OUR LADY OF THE LAKE CATHOLIC CHURCH

ANNUAL REPORT & PASTORAL PLAN · FISCAL YEAR 2026



SACRAMENTS



COMMUNITY



STEWARDSHIP

Excellence in All We Do

Our Lady of the Lake FY 2026 Annual Report & Vision 2030 Pastoral Plan

SANCTIFYING HENDERSONVILLE

I SACRAMENTAL UNITY
II GOVERNANCE AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
III FINANCIAL TRANSPARENCY AND RESPONSIBILITY

"Whatever you do, do from the heart, as for the Lord."

COLOSSIANS 3:23

NOVEMBER 2026

Hendersonville, Tennessee · Diocese of Nashville

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A WORD FROM OUR PASTOR

To God Be the Glory

Dear Friends in Christ,

All glory and praise belong to God, through whom all these things are possible. Every sacrament celebrated, every family welcomed, every ministry begun, and every gift recorded in these pages comes first from Him, and I give Him thanks for a year of abundant grace.

I am also deeply grateful to you. Every gift you place in the basket, give online, or offer through your time and talent is an act of trust. This report honors that trust by showing, as clearly as we can, what came in last year, where it went, and what your generosity made possible. This year it also carries our Vision 2030 pastoral plan, so you can see where we are going together.

Fiscal year 2026 was a very good year. Through the Step Up offertory campaign, the many new families who joined us, and the move to online giving, offertory grew by more than 15 percent while our staff held spending essentially flat. That allowed us to strengthen our reserves and pay down our mortgage.

Good results bring responsibilities, and I want to be candid about them. Our buildings are aging and need care, the favorable rate on our mortgage ends in 2028, and we are preparing to open Our Lady of the Lake Catholic School in August 2027. This report addresses each honestly, so that you can pray with us, ask questions, and help carry this work.

This year we also strengthened how our parish is governed. Section 2 explains how our two councils and seven standing committees now work together, and it invites you to tell us if you sense a call to serve.

Please read this report, share it with your family, and bring us your questions. Transparency is not a one-time report; it is a habit we intend to keep.

Gratefully yours in Christ,
Reverend Austin Gilstrap
Pastor, Our Lady of the Lake Catholic Church

FY26 BY THE NUMBERS

The Year at a Glance

$3.26M Total FY26 revenue	**+15.2%** Offertory growth over FY25	**$608K** FY26 surplus	**$188K** Mortgage principal paid down
131 Baptisms celebrated	**2,465** Households in our giving records	**454** Neighbors served through St. Vincent de Paul	**200+** Volunteers serving most weekends

WHO WE ARE

Our Mission

Our Lady of the Lake exists to **Sanctify Hendersonville** by bringing God's presence into every aspect of life: our hearts, homes, work, and community. We pursue that mission humbly, zealously, and faithfully, providing for the sacramental, social, and spiritual needs of the people of our parish.

Every ministry, project, and dollar described in this report is measured against our four marks of success:

- **Family Focused.** Our decisions and ministries strengthen the domestic church and serve families at every stage of life.
- **Excellence in All We Do.** From liturgy to facilities to hospitality, we offer God and our people our best.
- **A Welcoming Culture.** Newcomers and longtime parishioners alike find genuine hospitality and belonging.
- **Rooted in Prayer.** Our life and activity, individually and together, flow from and return to prayer.

SECTION 1

Sacramental Unity

Our Sacramental Life

In fiscal year 2026, our parish celebrated:

- **131 baptisms**: 123 infants and young children, 2 older children, and 6 adults
- **15 adults and older children** received into the full communion of the Catholic Church, with about 80 now journeying through OCIA
- **91 First Communions** and **149 Confirmations**
- **41 weddings**, and funerals for the 54 parishioners we commended to God
- **201 hours of Eucharistic Adoration** and **19 hours of confession** offered each week

This is what God's grace, through your gifts, sustains: the sacraments, prayer, and the care of souls.

A Praying Parish

Beyond the sacraments, our parish is held together by prayer. Parishioners pray together through the Hallow app and our parish prayer challenges, gather for the Corpus Christi procession, and find healing through Healing the Whole Person, Undone, and our healing retreats. The Nashville Marian Conference and our parish missions draw people from across the region.

NEW THIS YEAR

Faith Formation: A New Hybrid Model

Three years ago, the parish adopted the Pathways model of family faith formation to draw parents more deeply into their children's formation. It increased parent involvement, but a parish-wide survey showed that families wanted more: more classroom instruction, stronger curricula, trained catechists, and more time with the same peers. Given two paths forward, 76% of surveyed families preferred a hybrid model, now in place for the 2026–27 year:

- **Continuing Education** (grades K–1 and 3–7) moves to weekly classes using *Alive in Christ*, a textbook-based curriculum from Our Sunday Visitor.
- **Confirmation** (grade 8) moves to weekly classes using *Chosen* from Ascension Press.
- **Mend & Nourish** (grade 2, First Reconciliation and First Communion) remains largely unchanged because families told us it works well, now with trained catechists added.

Our goal is two trained catechists in every classroom, with all three pathways kept accessible and affordable. A new Parent Advisory Council gives families a direct voice as the model takes its final shape. If you have considered serving as a catechist or classroom helper, please contact the Faith Formation office.

SECTION 2

Governance and Community Engagement

Parish Leadership and Staff

Our staff has grown and changed this year. As team members moved on, we rethought how responsibilities are best carried rather than simply refilling the same roles.

- **Clergy.** All three of our priests now serve Our Lady of the Lake full-time.
- **Finance and Operations** is now led by two dedicated directors: **Ginger Lannom**, Director of Operations, and **Andrea McGuire**, Director of Finance.
- **Parish Life and Evangelization.** Jennifer Harris was promoted to Director of Parish Life in January, and Julianna Topper joined in July as Communications Coordinator, now full time.
- **Music and Liturgy.** Mitchell Price now serves as Director of Music, Liturgy, and Evangelization, an expanded role focused on new opportunities to share the faith.
- **Hispanic Ministry. Elsa Ehinger** has retired as Director of Hispanic Ministry, and we are deeply grateful for her service. **Fr. Rhodes Bolster now serves as Director of Hispanic Ministry, supported by Rocío Romo and Esteban Cervantes Betancourt.**
- **Still to come:** a school principal and a bookkeeper, to be hired in the coming months.

How Our Parish Is Governed

Parish life has grown faster than the structures meant to support it, and too often good work moved forward on separate tracks. So this fall the parish adopted a new governance structure. In October, the Parish Council and the Finance Council reviewed the proposal and new statutes for both councils, written to follow the Diocese of Nashville's new Particular Law (effective November 29, 2026), and gave their advice. After weighing that counsel, Fr. Gilstrap adopted the structure, and the statutes took effect November 6, 2026. The aim is simple: that our parish's many efforts move forward together, rooted in prayer and guided by good counsel.

The Pastor and Two Councils

Under Church law, the pastor is responsible for governing the parish, but he does not do so alone. Two councils of parishioners advise him, and he consults them on major decisions.

- **The Parish Council** is a strategic body. It helps the pastor shape and update Vision 2030, our multi-year pastoral plan; weighs priorities when projects compete for money, time, or space; coordinates the seven standing committees; and serves as a channel of clear, honest communication between parish leadership and the parish. It meets at least quarterly and elects its own chair each year; in October it elected Russell Marino.

- **The Finance Council,** required in every parish by Church law, is a separate body of parishioners skilled in finance, accounting, business, law, and construction. It advises the pastor on the budget, financial reports, internal controls, reserves and debt, insurance, and the financing of capital projects, and it gives its opinion on every major request the parish makes to the diocese. A new seat is reserved for a member with construction or project-finance experience.
- **Working as one.** A Finance Council member serves on the Parish Council as liaison, and the Director of Finance presents the financial report at each quarterly Parish Council meeting, so both councils work from the same information. Both follow our July-to-June fiscal year, and each August they open their year together with a day of prayer, formation, and fellowship.
- **Our Hispanic community.** Fr. Bolster is forming a Hispanic Pastoral Council that will work alongside the Parish Council and be represented on it.

Both councils are consultative: they advise, and the pastor decides. Their members serve as disciples, not as representatives of a group or interest, and their meetings begin and end in prayer. Every current member continues through this transition year; beginning July 1, 2027, members will serve staggered three-year terms, so each year brings new voices while keeping continuity.

What happens next. Committees that are ready will hold their first meetings before Christmas, and all seven will be meeting by late January. Members of both councils and of the new committees will be commissioned at Mass on the weekend of the Baptism of the Lord, January 9–10, 2027. From then on, each committee will report to the Parish Council every quarter.

Seven Standing Committees

The Parish Council sets direction; it is not meant to carry out the work itself. That work belongs to seven standing committees of parishioners and staff, some long established and some new. Each has a defined purpose, a representative on the Parish Council, and a staff member who works alongside it. Each meets as its work requires and sends the Council a short update before every quarterly meeting. Committees advise and assist; they do not sign contracts or spend parish funds on their own.

Committee members need not serve on the Parish Council. They are invited by the committee chair and staff collaborator, with the pastor's approval, based on the gifts each committee needs.

Construction & Facilities

Stewards our buildings and grounds and guides major capital projects from planning through completion: the Columbarium and Prayer Garden, the roof, fire safety, heating and air conditioning, restrooms, sanctuary projects, and the facilities side of our new school. It sorts every facility need into urgent, foreseeable, and long-term priorities.

Gifts that help: Construction, engineering, architecture, facility management, project management, and vendor oversight.
Staff contact: Deacon Mike Rector, Facilities Manager (miker@ololcc.org), and Ginger Lannom, Director of Operations (gingerl@ololcc.org)

Parish Life & Events

Helps the parish celebrate and gather well, so that our community events reflect real hospitality and excellence. It works with the Parish Life team to plan and staff events such as our Patronal Feast Day, Oktoberfest, and the Spring Social, and it provides hospitality and logistics for parish retreats, missions, and the Marian Conference.

Gifts that help: Event planning, hospitality, food service, decorating, setup, and a love of welcoming people.
Staff contact: Jennifer Harris, Director of Parish Life (jenniferh@ololcc.org)

School Steering / School Advisory

Guides Our Lady of the Lake Catholic School toward its August 2027 opening, including space planning, branding, staffing, and opening logistics. Once the Bishop approves the construction contract and line of credit, it will serve as the parish's education commission, sometimes called a school board, advising the pastor and principal.

Gifts that help: Education and school leadership, finance, marketing, and the perspective of parents of young children.
Staff contact: Fr. Austin Gilstrap, Pastor (pastor@ololcc.org), until a principal is hired

Worship & Liturgy

Partners with staff so that every parish liturgy is celebrated with reverence and excellence. It helps recruit, form, and schedule altar servers, Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, lectors, coordinators, ushers, and greeters, and it helps parish devotions be celebrated in harmony with the liturgy.

Gifts that help: A love of the liturgy, experience organizing and scheduling volunteers, hospitality, and music.
Staff contact: Mitchell Price, Director of Music, Liturgy, and Evangelization (mitchellp@ololcc.org)

Evangelization, Formation & Discipleship

Helps the parish proclaim Jesus Christ, form disciples at every age, and send them out on mission. Its work includes faith formation for children, youth (including Fraternus and Fidelis), and adults; preparation for the sacraments; retreats, parish missions, and the Marian Conference; devotions; and healing ministries such as Healing the Whole Person, Undone, and grief and mental-health support. Much of its work happens through six working groups: the Parent Advisory Council; Youth Ministry; Adult Formation & Small Groups; Adult Sacramental Preparation; Retreats, Missions & Healing; and Devotions. Each needs leaders.

Gifts that help: Teaching and catechesis, leading small groups, mentoring young people, organizing retreats, accompanying those returning to the faith, and fluency in Spanish.
Staff contact: Fr. Justin Farr, Director of Faith Formation (fr.farr@ololcc.org); for youth ministry, Esteban Cervantes Betancourt, Coordinator of Youth Ministry (estebanc@ololcc.org)

Direct Service to the Poor

Brings together the parish's ministries of direct service, including the St. Vincent de Paul Society, Room in the Inn, our twinning with Haiti, the food pantry, and Angel Tree, so that they plan and serve as one and look for new ways to reach the homebound. Christ tells us that whatever we do for the least of his brothers and sisters, we do for him (Matthew 25:40).

Gifts that help: Social work, nonprofit or ministry leadership, coordination, and a heart for those in need.
Staff contact: Jennifer Harris, Director of Parish Life (jenniferh@ololcc.org)

Advancement, Stewardship & Development

Works with staff and the Finance Council to raise the funds the parish needs and to steward them well, including Step Up and the school campaign. Its first work is forming stewards: helping parishioners see the gift of time, talent, and treasure as a grateful response to God.

Gifts that help: Fundraising and development, donor relations, planned giving, marketing and communications, and a heart for stewardship.
Staff contact: Fr. Austin Gilstrap, Pastor (pastor@ololcc.org)

An Invitation to Serve

A structure on paper does not carry a parish forward. People do. Each of these committees needs parishioners who love Our Lady of the Lake and are willing to lend their experience, their gifts, and a few hours each quarter to its mission. You do not need to be an expert, and you do not need a title. You need a willing heart and a desire to help our parish become what God is calling it to be.

If you sense a call to help move the mission of our parish forward through one of these committees, please tell us; we would love to know of your interest. We especially hope the committees will reflect the whole parish: young families and longtime parishioners, our Spanish-speaking community, and people who have never served on a parish committee before.

How to Let Us Know

1. Pray. Ask which committee best fits your gifts and your season of life.

2. Reach out. Contact the staff member listed above for that committee. Tell them a little about yourself and why you are interested.

3. Talk it through. They will share more about the committee's work and what serving involves. Committees are kept small to work well, so not every offer leads to a seat right away; members are invited as needs and openings arise, with the pastor's approval.

Strengthening How We Support Volunteers

More than 200 volunteers serve our parish most weekends. Recruitment has been strong, but follow-up after someone says "yes" has been inconsistent, and strengthening it is now a top staff priority. Every person who signed up at the September volunteer fair received a personal welcome within a week, with clear next steps for training; that is now our standard.

Staff are also reviewing each of our ministries to ensure it is active, well led, and aligned with our mission. A few inactive ministries have been retired, and a parish-wide ministry fair is planned for spring 2027.

Parish Life and Communications

Our Parish Life and Evangelization team is building a welcoming, prayerful, family-centered community. In the year ahead: a weekly “What’s Happening” email and a redesigned parish website; parish-wide gatherings including the Spring Social, Patronal Feast Day, and Oktoberfest, with a prayer tent at our festivals; “Come & See” rehearsals for anyone curious about joining the choir; volunteer guilds to walk alongside families planning weddings and funerals; and clearer directional signage around campus for visitors.

After surveying the parish, we will sunset the **Hendersonville Catholic** magazine after its December 2026 edition and are discerning a parish podcast. Looking ahead, each fall we will publish this report with our Vision 2030 pastoral plan, and after each Parish Council meeting the Council may share brief highlights: fewer pages, more often.

Serving Our Neighbors

In each of these ministries our own parish families are always served first, including families from our Hispanic community, and we extend the same care to individuals and families throughout the wider community.

St. Vincent de Paul. Through our St. Vincent de Paul Conference, we served **454 neighbors** in the past year, up 29% from the year before, including **211 children**. We completed **164 assistance cases**, gave **more than 1,000 hours** and 10,000 miles to visit and help families, and provided **$135,791** in direct assistance. **98.5 cents of every dollar given** went directly to neighbors in need, and Fifth Sunday collections for St. Vincent de Paul grew 176%.

Food Pantry. Our food pantry volunteers prepare and give out about **700 bags of food** each year, 12 to 16 every week. At the holidays we also give about **70 baskets** at Thanksgiving and **40** at Christmas.

Angel Tree. Last Christmas, Angel Tree brought gifts to **407 angels**: **260 children** and **147 seniors** in **123 families**. Applications for this Christmas are still coming in.

Room in the Inn. We first opened our doors to 15 homeless men in 1992, and we have offered shelter every winter since, November through March: an estimated **11,220 guests**.

Your generosity makes all of this possible. This is how we serve Christ in the least of our brothers and sisters.

SECTION 3

Financial Transparency and Responsibility

Our fiscal year runs from July 1 through June 30. Fiscal year 2026 (FY26) covers July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026. The figures below come from the parish's General Fund financial statements, which were reviewed with the Finance Council in September 2026.

FY26 Results in Summary

	FY25	FY26	Change
Total revenue	$2,844,057	$3,262,166	+14.7%
Offertory (included above)	$2,478,205	$2,853,991	+15.2%
Total expenses	$2,655,363	$2,654,187	Flat
Surplus (revenue minus expenses)	**$188,694**	**$607,979**	**+$419,285**

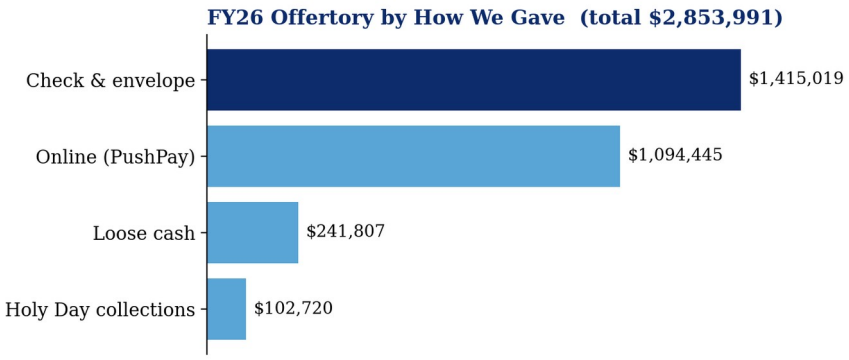
We had budgeted a surplus of about $310,000. The actual surplus was nearly double that, because giving came in well above budget while spending stayed close to plan.

Where Our Revenue Came From

Source	FY26	Share
Offertory (weekly and Holy Day giving)	$2,853,991	87.5%
Program and service fees (including facility rentals)	$184,254	5.6%
Bequests and donations	$143,297	4.4%
Interest income	$39,958	1.2%
Capital campaign receipts (winding down)	$24,050	0.7%
Miscellaneous	$16,616	0.5%
Total revenue	**$3,262,166**	**100%**

Offertory is the heart of our parish's support and the source of nearly all of this year's growth. Donations also included gifts designated for our HVAC updates, which were used for that purpose.

How You Gave



- **Online giving grew 31%** to $1,094,445 and now makes up 38% of offertory. Recurring online gifts give the parish a steadier, more predictable base to plan from.
- **Check and envelope giving grew 8%** to $1,415,019. The Step Up campaign lifted traditional giving as well, rather than simply moving donors online.
- **Holy Day collections rose 33%** to $102,720. Loose cash dipped slightly, as we would expect while more families give electronically.

Step Up: Caring for Our Parish Home

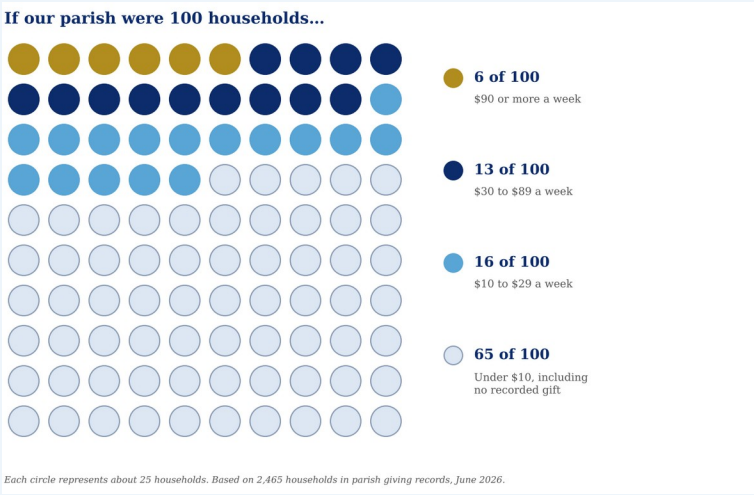
In early 2025, Fr. Gilstrap invited every family to prayerfully consider a steady weekly increase in their offering to help care for our church home. Step Up giving is the main source of our surplus, and that surplus now pays for the care of our buildings: restoring our roof, upgrading aging electrical systems, improving accessibility, and refreshing well-worn spaces, so that Our Lady of the Lake remains a spiritual home for generations to come. The earlier **Legacy of Faith, Hope, and Love** campaign has already paid for the parking lot, the sound system, and the original carpet and pew project.

Many of you answered that invitation. Between February 2025 and June 2026, households giving **$30 or more each week grew from 332 to 473** (up 42%), and those giving **$90 or more grew from 100 to 157** (up 57%). That generosity is a large part of the offertory growth described above.

Weekly gift (households)	Feb 2025	Jun 2026	Change
$90 or more	100	157	+57
$30 to $89	232	316	+84
$10 to $29	346	387	+41
Under $10, including no recorded gift	1,676	1,605	−71
Total households	**2,354**	**2,465**	**+111**

An Honest Look, and an Invitation

These same numbers show how much room we have to grow together. Of the roughly 2,465 households in our giving records, about 1,605 (nearly two in three) give less than $10 a week, and many have no recorded gift at all.



Numbers never tell the whole story. Cash placed in the basket without an envelope cannot be credited to a family, many parishioners give generously of their time and talent, and every family's circumstances are different. No one's place in our parish is measured by a giving statement. And a small gift offered faithfully each week matters: like the widow's two coins (Mark 12:41–44), it is seen by God.

Still, we share this openly because the mission of our parish, from caring for our buildings to opening a school, is carried today by a smaller share of our families than many realize. If your family does not yet give regularly, we invite you to begin, with whatever amount you can offer in faith. A weekly envelope or recurring gift through PushPay helps the parish plan with confidence. And if you already give, thank you. Please prayerfully consider whether God is inviting you to step up one bracket.

Why the surplus matters. Our surplus comes largely from Step Up giving. The parish has committed to keeping $750,000, about three months of expenses, in reserve, and every dollar of surplus beyond that reserve goes to the care of our buildings. Right now our savings are how we pay for capital work such as the roof, the fire panel, and heating and air conditioning, so each year's surplus is what lets that work move forward.

What a Few Dollars a Week Could Do

If each of the 1,605 households now giving less than $10 a week set aside a steady weekly gift:

$1 a week would give about $83,000 a year, enough to replace five of our aging heating and air-conditioning units.

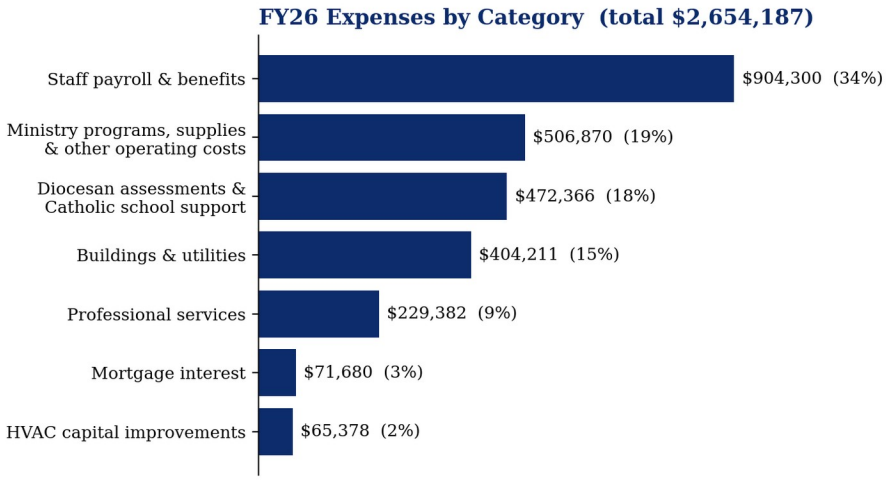
$5 a week would give about $417,000 a year, more than a full year of our building and utility costs ($404,211 in FY26).

$10 a week would give about $835,000 a year, more than everything now set aside for our buildings ($500,000), so urgent work like the roof and restrooms would not have to wait.

Small gifts, given faithfully by many, carry a parish.

Thank you to every family who has already stepped up in faith, and to the Finance Council and volunteers who have led this effort.

Where the Money Went



Total spending was $2,654,187, about $1,200 less than the year before despite inflation. It came in 2.3% over budget; about a quarter of that overage was additional HVAC work paid for by designated gifts. A few notes:

- **Staff payroll and benefits** came in about $43,000 under budget.
- **Diocesan assessments and Catholic school support.** Like every parish in the Diocese of Nashville, we support the ministries of the wider diocese and Catholic education. The diocese changed how some assessments are billed this year; together, the two main assessments were slightly lower than in FY25.
- **Buildings and utilities** was our largest area of overspending, about $48,000 over budget, driven by maintenance and repairs, electricity, and natural gas. These costs rose 18% over FY25, a sign of aging building systems (see Caring for Our Buildings).

- **Professional services** includes contracted services and facilities management.

What the Surplus Accomplished

The FY26 surplus **grew our cash reserves by $393,134** and **paid down $187,540 of mortgage principal**. Going forward, every dollar of surplus beyond our $750,000 reserve will go to our building needs.

Our Financial Position at June 30, 2026

	June 30, 2025	June 30, 2026
Cash and cash equivalents	$770,756	$1,163,890
Mortgage balance	$2,942,484	$2,754,944

Our cash is held in the parish operating account, a high-yield savings account, and certificates of deposit, and covers about four and a half to five months of expenses. Columbarium funds are held separately for that project. The Finance Council has set a floor of $750,000 in operating cash, about three months of expenses, and is considering a formal reserve policy. Cash above that floor is what we are using today to pay for building repairs and replacements.

> ### Looking Ahead: The 2028 Mortgage
>
> The mortgage on our parish property carries a favorable 2.4% interest rate, but the loan term ends in 2028. At our current payment level, we expect to still owe about $2.5 million at that time, and that balance will very likely need to be refinanced at a higher rate. Each additional percentage point of interest would cost the parish roughly $25,000 a year.
>
> **Why not pay it off now?** Our savings earn more in interest (roughly 3.5 to 4.25 percent) than the mortgage costs (2.4 percent), and our buildings need care now, so savings above our reserve go to the buildings rather than extra mortgage payments. Parish leadership will begin refinancing conversations well ahead of 2028, and the Finance Council and Parish Council will weigh how much to pay down before then.

The FY27 Budget

The budget for July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2027 has been adopted. It projects:

FY27 Adopted Budget	Amount
Operating revenue	$3,199,198
Operating expenses	$2,919,326
Projected surplus	**$279,872**

The budget was built conservatively:

- **Offertory is budgeted essentially flat** with FY26 ($2,859,000). We are not counting on last year's growth to repeat; any growth beyond budget adds to the surplus.
- **All three of our priests now serve the parish full-time.** In FY26, two of them split their time with diocesan assignments, and the diocese shared their cost. Taking on their full cost adds about $121,000, covered from ongoing revenue. Having our priests with us full-time is a real gift.
- **New or expanded lines include facilities management, security, and textbooks, and diocesan assessments increase by $82,000.** The Finance Council will review these against actual spending each quarter.
- **Expenses are budgeted to rise about 10% over FY26,** largely due to clergy costs and facilities needs. Even so, the budget projects a surplus of almost $280,000, which will go to the care of our buildings.

> **About These Numbers**
>
> The parish operating figures do not include second collections for the USCCB and the diocese, which pass through the parish to their intended recipients. They also exclude parish ministries that manage their own funds: Moms+, Fraternus, Fidelis, and our St. Vincent de Paul Conference.
>
> During FY26 the parish moved to a new accounting system (Sage Intacct) with an updated chart of accounts. Prior-year figures were mapped into the new system, so a few year-over-year comparisons may reflect that change rather than real differences in activity.

Capital Projects and Facilities

We are in one of the most active seasons of building and renewal in our parish's history. Each project below is guided by a parish committee of volunteers and staff and carried out with the approval of our pastor and, where required, the Bishop.

UNDER CONSTRUCTION

Columbarium and Prayer Garden

The Prayer Garden and Columbarium will offer members of our parish family a beautiful and dignified final resting place, and all of us a peaceful setting to gather in prayer, faith, hope, and comfort, for generations to come.

The columbarium is now expected to be complete in early 2027, after a city permitting delay. It will have 528 niches in all, including 176 added in a second phase (Phase 1.5), and each niche can hold the cremated remains of two people. A Pietà and a cross, made by different artists, will stand together in the garden. The total estimated cost is about $915,000, including design and legal work, construction, the Pietà and cross, contingency funds, and a $100,000 reserve.

The project is fully funded by the sale of niches and by gifts given for the columbarium, so it is being completed without relying on the parish's general operating funds. As of September 30, 2026, 177 niches had already been reserved, a beautiful sign of our parish's faith, and 351 remain available: 175 in the first phase and 176 in Phase 1.5. To ask about one, contact the parish office.

ONGOING

Caring for Our Buildings

Our main facilities are now about 27 years old, and many core building systems are reaching the end of their useful life. This work is now paid for from our surplus, made possible largely by **Step Up** giving. About $500,000 is available today, and our needs exceed that, so projects must be staged over the next several years.

To guide these decisions, the parish formed a **Construction & Facilities Committee** in June 2026, made up of parishioners experienced in construction, facility management, vendor oversight, and financial planning. It is now one of the Parish Council's standing committees.

Recently Completed

- Through the Legacy of Faith, Hope, and Love campaign: parking lot repaving and lighting, a new sound system, and the original carpet and pew project.
- HVAC updates in FY26, funded by gifts designated for that purpose.

Top Priorities

- **Roof replacement.** Funds are set aside, and timing and final cost are still being determined.
- **Fire panel replacement in the older building.** The new system is about 70 percent installed and should be finished in mid-November, putting the whole building on one panel.

Also Underway or Planned

- **Heating and air conditioning.** Rather than one costly replacement, our roughly 30 HVAC units are being replaced one at a time as each reaches the end of its life.
- **Restrooms.** The heavily used restrooms upstairs and near Bevington Hall need updating; the committee is exploring coordinating this with school construction to save costs.
- **An additional confessional**, planned together with a new home for the choir, so more priests can hear confessions at the busiest times.
- **Safety and security improvements**, planned for the older building.

A Plan, Not a Patchwork: Our Construction Committee's Advice

Our buildings' needs are greater than the funds we have set aside. Rather than deciding repairs one at a time as things break, the Construction & Facilities Committee has advised the parish to step back and plan:

A full assessment. A professional look at every building system, sorting each need into urgent, foreseeable, and long-term.

A phased plan. A three-, five-, and seven-year maintenance and capital plan, so the parish can budget for replacements before they become emergencies.

Where we are now. We are working on this now with our architect for the school, who has already walked our buildings with the committee and is preparing a five-year maintenance plan. The school comes first over the next few months; the full plan will follow.

Once it is in hand, this plan will show the Councils, and you, where each dollar of surplus should go first.

ACTIVE CAMPAIGN

Our Lady of the Lake Catholic School

With the Bishop's approval, the parish is undertaking a **$2.5 million capital campaign** to renovate our Faith Formation building into Our Lady of the Lake Catholic School, with a target opening of **August 2027**. The school will open with Pre-K through 1st grade, and possibly 2nd, and will grow to serve Pre-K through 5th grade.

This decision was made carefully. The parish commissioned a feasibility study by Meitler, a national Catholic education consulting firm, which included listening sessions with English- and Spanish-speaking families, focus groups, and an online survey that drew 519 responses. The study confirmed strong, sustained demand for a Catholic school close to home. On March 18, 2026, both the Parish Council and the Finance Council affirmed that the school supports the parish's mission. The school has been planned in collaboration with Pope Saint John Paul II Preparatory School, St. John Vianney, and St. Joseph, so that Catholic schools in our area strengthen one another rather than compete.

The campaign will fund:

- Renovation and reconfiguration of classrooms for elementary use
- Modern safety and security systems
- Technology infrastructure
- Playgrounds for our youngest learners
- The administrative foundation needed to open a school of excellence

The school will make its home in the classrooms built through the 2016 Forward in Faith campaign. Generous parishioners gave those rooms for the formation of disciples, and they will continue to serve faith formation, just as their donors intended.

Sharing the building means some staff offices, storage, and meeting space will move, and planning is underway so that every ministry is well served as the school takes shape.

Because many pledges will be paid over several years, the parish is also asking the Bishop's permission for a line of credit through the Diocese of Nashville's Catholic Community Investment and Loan. It would be drawn only as needed to bridge the time between pledge payments and construction bills; it is not a long-term loan, and the parish will continue to keep a cash reserve for operations.

How you can help. Please pray for the families, teachers, and leaders of our new school. The parish will share the school campaign, and the invitation to become one of its founders, on its own weekend in the coming weeks.

IN PROGRESS

Sanctuary Beautification

A new crucifix has been commissioned for the wall behind the altar. The corpus is being painted in Italy and is expected in December; the painted backdrop will be made in January, and installation is expected after Easter 2027. Engineers are designing a mount that uses an existing structural beam, keeping the project close to its original cost. The Resurrection statue now in the sanctuary will move to a place of honor in the narthex. This project has been made possible by generous families who gave specifically for it.



Artist's preview of the new crucifix and painted backdrop above the arch to the Adoration Chapel. Final colors are still being adjusted.

Still being studied: our 8:30 and 11:00 Masses often have people standing along the walls. We are exploring whether opening the wall to the Guadalupe Chapel and music room could add 60 to 100 seats, with a new home for the choir. We are also considering a durable hard floor for the church in place of carpet. No decisions have been made, and we will share more when there is something concrete.

The Road Ahead: Vision 2030

Our Vision 2030 pastoral plan guides this work. Here is what lies ahead:

When	Milestone
November 2026	Statutes in effect; this report shared with the parish
January 2027	Councils and committees commissioned at Mass
Early 2027	Columbarium and Prayer Garden ready
Spring 2027	Crucifix installed after Easter; parish-wide ministry fair; budgets and ministry plans for the next year
August 2027	Our Lady of the Lake Catholic School opens
2027 and beyond	New choir space and additional confessional; more seating and new flooring if approved
2028	Mortgage refinancing, planned well ahead of the deadline
Through 2030	A phased three-, five-, and seven-year plan for the care of our buildings

IN CLOSING

Stay Informed and Get Involved

This report belongs to all of us. Here is how you can take part in the work ahead:

- **Pray** for our parish, our staff and volunteers, and the families who will be served by our new school and Faith Formation program.
- **Serve.** Contact the parish office to find a ministry that fits your gifts, or tell us of your interest in a standing committee (Section 2). Catechists and classroom helpers are especially needed this year.
- **Give.** If you are not yet giving regularly, prayerfully consider beginning with a weekly gift of any size, by envelope or recurring online giving through PushPay. If you already give, consider stepping up one bracket. And please pray about a gift to the school campaign.
- **Read more.** This report and a one-page summary are available by scanning the QR code in the bulletin and in print at the parish office.
- **Ask.** Questions about this report are welcome. Stop by the questions table after any Mass on the weekends of November 21–22 and 28–29, or contact Fr. Austin Gilstrap, Pastor, at pastor@ololcc.org.

Our Lady of the Lake Catholic Church

Sanctifying Hendersonville