



Adult Faith Formation Committee

2017 Survey Results and Next Steps

The Adult Faith Formation (AFF) Committee thanks everyone who participated in the recent survey, designed to better understand the needs of our parishioners for ongoing educational programs. The purpose of this communication is to briefly summarize the survey results and then outline some directions that it indicates for continuing to build on an already strong Adult Faith Formation program. Survey highlights are below.

Overall Respondents

- A total of 149 parishioners completed the 12 question survey.
- Majority of the respondents were in the 60-79 age category, with smaller but important fractions below 60 and above 80.
- The great majority was no longer working but a significant number do still work.
- About 2/3 of the respondents were female and 1/3 male.
- This demographic data enabled analysis of survey answers based on age, gender, or working status that was helpful in identifying interests of each segment.

Interests

The survey asked about interest in a number of different types of programs.

- "Strengthening My Faith" was by far of the overriding interest, with programs focused on areas such as Bible Study, Prayer, Church History, Comparing Other Religions, "Lives of the Saints", "The Sacraments", "Apologetics/Defending the Faith", and "Morality and Other Contemporary Issues" all highly rated.
- Having a special guest speaker interested a third of the respondents.
- These results tell us that program diversity is important, so the AFF Committee will encourage diverse program offerings and advertise them based on the topical area they address to assist those looking for particular types of programs.

Preferred Program Options for Greater Participation

- **Time:** While weekday mornings were the most favored, we clearly saw the desire for evening and weekend program offerings, especially for those still working. The AFF Committee will develop new program offerings in 2018 to try to meet these needs.
- **Time:** One particular experiment would be to offer a program between the two Sunday Masses to determine if this is a desirable time, saving the need to make an extra trip to the parish for a program.
- **Type/Length:** The desired length of programs as well as preferred method of delivery were explored. A 2-6 session program over six weeks or less was of greatest interest, although

one-time events were also highly rated, especially by those who had not participated in many past programs. The AFF Committee will be looking to schedule parish-wide, one-time events in the evenings to facilitate wider attendance with a range of presenters including our own clergy and others.

- **Small Groups:** Many programs are currently offered through existing small groups in the parish. Survey respondents told us they are often not sure how to become involved in these small groups and wonder if they are open to new members. The AFF Committee will look to clarify the ways to join the existing small groups where possible and form additional ones as needs arise.
- **Web-based Options:** Online program delivery was of interest to about 1/3 of the survey respondents, and half said they are aware of and use the www.Formed.org website. Viewing programs online is a great tool for faith formation, especially if there are schedule or travel limitations. The AFF Committee will continue to promote Formed and include specific program recommendations for the parish to consider. We will encourage faith formation programs to use Formed so that they can be viewed at home in the case of a missed in-person class.

Publicity for Awareness

Another area that was explored in the survey was how parishioners found out about faith formation programs. While bulletin announcements were universally cited, announcements, and especially encouragement, from the pulpit at Mass as well as word of mouth from a friend were also important. The survey suggested that improvements could be made by providing better descriptions of programs, which the AFF Committee will do going forward.

Again the AFF Committee thanks those in the parish who took the time to respond to the survey and provide the results that will assist in guiding the programs in the future. If you have specific interest in the full survey results or would like to make a suggestion regarding the Adult Faith Formation program, we encourage you to e-mail us at adultfaithformation@sthomaslc.com or talk to any AFF Committee member.

The St. Thomas the Apostle Adult Faith Formation Committee