

Parish Self-Assessment Report  
We Walk By Faith

Blessed Sacrament Parish  
154 N. Main Street, Harrisonburg, VA 22802  
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## I. Introduction

**Mission:** Blessed Sacrament aspires to be a model Christian community, disciples of Christ, in communion with the Universal Church, in service to each other and our greater communities. We speak with diverse and inclusive voices, united by our Catholic Faith and Eucharistic celebration.

### Demographics:

- |                |                        |
|----------------|------------------------|
| • White 50%    | Children 33%           |
| • Hispanic 46% | Men 31%                |
| • Black 1%     | Women 36%              |
| • Asian 1%     | Total Individuals-4673 |
| • Other 2%     | Total Families-1612    |

### History:

- Founded in 1844
- Cornerstone laid October 21, 1906
- November 28, 1907 new church was dedicated as Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church. Father Joseph DeGryse becomes first resident pastor.
- In 1958 Father Edward Johnston becomes pastor. The next ten years saw rapid growth and new parish hall, named Johnston Hall, is built.
- The 1980s brings Father Ken Rush to the parish. Oversaw the growth of the parish and its ministries.
- In 1992 Father Ken Wood oversees the building of the new sanctuary-dedicated on June 28, 1995
- In June 2005 Father Tom Mattingly becomes the new pastor, and he currently oversees the parish.

## **II. Word**

Strengths:

- Word of God is proclaimed in a way that helps me to know and love Jesus.
- Homilies are meaningful and effectively delivered.

Needs:

- More adult Christian formation classes
- Stronger youth program
- Better communication about Religious Education program

## **III. Worship**

Strengths:

- Liturgical celebrations take into account various ethnic groups.
- Music selections are good.

Needs:

- No dominant needs identified in survey.

## **IV. Community**

Strengths:

- Outreach ministries are very good (food pantry, welcoming ethnic minorities)

Needs:

- Welcoming newcomers
- Parish facilities are not accessible for people with disabilities.
- Working with other Catholic communities

## **V. Service**

Strengths:

- Advocate for human life (March for Life)

Needs:

- Legislative advocacy

## **VI. Plans for renewal and meeting parish needs**

For the next year:

Study and consult concerning improving our Adult Religious Education program.

Hold a Parish Mission in 2011.

Review Youth Ministry Program

Work on a better and consistent way to welcome of new parishioners

For the next five years:

Improve and Expand Facility

Increase Accessibility throughout the Facility

Develop a plan for greater legislative advocacy

## **VII. Diocesan Support**

Provide resources in development of Adult Religious Education Process

Provide a list of diocesan approved speakers for religious education.

We need Hispanic Leadership Programs from the diocese to be more locally accessible (through programs offered locally or by participation enabled through technology)

Clarify policy of meeting volunteer screening requirement for undocumented persons

## **VIII. Conclusion**