



## FROM THE DESK OF FR. MIKE

Last year Cardinal Cupich asked that every parish in the Archdiocese of Chicago participate in a Disciple Makers Index survey designed to give people an opportunity to reflect on their level of involvement in and satisfaction with their parish, as well as a chance to reflect on their spiritual growth and personal beliefs. The Church of St. Mary received 548 completed surveys, which is 64% of our average Sunday Mass attendance. Here is a report of the responses from members of the parish.

**SOME OF OUR STRENGTHS** - The following percentages show those who answered “agree” or “strongly agree” to each question.

Religious Education - 87% would recommend our school to a friend, 85% would recommend our religious education program to a friend and 95% believe that one of their most important responsibilities as a parent is to help their children know Jesus.

Outreach - 81% affirm that our parish helps them to connect with a local Catholic community by providing opportunities to serve those in need, and 81% of respondents have actually volunteered for such service within the last year.

### FAITH MARKERS -

- 94% believe Jesus died and rose from the dead
- 91% believe Scripture is the word of God
- 88% personally believe that the Eucharist is really the body and blood of Christ
- 87% participate in individual prayer time with God at least weekly (68% do so daily)
- 86% believe in Jesus’ moral teachings as taught by the Church
- 83% believe the Church is critical to their relationship with God
- 80% believe in the teaching authority of the Church

### MISCELLANEOUS -

- 84% say our parish makes information easy to find (via bulletin, web, email)
- 83% would recommend associate priests serving at our parish to a friend
- 80% agree that our parish makes them feel welcomed and accepted

**SOME OPPORTUNITIES** - The survey also disclosed some areas where there is room for improvement. As a result, a small team of staff and parishioners identified the following priorities and goals for our parish to pursue over the next 2½ years.

### **PRIORITY 1: The Church of St. Mary will provide parishioners with opportunities and resources for spiritual growth.**

- Goal 1: Increase the percentage who strongly agree our parish helps them grow spiritually by offering vibrant and engaging Sunday Masses from 26% to 40% by summer 2026.
- Goal 2: Increase the percentage who strongly agree our parish helps them grow spiritually as a Catholic from 32% to 45% by summer 2026.

### **PRIORITY 2: The Church of St. Mary will foster community life on and off campus.**

- Goal 1: Increase the percentage of those who strongly agree our parish is welcoming from 40% to 55% by Summer of 2026.
- Goal 2: Have 800-1000 parishioners in the aggregate participate in at least 3-5 major parish-wide social and service events in each fiscal year, starting July 1, 2024.

### **PRIORITY 3: The Church of St. Mary will form and connect young members of our community to a faith lived out.**

- Goal 1: Engage 100-200 high schoolers in social, spiritual, and service opportunities in the 2024-2025 school year.
- Goal 2: Offer 4-6 faith formation opportunities each year for families with children 18 or younger at the Church of St. Mary.

I ask that you prayerfully reflect on this information and let me know if you would like to take an active role in bringing the above goals to successful completion at our parish.

May God bless us in living extraordinary lives of faith in ordinary time,