

Saint Thomas the Apostle Parish

2008 Long-range Planning Survey: 259 Aggregated Responses

QUESTION #1

HOW CAN ST. THOMAS BETTER SUPPORT YOUR FAITH JOURNEY?

LEADERSHIP

- 52x Doing a great job/continue what is being done
- 13x Fr. Jim is doing a great job / great homilies
- Fr. Jim needs to be more accessible (office hours like college professors)
- Improved coordination between volunteers and activities
- Advocate for women in the priesthood

LITURGY

- 8x Shorter homilies – more understandable language / not so depressing / less scolding
- 5x Continue music ministry
- 4x More quiet time during and after Mass
- 2x More teaching about parts of the Mass
- 2x Earlier Mass time on Saturdays / weekday evening Mass
- 2x Targeted Masses – for high school students, or half hour children's Mass on the weekend
- No clapping during Mass
- Latin Mass (once a month)
- Better seating for handicapped and easier for them to receive communion
- Communion service instead of morning prayer when Fr. Jim isn't available

PARISH ENRICHMENT

- 2x Work on outreach / welcoming new members
- Too many activities

OUTREACH

STEWARDSHIP

EVANGELIZATION

FAITH FORMATION

- 50x Faith formation – all ages/family/small group/large group/mini talks/outside speakers/ morning or evening
- Parish renewal program with outside speakers
- 8x More hours for adoration/perpetual adoration – with child care
- 8x Connect more with youth
- 7x More parish missions/day retreats
- 6x More times for reconciliation – before/after daily Mass – 3:15 each day
- 4x Online information – homilies/bible study/book study/Q & A
- Weekly readings in the worship aid handouts
- Men's group breakfasts (once a month)
- Change dates of St. Lazare's Retreat
- 2x Support groups – bereavement/care givers
- Continuing counseling services

SOCIAL JUSTICE

- 5x More diversity / social justice teaching

EDUCATION

QUESTION #2

WHAT ARE YOUR HOPES FOR SAINT THOMAS IN THE NEXT 5 YEARS?

LEADERSHIP

- + 125x (or more) Many people put the statement “continued growth” and some added long paragraphs that highlighted the vibrancy of our many ministries

Retention of Staff – Father Jim, Deacons, etc.

- 30x Hoping to keep Father Jim as our priest
- 3x Love Father Jim, but want parish to stay great even if he leaves
- The Deacons, their sermons and enrichment of ministries were mentioned, with a dozen or so hoping that Dean Vernon can eventually be ordained and stay at St. Thomas
- 10x Great appreciation for Eileen and the music ministries
- 2x Negative comments about DRE

Volunteerism and Ministries

- 30x Hope for more involvement in basic ministries, ushers, lectors, EMEs
- 4-5x Balance of ministries, letting go of ones we don't need, put appropriate ones in place

LITURGY

- 5-6x Mention of chaotic distracted feelings at Mass, wish less announcements and sermons were shorter when lots of things are going on
- 8-12x Like the mix of teachers with the Deacons giving sermons and wanted more of a mix of new voices, more missions
- Hope St. Thomas would embrace the Pope's wishes; NO CLAPPING during Mass
- Modesty in dressing
- A relevant and holy worship experience

PARISH ENRICHMENT

- Gifts of members cherished and utilized
- To have more members, and to have a lot of doughnuts (doughnuts multiple times)

HOSPITALITY

- 12x Positive – hope that an embracing and welcoming place still exists
- 10x Negative – hope for less cliques and judgmental attitudes

Two Direct Quotes:

“I hope for more unity in our faith community. I feel things are very fractured right now and it is having a real impact on many people's faith life. People feel excluded, judged, looked down upon, and intimidated. I know people that won't get involved in certain things because of who is running them. This is no way for people in a faith community to feel. My hope is that everyone feels welcomed, included, important, and loved.”

and

“I would like to see all parishioners take an active part in making everyone feel welcome. There is population that I feel is at risk for leaving St. Thomas, i.e., those who feel they don't fit it, those who feel they don't make enough money, don't have enough education, those not involved in a ministry, etc. I think the smallest gesture can have a positive or negative impact on a parishioner.”

COMMUNICATION AND TECHNOLOGY

- 4x Continued open communication
- 4x Improved use of technology

One Direct Quote – “My hopes for St. Thomas are a strong thriving community. I see the need to embrace communications and technology at a level that it has not been achieved to this date. I would like St. Thomas to reach into the community and become a source of love and support to those that are our neighbors. I have a vision for a technology center that would allow young and old the opportunity to access and learn technology. Many in our community are caught in the fast past change and trying to keep up with technology in the home and workplace. I see empowering those in our parish and

surrounding community in technology will allow us to server and love one another. And help to build a strong thriving community.”

OUTREACH

- A shelter and spiritual home for others

Diversity and inclusion

- 20x Teachings and understanding concepts of diversity, expanded diversity of membership, acceptance of others who are different, and continued diversity efforts in our school. Expressions to be sure to be inclusive and accepting of each other.

STEWARDSHIP

Tithing

- 20x Mentions of tithing and teachings about it and its benefits from a spiritual perspective as well as our call
- It's amazing to think of the wonderful things that could be done if a larger percentage of our community tithed, not to mention the blessings our membership would receive personally. This would allow us to grow exponentially in many directions
- *(If everyone understood tithing)* "Free" tuition at school for parishioners through tithing or a fund of some kind
- 3x Understanding it's importance and impact
- Financially sound and being good stewards of our resources

EVANGELIZATION

FAITH FORMATION

- 50-60x The statement that solid Catholic values are taught was stressed again and again
- 12x People wishing for activities that the entire family could participate in, citing the recent mission as a good example
- 12x Sacraments and adoration very important, more focus on Eucharist

YOUTH GROUP

- 12x Great appreciation for Patti and all she does with the youth
- 8x Keeping the youth group strong
- 5-6x Participation in Mass, possible youth music group (high school age)
- 10x Involved in outreach and leadership development of our youth
- 3x More social/faith involvement with age peers for special needs adults

PROFESSIONAL SINGLES NEEDS

- 5x We need more programs for the older but not yet retired, social gatherings and classes. To borrow a sentence from Rabbi Lewis' column "too often the 50-plus group is allowed to wallow in a spiritual desert"
- 3x Divorced w/ families and divorced singles
- 6x The working professional single person has programs and feels included in our parish age 30+

Two Direct Quotes:

“There seems to be a bit of uneasiness with certain groups (e.g., Regnum Christi) becoming quite popular at St. Thomas. It helps when Fr. Jim teaches and informs us about different religious groups and sends "friendly" reminders about what we should strive for as Catholic Christians. I hope St. Thomas can be a parish where everyone can feel welcome even if they are not part of some additional religious group.”

versus

“I have seen over the past 5 years that St. Thomas has groups that are exclusive (Regnum Christi). They don't seem to advertise or care to open up to general population. I would also like to see more appreciation and acceptance of people in their practice of Catholicism. Where each is accepted for where he/she is along the journey and more tolerance for those (like me) who struggle with certain teachings of the Church. I would like to see more platforms for which we can share our struggles without being put

down for them. There seems to be an undertone of people striving to be good Catholics and missing the boat on being a good Christian.”

SOCIAL JUSTICE

- 20x Neighborhood
- 25x Social Justice as our call rather than just doing “what’s right”
- 25x Ecumenical and other Catholic churches
- 6x Aquinas students, seeing more of them as well as importance of giving them a “parish home” while in attendance at Aquinas
- 2-3x Comments about understanding our place of stewards of the earth and ecological issues

EDUCATION

- 10x Dave Faber was praised multiple times as well as strength of the school
- 12x Great values and programming in school
- 4-5x Less division between those who attend St. Thomas and public, charter, home school
- 3-4x More openness to diversity in the parish and school
- 3-4x Open to all at school not “just those” who’ve been here the longest or considered better Christians.
- 3-4x School age children involved in more outreach activities

MISCELLANEOUS

Space and Facilities Issues

- 1x Remodel women's restroom--larger w/ wheelchair access
- 6x "Sound proof" facilities for crying children - sermon piped in
- 1x A few more handicapped parking spaces
- 5x Keep our facilities in excellent shape
- 5x Work to resolve space issues, a plan will be in place in 5 years

QUESTIONS #3

CHECK THE SERVICES THAT YOU PERSONALLY USE AND THOSE IN WHICH YOU VOLUNTEER

Ministry/service	Use ministry or service	Volunteer in ministry/service	Top 5 in importance
Alcoholics & Over Eaters Anonymous	1	0	1
Altar servers	44	8	5
Athletic boosters	34	35	1
Bible study and adult faith formation	36	15	42
Called to serve lay leadership training	1	1	1
Children’s liturgy of the word	30	4	9
Christian service outreach ministry	18	89	51
Counseling	11	0	12
Education commission	16	5	14
Education foundation	16	6	3
Eucharistic ministries	46	55	34
Evangelization training	0	1	5
Faith and friendship groups	37	38	12
Family meals ministry	41	69	10
Fifty-plus club	2	3	1
Finance council	16	5	17
Funeral ministry	9	50	17
Healing services	19	3	3
Home and school/school VIP	42	60	6
Homebound and nursing home ministry	1	23	36
Hospital ministry	25	9	25

Knights of Columbus	11	7	0
Lectors	43	15	6
Liturgy commission and environment	33	11	44
Marriage Encounter	17	6	3
Marriage preparation	14	4	15
Music ministry	61	39	48
Natural family planning	7	3	4
New member welcome/hospitality	51	37	16
Parish library/resource center	28	3	0
Parish newsletter	67	6	8
Pastoral council	20	9	24
Peer ministry groups	8	3	6
Personnel committee	7	3	0
Prayer line	26	6	12
RCIA	6	17	50
Religious education	16	13	47
Rosary group/Eucharistic adoration	25	21	12
Sacramental preparation	120	24	58
School	88	88	78
Social justice advocacy	8	11	25
Stephen ministry	5	6	30
Stewardship commission	7	4	14
Sunday school/nursery	25	10	14
Ushers	40	19	2
Vacation bible school	44	56	12
Youth ministries (junior, senior)	28	22	51

QUESTIONS #3a

RANK THE TOP 5 MINISTRIES/SERVICES IN IMPORTANCE IN MEETING THE NEEDS OF PARISHIONERS

School	78
Preparation for sacraments	56
Youth ministries	51
RCIA	50
Christian service/outreach	50
Music ministry	48
Religious education	46
Liturgy commission/environment	44
Homebound	36
Eucharistic ministries	34
Stephen ministry	30
Faith formation	28
Hospital	25
Social justice advocacy	25
Pastoral council	24

QUESTION #4

WHERE DO YOU BELIEVE THAT OUR ENERGY AS A PARISH IS CURRENTLY TAKING US? (Directional trends, both positive and negative)

LEADERSHIP

- 53x People expressed general positive feelings about the direction we're heading, the vibrancy of the faith experience, ministries and worship at St. Thomas
- 1x Any new ministry should be fully vetted by both the pastoral council and the finance council as well as the parish staff
- 1x An associate pastor to help Father Jim
- 2x I believe we are more a business than a family right now. The parish is too much of a corporation, and these long range plans do not help. The parish should try to work with what we have at the present time, and not try to think about the future, and let it come as it is.

PLANNING

- 6x We are proactive vs. reactive; Long-range plan
- 1x With growth we need more space
- 1x Make sure planning continues

LITURGY

- 1x Proper order is God first, then family/community; lastly ourselves. It seems like we keep trying to do more and more (especially with the Mass). Sometimes doing less is more

PARISH ENRICHMENT

Conservative trend

- 3x Guiding the growth and education of the congregation on more conservative Catholic beliefs
- 4x On a slow path towards a more conservative parish – personally do not consider this a positive in that it reduces the tolerance for alternative viewpoints

Parish as a Community

- 1x The Parish is in need of a renewal weekend again
- 3x Maintain the familial feel of the parish
- 6x Let's do more parish wide activities; be careful not to leave people behind; be careful of exclusive groups, not sure where to fit in
- 1x All of the energy could become "unwelcoming"
- 1x Disunity between the school and parish – the idea that the parish exists for the school not that the school is part of the entire parish mission statement

Volunteerism

- 10x Vibrant and active
- 7x Burn out; a 'chosen few' do work; there is a need for volunteers to fit "the mold" and not "rock the boat"
- 4x So much to volunteer for; struggle to maintain good family time
- 2x Find different ways to 'call' parishioners to use their time and talents, especially those not involved
- 1x Liturgical ministries need to be scheduled better

Ministries

- 10x Good diversity; openness to new ministries; adapt to needs as they present themselves
- 30x Too many; "sometimes it is better to do fewer projects and do them well"
- 4x Be aware of duplication; need to work together
- 2x Set up evaluation system to see if a certain ministry is working, if not "cut it out"
- 1x Need more programs for 50-65 year olds

OUTREACH

- 1x Need for collaboration with our neighboring parishes

Diversity

- 4x Open our doors to a wider group of parishioners, all races, ages, backgrounds, socio-economic, faith levels
- 3x Need to be open minded to the needs of blended families and divorced

Tolerance vs. intolerance

- 5x Openness and acceptance of different “movements” in the church but some of these groups think their way is the only way to God (example: challenge group)

STEWARDSHIP

EVANGELIZATION

FAITH FORMATION

Spirit/Faith/Catholic

- 26x It's a wonderful, faith-filled, parish that is having a positive impact on children and families. Helping us grow in our faith. Faith filled with the Holy Spirit
- 2x Not enough opportunity for confessions at different times
- 1x Display tabernacle in the Church

Catholic and Faith Education

- 4x Education first; Father Jim's teaching homilies
- 5x More opportunities of catechesis, bible study, and church practices
- 1x Need to teach reverence
- There is one **WONDERFUL** aspect about our religious ed program that I'd like to note: Father Jim is so **PRESENT** to our youth. I am touched and grateful for the time he makes for them. He is sometimes in the hall just to say “hi”, and he makes certain to offer all the classes the sacrament of reconciliation twice a year, **AND** participates, personally, in several of the sacramental prep classes. It **MATTERS**. Thank you.

SOCIAL JUSTICE

Outreach global and neighborhood, help to parishioners

- 25x Positive comments about parish efforts in these ministries/services
- 12x Comments indicating that the parish still has work to do to improve these ministries/services
- 12x Concerns for our families of St. Thomas who are struggling so badly right now and are falling through the cracks, need to think of them as well as outreach efforts
- 40x Social Justice was often mentioned by name with respondents happy about focus on social justice and outreach and the importance of engaging in them through truly Catholic principles, prayer and a relationship w/ Christ
- 8x Social Justice – we could do more and reach out more
- 6x Social Justice and making sure it is done in conjunction w/ faith principles

EDUCATION

- 2x Families are transferring to St. Thomas for the school
- 1x After school care a hindrance to strong marriages and strong families, not a help
- 17x Strong programs in our school
- 2x Excitement about Special Ed programs
- 4x Still a split between school children and parish children

MISCELLANEOUS

- 1x Technology is the direction the school and parish are heading
- 1x Confirm Deacon Vernon (as a Deacon)
- 1x E-mail system is unacceptable; allows for too much “garbage”. Where is an open and public plan for the technology and communication needs of the school/parish?
- 1x Better communication is needed
- 1x Concern with church's distribution of mail/handouts pertaining to political issues
- 1x I don't like all the money we spend in remodeling and stuff like that
- 17x Didn't know what to answer for this question

QUESTION #5

IF PARISH RESOURCES INCREASED SIGNIFICANTLY, WHAT SERVICE OR MINISTRIES WOULD YOU ADD OR EXPAND?

LEADERSHIP

- 1x Pastoral
- 2x Increase Deacon presence
- 1x Liturgy commission
- 1x Increase staff

LITURGY

- 3x Music ministry
- 1x Bring more varied and different styles of music

PARISH ENRICHMENT

Hospitality Welcoming and Engaging Membership

- 8x Welcome ministry and integrating new members into parish life
- 1x Time and talent surveys
- 2x Social activities for our parish and in the summer
- 2x Ushers and lectors

OUTREACH

- 9x Hospital and homebound; opportunities for our senior members

STEWARDSHIP

Finance

- 2x Finance and full reserve budget
- 1x Foundation should distribute funds for general emergency needs

EVANGELIZATION

FAITH FORMATION

- 26x Bible and book studies, retreats and Catholic educational programs
- 19x Spiritual direction, mentoring/counseling program (personal, divorced, grief, etc)
- 3x Faith and friendship groups
- 6x Evangelization
- 6x Marriage preparation, marriage encounter and marriage counseling
- 3x Family faith enrichment (like the recent mission)
- 8x Perpetual adoration
- 4x Sacraments
- 1x Healing ministry
- 1x Vocation training
- 1x Classes for those over 55
- 5x Partner w/ Aquinas on programming

SOCIAL JUSTICE

- 57x Outreach ministry and serving the underprivileged
- 9x Outreach to fellow Catholic parishes in need/form relationships w/ other parishes
- 5x Education and training about Social Justice concepts and issues
- 1x Support Right to Life issues and sponsor programming
- 4x Ministries to young pregnant women and post-abortion retreats or help-lines
- 9x Responding to poor and unemployed of our parish family
- 7x Reaching out in the neighborhood and Wilcox Park relationships
- 2x St. Thomas sponsored adult mission trips to help across the world
- 1x Support environmental and ecological Issues

SCHOOL AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION OF OUR CHILDREN

- 20x School in general
- 7x Building up the education foundation
- 20x Tuition assistance for families in need
- 1x Special education programs in our school
- 5x Teachers – higher salaries & resources for the teaching staff
- 1x School music ministry
- 1x Extensive altar server training
- 3x Services to public school or neighborhood children
- 10x Religious Education in general
- 4x VBS & adding second session
- 8x Expand children's liturgy to weekly and at 11:00 am

YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULT

- 38x Programming & engaging our young adults into leadership & service
- 3x More facilities for our youth & young adults
- 2x Scholarship help for our youth to attend Catholic high school & colleges
- 2x Fulltime high school & fulltime youth minister (the idea of 2 staff positions)
- 1x Contribute to Boy Scout troop
- 2x Special needs youth
- 2x Singles

MISCELLANEOUS

Communication and Technology

- 2x Parish library-resource center
- 1x Catholic radio station
- 2x Parish newsletter
- 6x Develop better technology & on-line communications

Facilities and Space

- 3x Resolve Space Issues & Conduct a Space Study
- 3x Women's Restroom in Church
- 1x Audio Speakers in Narthex for stepping out w/ toddlers
- 3x Different atrium space for Catechesis of good Shepard--more availability of this ministry Redo pews
- 11x Expand School, 1x A/C in School
- 4x More space for religious ed programming & ministries
- 4x Tabernacle back in front of church
- 1x Expand Narthex

More Miscellaneous

- 12x Don't know or can't think of anything
- 8x We already have too many ministries – streamline some

QUESTION #6:

IF CONDITIONS AT ST. THOMAS REQUIRED A REDUCTION IN SERVICE, NAME UP TO 3 SERVICE/MINISTRIES THAT SHOULD BE CONSIDERED FOR REDUCTION OR ELIMINATION

Part 1: List of services/ ministries to consider reducing or eliminating based on 5 or more responses:

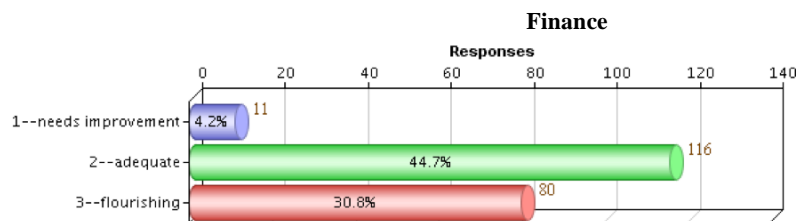
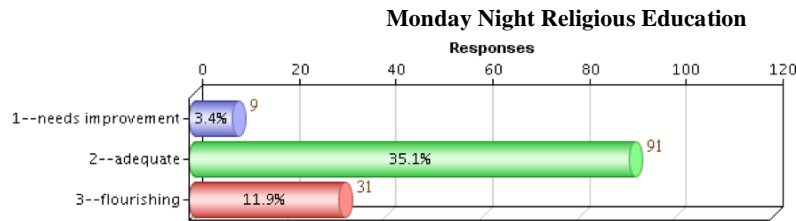
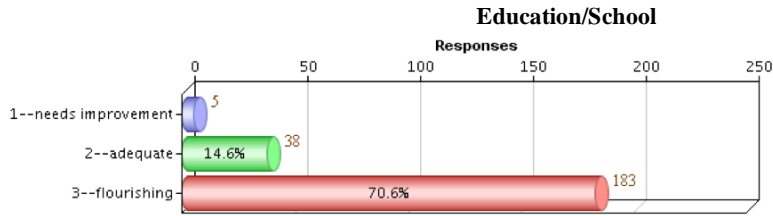
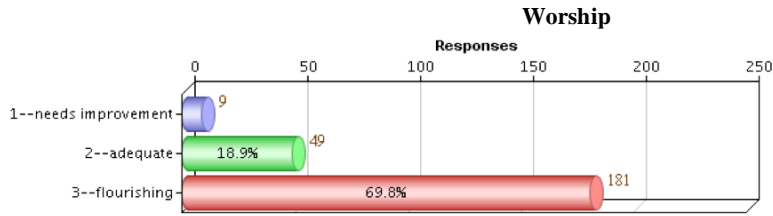
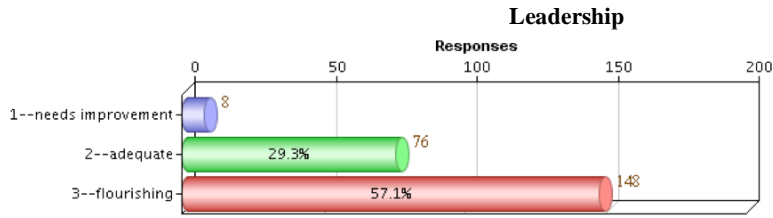
1. Newsletter	15
2. Vacation Bible school	13
3. Athletic Boosters	11
4. 50+ Club	10
5. AA and Overeaters	9
6. Evangelization Training	9
7. Natural Family Planning	9
8. Personnel Committee	8
9. Knights of Columbus	7
10. Faith/Friendship Groups	6
11. Parish Resource Center	6
12. Peer ministries	6
13. Social Justice Advocacy	6
14. Counseling	5
15. Coffee and Donuts	5

A total of 34 ministries were listed as possible areas of reductions or elimination.

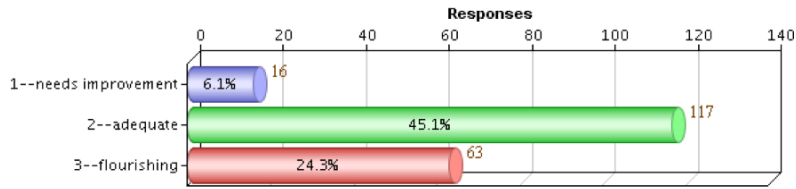
Part 2: A summary of comments when no ministries or services were listed:

1. Nothing should be dropped; all ministries are needed by someone	19
2. I am not sure what should be dropped	13
3. Collaborate with other parishes or combine ministries	5
4. Most of these services/ministries are volunteer; let's get more volunteers	4
5. Reduce excessive mailings from Church and school	3
6. Cut social ministries, not sacramental ones	2

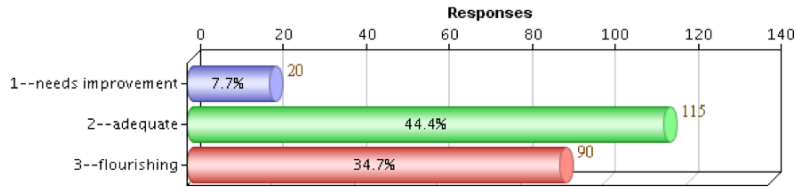
QUESTION #7
ASSESS THE PARISH ON THE FOLLOWING CATEGORIES



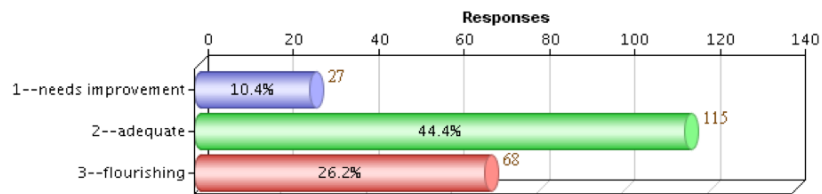
Collaboration



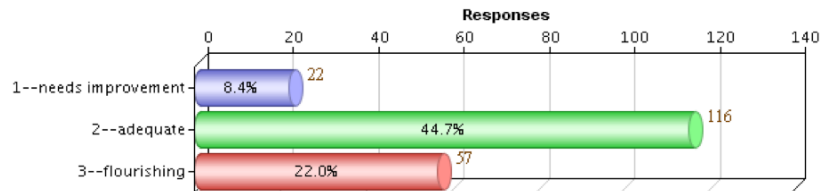
Communication



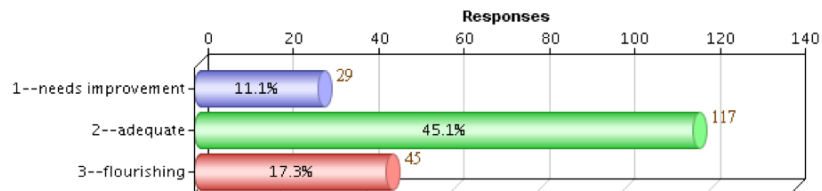
Outreach

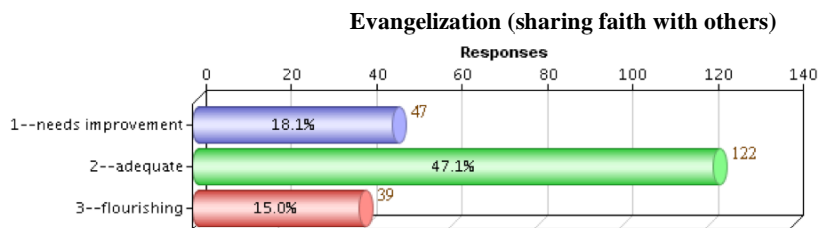
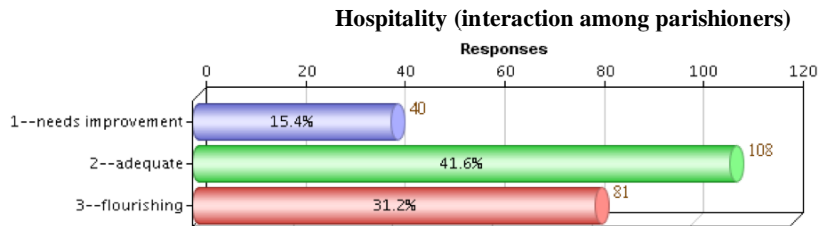
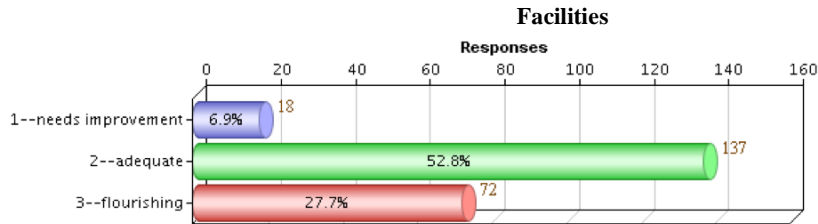


Social Justice



Adult Faith Formation





LEADERSHIP

- Concerned with an apparent alignment with church leadership and the political right, as well as “scolding” approach that always assumes the worst in people and does not call to the best in them to be who God wants them to be

COLLABORATION

- 3x Seems to be little between ministries at the volunteer level and leaders run things “their way”
- Team with another “needy” parish

COMMUNICATION

- 7x Need better communication so there are fewer misunderstandings/duplication of work
- 4x Better knowledge of available ministries and programs
- Sometimes it is late, so people (kids) miss out on doing activities
- Need to know who to contact re: changes in program and reaching interested parties

WORSHIP

- 4x Need to make sure Mass does not become a performance or the music a distraction
- 3x Lack of reverence in the church
- 2x Eucharistic adoration offered more
- Teaching to be before Mass
- Don’t clap during Mass when someone begins a new ministry (servers, EME, etc.)

- Need more “Holy Spirit filled” music / PRAISE/worship music

HOSPITALITY (INTERACTION AMONG PARISHIONERS)

- 8x Increase the interaction among parish members through social but faith filled initiatives
- 7x Tend to sit in the same place in church/during doughnuts without knowing the names of the people around us/name tags
- 4x How do we become more inviting?
- 3x Too many cliques/feel like an outsider
- 3x Need more people to volunteer/personal invitation from Fr. Jim or John may help
- New attitude towards volunteers, especially if they aren't rich or old-time parishioners
- More potlucks (like those at the Parish Mission)
- 2x Would like to see more social activities for singles
- 2x Everyone (Parish, school, and religious ed) need to work together
- Need Greeters (with the Ushers) at all entrances to welcome everyone, particularly visitors
- Parish mentor program
- Disappointed in the New Member Ministries. Joined 3 years ago and tried to become involve in the Hand-in-Hand ministry and never received follow up on our initiation. Did donuts and were given rushed instructions and were by ourselves. Hard time meeting other families – parishioners do not seem very welcoming

OUTREACH

- 8x Need to find a way to reach into the community other than VBS
- 4x Never do enough
- Reach out to people outside of St. Thomas (other states or countries) that are poverty stricken
- More outreach and prayer for persons in the pews
- To improve outreach, would need more communication and adequate community support and discernment.
- Team with another “needy” parish
- Need to help people actually take steps out of poverty
- Jail ministry
- Help the homeless or those who find themselves in temporary hardship/“warming center”
- Needs are not being met as we are a non-traditional family. I feel when someone is ready to make the commitment to Christ and am told they may not be ready; it really can confuse someone wanting to learn more about St. Thomas and what it may have to offer.

FINANCE

- 5x In this difficult economic time, need to proceed with cautious spending
- 2x Our parish should be in a better place financially/don't talk about money and stewardship enough/without putting pressure on parishioners
- 2x Parish needs to learn to tithe/so everyone shares the expenses
- Our parish could do more through focused stewardship efforts

EVANGELIZATION (SHARING FAITH WITH OTHERS)

- 14x Need more practice sharing faith with others / not just those whose faith is “more together”
- 2x Not sure what Evangelization means
- RCIA candidates could share their personal stories during Mass / on our website / in the bulletin
- Take on mission trips/get involved in missionary work
- Have nights of prayer and sharing of personal faith “stories”
- Need to have more new candidates in RCIA program
- Do not believe that evangelization is preached from the pulpit

ADULT FAITH FORMATION

- 8x More opportunities for sharing and formation/“awakening”/generations of faith
- 2x Need to understand why they believe what they believe
- 2x If we have another mission, it should be a real one/more recollections- missions

- Need to go back and re-learn all of the parts of the Mass
- Adult formation is a personal journey, should not be a group activity. Turns people off the way it is handled now
- More adult catechism classes like offered last year
- Education like the typical Protestant Sunday when there is education going on for all in age appropriate settings
- More speakers for Adult Education
- Changes in sacramental preparation. Youth desire to be challenged a bit more in their faith

SOCIAL JUSTICE

- 5x Need to continue expanding
- 2x Concerned as to why it sponsored Bishop Gumbleton
- They get labeled as a bunch of radicals or hippies
- Seems to be a lag between planning and implementation
- Should not be political

EDUCATION

St. Thomas School

- School places academics at a low priority
- Teaching of reading and grammar is lacking
- School family mentoring program

Monday Night Religious Education

- 2x Combine with adult faith formation/family catechesis
- Needs to be updated, more welcoming for those with different abilities and more experiential
- Lacks fervor
- Doesn't always seem to cater to the public school children it purports to serve.
- Additional evening added as an option for instruction or more formalized home schooling
- Need new information about God

FACILITIES

- 3x Renovate the Church basement / tear down walls to additional rooms with removable dividers
- 3x The school needs more room for classrooms
- 2x Restroom for women is inadequate
- 2x Need a cry room
- 2x Church is getting too small
- 2x More room for various ministries
- Easier access for handicapped (sidewalks are too slippery)
- Sound system needs improvement
- Need a nursery available at the Saturday 5pm Mass

MISCELLANEOUS

- A general question and answer phone line would be great
- Lay Ministry training is desperately needed

QUESTION #8:

ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

LEADERSHIP

- 8x We have good spiritual and practical leaders (Father Jim, Deacons, Dave Faber and staff)
- 7x Fr. Jim is doing a great job/ takes a personal interest in parishioners and children
- Sometimes there is the attitude that if you offer an opinion that doesn't agree with Fr. Jim, you run the risk of being put down

Long Range Plan (process)

- I am impressed with the lengths our parish goes to get everyone's input
- I answered the full questionnaire, then I hit a key that took me back to the start
- I attempted the online survey. I found I needed something more tangible and tactile due to the nature of the questions. I could not save the survey and come back to it, after I spent some time in prayer. It took me longer than 15 minutes to complete it.
- Comments are from the heart and are intended to encourage parish growth
- I am praying for a positive response to these few seemingly direct and negative comments. We need to continue to grow

WORSHIP

- 3x The homilies can be hard to follow or repeated too many times or there are too many different messages during the Mass
- 3x Great music program
- 2x Can the new EMEs be installed at the beginning of Mass instead of just before communion?
- 2x More chances for students to play instruments at Mass
- Music should not be like a performance
- I wish that the school students who do choir with Mrs. Proulx could just be able to sing in choir at the Mass where kids sing and not have to travel back for choir
- Would like more Masses for the holy days
- Sometimes the worship aid has errors
- More times available for reconciliation
- Like having weekday morning Mass
- Individual wine cups
- Perpetual adoration

HOSPITALITY (INTERACTION AMONG PARISHIONERS)

- 26x Parish is very welcoming / thriving / spiritual home
- 10x We love St. Thomas.
- There is a small group of people who are "in the know" and "manage, administer and deliver" the programs. Need to "term limit" the leaders so others have a chance to be leaders.
- I have made my opinions known on a couple of occasions and have felt chastised so I will remain a faithful yet anonymous parishioner.
- Adapt more to families with young children because we have so many at St. Thomas.
- We need support groups for the divorced and single parent families.
- In reality we almost have too many ministries as some seem to overlap.
- Sometimes when I have volunteered here, Fr. Jim or a staff member has stepped in and taken over in inappropriate ways. If the time I say I can do something isn't soon enough – tell me.
- The single adult issue remains a bit of a problem. It happened again at the Parish Mission that was just held - - for the over 40 single people.
- The recent Community Dinner was very poorly advertised this year.

OUTREACH

- Would like to start a mentoring program.

EVANGELIZATION (sharing faith with others)

- Teach people how to live their faith by instilling into our people the spiritual tools they need to survive.

- We need to promote ourselves as a welcoming dynamic parish for ALL (races, marital status, etc.) There has been a perception outside of our community that St. Thomas is a “white” parish.

EDUCATION/SCHOOL

- 2x My three children are involved in the St Thomas athletic program. Like the program but do not like having practice on Sundays and such long seasons
- There has been an increase in parents showing their displeasure with referees and coaches, and that St. Thomas is ‘KNOWN’ to rub it in.
- We let inadequacies with regards to teachers go on longer than we should.
- Great education program.

FACILITIES

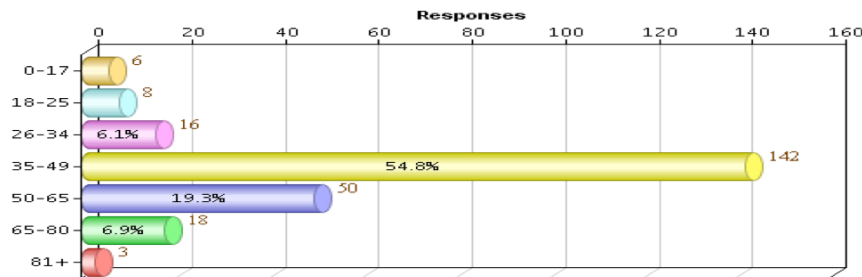
- Need a cry room.
- The school is an excellent facility.
- I am very disappointed that the tabernacle is hidden.

MISCELLANEOUS

- I have training to be an ENDOW facilitator and would be interested in forming a group. I would also be willing to volunteer for the environmental group formation.
- We just discovered the wonderful parish Web site.
- Disappointed that Dean Vernon hasn’t been able to complete the deaconate program.
- Where is the Parish pictorial directory?
- Concerned about the upcoming Diocesan fund drive, when we just finished the fund drive to remodel Henry Hall and it was sold at a loss.
- There is much help available with each transition of my walk in life.
- Help me to sign up. What can I “cherry pick” to help?
- I wonder how many individuals here at St. Thomas would be interested in a sportspersons club, to create a sense of community around the outdoors.

QUESTION #10

AGE CATEGORY (please choose one):

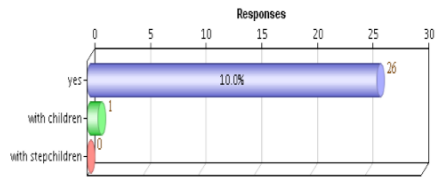


Total Number of Responses for this Item: 259

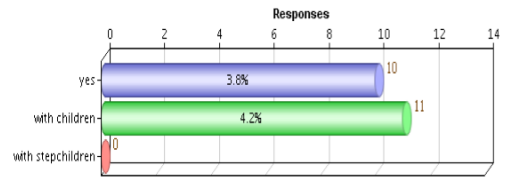
QUESTION #11

Marital status (please check any/all that apply):

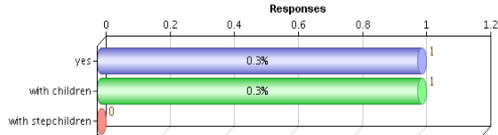
Single--never married



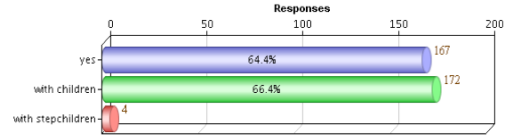
Single—divorced



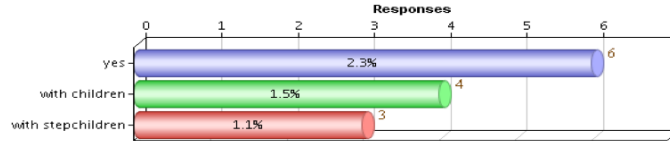
Single--widow(er)



Married



Second marriage

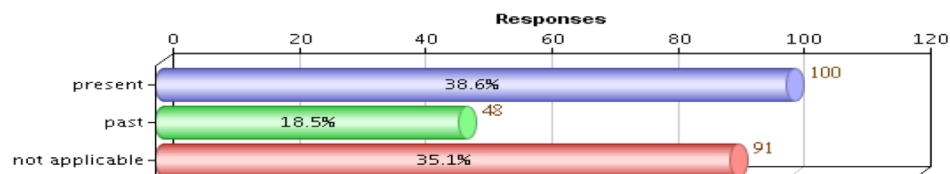


QUESTION #12

YEARS AS MEMBER OF ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE PARISH FAMILY

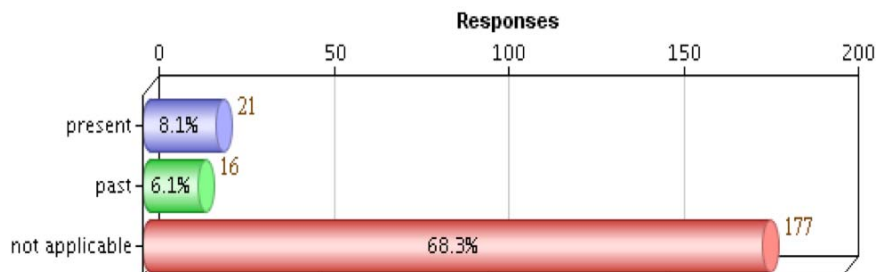
0-23 months	20	2-4 years	44
5-9 years	46	10-14 years	48
15-19 years	33	20-24 years	17
25-29 years	5	30-34 years	10
35-39 years	5	40-44 years	4
45-49 years	5	50-54 years	3
55-59 years	2	60-64 years	0
65-69 years	2	70+ years	0
TOTAL ANSWERS	244		

QUESTION #13
CHILDREN ATTENDING ST. THOMAS SCHOOL



Total Number of Responses for this Item: 259

QUESTION #14
CHILDREN ATTENDING MONDAY NIGHT CCD



Total Number of Responses for this Item: 259

QUESTION #15
WHICH WAYS OF RECEIVING PARISH INFORMATION ARE MOST USEFUL FOR YOUR FAMILY?

Announcements at end of Mass	40 responses, 15.4%
Parish bulletin	77 responses, 29.7%
Email	37 responses, 14.3%
Mailings to your home	31 responses, 12.0%
Parish website	18 responses, 7.0%
Printed newsletter	6 responses, 2.3%
Worship aid at Mass	17 responses, 6.6%
No preference indicated	33 responses, 12.7%

THE COMPLETE SET OF VERBATIM SURVEY RESPONSES IS AVAILABLE FOR REVIEW ON THE SAINT THOMAS WEBSITE: www.stthomasapostlegr.org