

SUMMARY OF STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

STRENGTHS

- Active parish, active parish council
- Liturgy
- Music ministry
- Loyal parish constituency
- Affiliation with Boston College
- Variety of spiritual development programs
- Religious Education program, especially for children
- Talented congregation
- Progressive community
- Parish leadership which is encouraging and open to suggestions
- (Generally) high per capita income
- Active outreach to community
- Access to various Jesuit programs and centers
- Each liturgy has its own character/personality
- Education levels of staff, volunteers, lay people
- Large numbers of young adults
- People come here because they want to
- Ignatian identity
- Aesthetics
- Family mass
- Inclusion of lay people in support roles
- Diversity represented in the parish
- Large number of people who want to volunteer

WEAKNESSES

- Each liturgy has its own character/personality
- Only three full time priests on staff
- Lack of building space and parking space
- Lack of leadership development
- Disconnectedness of parish population (by liturgy attended)
- Transient population/geographically diverse
- Financial support
- Perception that parish is part of Boston College
- Poor follow up with volunteers
- Little parish inreach – making community at large feel connected
- Communication, especially use of newer technology (web site)
- Little relationship with Chestnut Hill community and interfaith community
- Lack of “ownership” on part of parishioners

- Lack of intimacy
- Success of a person's volunteer efforts sometimes leads to elitism or snobbery
- Hard to "break into" others' groups
- Lack of ethnic and economic diversity
- Volunteer burnout
- Hospitality – parish is open to anyone, but they come and go on their own

OPPORTUNITIES

- Ability to tap into dynamic people
- Resources of Boston College and Jesuit province
- Youth ministry
- Religious education for adults
- Spiritual development
- Expanding outreach
- Emphasizing Ignatian spirituality
- Life as a "cutting edge" parish – being creative about how we define ourselves as a parish
- Novel approaches utilized in parish
- Geographic clustering of parishes in the archdiocese

CHALLENGES

- Geographic clustering of parishes in the archdiocese
- Financial support
- Space problems not resolved
- Physical encroachment of Boston College
- Archdiocesan control
- Shortage of priests
- Volunteer burnout
- American culture and secularization
- "Catholic culture" – new ways of doing things, challenging the way things have been done
- Consumer consciousness – "shopping" for parishes limits peoples' willingness to invest
- Parish size can be overwhelming
- Lack of inreach necessary to take care of the caretakers