

Summary

Unity, Future

20. Looking to the next 5 years, and given all that you have said about what is important to a vibrant parish life now and in the future, what can we do to make the wisest use of our parish buildings?

Many ideas were given regarding the convent. One person suggested *“Sell the convent...”* Other ideas included *“...use the convent for an assisted living center,”* and *“turn the convent into a retreat house for the Diocese.”* Someone commented that *“It is a smart move to sell the convent.”*

Several people had recommendations for the church halls. The suggestions included *“Use St. Mary Hall more- use the gym for basketball, etc., rooms for exercise, like a Community Hall,”* and *“Utilize the school building to hold tutoring help.”* Someone recommended *“Sell St. Mary Hall to city as a non-denominational community center.”* Marketing the halls for rentals was stated several times, such as this comment *“We need to market our halls for rentals. We need to look at the resources we have and make them more available to the public. It would make us more visible in the community,”* and *“Halls could bring in money.”* Someone else said succinctly *“Halls could bring in money.”* Another suggestion included *“Use (St. Mary) hall classrooms as offices, improve kitchen facilities.”*

Keeping both churches open was overwhelmingly stated. Two people responded on the uniqueness of each church with the comments *“...both (churches) are distinct and important in their own way,”* and *“St. Frances Cabrini is newer, but St. Mary is historic.”* One person suggested *“Raze St. Mary church-it is old and decaying. Along with the sale of the garages and gym, this corner of real estate could be very valuable to a developer. Although I have many fond memories of St. Mary Church, I now realize that life goes on and things must change.”* It was also suggested that St. Mary *“become a shrine and subsidized by the Diocese.”*

One parishioner recommended *“No hasty decisions, make practical decisions.”* Another suggestion was *“Downsize, but set goals NOW to have one church, one hall, so money saved can be spent on people and programs in the faith community.”* Someone commented *“Strengthen the parish commitment first, then consider the facilities.”* Still another recommendation included *“We are not rich enough to keep so many buildings open. If we determine that STM or SFC church remain as the worship site, the interior needs to be renovated so that it looks entirely different from before. Everyone needs to let go of their preference for one worship site over the other. We are the people of God, not the building.”*