



My Dear Parishioners,

As you may recall, our parish participated in the *Disciple Maker Index (DMI) Survey* from February 5th through March 5th 2018. Of the 957 registered families, 246 parishioners responded to the survey. We are so grateful for all those who participated and I look forward to sharing the results and the Action Plan that will be developed by the DMI Survey Committee.

The Committee members who have volunteered to study the results and develop a plan, with continued input from our parishioners, are parishioner and Finance Council member Mike Emmi; parishioner and Pastoral Council members Drew Bilotta, Chris Bouvier, and Mark Gaeto; Parish Secretary, Rose Ann Westerfer and myself. The Committee attended a Consultation Session facilitated by the Catholic Leadership Institute (CLI) and held at St. Katharine of Siena on May 7th along with a number of other churches that participated in the survey. The purpose of this meeting was to help the participating churches understand the results of the survey contained in a lengthy and detailed high-level dashboard of data, to learn from the responses, and to develop the basis for an Action Plan. Since then the Committee has met once to draft this initial communication to you, our parishioners. As advised by CLI, we were asked to choose only two areas of strength and two areas for growth to begin the process. The Committee has chosen the following based on the in-depth data provided by the survey:

STRENGTHS:

1. OLA is a welcoming, faith-filled community.
2. The OLA parishioners overwhelmingly agree that Scripture is the Word of God and that Jesus Christ is truly present in the Body and Blood of Christ.

AREAS FOR GROWTH:

1. The Mass Matters – Need to find ways to improve Mass attendance and look at the way we celebrate the Liturgy.
2. Faith Sharing – Need to prepare our people to be disciples.

The first action that will be taken will be a 5-week session of instruction on the Knowledge of the Mass, which will be provided as an insert in the Parish Bulletin as well as posted on the OLA website from July 29th through August 26th.

The second action will be to drill down to find out how the parishioners would like to see the Liturgy improved, specifically on the topics of hospitality, homilies and hymns. In order to do this, a Suggestion Box will be placed in the vestibule of the church for your suggestions and ideas. There will also be an online Suggestion Box on the OLA website, and parishioners will be welcome to call the Parish Office with their thoughts and suggestions.

Regarding Faith Sharing and how to help you become better disciples, we will be bringing an evangelistic program to OLA in the future. The Pastoral Council has been reviewing several programs and has settled on one called RELIT. The current plan is to introduce it to a small core group of volunteers who will attend the program and then grow the program from there.

Most importantly, we want you, our beloved parishioners, to “talk to us”. Please feel free to come to me or any of the committee members listed in this letter with your thoughts and ideas about how we are doing and how we can improve. The Committee will continue to meet as we receive your input. It is our hope that we will continue to grow in our understanding and love for the Mass and learn how to express openly our love for the Lord as His committed disciples.

*Love and Prayers,
Fr. Carey*

