

St. Michael's Parish Survey Results

St. Michael's Catholic Parish, Grand Forks, North Dakota

We mailed out the parish survey in June 2016. The purpose of the survey was to dig deep into how our community feels about their experience of our parish.

One of our challenges at the parish is the recent downturn in Sunday collections. This income effects the programs offered, school budgets, staff, and our parish's well-being.

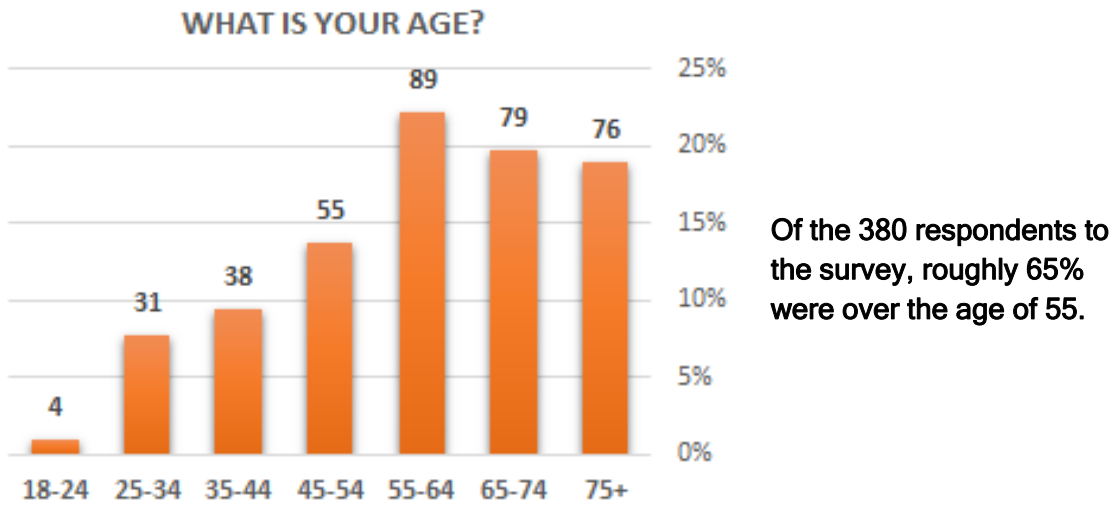
We are reporting portions of the results in our weekly Sunday bulletin. As the sections are reported in our bulletin, the same information will be added to this document.

Please check back for further information.

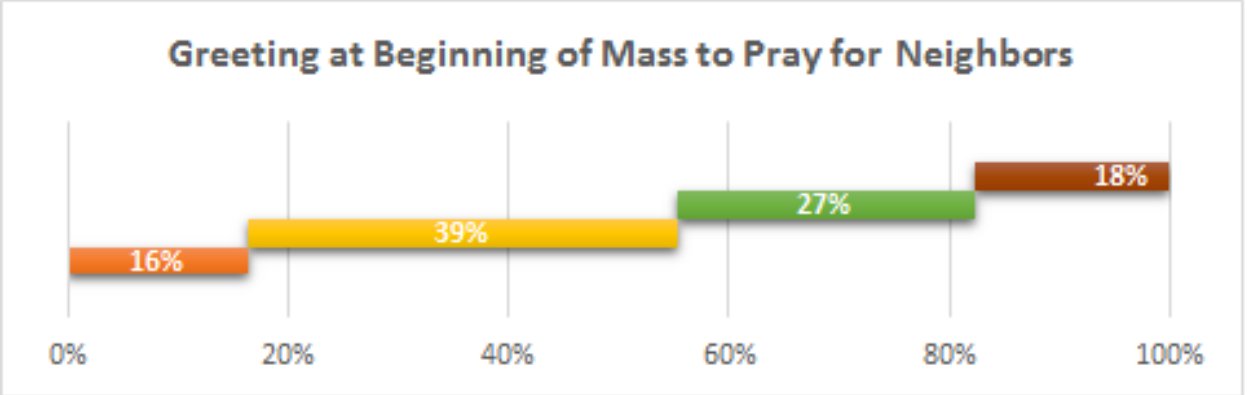
Approximately 1,663 surveys were mailed to parishioners.

The total number of responses was 380.

WHAT IS YOUR AGE?



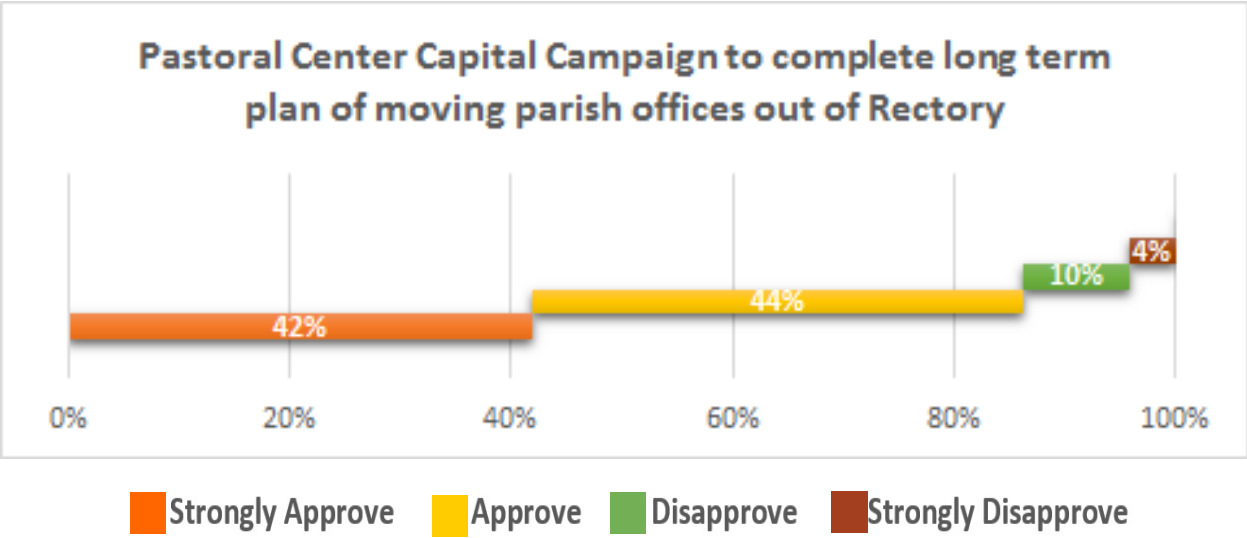
PLEASE RATE THE RECENT CHANGES AT ST. MICHAEL'S WHICH FOCUSED ON THE GROWTH OF OUR SPIRITUAL MISSION.



■ Strongly Approve
 ■ Approve
 ■ Disapprove
 ■ Strongly Disapprove

Explanation:

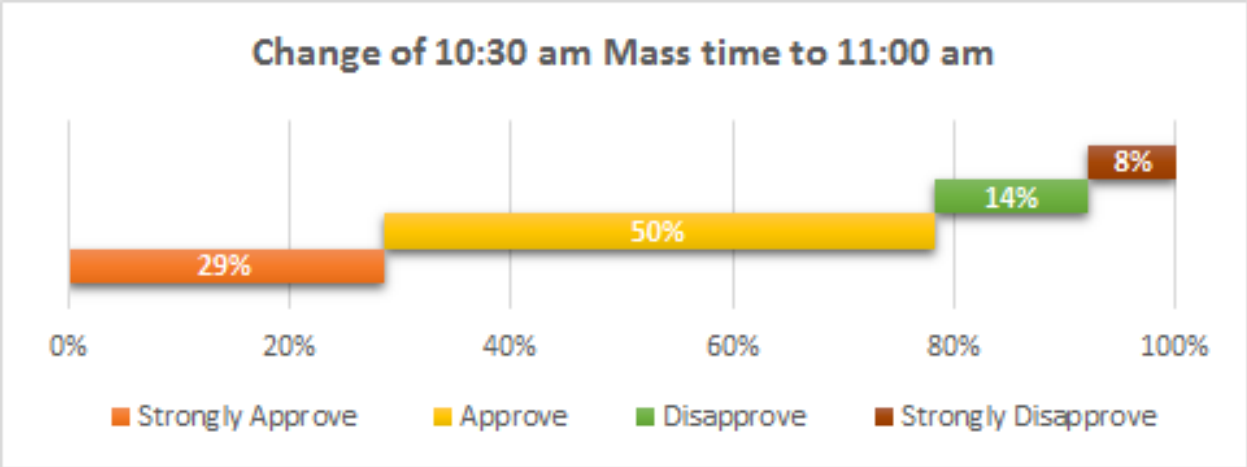
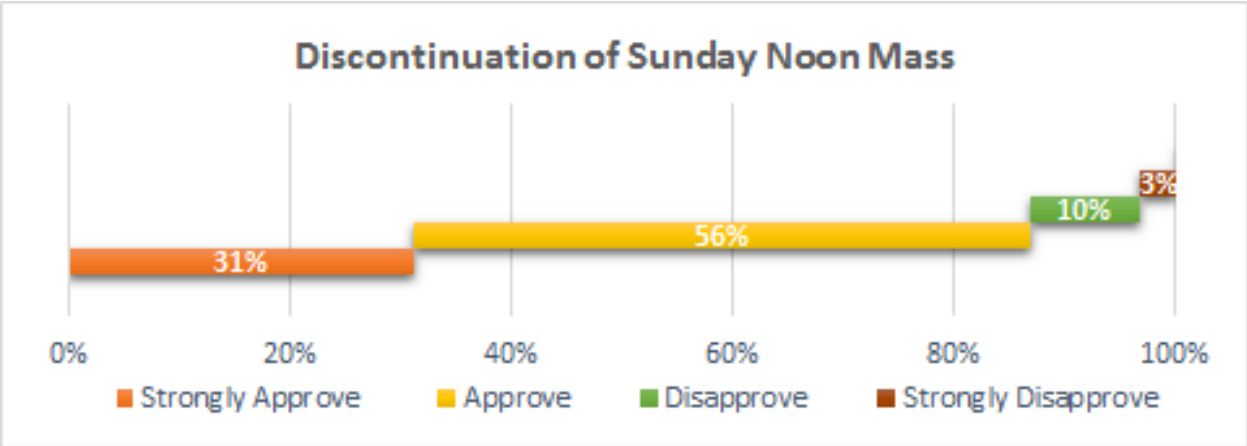
Only a slight majority of the respondents (55%) were in favor of the greeting and offer to pray for our neighbors before Mass. However, as was reported recently at Mass, several respondents expressed just how uncomfortable the practice was for them, and perhaps counter-productive for the purpose it was started. **Therefore it was decided to end the practice.**



Explanation:

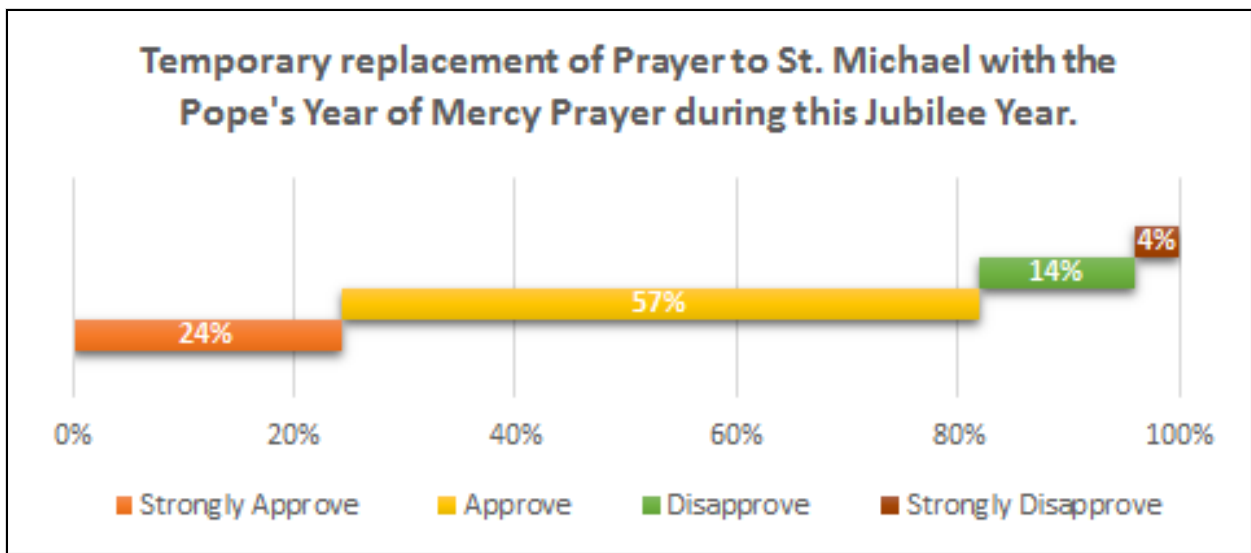
A vast majority of the respondents (86%) showed their support for the project we have taken on to create a Pastoral Center for St. Michael’s and a new place to house parish offices. This was a large step forward in faith for our community and we are grateful for those who have made sacrifices to bring it into reality.

Please rate the RECENT changes at St. Michael’s which focused on the growth of our spiritual mission.



Explanation:

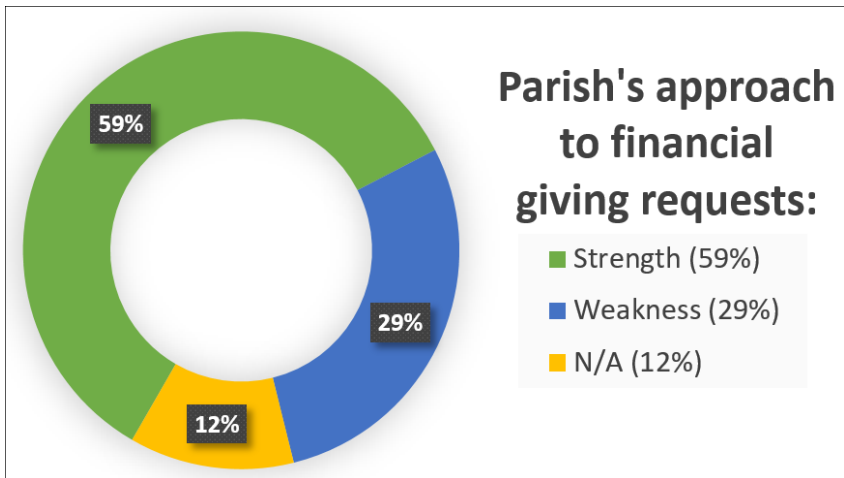
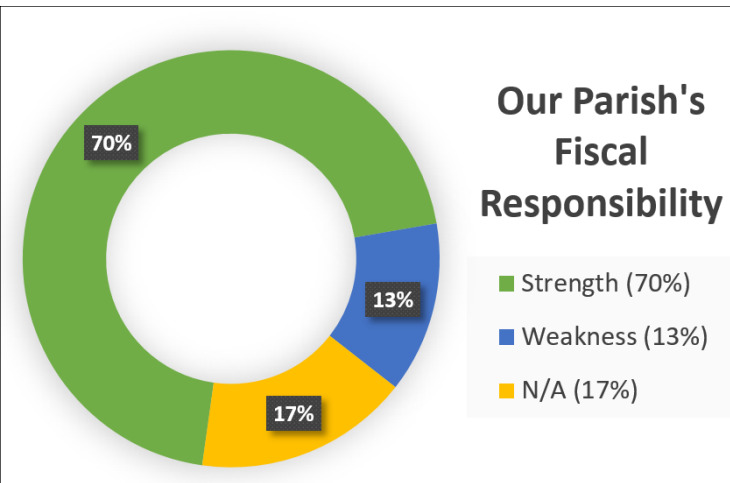
Nearly 90% of respondents support the decision to discontinue our noon Mass and 78% supported moving the 10:30 Mass to 11:00am, allowing for more time between our largest morning Masses and a smoother transition from one to the next. Thank you for weathering that transition patiently, as it inevitably caused people confusion from time to time, especially for visitors! Several people have responded how much more prayerful the church is now between the 9:00am and 11:00am Masses!



Explanation:

Over 80% of respondents appreciated temporarily switching our congregation's prayer before Mass to the one penned by Pope Francis for this Jubilee Year of Mercy. We will return to the St. Michael prayer after this Jubilee concludes, but we are grateful for the chance we have taken to join spiritually with the greater church asking God to teach us how to show mercy.

FOCUS: PARISH FINANCES



Our survey shows a high level of trust in the way St. Michael's makes the most of your contributions, but there is also work to be done. **Better fiscal transparency and communication** was a theme in many comments, so we intend to do a better job of publishing the minutes from Parish Council and Finance Council meetings. The priests have also been more attentive to the frequency and form of *how* they talk about **money and requests**. Such requests will always have their place; Jesus mentioned money in the Gospels more than he mentioned Heaven and Hell - combined! Yet the priests are also attentive to your own financial situations, and are very grateful for how sacrificial many of you are.

Also, two weeks ago it was published that 86% of respondents are supportive of the **Pastoral Center campaign**. Nonetheless, many also expressed concern with the cost of its renovation. It is no small investment for our parish, and be assured it was made with prayer and forethought with opportunities for community input. There were other options considered when we began this project two years ago, and yes some were cheaper and some more expensive than our chosen path. However, our 2014 feasibility study explored three main options, an open parish meeting was held in March 2015, and the purchase of the Washington School building was deemed the best plan to meet the current and future needs for parish ministries - even though it requires sacrifice from all of us. Please be assured it will serve our community well!

FOCUS:

QUALITY OF OUR EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

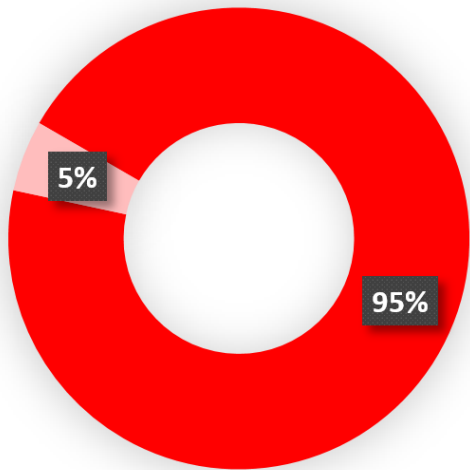
Our parish survey revealed very positive attitudes regarding the quality of the educational opportunities provided here.

We have had lots of involvement by eager and helpful members of our congregation to help conduct or assist in Bible studies or other types of studies, and in our Wednesday Religious Education program.

Religious Education, just like other types of formal education, is always adapting and trying to find new ways to engage the students and help them learn. We have been blessed with dedicated and creative employees for Youth and Adult ministries, who each year scour the materials available to help teach the faith.

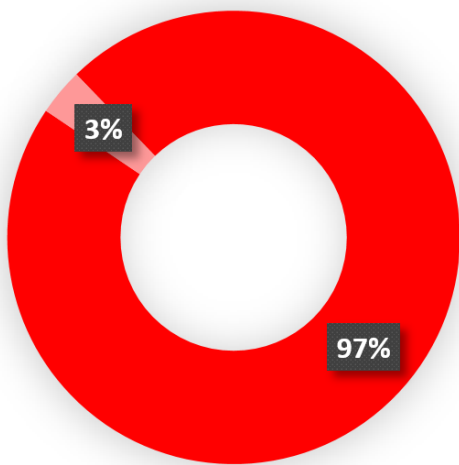
Our volunteers dedicate large amounts of their time to help our children learn about and experience the love and truth of Christ.

One area shown for clear improvement is participation in Bible studies offered. We hope that the new Pastoral Center will alleviate space constraints to allow us to offer more studies, and find ways to draw new people to learn more about their faith!



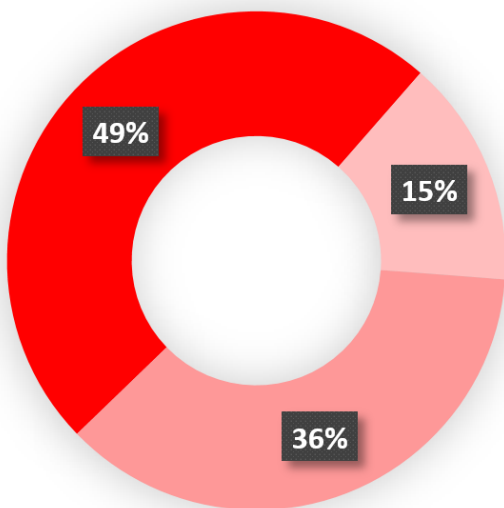
Religious Education

- 95% - Strength
- 5% - Weakness



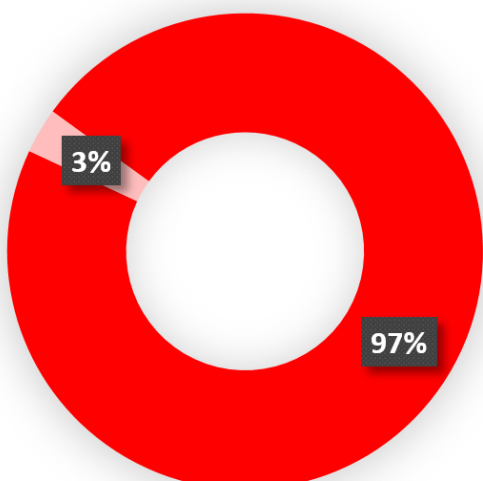
Sacramental Preparation

- 93% Strength
- 3% Weakness



Bible Studies

- 49% - Strength
- 15% - Weakness
- 37% - N/A



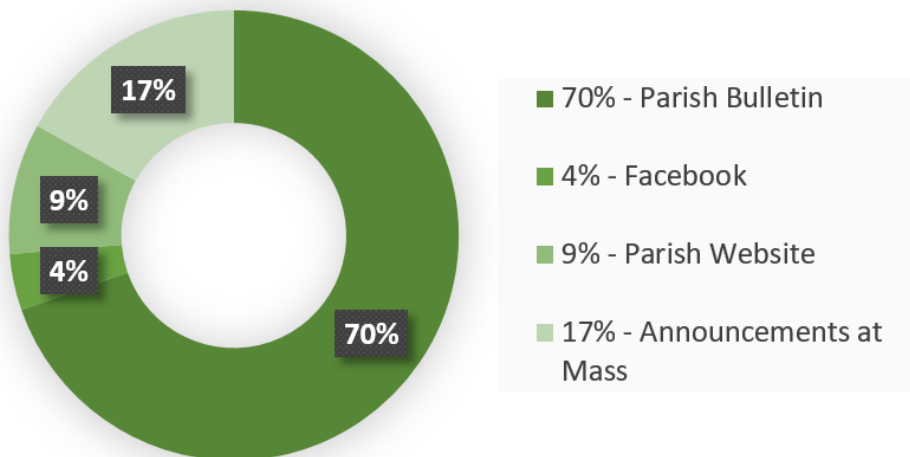
RCIA

- 97% - Strength
- 3% - Weakness

FOCUS:

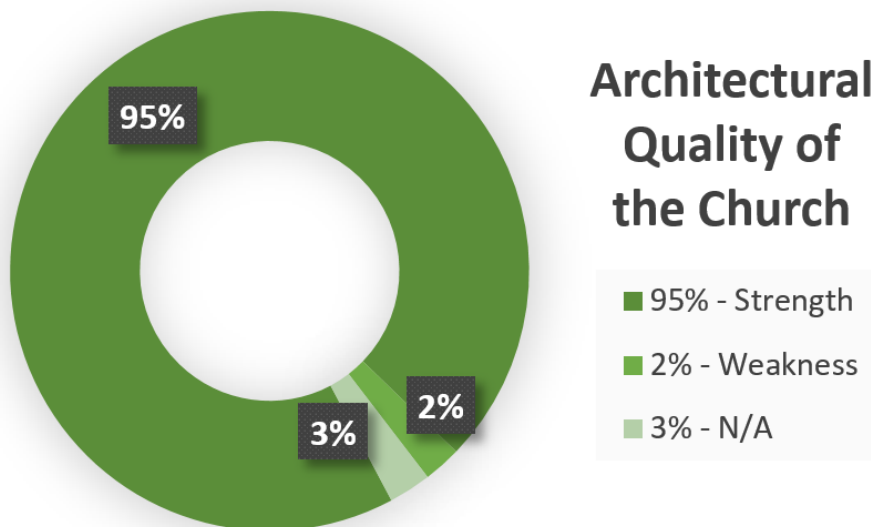
ASPECTS OF YOUR EXPERIENCE AT WEEKEND MASSES

Preferred Method of Receiving Information about St. Michael's



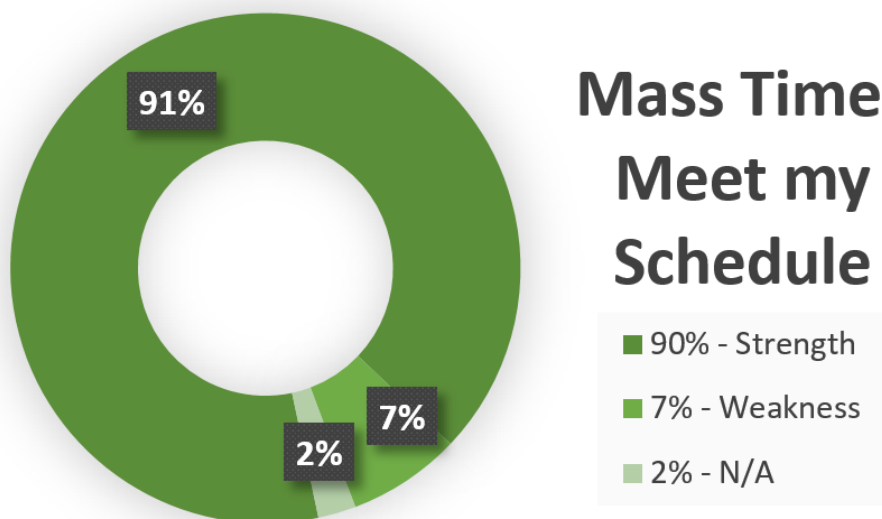
We try many different overlapping means to communicate information to our parishioners: weekly bulletins, bulletin boards, Facebook and our website, parish announcements, and more recently, our weekly emails. We thank you for your attention to these means, and we will keep trying to utilize them to their best potential!

Architectural Quality of the Church



St. Michael's is known most for one thing in Grand Forks: its architectural beauty. It is also *the most common* compliment the priests receive from visitors after Masses on Sunday. We're grateful to the sacrifices of generations past who left us this gift to help our worship, and we pledge to keep it beautiful for future generations.

Mass Times Meet my Schedule



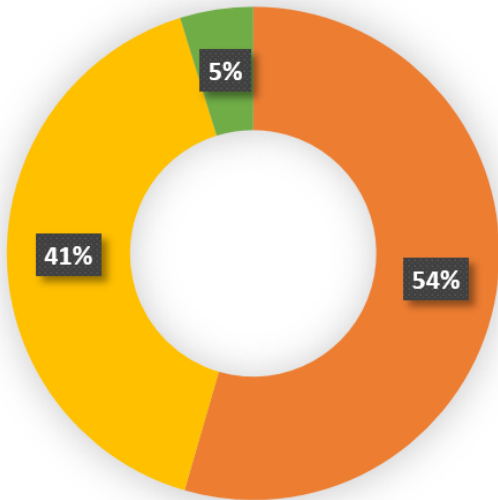
It was reported several weeks ago that about 85% of respondents approved of the recent changes to our Sunday morning schedule.

Despite these changes, we are glad that the Mass times are still very accessible for a vast majority of you.

We know that those who work shifts on Sundays, primarily those in the medical fields, still have trouble finding Masses that work for them. Please be aware that there is now Mass offered at 7:30pm at the Newman Center during the school year!

FOCUS:

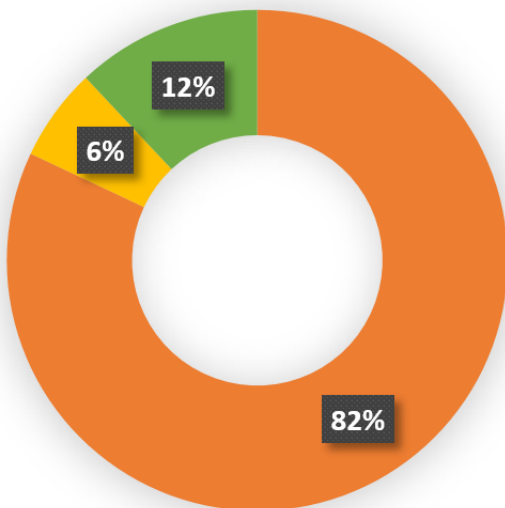
ASPECTS OF YOUR EXPERIENCE AT WEEKEND MASSES



Parking Access

- 54% - Strength
- 41% - Weakness
- 5% - N/A

We think that most people - guests and regular parishioners - are aware that parking on a Sunday is a top commodity at St. Michael's. We hope the spots around the new Pastoral Center have helped alleviate this, and that our long-range plan to expand our other lots can happen before too long. In the meantime, please remember that parking on Sundays in our center courtyard is for Handicapped Parking only. Several physically challenged respondents mentioned their difficulty finding a close space when they come to Mass.

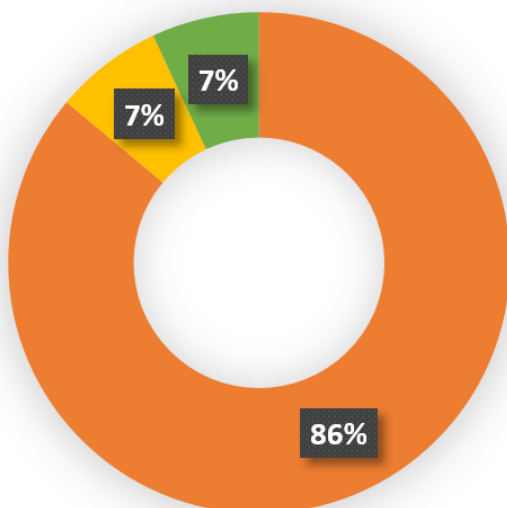


Availability of Priests

- 82% - Strength
- 6% - Weakness
- 12% - N/A

Many people approached Fr. Haman after his recent article in the New Earth describing how priests fill their days. It was interesting - and surprising - for many! We are blessed to have three priests once again at St. Michael's available for peoples' diverse needs, both to registered parishioners and the wider community. They are blessed to have such availability, and are grateful for peoples' patience when they are unable to honor a request in quick fashion! Please never forget to pray for your priests and the work they do for the Church!

Parish Properties (Church, Pastoral Center & School Buildings)



- 86% - Strength
- 7% - Weakness
- 7% - N/A

Our survey showed that most people are very satisfied with our historic facilities here at St. Michael's and with our current step forward with the Pastoral Center. However, several comments suggested that our school has a large amount of space our parish offices could have utilized. We are happy to clarify that the enrollment in our school has consistently been growing, which along with today's security concerns would make devoting it to other uses quite impractical! Thank you to everyone whose sacrifices are making these steps possible!