

St. Frances Cabrini Parish Community

Parish Pastoral Plan

Part Two

Role of the Disciple Maker Index in Shaping the Vision

By Matt Creevey – Envisioning Team Member

Throughout the past year, we have been invoking the Holy Spirit to guide and inspire our Parish Envisioning Team through the Prayer of the Faithful at our weekend Masses. The foundational pieces that our Envisioning Team used in developing our Parish's Values and Priorities began back in 2018 when we, as a Parish Community, participated in the **Disciple Maker Index (DMI) Survey**. This Survey allowed our parishioners the opportunity to reflect upon their individual spiritual growth and knowledge of the faith, their personal relationship with Jesus, and provide feedback on whether the Parish leadership was effectively supporting their need and desire for spiritual growth and understanding of our practices, while developing a connection with our Lord. With over 500 responses to the Survey, and with the interpersonal relationships that members of our Envisioning Team have developed with parishioners of Saint Frances Cabrini over the years, our Team had more than enough data to begin identifying and prioritizing different areas of strengths and opportunities to grow within our Parish Community, so to better understand the current position of our Parish and the plans that would be needed for the future of our Saint Frances Cabrini Parish.

During the process of interpreting the responses from the surveys, we analyzed how we compared to other parishes which also participated in the Survey within our Archdiocese, where our strong points as a Parish Community were, what made us successful in these areas, as well as identifying the areas of opportunity to grow and provide for our Parish. During this process, we found the following trends that highlighted where our parishioners stood in their Catholic faith journey, how they felt about our Parish and where we needed to shift our attention:

- **Our Parish Staff and Parish Community** – People are happy with the pastoral staff and would recommend us to a friend, while also finding the Parish Community to be inviting and welcoming.
- **Sharing the Invitation** – While we found parishioners are happy with our pastor and the staff, we, as a Parish, are also reluctant to invite others to come and participate at Mass, come to faith formation programs or share our witness stories with one another.
- **Embracing the Faith** – We found a dis-connect between the number of participants who responded by identifying themselves as “Catholic” yet also responded that they are not engaged in a ministry within the parish or do not fully understand their faith.
- **Continuing Spiritual Growth** – We found that our parishioners have a desire in continuing to grow in their faith beyond where they are now, while also strongly agreeing that our Parish is aiding their spiritual growth by providing them with Parish Missions, workshops, and other resources throughout their journey.
- **Dwindling Sacramental Trends** – Having the Parish be a focal point in the lives of our parishioners is an area for growth and was shown as an area of priority for the Team to focus on. Over a 5-year historical snapshot, our Parish has shown a steady decline in the number Weddings, Baptisms, First Communions and Confirmations.

Like many parishes in the Archdiocese, we have our strengths upon which to build and we also have our areas for growth. The DMI Survey was an opportunity for us, as an Envisioning Team, to reflect on where we, as a Parish Community, are going, and where the opportunities for growth are for our Parish. As outlined previously in our Parish's Vision Statement, Saint Frances Cabrini Parish Community is committed to the growth and strengthening of faith for each of our parishioners. In the coming weeks, we will be providing additional reflections and commentaries from members of our Envisioning Team regarding the various components of our Parish Pastoral Plan.