

What's Next?



Opportunities for Growth

As disciples, we have both the responsibility to come and to go. Not unlike the rest of the country, some of the biggest areas of growth for the Diocese of Columbus are based in our confidence in sharing the good news and inviting others whom we love into a deeper relationship with the Lord.

Especially as the *Real Presence, Real Future* initiative examines how best to serve our diverse diocese with fewer priests, our need to invite young men to consider the priesthood grows every year. Recently, many more women and men religious have accepted the invitation to serve our diocese. Through their presence, it is hoped that many more young women and men will be invited to consider religious life. As important as our priests, deacons, and religious are, the work of evangelization is not on their shoulders alone.

Similar to the rest of the country, the faithful in Columbus are looking to grow in confidence in sharing the richness of what the Church has to offer as well as our own personal stories of faith. The strategies and resources being researched and implemented as part of *Real Presence, Real Future* will seek to support parishes to equip their people for this important work.

5 Questions You Might Have

1. How will this, or can this, information be used by the parish or the diocese?

With any journey, you have to know your destination as well as where you are starting from in order to get there. While our journey as disciples and a Church is lifelong, the *Real Presence, Real Future* initiative wants to assist the entire Diocese of Columbus to take the next giant step toward our Lord. The Disciple Maker Index provides one snapshot of a large portion of our worshipping population. You are essential to the work of evangelization, in order to reach those who have not been practicing their faith. At a diocesan level, this information will help guide some of the research and resourcing that Bishop Brennan hopes to offer parishes and parish leaders in the future. At the parish level, it is the hope that by growing in understanding of where we are starting from, each community can help provide input and direction as to where we need to go. It is also a hope that several years from now, we can retake this index for another snapshot and see the progress we make together.

2. Who didn't we hear from?

The Disciple Maker Index intentionally focuses on those "in the pews." It gives a parish a sense of where their worshipping parishioners are in order to be able to discern strategies to build up this core group of Catholics and send them out on mission.

Of the 17,909 individuals who indicated their age, almost 10% indicated that they were age 35 or younger. While this is two points higher than Catholic Leadership Institute's national database of over 300,000, reaching out to our young adults will be an essential area of growth for all parishes in the next decade.

Of the 17,856 individuals who indicated their ethnicity, 11% were non-Caucasian with half of those individuals (5%) indicating a Latino/Hispanic. According to projected Census information, about 3% of the total population in the counties that comprise the Diocese of Columbus are Latino. However,

we know this is a growing segment of the Catholic population in Central Ohio.

3. What effect does COVID-19 have on these perceptions?

Catholic Leadership Institute has been administering the Disciple Maker Index since 2014. Interestingly, parishioner perceptions in the aggregate were not dramatically different pre-pandemic and during the pandemic. Further qualitative research shows that parishioners have been extremely grateful for the efforts their parishes have made during these difficult times in many cases boosting positive feedback if anything. Of course, time and the fruit of our current and future outreach efforts will tell us what the long-term effects might be from the pandemic.

4. What if my parish's results are better or worse than these diocesan averages?

This feedback is one lens through which we can grow in understanding of where we are as a Catholic community. There are many lenses through which to look. As was previously mentioned, the Disciple Maker Index gave us a snapshot of our starting place in 2021. While the diocesan results are a helpful benchmark, the most important thing is where we go next in service to God's people.

5. Where do we go from here?

The conversation continues. Key parish leaders from every parish have been reviewing this information and have been asked to share parish-specific thoughts over the summer. This Fall, there will be extensive consultation with all parishioners around strategies and models for the future based on this feedback as well as sacramental, financial, and socio-economic trends throughout the diocese. Be sure to stay connected by signing up for more information at www.RealPresenceRealFuture.org and through your local parish.



Renewing the Church in the Diocese of Columbus



Disciple Maker Index Results

Thank you to the more than 21,000 Catholics from all parts of the Diocese of Columbus who completed the Disciple Maker Index (DMI) Survey during Lent. The results are in, and the Diocese wanted to share some of the highlights.

The DMI is a 75-question survey designed to provide an opportunity for parishioners to reflect on their individual spiritual growth and overall parish effectiveness. Almost 300,000 Catholics at more than 1,500 parishes throughout 40 dioceses have taken the DMI since 2013, providing not just valuable data for each parish, but for the Church nationally, as well. Now the Diocese of Columbus can be counted among these national benchmark dioceses.



Reviewing the Results

Phase I (May - June)

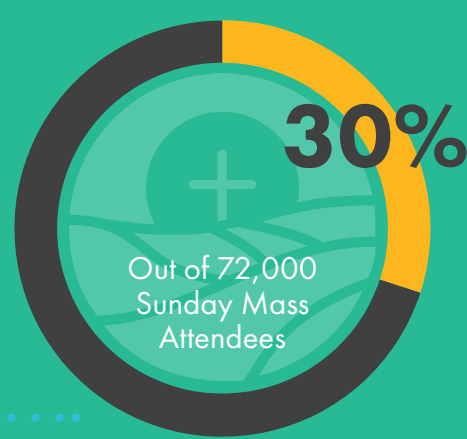
The DMI parish-specific results were sent to each parish to be reviewed by the pastor and his RPRF parish representatives, all of whom attended an information webinar in May to learn how to read and interpret the DMI data for their parish. They met to review the outcomes together and to draw meaningful conclusions from the data. The information generated from the DMI survey is quite extensive and required time, patience, and focus to understand it in its proper context. Thank you to pastors and RPRF representatives for your generosity in serving your parish in this way. Diocesan-wide results that reflect the collective responses from the more than 21,000 respondents are included here.

Phase II (late June - July)

Parishes will share their parish-specific results of the DMI with parishioners, along with information about the context of the survey and some initial conclusions reached by the pastor and his RPRF representatives.

Total Surveys:
21,462

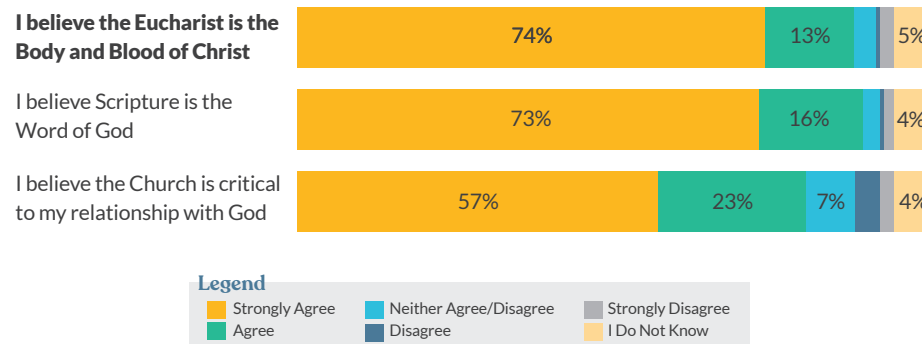
Survey Participants
Non-Participants



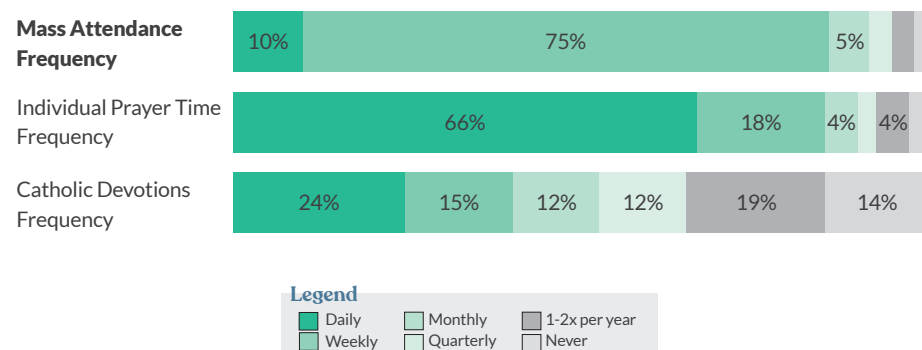
Over a five-year period, the Diocese of Columbus has averaged 72,000 Catholics attending Mass on a weekend. **Almost 30% of the individuals** completed the Disciple Maker Index this Lent. This is above the national average for other dioceses who have taken the DMI nationwide.

Strengths

Among the belief questions, survey respondents indicated the strongest belief in the following areas:



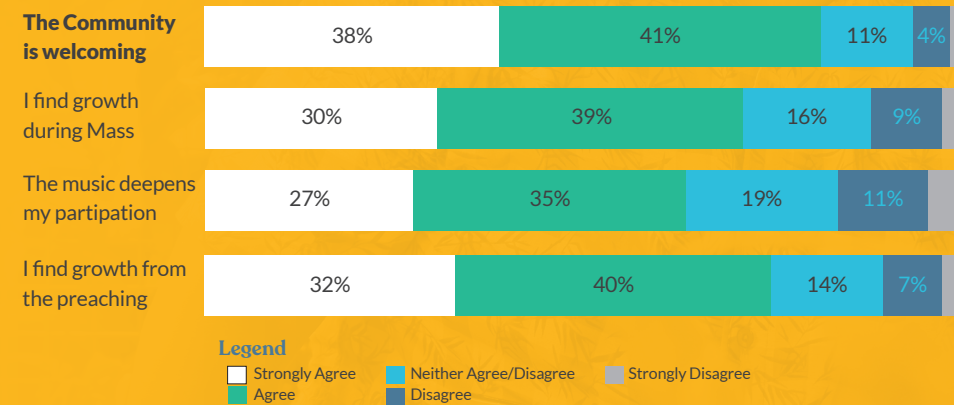
With respect to faith practices, survey respondents indicated they most frequently engaged in the following activities:



The Sunday Experience

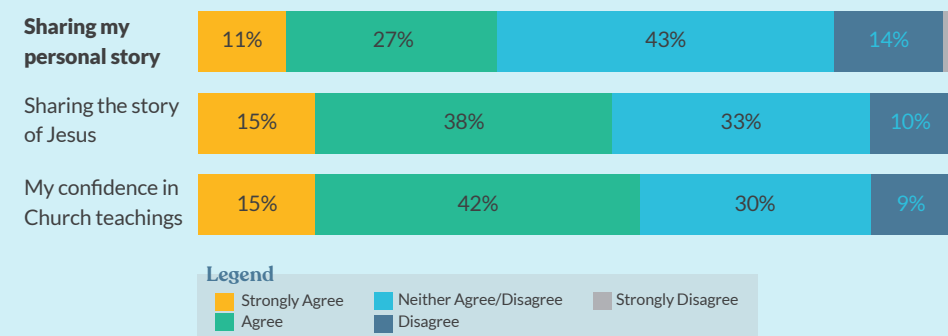
While the pandemic has forced us to do things a little differently over the past year, parishioner perceptions on the Sunday experience in their parish remain relatively in alignment with parishioner perceptions from around the country pre-pandemic. Welcome and hospitality as well as music that helps deepen participation will be especially important as restrictions are removed and worship resumes some normalcy.

How I personally view the Sunday Mass

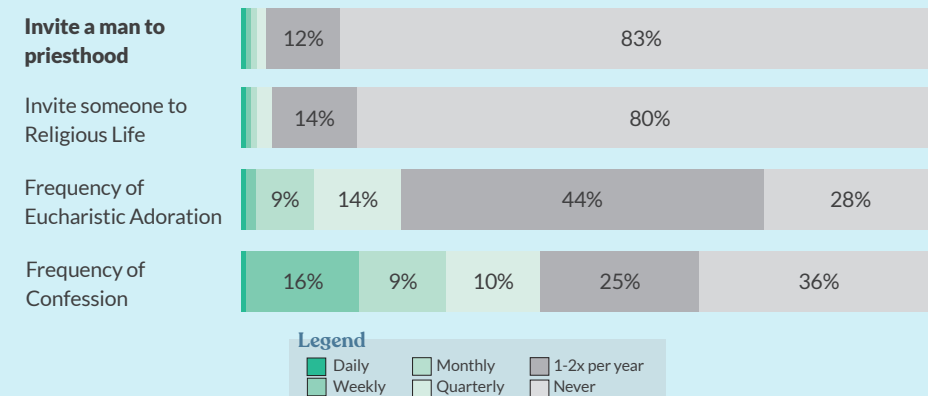


Opportunities

With respect to the areas in which survey respondents felt they needed the most support from their parishes, the most significant were:

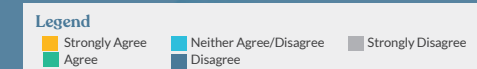


With respect to the faith practices that survey respondents indicated they were doing the least, the most significant were:

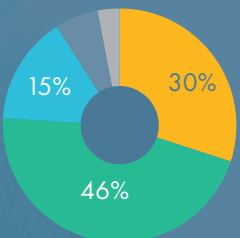


Fostering Spiritual Growth

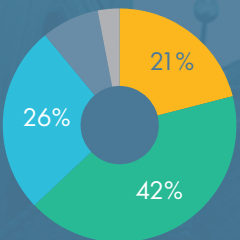
One of the main goals of *Real Presence, Real Future* is to help Catholics grow in their prayer life and their relationship with the Lord. Several different evangelization subcommittees have been working for the past year to develop strategies and resources to assist clergy and lay leaders with helping their people grow. As the Disciple Maker Index results from across the diocese show, the Church in Columbus is starting on a strong foundation.



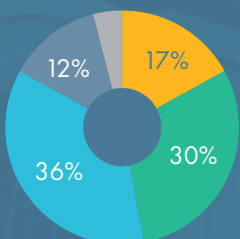
The Parish helps me grow spiritually



The Parish helps me grow my prayer life



The Parish helps me grow through small groups



The Parish helps me grow through formation as a disciple

