

Holy Rosary Catholic School

2019-2020 State of the School Report



Dear Parents, Staff Members, Parishioners, and Investors in Holy Rosary Catholic School:

What a year it has been for schools across the country! On March 15th, Holy Rosary School was notified that Governor Walz requested state-wide school closure and that we should prepare for teaching our students from a distance. As educators, I think we all felt we were being faced with an overwhelming, daunting, and arduous task. This was something we were never trained to do nor anything we had ever experienced, yet parents and students rightfully were relying on us to continue to provide a quality education. Nonetheless, we have an amazing group of teachers here, and they immediately stepped up to the plate and were ready to tackle the challenge before them to the best of their ability. Their creativity really shined during the new and unusual circumstances before them, and they were working harder than ever to ensure our students were learning. Due to that, and with the exceptional support of parents, our transition into Distance Learning went better than we could have ever expected. Although Distance Learning fulfilled an immediate need for educational instruction, it surely

brought it's challenges and was not ideal; however, through a dedicated team of teachers, staff, and the students and families we have the opportunity to serve, I believe we made the best out of a challenging situation and were successful in our endeavors.

Holy Rosary School and Parish are fortunate to be able to provide a Catholic education option to families in the Detroit Lakes area. Faith development, academic excellence, and a dedication to service are key elements to Catholic education and set our school apart from other educational options.

This report will provide some information with regards to the current state of our school. It specifically addresses our School Strategic Plan, a summary of our financial resources, standardized assessments, enrollment trends, ways we serve others, and upcoming improvement initiatives.

Thank you for your continual support for our school. The Holy Rosary community is very blessed to have so many individuals who care about our school's ongoing success!



May God bless you & your family most abundantly!

Cathy Larson

Holy Rosary School
Principal

A Glance at Key Events During our Year



- **August 2019** – Our 1st grade teacher, Mrs. Debbie Averbeck, was named Diocesan Teacher of the Year during our biannual diocesan teacher inservice day at Sacred Heart School in East Grand Forks.

- **September 2019** – It is back to school for our 138 students, 15 teachers, 8 staff members, 2 priests and 1 principal!



- **October 2019** – We went beyond our goal by raising over \$37,000 for the school marathon. As an incentive for reaching their school goal, students got to spray Fr. Michael with Silly String and cut Principal Larson's hair, which was donated to *Locks of Love*.

(Before)



(After)



- **November 2019** – We honored our veterans with a Veteran's Day program. Several from various branches in the service, past and present, spoke to our students about their experience.



- **December 2019** – Shared the true meaning of Christmas with the community during our school Christmas program, "The Night Shift Before Christmas".

- **January 2020** – Directed by our music teacher, Mrs. Terri Hutchinson, students sang the "National Anthem" before the Harlem Globetrotter's game in Fargo.



- **February 2020** – Implemented our 1st annual "Giving Hearts Day" fundraiser.
- **March 2020** – The COVID-19 Pandemic hit and we were required to close our doors and teach from a distance. This happening also led to many cancellations for our students including the school science fair, spring field trips, track-n-field day, awards ceremonies, and our traditional closing liturgy & 8th grade graduation.
- **April 2020** – Since our school Science Fair, due to happen in March, had to be cancelled, students in grades 5-8 submitted their presentations via a video recording, which were crafted into a virtual Science Fair and shared with the school.
- **May 2020** – On May 13, Distance Learning and our school year came to a close. We are thanking God for his blessings upon our year!

School Strategic Plan Progress

Holy Rosary School is accredited through the Minnesota Nonpublic School Accreditation Association (MNSAA). The mission of MNSAA is to be a facilitator in improving the quality of nonpublic education in Minnesota through an accreditation process.

Part of the improvement initiative that MNSAA requires of Holy Rosary School is to produce a School Strategic Plan that includes objectives, action steps, and a timeline. Progress on our School Strategic Plan is reported to MNSAA on an annual basis.

The information below includes our 4 objectives and a description of what steps have been taken thus far to achieve these goals.

Objective 1: Holy Rosary School will become more financially independent.

Several steps have been taken to meet this objective. A new tuition management system was implemented through the use of an online software program. Using this method of collecting and managing tuition money has increased our overall tuition revenue, and currently, we are on track to collect 100% of the tuition due by the end of June. We are also actively working towards the establishment of an endowment fund to augment the school's operating fund. It is our hope to create an investment committee in the near future to oversee this endeavor. Through contributions made at our annual Spring Interlude fundraiser, we have deposited a significant amount of money into this fund; unfortunately, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we were unable to hold our annual Spring Interlude fundraiser this year, which bestowed a significant loss on our fundraising income. However, in February, Holy Rosary School implemented "Giving Hearts Day", for the first time, which brought in over \$19,000 in revenue from 82 generous donors.

Objective 2: Holy Rosary School will meet the academic needs of each student.

Holy Rosary School reviews and updates our preschool through 8th grade curriculum on an annual basis. This past year we focused on science. When we review curriculum, we are looking at standardized testing scores to determine strengths & weaknesses in student progress, MN state education standards and how our curriculum aligns. We began to implement an after-school STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) program for our students here in grades 3-8, but due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we had to cancel the class. We also have been working towards purchasing necessary science materials to provide our students with more hands-on learning experiences related to science. A few of our teachers meet annually with other teachers in the Diocese to review standards and create a more uniform plan for what we're teaching across our Diocesan Catholic schools. Most recently, the focus for standards review has been math, social studies, and science. Finally, our classroom teachers are attending a training in "Math Recovery" to learn the new methods behind this strategy. "Math Recovery" is a system for teaching math that strays from traditional ways and provides a customized and unique way of instructing and assessing. As they learn, teachers have been working to implement these new strategies in their classrooms.

Objective 3: Holy Rosary School will provide a regionally competitive salary/benefit package to provide students with highly qualified teachers.

Holy Rosary School has been working towards raising the base pay for teacher salaries so that we are more competitive with what the public schools can offer. Currently, a new teacher at Holy Rosary would start at 73% of what a Detroit Lakes Public School teacher would be paid. Offering a more competitive salary would allow us to attract teachers and provide staffing consistency for our students. To help raise salaries, an endowment fund has been created and in the near future we hope to form a committee to work on building-up the fund. Our "Giving Hearts Day" initiative also provided extra funds that we don't typically have. These funds were used to boost teacher salaries. Going forward, it is our intent to use funding from "Giving Hearts Day" for this endeavor.

Objective 4: Holy Rosary School will maintain strong leadership for students and staff in Catholic education.

This objective was written when Mr. Mike Connell resigned as principal two years ago. In May of 2018, Mrs. Cathy Larson was hired as principal of Holy Rosary School. In December of 2019, she completed her Master of Education degree in Elementary Administration through the University of Mary, Bismarck. Monsignor Timothy McGee, school superintendent, is Mrs. Larson's supervisor and administers an annual evaluation of her job performance.

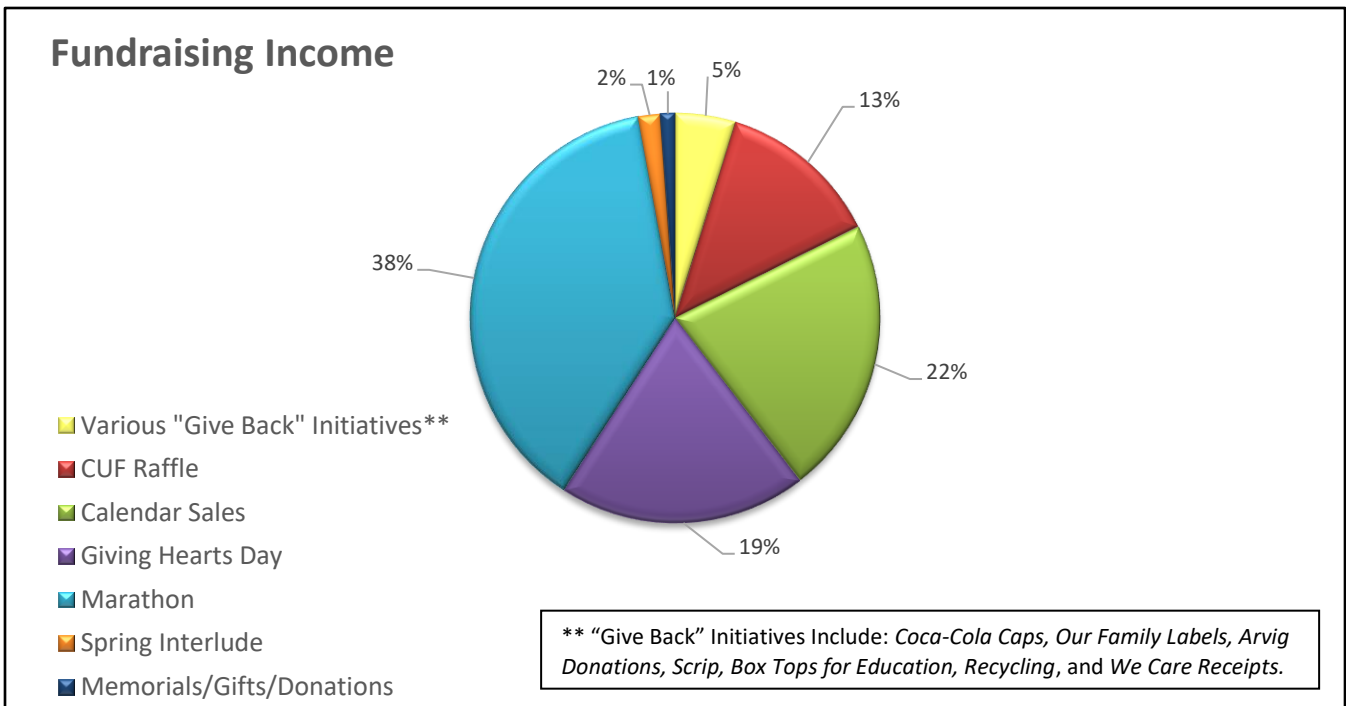
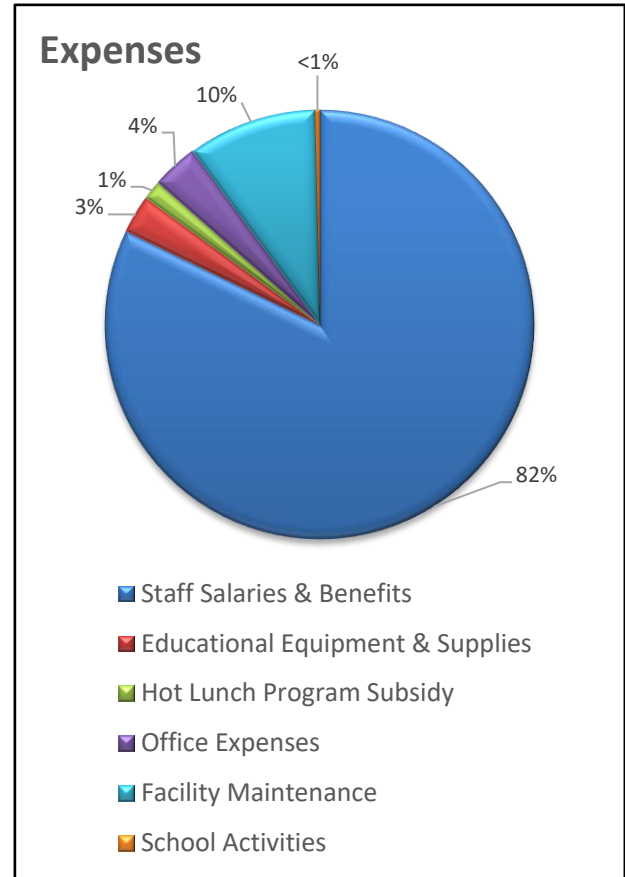
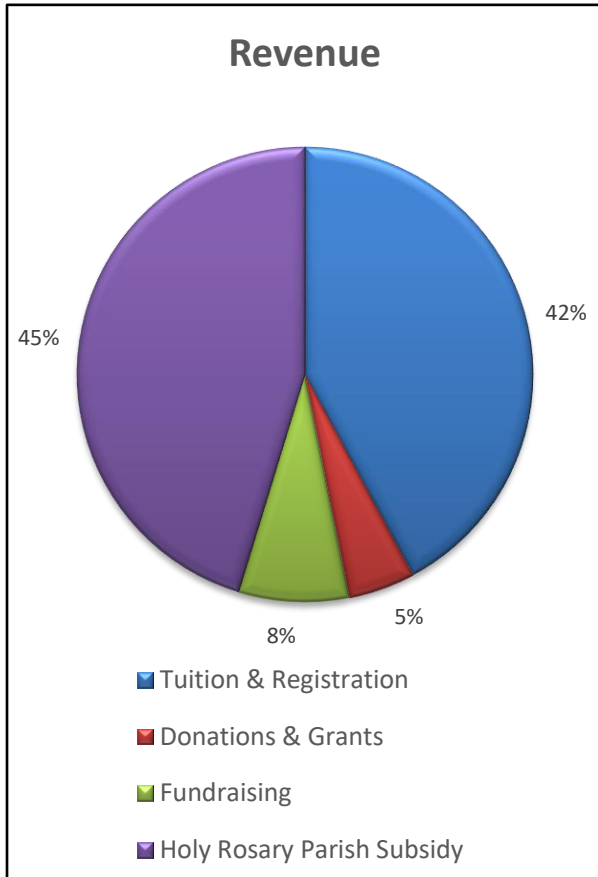
Upcoming Improvement Initiatives

Holy Rosary School is always looking for ways to improve in order to provide a quality education for our students. It is our goal to take on the following initiatives during the next couple of school years:

- **Updating Student Technology Equipment:** In 2012, our school was gifted with a number of iPads for student and staff use. Over the years, the iPads have been a wonderful resource and addition to our education in technology; however, they are quickly becoming outdated and are not operating as well. We plan to explore the possibility of purchasing new equipment such as Chromebooks or new iPads to support student learning and give them the tools they need to develop 21st century skills. In addition, during the summer of 2020, we'll be upgrading the technology in our computer lab to a Windows 10 operating system, as the older version of Windows 7 is no longer functional.
- **Enhance Safety Throughout the Building:** This past fall, teachers and staff were trained by a certified ALICE (Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, Evacuate) Detroit Lakes Police Officer. This training provided insight as to how we should be handling a serious threat or an intruder should it ever happen in our building. During our first session, we were educated about procedures and then spent another session acting out scenarios and critiquing how we handled the situations at hand. These training sessions led to making improvements to our written policies regarding our methods, as well as purchasing materials to upgrade the physical safety of our classrooms and building. It is our hope, in the near future, to install a surveillance system throughout the building, and make updates to our current PA system.
- **Implementing STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) Programming:** Teachers at Holy Rosary School have started planning for the implementation of an after-school STEM program for our students in grades 3-8. It is our hope that eventually we can provide programming for students in the primary grades as well. STEM education is valuable to student growth because it fosters ingenuity and creativity, and encourages teamwork and problem solving strategies.
- **Communicating Student Achievement:** To better communicate student progress to parents at the elementary level, we are looking at updating our reporting methods to mastery-based reporting. This means that instead of students receiving a letter grade in each class during each quarter of the school year, their report card will reflect whether or not they have mastered the educational standards required by the state of Minnesota. Currently, Kindergarten has methods in place and has implemented mastery-based reporting. By the fall of 2022, we hope to have a template in place for grades 1 & 2, and by the fall of 2023, a template for grades 3-5.
- **Create Another Source of Funding to Support the School:** To establish a lucrative endowment fund for augmenting the school's operating fund, an investment committee will be created to develop investment strategies, identify potential donors, and monitor fundraising progress.
- **Improving Teaching Strategies & Student Success in Math:** Last year, the teachers and principal were introduced to a new way of teaching students basic skills in math by an educator trained in *Math Recovery*. Eventually, all teachers who teach math in preschool through grade 8 will attend a four day class to learn the new methods behind this strategy. 6 of our 8 classroom teachers were able to attend the first session this past winter. Others will attend future upcoming sessions. *Math Recovery* strays from "traditional" ways of teaching math and provides a customized and unique way of instructing and assessing. Teachers who have attended the first session have begun implementing strategies in their classrooms. Holy Rosary School will closely monitor student achievement in math during the next few years.

Financial Report

The following charts depict Holy Rosary School's revenue and expenses during the 2019-2020 school year. Because of the COVID-19 Pandemic, we were unable to hold our annual Spring Interlude event, which affected our fundraising revenue; therefore, there was more parish subsidy in our overall revenue and less fundraising revenue than usual. However, because we had a few donations come in for Spring Interlude, there was still a little bit of fundraising income to be noted for that event this year.



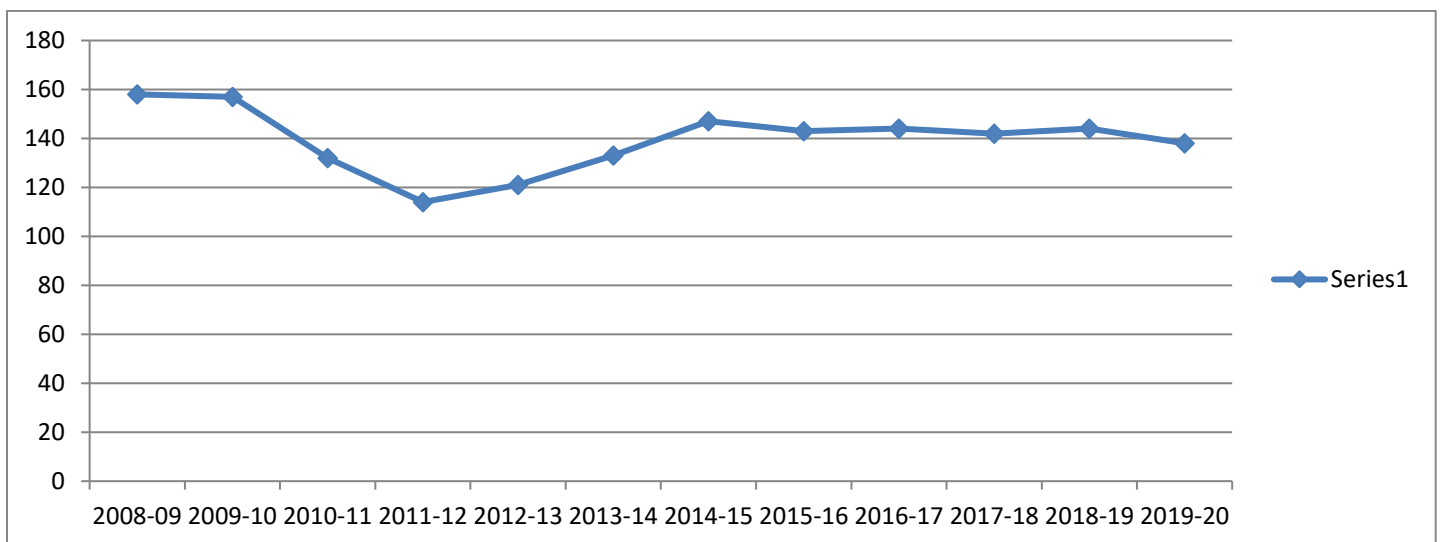
Assessment Data

Each fall and spring, Holy Rosary School administers the NWEA (Northwest Evaluation Association) MAP (Measures of Academic Progress) Test to our students. Students in grades K- 8 are tested in Math and Reading, and students in grades 2-8 are also tested in Language. The scores generated from these tests provide teachers and parents with a lot of information about student progress. Because so many factors (ie: class size, attendance, student ability to focus, state of mind, effort, etc.) play into the test results, we use the results as a tool and guide as we monitor student progress. In other words, we do not rely solely on standardized test scores to determine student success.

Unfortunately, due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, Holy Rosary School was unable to administer spring standardized testing. Therefore, we do not have any data to share regarding student academic growth for the 2019-2020 school year.

Enrollment Trends

Holy Rosary School's enrollment has held steady for the past six years. During the 2019-20 school year, we had 138 students enrolled in preschool through grade 8.



Faith Development & Dedication to Service

Throughout the year, our students have many opportunities for developing a strong faith and learning to serve others. These are a few of the activities that our school family participated in throughout this past school year that reflect our dedication to service and reaching out beyond the walls of our building.

- Our 2nd Graders served a Lenten Soup Supper to community members
- Our 3rd Graders read to residents at Oak Crossing on a monthly basis
- Students in all grades delivered donuts & thank you notes to first responders in our community
- Teachers rang the bell for the Salvation Army during the Christmas season
- All students and staff collected loose change for a memorial to Red Lake School after they tragically lost their 5th grade teacher to a car accident
- Daily prayer intentions for those in need during our Morning Prayer together & during our weekly school Mass
- All students brought contributions for the local food pantry on a weekly basis
- Each class took turns leading the "Stations of the Cross" on Fridays during Lent
- As a school, we raised money for the "American Heart Association"
- Students all participated in various Mass ministries throughout the year
- As a school, we raised money for "TeachHaiti" and through our efforts, provided an education for 3 Haitian children who would have not received an education otherwise
- Students in all grades made cards and wrote notes to students in the "TeachHaiti" schools
- Students in all grades collected loose change during Lent to be donated to "Pennies for Patients" (The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society)

Holy Rosary School Mission Statement

Holy Rosary School Community is rooted in the word and energized with the spirit of Jesus Christ.

We cultivate our community to live as Jesus taught within the Catholic Tradition.

We strive to build gospel values and promote academic excellence.