at Mass and also devoting time to visit the sick in their homes providing communion and spiritual comfort.

Without question, celebrating Mass is the pivotal gathering event that anchors our faith and our members. Throughout our respective building and remodeling journeys we have come to acknowledge the reality of what it takes for one priest to provide us with this basic but critical event and the chart below details his devoted service to us.

A WEEK IN THE LIFE OF THE PASTOR TO CELEBRATE MASS AT OLS AND SFX			
1	Sunday	8:30 a.m.	Mass at SFX - English
2		10:30 a.m.	Mass at OLS - English
3		12:30 p.m.	Mass at SFX - Spanish
4	Tuesday	8:30 a.m.	Mass at OLS - English
5		6:00 p.m.	Mass at SFX - Spanish
6	Wednesday	8:30 a.m.	Mass at SFX - English
7	Thursday	8:30 a.m.	Mass at OLS - English
8		6:00 p.m.	Mass at OLS - Spanish
9	Friday	9:30 a.m.	Mass at Cashmere Conv Ctr - English
10	Saturday	5:00 p.m.	Mass at OLS - English
11		7:00 p.m.	Mass at OLS - Spanish

As one can see, eleven Masses a week is a challenge for our Pastor and we also know that additional time and effort goes into preparing for and commuting back and forth to each Mass and obligation. And, of course, there are additional commitments each alternating week for responsibilities such as Saturday confessions and celebrations for the Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament services. And the demands only increase for the holy days and seasons of the year.

In addition to the weekly Masses, our Pastor must prep and plan to carry out a baptism, First Communion, Confirmation, Wedding or Quinceañera with behind the scenes work to provide lessons, counseling and preparation to those involved. Officiating at a funeral or rushing to anoint the sick are occasions where a priest is humbled to serve but must fit these obligations into an already jammed schedule.

We find ourselves year-after-year concerned about the health and well-being of every Pastor we have been assigned. Sadly we have become accustomed to witnessing each one become physically worn and weary, however, we haven't known what is in our power to do to assist them. As we merge churches into one Parish a reality emerges that surely a singular church with an on-site home and surrounding facilities would help ease the back-and-forth rush and contribute to the stability of a Pastor's physical health by providing a home and work base from which to rely upon each day.

Sacraments

As we strive to keep our Church alive and thriving it is important that we look at our blessed sacraments to gauge our progress. Therefore, listed below is the data that was acquired from the Diocese for the church membership statistics from 2007-2016 for OLS and SFX:

Our Lady of the Snows

	Registered Households	Infant Baptisms	Minor Baptisms	Adult Baptisms	First Communion	Confirmations	Marriages or Quinceañeras	Deaths	CCD Elementary	CCD High School
2016	132	12	0	0	2	0	7	3	21	0
2015	144	7	0	0	12	29	6	4	21	0
2014	220	12	6	3	11	10	5	4	15	10
2013	181	9	0	1	18	26	5	2	24	8
2012	225	12	1	1	18	26	5	3	0	0
2011	Data	for	this	year	was	not	available	from	the	Diocese
2010	230	13	0	0	16	23	2	2	48	22
2009	245	8	0	0	25	1	5	6	62	11
2008	270	11	0	0	22	14	2	3	60	20
2007	240	9	0	0	30	1	5	8	85	25

Saint Francis Xavier

	Registered Households	Infant Baptisms	Minor Baptisms	Adult Baptisms	First Communion	Confirmations	Marriages or Quinceañeras	Deaths	CCD Elementary	CCD High School
2016	128	26	1	2	25	30	4	0	26	30
2015	148	24	0	0	18	15	1	1	25	26
2014	132	35	3	0	31	31	4	7	50	20
2013	279	24	0	1	50	50	2	1	46	19
2012	340	24	2	0	53	0	0	3	0	0
2011	Data	for	this	year	was	not	available	from	the	Diocese
2010	350	24	0	0	26	17	3	2	56	18
2009	330	23	0	0	29	0	2	1	64	12
2008	390	30	0	0	9	9	2	6	60	20
2007	370	66	0	1	36	0	5	3	100	0

As one can see there has been a substantial reduction in membership, overall involvement in receiving the Sacraments and religious education enrollment.

Organizations

A driving force in both churches is our combined Knights of Columbus group which serves as a shining example of the power of collective forces. Through their monthly meetings and growing comradery these relentless individuals have an ongoing campaign that collects food for the poor and coats during the winter for needy children. They sponsor a tootsie roll fundraiser to donate the profits to two residential facilities for the intellectually disabled, The Dwelling Place and the Cornerstone Community. They also man the hospitality tent each year at the winter Special Olympics. These gentlemen raise money for scholarships for high school students by hosting monthly pancake breakfasts and provide funding to assist with wheelchair mobility devices. They donate their time to volunteer at Oktoberfest to raise money should it be to sponsor a seminarian, print pro-life material or provide much needed vestments for the altar servers. Yet another ministry, known as the Pilgrim Virgin, dedicates a member to serve as the connection point to exchange a holy statue every two weeks with varying members of the church who desire to house it in their home. The goal is to promote prayer, harmony and holiness in the home of the host. Our Knights are trailblazers in the development of the sacred space known as The Meadows and creators of a Catholic radio station in the Upper Valley.

Our Lady of the Snows provides a full Altar Society to care for the altar linens and the vestments of the priest whereas St. Francis Xavier has a handful of members that rotate and complete this work. The OLS group fundraises through an annual rummage sale to purchase vestments, linens, religious articles and books that are on display in the narthex. SFX has a devoted duo of two women who created, sustain and manage a fully stocked gift shop of religious wares and supplies. Within the gift shop is a lending library of religious books.

Through bi-monthly meetings the St. Clare's Comforters Quilt Guild at OLS makes quilts, hats and sells them to fundraise to support the Judith Underland Memorial and Louis Callahan Scholarship to present to an OLS member for a post-secondary study. OLS also has a devoted group of Rosary Makers who provide these handmade crafts to adorn the church showcases and to give the completed rosaries to the missions, military personnel and to those in prison. Another newly formed group, known as the Adores, has offered to commit four hours every Thursday for adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. OLS has created a ride share program providing transportation to church events for elderly members and a number of people have stepped forward to train, encourage and support the altar servers of both parishes. We promote our members to partake in the Cursillo retreat experience and have offered opportunities for follow-up by providing an Ultreya program.

Common Ministries

Both churches have Parish Councils that meet monthly to be overseers and to advise the Pastor on church matters. For many years both parishes have had very active building committees devoted to the projects that were desired for their respective church communities. Prayer chains are a common way for each church to notify and give thoughtful prayer to fellow parishioners in need. Our devoted group of money counters provide us the certainty of efficient and ethical money handling following Diocesan protocols and our steady and ready janitorial and maintenance volunteers over the years have helped to keep our respective churches functional and safe.

Traditions

One of the newer traditions for SFX has been the blockbuster February Romantic Dinner held now in Leavenworth at the Festhalle providing a dining and dancing evening of fun though mainly serving as a fundraiser through dinner ticket sales and raffle to raise money specifically for the church building fund.

In March the St. Clare's Comforters Quilt Guild hosts a Saint Patrick's Day corn beef feed and at this event announces the recipients of the scholarships that this group supports.

As Lent concludes each church holds indoor and outdoor bilingual opportunities to participate in the Stations of the Cross and on Good Friday each organizes a live dramatized portrayal processing through either the church grounds or city streets station-by-station. Lenten Soup Suppers are served after the Saturday masses at OLS and at SFX and after Easter Sunday Mass there is the longstanding tradition of holding an Easter egg hunt for the children on the school property that is located close by. OLS also provides an ecumenical sunrise service on Easter morning in The Meadows.

Our Hispanic members reserve nine days prior to Mother's Day to come together to pray, remember and honor each individual's mother and also, of course, our Blessed Virgin Mary.

At the closing of a school year, it is the tradition of both churches to recognize and honor the high school graduates with a special blessing and/or a gift. For those fortunate to have earned a Knights of Columbus scholarship those announcements are made at this time and parishioners wait with anticipation to hear the future plans of the teens from the parish.

Summer is the time for the annual potluck Parish picnic in The Meadows at OLS and a July rummage sale sponsored and carried out by the Altar Society.

During September, the Knights of Columbus have established the tradition of hosting a statewide event known as the National Day of Remembrance for Aborted Children. This solemn memorial in The Meadows is meant as a time to pause to pray for the sanctity of human life and to be enlightened by guest speakers on the topic of respect for life both young and old.

The fall brings to Leavenworth the annual Autumn Leaf Festival and the opportunity to outfit and work the Bratwurst Booth during this busy time. It is an "every hand on deck call" to bring this project to fruition as it has come to be a major fundraiser for OLS.

In addition to a liturgical celebration for All Soul's Day and for the month long celebration of Dia de los Muertos, members of the Hispanic community erect an altar in the church basement and adorn it with pictures, favored foods and cherished items of their lost love ones. Many also choose to mark these holy days and month by reciting the rosary each day.

In December the city of Leavenworth hosts the Christmas Tree Lighting Festival for the first three weeks and this is yet another opportunity for the Bratwurst Booth sales to be carried out. The Hispanic members of our communities hold near and dear the patron saint of Our Lady of Guadalupe and yearly find special ways to decorate and celebrate in her honor. They hold a pre-Christmas nine-day Posada and carry out the tradition of breaking bread ending in a feast for the presentation of the Lord. Each church commandeers a crew to assist in decorating their respective churches adorning each one in tasteful splendor to honor Christmas as a special opportunity for prayer and devotion. At SFX, during the life time of longstanding member, Art Cote, it became the tradition after the decorating work party to retire to the basement for conversation and hot buttered rum cocktails; it remains the tradition long after Art has passed. OLS provides a Giving Tree each year which allows one to pick a tag and provide a gift for a needy child of the community.

Religious Education

Despite the lack of adequate space, Cashmere had continued to offer consistent opportunities for students K-12 to learn about their faith. This has been possible over the years with the cooperation and assistance of the elementary school and Protestant church nearby for generously offering space for these sessions. Run predominately by a very small committed group of volunteers and parents, these students learn faith fundamentals and are encouraged to serve the church in the various ministries. Included in the teachings are the religious origins of many secular holidays aiming to provide faith formation emphasizing God's love. The churches combine their youth to partake in Vacation Bible School each summer.

The current cycle of preparing children for their First Communion runs two years with 2nd graders receiving the Sacrament. For Confirmation our adolescent members commit to a three year program and are confirmed around the age of 16. The First Communion classes are held separately in each parish while those readying for Confirmation combine together from each community.

A special event that our young members have experienced is that of a human rosary with each child holding a balloon, saying collective prayers and then culminating in the release of the balloon at the conclusion. Also for All Saints Day, our young people are encouraged to dress as a saint and explain to the group about the life and impact of the individual they have chosen to emulate.

For many years now, the SFX deacon has spearheaded an adult faith formation class that meets weekly to read, listen, learn and share the faith together as one eager and respectful group. This opportunity is the breeding group for anyone who desires RCIA training to formally learn about and join the Catholic faith. This devoted group has completed dedicated study to many of the Great Adventures series trainings including: Matthew: The King and His Kingdom, The Bible Timeline, Acts: The Spread of the Kingdom, Mary: A Biblical Walk with the Blessed Mother as well as an Old Testament study plus others focusing on the rosary, Advent and Lent.

We are anxious for a new opportunity coming to us during this upcoming Lent when our Pastor will be offering a weekly mission providing educational lessons to help us learn and deepen our faith.

Social and Fellowship

After Mass each week, both churches have some sort of confection and beverage to partake in while enjoying the comfort and comradery of known parishioners, new ones and

visitors. Over time many relationships have been explored and deepened during these simple and ordinary moments. Wherever two or more are gathered in His name . . .

Parish Financials

It is plain and painful to see in the tables below that our current financial picture paints an all too clear picture that despite our generosity we fall short of meeting our obligations to provide for standard operating and maintenance of our two churches. However, hope abides when taking into consideration our combined savings and assets.

Income and Expenses

Our Lady of the Snows

	Income	Expenses	Net gain/loss
July 2012 – June 2013	117,757.36	128,407.87	-10,650.51
July 2013 – June 2014	113,393.47	126,365.62	-12,972.15
July 2014 – June 2015	109,861.33	113,929.90	-4,068.57
July 2015 – June 2016	118,379.26	137,575.37	-19,196.11
July 2016 – December 2016	81,879.35	86,955.50	-5,076.15

Saint Francis Xavier

	Income	Expenses	Net gain/loss
July 2012 – June 2013	81,535.62	81,492.32	-9,568.33
July 2013 – June 2014	81,492.32	76,321.74	+5,170.58
July 2014 – June 2015	86,260.20	82,011.61	+4,248.59
July 2015 – June 2016	78,750.10	103,005.00	-24,254.90
July 2016 – December 2016	49,850.71	65,655.56	-15,804.85

Savings/Assets (as of 12/31/16)

Our Lady of the Snows

Building and Maintenance	53,852.33
Savings	349,041.88
Checking	18,242.95
Current Estimated Market Value of Assets	1,593,000.00
Sub Total	2,014,137.16
Less Restricted Funds	197,788.21
TOTAL	1,816,348.95

Saint Francis Xavier

Building Fund	522,972.17
Savings	27,782.17
Checking	-7,601.31
Current Estimate Market Value of Assets	869,000.00
Other	1,136.56
TOTAL	1,413,289.59

Special Collections (July 2015 to June 2016)

Our Lady of the Snows

Catholic Relief Services	84.87
Christmas Day Collection	1,049.08
Easter – Rice Bowl	239.65
Holy Land Donation	56.00
May Catholic Charities	8.03
Priest Retirement & Seminarian Education Collection	2,178.59
TOTAL	3,616.22

Saint Francis Xavier

Catholic Relief Services	166.60
Christmas Day Collection	278.25
Holy Land Donation	362.55
Priest Retirement & Seminarian Education Collection	1,378.46
TOTAL	2,185.86

Both OLS and SFX take an active role in stewardship by supporting the special collection schedule sent forth by the Diocese of Yakima each. The accumulated contributions for each parish were not available to coincide with the writing of this report.

Overall, the stated financial data and trends emphasize our Shephard's concern for our viability as two distinct Parishes. He has listened to members of each flock and the respective conversations in regard to planning and fundraising for a remodel of a current church and the creation of a new one and he does not find it wise or financially sound to continue separately. This prompts him to insist on urgent and prudent action to appease and satisfy the needs of his members.

Looking to the future financially when we have built one church and our duplicated expenses have been eliminated we will achieve an overall reduction in operating costs. The

chart below prepared by members of our combined Finance Committee is a preliminary visual and is derived using actual financial information from OLS and SFX from July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016.

The amounts used were configured by using different percentages for each expense category. For the two different insurance policies – 25% was used for Fire & Peril and 30% was used for Liability. For Repairs & Maintenance a rate of 50% was used estimating that these costs in the future would be minimal for a newly built facility. A property tax will not be applicable for a new church. For church supplies, 25% was used and for Utilities a 30% figure was utilized, however, a new church will be more efficient than either existing church building. And finally, Father’s auto expense came in at 70% knowing there would be a reduction in this cost due to the declining need to drive from church to church to carry out his many work duties.

Expense category	SFX Cost	OLS Cost	Total Cost	New Church Cost	Reduction in Cost
Insurance	4,766.09	5,189.11	9,955.2	7,385.12	2,670.08
Repairs & Maintenance	1,125.43	12,688.48	12,813.91	6,906.96	6,906.95
Property Taxes	4,212.89	0	4,212.89	0	4,212.89
Church Supplies	5,450.28	7,417.34	12,867.62	9,65.71	3,216.91
Church Utilities	3,606.67	9,451.93	13,058.60	9,141.95	3,917.55
Auto Expense	4,991.85	4,622.08	9,613.93	2,884.18	6,729.75
TOTAL	24,153.21	39,368.94	66,552.15	35,868.2	27,654.13

Analysis of Existing Parish Facilities

Our Lady of the Snows

From the time that the 2007 OLS Discernment Report was written under the leadership of Father Felipe Pulido, the assessed needs and priorities of the existing parish facilities have been re-evaluated several times. During Father Dan Dufner’s tenure, the Building Committee continued to meet and address the needs stated in the 2007 report. At the same time, the issue of possibly merging with St. Frances Xavier (SFX) was raised yet again. Although meetings were conducted and a survey soliciting views of OLS and SFX members took place, Father Dufner abstained from making a decision. Therefore, moving forward with any plans for OLS facilities were stalled.

With Father Alex Trejo’s arrival to OLS in August 2011, the Building Committee was again re-activated and at a minimum was charged with making improvements to the buildings

and grounds but additionally to look into the feasibility of providing additional space for classrooms, a fellowship hall, and a larger kitchen with increased service capacity, and more functional office space, including a private office for the Pastor.

It is also important to note that the Building Committee was only charged with considering the above spaces and not tasked with looking at any potential changes to the sanctuary. Also relevant from the 2007 report is that some facilities that were noted to be in good to excellent condition at that time have now since deteriorated.

Many of the areas referred to in the Discernment Report have remained unchanged and are in good working order to this day including: the Sanctuary, Chapel, Sacristy, Reconciliation Room, Narthex, fellowship/meeting hall, kitchen area and pantry, restrooms and downstairs storage areas.

The Parish office (180 sf), although still inadequate, was reconfigured with a redesigned layout complete with new office furniture and built-in storage providing for more functional space. The location of the office remains problematic though - located next to the chapel with a door opening directly into the Sanctuary. The lack of sound proofing does not provide the desired meditative environment in the Sanctuary and Chapel as office noise and conversations easily leak through the adjoining wall. In the fall of 2016, our Pastor replaced the awkward door with a window and has added better office signage. The reconfiguration, however, still does not provide for the desired privacy for the Pastor's office nor is there the guarantee for confidentiality in the nearby confessional which lacks adequate soundproofing.

The only space for a dedicated classroom (120 sf) is one designed originally as a storage area and for the last five years it has been used interchangeably as a classroom and for miscellaneous storage.

The upstairs area (645 sf) was designed and built as a studio apartment with a ¾ bath and kitchenette. Over the years it has been used when available as a small classroom but more so for overflowing clutter and catch-all storage. In the 2007 report, this space was reported to be seriously considered for a library and reference area, meeting place, and space for adult studies. Further it was envisioned that creating this "upper room" could provide significant storage capacity that could easily be incorporated to maximize open floor space. In 2012, Father Trejo authorized the Building Committee to clean out this space, design a usable storage area to make this space functional for group meetings such as the Knights of Columbus, the Quilt Guild, etc. The kitchenette area was expanded and improved with counter space and built-in cabinets and the bathroom was also upgraded. A conference table and moveable chairs were purchased. This area has become a viable, functional asset that the parish could not continue to regard as merely a storage destination. ADA access is still an issue and when necessary due to physical limitations meetings and classes must be moved to the downstairs fellowship hall.

The upstairs mechanical room (112 sf) is located over the Narthex behind the restored upstairs apartment. Upon remodel this whole area was cleansed so it is no longer used for storage, decreasing fire and safety hazards.

In 2012 Father Trejo authorized the paving of the parking lot including taking care of drainage problems. It was decided to eliminate the step-down from the concrete terrace at the front doors making them flush with the parking lot eliminating problems especially in the winter with ice and snow. This entrance way was installed with heating cables to keep it free of ice and snow and then finished with a textured surface. With a large senior population this entrance is both welcoming and safe year round. Outside lighting is scheduled to be installed in early 2017.

Another outside consideration is the surrounding landscaping and specifically the 2 ½ acres of open field which Father Trejo promoted and approved to be cleaned and put to “good and holy purpose” in 2011. After consultation with members of the parish it was decided to develop the area into a meditative garden that would come to be known as “The Meadows”. It was also decided to create a meditative walkway consisting of the Stations of the Cross around the perimeter of area. The crosses were designed and made by members of the OLS parish. In addition to the Stations of the Cross, a worship area was created and was consecrated by Bishop Tyson. In 2015, a life-size statue of Our Lady of the Snows was commissioned by a member of the parish and was installed in August 2016.

Since the 2007 report it is perhaps more accurate to consider the interior of the Church as being in good condition rather than excellent. The carpet does need to be replaced. The problem of compaction of snow and forming of ice dams continues to tear off when the snow/ice unloads. The problems of water related damage and rot continue.

Structural hazards continue during heavy snow periods when the roof unloads and the compacted snow berms build up against the east wall of the fellowship hall causing compression and for the walls to flex inward. In the winter of 2014 – 2015 the windows had to be boarded up to keep them from caving in.

It was projected in the 2007 report that the exterior of the Church would need to be repainted in six to seven years. This, plus permanently repairing the roof, has been deferred due to lack of funds.

Saint Francis Xavier

The current church building that houses Saint Francis Xavier Church was built in 1913 and is situated on a 50 foot wide lot that is approximately 120 feet deep. The entry way to the building is 12 steps up from the street level opening into approximately 1,800 sf of sacred space. Upon entering one would view pews for 135 people plus seating in a choir loft for an additional 20 people. The altar platform and frontage uses roughly 40 sf of the 1,800 sf total while the

confessional in the back of the church is a mere 25 sf in size. In the basement there is 1,700 sf of multipurpose space housing a kitchen, bathroom and a gift shop. The majority of the space in this area is where meetings, classrooms and social functions are held. Parking is at a minimum with six to seven dedicated spaces.

Through the years it has become most evident that in addition to the deterioration of this century old building that it no longer fits the needs of our parishioners. The stairs at the entry are steep and treacherous in an icy winter. The church seating is wholly inadequate for basic Mass attendance no less to house increased attendance on holy days and Sacraments celebrations. Both the stairs and the configuration of the space around the altar makes it almost impossible to house a funeral. We have struggled to refigure our sole confessional stall with various attempts at soundproofing for confidentiality.

The basement has seen better days and we struggle to hold quiet and controlled faith formation classes in one large room plus the drawback of not having a functional exhaust system so cooking must be kept to the absolute minimum. We are fortunate to have use of the adjacent school district lot for parking on most days but often vie for position with the coming and going of cars at the local sporting events at the ball field just beyond the church property.

For so many safety and access is becoming a critical barrier to church attendance and enjoyment. The stairs to the entrance of the church and basement are dangerous, the narrow church aisles create a crowded claustrophobic environment, the rickety choir loft is unsafe and when the parking lot becomes icy and crusty with frequent school use is creates a landmine of unsafe conditions to maneuver when walking into Mass. Sadly, there is no way that one who needs a wheelchair or even crutches could comfortably enter our church. We have known of these barriers and limitations for too long and can no longer excuse our inaction to address them.

Proposed Plan

Before the finality of merging our two churches became a reality, SFX had a preliminary drawing from a local architect that included building a church structure, multipurpose room/social hall, conference room, office, five classrooms and a parking lot on our Webster Way property. We had in our minds that the home on the property would remain as the Rectory to compliment the other structures that would be built close by it.

With the proposed possibility of once and for all merging OLS and SFX new and exciting ideas and prospects are emerging. The new Parish is expected to be near Dryden which is located nearly mid-way between the two churches. Even though this general location would be ideal there is no assurance that a suitable parcel will become available but nonetheless a

search is underway. The selection process must take into serious consideration numerous factors that may affect land use and development. In general, church property is exempted from property taxes up to five acres as per the State Department of Revenue Tax Exemption Guidelines. Any additional property may benefit from other local county tax exemptions or deferrals.

The sale of all church property assets is essential to funding the development of a new church campus and rectory. Our Lady of the Snows property will be more difficult to market as a church site. Whereas, the Webster Way property is undeveloped with a single residence and out buildings. The church on Division Street may also be difficult to market due to its location, size and adjoining land usage.

The rectory merits special consideration in that a residence for the Pastor must be provided throughout the transition process as a new rectory is erected. The rectory at Webster Way would need to be retained. This will require special consideration when marketing the Webster Way property and may require creating a separate land parcel with the rectory attached.

Another consideration for the Webster way property is to retain it intact until it is certain that a suitable new site is acquired. A delay in selling should have no impact in that the property will be considerably easier to sell than the Wheeler Street property in Leavenworth.

It is important to understand that neither community would have realistically achieved their own expectations if they would have pursued their respective plans to build a new church for Cashmere or a remodel for the Leavenworth church. The best estimates for these endeavors would have been around \$2,000,000 for Cashmere and a range of \$850,000 to \$1,500,000 for Leavenworth. The important takeaway is neither parish would have met their identified needs. More significantly, the pastoral services, care, programs and building the House of God would remain crippled and diminished.

Determination of the market values for the real estate assets of both parishes were provided by two independent professional real estate agents who are members of SFX. Their services will be critical for selling the properties. Present market values for Cashmere are listed totaling approximately \$869,000 and for Leavenworth at \$1,593,000. The Diocese will be requested to assist in the formation and build-out of the new church campus through cooperative financial actions. This would require the Diocese to advance 90-100% of the current property market value in order that sufficient capital can be generated in the short-term to kick start the capital campaign.

A potential church campus site will be significantly impacted if the location is in a rural area without public water and sewer hook-ups. In a rural setting, considerable land must be reserved for septic drain fields with a 100% reserve; a wellhead will require a 50 foot radius set-back and a 100 foot set-back from the drain field. These areas are restricted from encroachment of buildings, parking lots, driveways and drainage. Retention of surface drainage

must be retained on-site which generally entails creating a dry pond area engineered and designed for the specific site. Retention ponds are required regardless of location.

The rectory will be discussed separately below as it may be necessary to locate it outside of the campus.

The Campus:

The campus is envisioned to have four major components which will be interconnected with direct access between them. As a complex, the overall notional size is expected to be in the range of 15,000 to 18,000 sf. The four components are listed in priority order below as stated in the agreed preferences and guidelines established in consultation with Father Miguel. They are a(n):

1. Church which embraces the character and reflects the holy liturgical and sacramental elements of the Holy Catholic Church as set forth by the rubrics of the Church
2. Faith formation and education space dedicated for the youth and adult enrichment
3. Social and parish community center which extends the House of God to community services, gatherings and celebrations of our Catholic heritage and faith
4. Administrative office space dedicated for the Pastor and secretary to carry out the responsibilities and duties to administer to the needs of the people and the church facilities

The need for these facilities stands alone in support of one another even if the project requires them to be built in a sequence of phases.

A detailed accounting of these four components is outlined below:

I. The Church Building:

The words of Cardinal Ratzinger convey our sentiments that we desire that our church building bring forward “the consciousness that this is a holy place, because the Lord is coming in among us, should come over us ever anew – that consciousness by which Jacob was so shaken when he awoke from his vision, which had shown him that from the stone on which he had been sleeping, a ladder was set up on which the angels of God were passing up and down and he was afraid, and said, ‘How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven’ (Gn 28:17). Awe is a fundamental condition for celebrating the Eucharist correctly, and the very fact that God becomes so small, so humble puts himself at our mercy, and puts himself into our hands should magnify our awe and ought not to tempt us to thoughtlessness and vainglory. If we recognize that God is there and we behave accordingly, then other people will be able to see this in us . . . “

The importance of the correctness of this space cannot be marginalized. Standards for this are provided through the Church rubrics. First and foremost, the proper liturgical and sacramental settings will be fully embraced. The basic form of the layout will be in

the cruciform vision with three steps rising to the sanctuary and altar area. The sanctuary and altar setting will use columns and pillars with appropriate orientation, location and significant elements of religious importance to contribute to and enhance the holiness and sanctity of the setting.

- a. Lighting and sound systems will incorporate the newest means to enhance the liturgical and sacramental settings and services.
- b. The major nave will be sloping downward to the sanctuary/altar area with a minimum of 400 seating capacity and two smaller naves offset to each side of the sanctuary. ADA access, seating and services will be through and at the smaller naves.
- c. The Sacristy will be located directly behind the sanctuary with access directly from the altar area. Sufficient space, storage and restroom facilities will be incorporated into this area. Direct egress to the outside will be required for safety concerns.
- d. The Reconciliation rooms will be located off of the narthex. Liturgically, the Baptismal font will be placed at the entrance to the church to serve as the gateway to receive the ensuing sacraments.
- e. Size and scale of the features for the building both inside and out will be appropriate for its presence as a church. Residential standards and components are not appropriate and will not be used. Design and structure of the church will emphasize and enhance the overall spiritual sense and presence of the House of God as a focal of community life.
- f. The main outside entrance into the narthex will be stately, appealing and appropriate for representing a place of worship. Spacious, open-flowing of both areas are essential for the reception, greeting and gathering of worshipers before and after Mass. The narthex provides that important transition from the outside world into the House of God. A place where people embrace reverence prior to entering the sanctuary. It also provides a focal area for the important social and religious sharing of personal expressions of compassion, kindness and joy. The openness and size of the narthex will also provide useful opportunities for expanded use and services routinely expected by a faith community.
- g. Outside and inside, ADA access for all areas of the church is essential. Multiple outside access will be made for all entrances to the main church, parish community center, the education wing and office complex entrances. Special ADA accommodations for worshipers will be made in the sanctuary for accessing the altar and receiving of sacraments.
- h. Covered porticos will be used to provide sheltered arrival/drop-off areas and entrances. These areas will also provide spaces for outside gathering and socializing.

2. Faith Formation and Educational Spaces:

Six dedicated spaces are envisioned with each having folding soundproof walls that allow for expanding each space for larger gatherings. Due to code consideration, these spaces will be used as meeting spaces and for educational purposes. Shoulder storage space will be maximized with both wall and under counter storage for tables, chairs, and materials. Walk-in storage rooms should be avoided due to the inefficient utilization of space and general disregard to maintain orderly access and use.

Access, egress and hallways shall be spacious avoiding narrow and crowded spaces. Natural lighting alone with modern electrical light, sound system and telecommunications will be maximized.

3. Social and Parish Community Center:

This essential facility will serve to bring together the congregation to extend the teachings and presence of the House of God for community services and celebration of our Catholic heritage and faith. It is essential to provide a large, welcoming area for Hospitality Ministries and community services. People of faith in ordinary and special times want fellowship and community gatherings to be an important part of their spiritual and church life.

This is a significant, important means and function of sharing our faith. The center is envisioned to have a seat/table service capacity for 350 people. Multi-use of the space for various functions shall be maximized as will be natural and modern lighting, sound, and telecommunication system. Window systems with internal blinds shall be incorporated as practical.

Food service and kitchen facilities, 800-1000 sf, will be designed by a professional commercial kitchen service company such as Bargreens of Spokane/Yakima. A commercial grade kitchen will provide the best value of investment for the Center. It will provide the best capacity for food services and for fundraising. The responsible design committee shall survey and visit a minimum of three church sites that have recently installed high quality commercial kitchen complexes.

Fire code considerations such as access, storage, fire suppression and ventilation are factors that cannot be circumvented.

4. Office and Administrative Facilities:

Private office space of at least 200 sf will be established exclusively for the Pastor's use. The secretarial office space will be incorporated into the administrative space and total at least 400 sf. The overall design of the facility shall be such that future expansion may be easily adapted to the existing structure.

An office/administrative conference room of at least 200 sf including, a small private kitchenette/coffee bar and small dining seating area, will be provided for the Pastor and staff.

Regardless of the size and scope of the church campus complex, it is important that the office/administrative space is sufficient for the Pastor and staff, including sufficient storage and work space. The layout shall have both natural and modern lighting and telecommunication systems.

The Rectory:

A new rectory located on the church campus is essential. However, it shall be private with limited direct access from the main campus which may be achieved by various means of landscaping.

Envisioned is a rectory of approximately 2,000 sf, a two-story structure with suitable privacy for the Pastor and guests. A small, efficient office space for the Pastor's private use will be designated. An open floor plan with ADA access and spaces shall be used. Light, telecommunication and window systems shall be incorporated for best/practical means. The structural design shall be such that future expansion may be easily added.

Outside areas shall be maximized for use and sheltered from weather and environments. An attached three car garage with a large storage capacity is preferred. Otherwise a covered breezeway connecting a detached three car garage is suitable.

Parking areas, driveways and ground level terraces will be paved with suitable impermeable product. Sufficient snow storage areas shall be incorporated into the landscape plan.

In conclusion, the proposed plan above provides the notional concepts for the complete church campus and rectory site. As such, it establishes a baseline for further refinement of the details to begin developing the schematic line drawings to visually interpret them. The master plan and specific site plan will be incorporated as part of this discernment report in due course. Once a suitable land parcel is acquired, the site plan can be developed.

Closing Statement

As faithful Catholics we desire to be good stewards of our inherited faith, to fully celebrate the sacraments, to educate all of our current members and to evangelize in the Upper Valley and as far and wide as our lives take us.

We yearn for a place of worship that displays the wonder and awe worthy of our Lord and seek to comingle our common histories and traditions with our eye on the future of the power and vibrancy of a combined church.

Reference Material:

This Discernment Report combines two prior reports completed by each respective parish in 2007. Copies of those original reports are included for reference.