

St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic Church

DMI Survey Results

During the fourth quarter of 2019 (late October to late November), the parishioners of St. Thomas the Apostle Church were asked to participate in a parish-wide survey, also referred to as the **Disciple Maker Index**. The survey gave people an opportunity to reflect on their spiritual growth, level of involvement in the parish, as well as their satisfaction with the parish and parish related activities. Out of our average of 800 weekend Mass attendees, we had 318 responses to the survey which is a 40% response rate and higher than the average parish response rate. Thank you for taking time to share your thoughts! As a result of your efforts the parish has gained valuable insight into your needs and how we can enhance our faith based community so we can grow as disciples of Jesus.

Based on the survey data, our top **parish strengths** include:

Personal Religious Beliefs:

- 93% respondents agree the Eucharist is the Body & Blood of Christ.
- 96% respondents agree Jesus died and rose again.
- 83% respondents agree in the belief of the Authority of the Church's teachings.
- 83% respondents agree the Church is critical to my relationship with God.
- 94% agree scripture is the Word of God.

Parish School:

- 82% respondents agree they would recommend the parish school to a friend.

Pastor:

- 65% respondents agree they would recommend the pastor to a friend.

The survey also helped us to identify several areas of **opportunities for the parish:**

Engagement/Volunteerism

- Only 36% respondents agreed that they were involved in decision making that affects the future of the parish.
- Only 34% respondents agreed that follow up to opportunities of service was given. Parishioners desire to be involved in the parish, but follow through was lacking.
- 60% of our weekend Mass attendees did not respond to the survey which supports how engagement is imperative at St. Thomas. Note: We have approximately 1,640 registered parishioners but only half attend weekend mass on a regular basis.

Spiritual Growth/Formation:

- Less than **50%** of our respondents felt the parish helped them grow spiritually to develop a personal prayer life and by providing workshops, retreats, and other resources.

Enhancing the Community Experience

- ❑ While 69% of respondents feel that our church is welcoming, 33% of respondents did not agree that the parish makes one feel welcome and accepted. This indicates that there are opportunities for growth to provide for a warmer, more welcoming environment for parishioners, visitors, and newcomers to our parish.

Forming Disciples:

- ❑ Less than 50% of the respondents felt the parish helped them connect with a local Catholic community by forming them as a disciple, however there is a great desire to do so by the respondents.
- ❑ Respondents indicate they lack the confidence in knowing the church teachings, sharing personal stories, and inviting someone to a parish activity, or answering someone's spiritual questions.

Father Jason has commissioned a **team of parishioners** with varied backgrounds to review the survey results and other data in order to develop a 'go-forward' plan. The members of this team are: **Ann Britzke, Cassy Eby, Brian Jondle, Dr. Tom Kolakovich, Jennifer Howard, Margaret Petersen, Stephanie Symanowski, Tish Wilsey and Father Jason.**

The team has been meeting for the last few months to pray, discern and plan the future direction for St. Thomas the Apostle Parish. Our **next steps will be crafting a vision for the parish, identifying key priorities, and what strategies/action steps** should be implemented to move the parish forward. We invite you to offer your comments, thoughts, and ideas to any team member. Your help will be vital in moving St. Thomas into the future. Finally, and most importantly, please hold the team and our parish in constant and fervent prayer that we will be guided by the Holy Spirit.