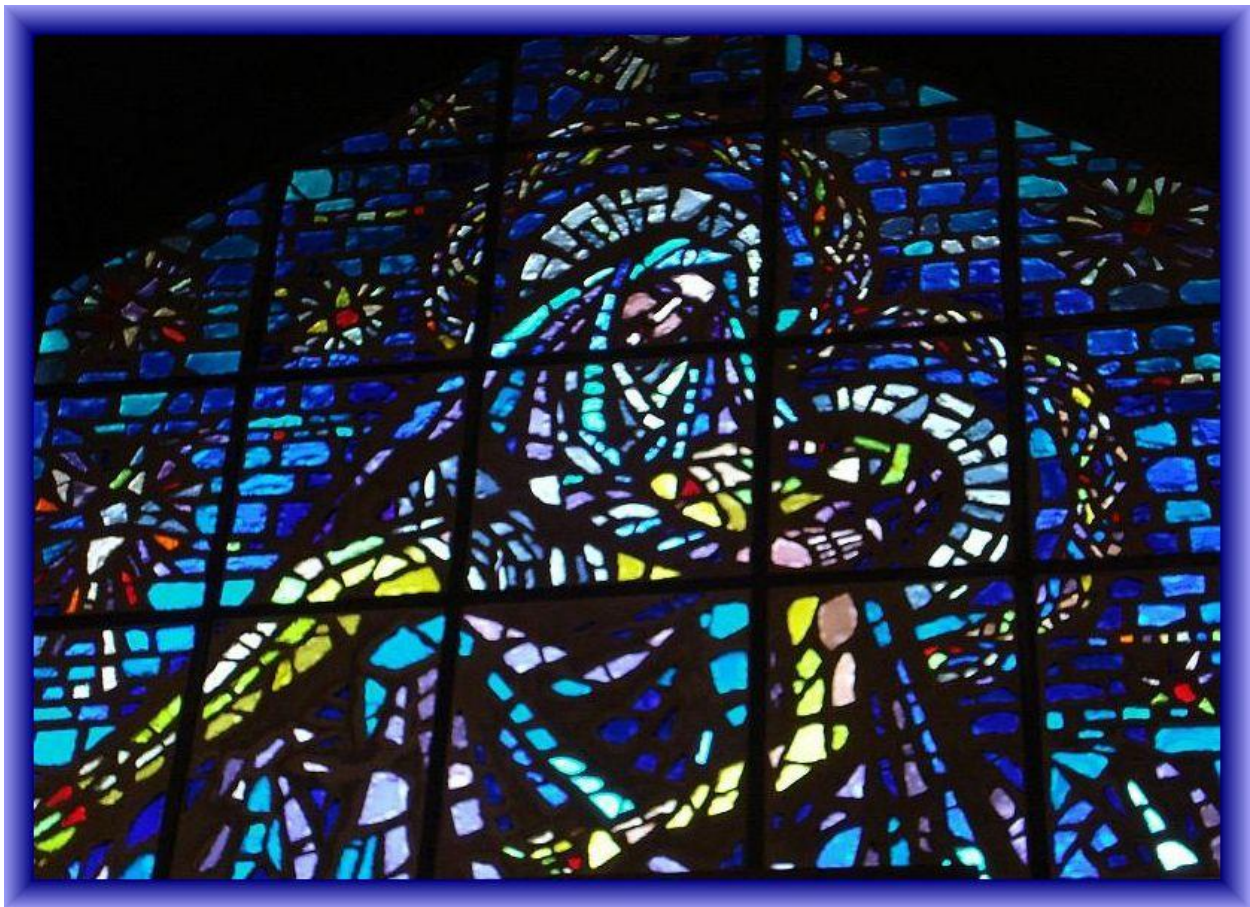


# OUR LADY OF SORROWS CATHOLIC CHURCH

Diocese of Honolulu

1403 California Avenue • Wahiawa, Hawaii 96786



Parish Pastoral Plan

December 2010

## **OUR LADY OF SORROWS PARISH**

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

*Our Lady of Sorrows Church is a Catholic, faith-filled community united and founded on the teachings and love of Jesus Christ to serve the needs of all parishioners and, through its ministries, to foster and nurture their growth in faith.*

*Our Lady of Sorrows Church believes in stewardship as a way of Christian living. As stewards, it is our responsibility to give back to God the best that He has given us, by giving of our time, talent and treasure.*

*As a unified and welcoming parish of the Universal Church, we reach out to all of God's people through education, through social action, through worship and through proclaiming and living the Gospel of Jesus Christ.*



## PARISH LIFE SELF-STUDY

In preparation for the Episcopal Visitation by the Most Reverend Clarence (Larry) Silva, the Our Lady of Sorrows Church Pastoral Council, under the direction of the pastor, Fr. Edgar Brillantes, conducted a parish life self-study to solicit the help of parishioners to identify our parish's strengths, challenges, and opportunities. A survey was administered to the Mass going parishioners by the Parish Pastoral Council. The results of the survey, and the 'Diocesan Road Map' priorities identified a year earlier by the parish, led to the development of a pastoral plan that will guide our leaders, ministries and parishioners (in the implementation of priorities) for the next three years. With firm resolve and with the grace of God, we intend to take this time as an opportunity to renew our commitment towards building the kingdom of God in our midst and to grow in our ministry in a more energetic and harmonious way.

The survey that our Pastoral Council conducted served to cover and evaluate the basic areas of parish life: **Community and Evangelization; Worship; Formation in the Word of God; Social Ministry; and Parish Leadership**. A series of questions pertaining to these areas of parish life were formulated. The method of response to the survey was kept to the simplicity of a 'YES' or 'NO' answer and a simple check mark in the areas of service and improvements. In addition, a space was provided for any comments or concerns. Many parishioners commented of their love and dedication to Our Lady of Sorrows Church and their priests. Some noted that their families have been parishioners for generations and see the parish as their spiritual home for years to come.

The survey was distributed and collected during the weekend Masses of October 9 and 10, 2010. The schedule of Masses is as follows: 5:00 PM on Saturday; and 7:00 AM and 9:00 AM on Sunday. An Ilocano Mass is celebrated on a monthly basis but was not included in the survey since the same people participated in the aforementioned survey. Our Lady of Sorrows Church has 1363 registered families. On the weekend of the survey, Mass attendance was recorded as follows:

- Saturday, 5:00 PM Mass; 121 adults and 10 children,
- Sunday, 7:00 AM Mass; 150 adults and 10 children,
- Sunday, 9:00 AM Mass; 217 adults and 83 children.

A total of 500 surveys were distributed to parishioners, ages 13 and older. A total of 335 surveys were returned. The number of surveys returned over the weekend is as follows:

- Saturday, 5:00 PM Mass; 68 surveys returned,
- Sunday, 7:00 AM Mass; 67 surveys returned,
- Sunday, 9:00 AM Mass; 200 surveys returned,

The total surveys returned are deemed to be a good representation of our active parishioners and adequate data for Pastoral Planning.

## **DIOCESAN ROAD MAP PRIORITIES**

The priorities in the Diocesan Road Map that our Parish identified in an earlier survey are as follows:

1. Repair and Maintenance of Church and School Facilities
2. Youth and Young Adult Programs
3. Leadership Development of Clergy, Lay Staff and Volunteers

Our Parish Building and Maintenance Committee has drafted and submitted to the Diocesan Planning and Building Commission, a Five-Year Plan for Building and Renovation. The Plan is gradually being implemented as some repair and maintenance are done or ongoing. Other major project proposals are awaiting diocesan approval and availability of funds. A major accomplishment is a new roof and skylight for the church building. The modern skylight is breathtaking and spiritually uplifting. Other significant projects were the reroofing of the old Convent chapel and the rectory extension room, the removal of the termite-ridden belfry, the renting to a non-profit agency serving parents and special needs children of 2 school classrooms which required some plumbing and carpentry repairs. We are in the process of planning a 3-phase renovation and erection of structures that includes new and ADA-compliant restrooms and parish hall. We are also looking into refurbishing damaged old pews in the Church.

As a second parish priority in the diocesan Road Map, the Youth Ministry and Young Adult Ministry are being accorded full attention and support. Each ministry is exploring ideas and finding ways to build a better program and increase its membership. The coordinators are dedicated and are putting up a delegation to attend the World Youth Day in 2011. The Young Adult Ministry was reorganized less than a year ago. It is formed by a group of motivated and enthusiastic individuals. They hosted a barbecue party for the parish and a pancake breakfast on Father's Day. They also bring food to the homeless and this Christmas they are adopting a family of 4 orphans. Every Thursday, they gather for faith sharing and have formed a choir that rotates with the other choirs in the Sunday liturgy.

The third parish priority, Leadership Development of Clergy, Lay Staff and Volunteers, is pinpointed as the focus of our immediate pastoral plan of action. This topic is presented towards the end of this report.

Conducting the parish survey was very rewarding. Each council member was involved with the process by belonging to one of the four ad-hoc groups that formulated questions and gathered feedbacks on the focus areas. From their concerted efforts of assimilating the parishioners' responses and sentiments together with their own thoughts and reflections is submitted an overview of the goals and aspirations that will become the Pastoral Plan at Our Lady of Sorrows Church which we are determined to realize over the next 3 years.

# **FOCUS AREAS**



## COMMUNITY AND EVANGELIZATION

The first basic characteristic of parish life, *Community and Evangelization*, is described as, “how we seek to bring others to share our faith and how we serve our parish community.” It identified the following: “programs for the family, elderly, youth, widows, and hospitality.” The questions that the parishioners were asked were: *Does the parish provide The Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults; share a spirit of welcome & invitation for those interested in becoming Catholic; exhibit a spirit of warmth and hospitality; provide outreach to non-practicing Catholics; cooperate with other Christian churches in the community? Are new members of the parish welcomed? Is the parish sensitive to religious diversity within families?*

Most of the parishioners see Our Lady of Sorrows Church as a welcoming parish, exhibiting a spirit of warmth and hospitality. Overall, our Church is a caring, supportive community, evident by the variety of social and communal activities that bring parishioners together in a spirit of “Ohana”. However, 50% of the responses felt there is a great need to provide outreach for non-practicing Catholics. Also, 24% said more effort is needed to convey a spirit of welcome and invitation for those interested in becoming a Catholic.

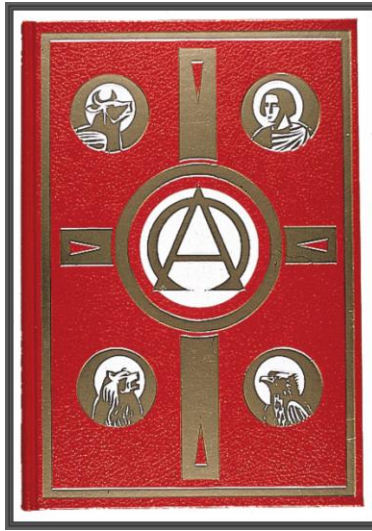


## **WORSHIP**

The second basic characteristic of parish life, *Worship*, is described as, “The Mass and other worship ceremonies centered on the Liturgy of the Word and the Eucharist are the core of parish life and the celebration of our relationship with God.” The ministries that are associated with this focus are the priests, deacons, lectors, altar servers, Eucharistic ministers, musicians, ushers, decorators and the assembly.

The survey asked participants to indicate whether the parish provided Masses that are prayerful, reverent and spiritually moving, an interior environment that creates a conducive atmosphere for worship, programs or activities to promote spiritual growth, devotional services (Rosary, Stations, Evening Prayer, etc.), opportunities to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession) and opportunities to receive the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick. In addition the survey asked if the parish encourages religious or priestly vocation.

The data collected showed that a majority of the parishioners who participated in the survey responded positively in the area of worship. They approved the reconfiguration of the seating arrangement and some physical improvements of the church structure. They are happy with the updating and training of liturgical ministers and the invitation of facilitators for retreats, recollections and catechesis. It is the understanding of the Parish Pastoral Council that with the introduction of the New Roman Missal, the Diocese will be providing resources and materials for catechesis. Our Lady of Sorrows will encourage as in the past, all parish leaders and liturgical ministers to attend the Diocesan workshops. Through the priests and trained leaders we shall also provide catechesis on the New Roman Missal at the parish level until its full implementation in Advent 2011. In the meantime, the parish will continue with prayerful, reverent and uplifting Masses and provide varied avenues and meaningful activities for spiritual growth.



### **FORMATION IN THE WORD OF GOD**

The third basic characteristic of parish life, *Formation in the Word of God*, is described as, "Formation is a life-long process, which should include continuing education in the faith at every stage of life." It identified the following ministries: Religious Education (elementary-age children); Adult Faith Formation; Youth Ministry; and Young Adult Ministry. It asked the parishioners: *Does the parish offer religious education for children; adult faith formation opportunities; programs that strengthen and foster family life; access to a Catholic elementary school in the area; youth ministry programs for teens; faith formation opportunities for young adults?*

The overall consensus is that Our Lady of Sorrows Church does offer sufficient programs for children, youth, young adults, and adults that encourage a deeper faith in God.

However, there are a few areas of concern pointed out. First, a need for programs that will strengthen and foster family life. We plan to provide family-centered faith formation opportunities by first assessing current activities, including sacramental preparation processes so needs can be identified and development of programs and/or providing resources can be made available. It is our hope to increase parental participation in our Religious Education program, through the lead of the Coordinator; to offer a variety of faith formation opportunities to attract parishioners of all ages; and to access resources and training for leadership.

The second area of concern by parishioners is the need for more information about access to Catholic schools in the area. In response, we plan to be a means of promoting Catholic education by encouraging attendance at any Hawaii Catholic Schools. Through our Sunday bulletin, we would publish enrollment timetable for neighboring parochial schools. We can invite administrators to come and talk about their school at the weekend Masses. We can also look at how our facility can be utilized by Catholic schools during their open enrollment.

As for the Youth and Young Adults, there are two separate ministries they are involved in. They are prepared for Confirmation and have regular meetings for leadership formation and faith-sharing.



## **SOCIAL MINISTRY**

The fourth basic characteristic of parish life, *Social Ministry*, is described as, “We are a people of service. We address not only the needs of our parishioners, but also those outside our parish.” The Social Ministry provides assistance to the homeless, the hungry, those grieving and experiencing illness, loneliness, unemployment and the impoverished. The questions addressed to the parish were: *Is the parish sensitive to people with special needs? Does the parish give attention to the spiritual and sacramental needs of the sick and those at home? Are parishioners encouraged to work for social justice? Does Our Lady of Sorrows Church cooperate with groups in the community to meet local needs? Do we promote respect for life, outreach to the poor, support families who have experienced death? Is Our Lady of Sorrows Parish a supportive, caring community?*

Many of the parishioners commend the various programs performed by the Our Lady of Sorrows Social Ministry. The commitment of our parishioners to serve comes from the life of Christ Himself who attended to the poor, needy, marginalized, sick and sinners.

The program strives to assist its parishioners to understand and act on Catholic social teachings. The following programs and opportunities are available:

1. Emergency financial assistance
2. A food pantry distributing bags of food supplies
3. A bereavement ministry that provides a 12-week grief support program for the widows and orphaned families
4. Home visitations with special attention to the spiritual and sacramental needs of the sick, disabled, and homebound.

Parishioners are encouraged by our pastor and other group leaders to work for social justice. Social issues and human needs are being addressed (e.g. Respect for Life, Faith Action for Community Equity). Service/action plans are being developed. There is cooperation with other community oriented groups to donate to local needs (e.g. school supply drive, Christmas giving tree, canned food drive). Parish delegates are organized for the March for Life at the Capitol. The parish also does intensive drive for the exercise of suffrage and faithful citizenship. A ministry concern is the need to present Our Lady of Sorrows as a supportive and caring community and to have the Social Ministry programs viewed as an integral part of parish life whereby parishioners become active supporters and role players.

# **PASTORAL PLAN OF ACTION**



## **PARISH LEADERSHIP**

*There are different kinds of spiritual gifts but the same Spirit: there are different forms of service but the same Lord; there are different workings by the same God who produces all of them in everyone. To each individual the manifestation of the Spirit is given for some benefit. (1 Cor 12: 4-7)*

The survey asked participants to indicate whether the parish invites parishioners to share the responsibility of leadership, encourages parishioners to become involved in parish ministries, listens to the concerns of parishioners and if the parish annually publishes a parish financial statement.

An overwhelming percentage of parishioners who participated in the survey responded positively to the questions. The Parish Pastoral Council has been working on addressing the Road Map priorities that were identified by the parishioners. The Repair and Maintenance of parish and school facilities is the number one priority. The newly established parish Building and Maintenance committee oversees the condition and status of our facilities. Since Our Lady of Sorrows has done submitting a 5- year plan to the Diocese and the major concerns are being addressed with projects in progress or accomplished, the parish wants to focus its attention on the third priority, Leadership Development of Clergy, Lay Staff and Volunteers, making it their pastoral plan of action.

The consensus of the council is the need for improvement in communication and collaboration among the various parish leaders, ministers, clubs and organizations. It is strongly felt that with this goal in mind the other aspects of parish life will flow and operate more smoothly. The council and parish staff has begun the process through perusal of books and articles on leadership, consulting with the relevant Diocesan departments and attending leadership workshops. While we appreciate the efforts of the volunteers who hold leadership positions in the parish, we need to empower our lay leadership through proper training and development of skills.

Although there are several areas of concern expressed throughout this report, it is by consensus that the basic foundation of further improvement and progress lies with developing effective leadership and well-honed communication skills. Therefore, owing to its importance and urgency, Our Lady of Sorrows Parish will focus on Leadership Development as its pastoral plan of action for the next 3 years.

**Goal:** To develop and empower responsible parish leadership.

**Objectives:**

- To formulate job descriptions for all parish staff, leaders, ministers and committees in order to establish clear roles and responsibilities of their positions, and set performance standards.
- To provide a variety of educational and training opportunities which will increase knowledge and skills pertinent to the minister's area, enhance collaboration, teamwork, communication, and accountability of volunteers.
- To provide opportunities for spiritual growth and guidance that will enable the leader to discover and recognize their talents and acquired skills as gifts to be shared and harnessed in building up the Body of Christ.

**Expected outcome:** Through our leadership goal and objectives we shall produce leaders who are pastorally and spiritually motivated, knowledgeable and accountable to the pastor and to the whole parish.

*May our beloved patroness, Our Lady of Sorrows, intercede for us  
and help us in accomplishing our Pastoral Plan of Action.  
Amen.*