



St. Norbert Parish: Report on Disciple Maker Index Data

Parishioners of St. Norbert Catholic Community were invited to participate in the Disciple Maker Index (DMI) survey in Lent 2022. In all, 399 individuals completed this 75-question survey. The Catholic Leadership Institute (“CLI”) held a series of three webinars for parish staff on how to access the data, communicate it to the parish, and discern an action plan. A committee of the Parish Pastoral Council (“PPC”)¹ reviewed and analyzed the data and compiled this report to communicate our data to you. Looking ahead, parish leadership will identify priorities and goals and incorporate them into our strategic plan.

This report organizes the data around our parish’ four strategic anchors that Father Steve introduced this past September and were reiterated over Stewardship Weekend:

1. Leadership (Build a Leadership Culture, serving within our parish)
2. Exceptional Weekend Experience (Encounter Jesus in the Liturgy)
3. Grow Deeper (Light a Path to Jesus using the STEPS model to deepen our faith)
4. Grow Wider (Invite the Seeker)

Below, we provide a demographics snapshot of survey respondents, followed by survey data organized around the parish anchors. Please note that many data could fall under more than one anchor, and parish leadership will consider the data from the perspective of all anchors.

Snapshot of Respondent Demographics

Who completed our survey? Mostly older individuals, without school-age children, and who have been parishioners for a long time.

- 399 respondents (368 completed survey online, 31 on paper)
- 11% of respondents were under age 46
- 8% of respondents were single
- 77% of respondents do not have school age kids
- 16% have been parishioners for 5 years or fewer; 45% have been parishioners for 20+ years.

¹ The 2022 DMI committee consists of Kurt Zampier, Director of Mission Implementation; Deacon Steve Martino; Mary Beth Fritz, PPC Chair; Aly Oswald, Liturgy Coordinator; and Jeff Klein.

Leadership

The importance of leadership was a recurring theme in survey responses. In our anchors and in this report, the term “leadership” means having parishioners step forward and take on roles of service within the community.

- When survey respondents were asked to prioritize parish needs, the #2 answer was “more volunteers participating in ministry.”
- When asked to rank the community values that best describe the culture of our parish, the top three answers were “access to the sacraments and worship; prayerfulness; **service and outreach.**”

Exceptional Weekend Experience

Data indicated the Weekend Experience at St. Norbert’s is very good but not yet exceptional. In terms of preaching, respondents were positive, but there is some room for improvement. The music inspires people to participate more fully in Mass, especially our younger parishioners.

- When asked the two most important things you’d like to take away from the homily, according to those who report being heavily involved in the parish, the top three answers given were:
 - Desire to grow spiritually
 - Truth
 - Relevance
- 79% of respondents said they grow spiritually from preaching and homilies that connect their faith with everyday life. (This is consistent with survey results in 2017 when the response was 81%.)
- In general, respondents said the music at Mass makes them want to participate more fully in the liturgy. This is especially true for our younger parishioners.
 - Respondents < 18 and 18-25: 100% agree or strongly agree
 - Respondents age 26-35: 90% agree or strongly agree
 - Respondents age 56 to 75+: 69-75% agree or strongly agree

Grow Deeper

The anchor “grow deeper” refers to personally encountering Jesus and following in his footsteps. Survey results indicate St. Norbert’s provides opportunities for parishioners to do so.

Also worth noting, survey results reflect strong Catholic beliefs. Sadly, this is not something one can assume today. For example, in 2019, the Pew Research Center found that only 31% of Catholics believe in the real presence of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist.² Per the DMI survey, the percentage at our parish is far higher.

- 86% say my parish helps me grow spiritually as a Catholic.
- 75% responded that our church connects them with a small faith sharing group. This number is the same as in 2017 (75%).
- Overall, the data suggested a strong belief in core Catholic teaching among survey respondents:
 - 91% believe Jesus died and rose again
 - 85% believe the Eucharist is the real body and blood of Jesus Christ.
 - 90% believe scripture is the Word of God
 - 76% believe in the authority of the Church
 - 81% believe the Church is critical in their relationship with God
 - 83% believe in Jesus’s moral teachings
- Survey respondents also expressed a desire for “more catechesis on church teaching.”

Grow Wider

Part of “growing wider” means building a community that attracts people in all stages of life to explore what St. Norbert’s has to offer, particularly those who have not been to church in a long time.

- 94% of respondents would recommend our parish religious education (62% strongly agree, 32% agree). Actively recommending our parish religious education program could attract young families to our parish.

² <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2019/08/05/transubstantiation-eucharist-u-s-catholics/> (last visited 11/16/22).

- 90% would recommend our parish to a friend. (92% in 2017).
- Data suggest the overwhelming majority of respondents feel our parish is a welcoming place but do not regularly welcome others to join us:
 - 88% agree or strongly agree our parish is a welcoming place
 - 78% invited someone to Mass only 1-2 times per year or never
 - 82% invited someone to a parish activity only 1-2 times per year or never
- When asked, “What is your most preferred method of bringing others to Christ?,” 64% said “leading by example,” while 31% said “one-to-one conversation.”
- The survey identified opportunities for growth. The top three opportunities come from questions about “the parish equipping respondents to have conversations about their faith with family and friends by . . .”
 - “teaching me how to share my personal witness story”
 - “growing my confidence in the Church’s teachings so I can answer others’ questions
 - “teaching me how to share the story of Jesus”
- When asked, “If you could select only 3 out of 12 options that the parish needs more of,” the #1 answer was “more young people involved.”

Summary

The DMI survey has been conducted in 2017 and 2022. The survey results from 2022 are remarkably consistent with those of the DMI survey in 2017. This indicates that we haven’t lost ground, but we haven’t grown much either, and our aspiration is to be exceptional. By focusing on the four strategic anchors (Leadership, Exceptional Weekend Experience, Growing Deeper, and Growing Wider), the intention is to do few things very well in order to make the greatest impact to achieve our mission:

To be a welcoming community that encourages personal encounters with Jesus and provides opportunities to share Him with others.

Our hope is that five years from now, at the next DMI survey, rather than seeing consistent results we will see pronounced improvement!