



Catholic Leadership
INSTITUTE

THE DISCIPLE MAKER INDEX FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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About the Survey Design

1. How was the Disciple Maker Index survey created?

- a. Catholic Leadership Institute gathered 100 bishops, priests, diocesan officials, parish leaders and authors/thought leaders (Sherry Weddell, Matthew Kelly, etc) to a 2-day “think tank” on parish engagement which produced some initial hypothesis. CLI then took a smaller group of the same constituents and crafted the survey. After that, CLI shared the survey with 15 bishops for feedback and edit. This will be the fourth year of the Disciple Maker Index, and more than 15 Dioceses and over 50,000 parishioners have taken part in the survey over the last three years.

2. Can we add unique questions about our parish to the survey?

- a. Not at this time. Part of the value of the survey is to see results benchmarked against other parishes around the country and in Canada. All participating parishes will be taking the survey at the same time and the consistency allows for the benchmarking. Additionally, it keeps the survey from getting too long. Catholic Leadership Institute is evaluating this possibility for future years.

3. This survey looks like it is geared to people in the pews. Aren't we supposed to be going after “the lost” or those not present in our pews?

- a. The survey will most likely be completed by people who are coming with some degree of regularity to your parish. The survey results will tell you what about the parish is keeping them coming as well as things that might be prompting them to start falling away. Both of these elements will help inform how we can reach out to those completely detached from the parish. Additionally, it is our belief that a primary strategy to reaching the lost has to be more deeply engaging and equipping those who are present in our pews. How can we equip those in our pews to be disciple makers? These results will aid in that greatly.

4. Numbers, graphs, likelihood to recommend, this sounds like a lot of corporate language and consumer mentality. This is the Catholic Church not the Home Depot.

- a. Remember all of the graphs and numbers are the aggregated voice of your people who have taken time to give you their feedback. Evangelization will always be best on a 1-1 basis. Understanding where your people are from a macro view allows you and others to “meet them where they are.” We do ask some parishioner satisfaction questions – these are to help you identify if there are any barriers or opportunities to help aid in your pastoral outreach. The Disciple Maker Index also asks the individual parishioner to reflect on their discipleship and practice of their faith in order to get past the consumer mentality and into a discipleship/mission mentality.

About the Survey Results

5. How will the Disciple Maker Index results be shared with parishioners?

- a. Those staff and parishioners who the pastor invites to be a part of the consultation day or planning process will get the full survey report. **We do not advise sharing the whole report with all of your parishioners because it is a lot of information and needs to be put in context.** We suggest that you summarize what you have learned, highlight 2-3 things to celebrate and 2-3 opportunities. Catholic Leadership Institute has sample bulletin inserts and communication pieces to assist you and we can also work with you to craft the most helpful summary and update. It is important to both thank and share some reflection of what you learned from the survey with parishioners in addition to incorporating it appropriately in your plans for the future.

6. What about confidentiality? With whom will my parish's results be shared? How about individual parishioner's responses?

- a. We take confidentiality of the parishioners very seriously. We want them to provide honest feedback. No one in the diocese or on your parish staff - including the pastor - will have access to individual parishioner responses. Likewise any email addresses or contact information provided will be saved on secure servers and not released for any purpose other than distribution of the survey. As for your parish's results, your results will be shared with you and those key leaders you bring with you to the consultation day or planning process. **Catholic Leadership Institute will not share your parish's individual data without your expressed written permission.** If one of your parishes receives the highest feedback on a particular question (liturgy, preaching, social outreach), that will be indicated on every parish's report in an effort to share best practice.

7. What is the Net Promoter Score?

- a. The purpose of the Disciple Maker Index is to provide a tool that will help us equip and call forth disciple-makers – people who bring others to know Jesus. We want to build promoters of the faith and promoters of our parishes as places to encounter Jesus and communities of faith. Given this purpose and the fact that the survey will most likely be responded to by people who are already coming to the parish, the Net Promoter Score is a helpful and cutting edge way to analyze survey responses on a 5-point scale of agreement for any given question. When we take the percentage of those who give a specific question a 5 (aka a promoter) and subtract those who gave a specific question a (3 – neither agree nor disagree, 2 – disagree or 1 – strongly disagree) we have the net percentage of promoters for that question. If that net percentage is positive, that is probably not an area you need to be concerned with. If it is negative, it most likely is something you want to think about more. Research shows that the unprompted positive behavior and endorsement of those who give something a 5 on a 5-point scale will influence another person's behavior. As part of the Disciple Maker Index, you will receive the survey results through this lens. You will also receive all of the data for each question.

8. Why are you comparing parishes against each other?

- a. For the data to be as helpful as possible, it always needs to be put into context. There is not a one-size fits all parish model. Inner city parishes look different than suburban parishes. Northeast parishes look different than Southwest parishes. It's helpful for a parish to understand the results in the context of parishes of like profile. It's also helpful to see what was possible on particular question. If my parish has 30% of parishioners who would recommend our religious education program to a friend – that is one piece of helpful information. If the national average of 100 parishes for that question is 35%, it still is an opportunity to improve but perhaps it is not where we need to focus right away given limited time and resources. Conversely, if the national average was 67% and parishes of like size and location was 57%, 30% would mean something different.

9. What is the needed response rate from the parishes?

- a. Catholic Leadership Institute would hope to see an 8-10% response rate from your parishioners. If your response rate is less than 8%, the data will still be helpful, though not as conclusive as if you had a higher response.

Parishioners have the option to complete the survey using the online link (www.disciplemakerindex.com) as well as by completing a paper survey. We encourage you to push out this link to the email addresses that you already have. This might be a good time to update the email list for your parish- so we've provided pew cards for collecting email addresses. **Getting a high count of responses is your ultimate goal.**

About the Survey Distribution

10. How do I access the Disciple Maker Index survey?

- a. The online version of the survey can be found at www.disciplemakerindex.com. Note that this survey will only be active during the launch time (see Key dates). A paper version of the survey will also be sent to you to distribute. We provide up to 100 copies, but can also provide you with an electronic version to print more copies if necessary.

11. Is there a staff position that is best suited to be the point contact?

- a. That is up to you and should be based more upon the characteristics and skills versus a dedicated role. The person who will be most helpful is one who is organized, can help us connect to other appropriate staff and info (email lists, etc) and who believes in this endeavor. A Full-Time staff member is preferable but whomever you appoint is who we will work with.

12. How long does the survey take to complete?

- a. 10-15 minutes

13. What is the youngest age able to complete the survey?

- a. Keeping in mind local diocesan and civic policies, Catholic Leadership Institute recommends that only individuals 18 years of age and older complete the survey.

14. In which languages is the survey offered?

- a. This year the survey will be offered in English, Spanish, Haitian Creole, Portuguese, Acadian French, Chinese, and Vietnamese. As Catholic Leadership Institute continues to raise funds, it is their hope to expand it to other languages.

15. What other dioceses have participated or will participate in the Disciple Maker Index?

- a. Parishes in the Archdioceses of Boston, Chicago, Denver, Detroit, Galveston-Houston, Omaha, Philadelphia, Seattle, St. Louis, Toronto, and the Dioceses of Bridgeport, Fort Wayne-South Bend, Harrisburg, Houma-Thibodaux, Pittsburgh, Portland, St. Augustine, Miami, St. Petersburg, Saint John NB, Tulsa, and Wichita.

16. I have more questions. Who can I contact?

- a. Please call Catholic Leadership Institute at 610-363-1315 or send us an email to DMI@catholicleaders.org