

St. Augustine 2014 Message Series Survey Results

Summary

The parish was surveyed with paper surveys and an online survey in August and September 2014. 67 surveys were completed, with 9 of those online.

Observations from the results:

- The **number of surveys completed** represents a relatively small portion of the parish.
- A significant number of questions were marked as “didn't remember,” “didn't experience,” or were **skipped**. The ratings were based on as few as 13 responses.
- The online survey offered an additional option for “**I didn't know about it,**” which was scored in the results as “Didn't experience.” The option was omitted from the paper copies to keep them simpler.
- **Preaching** averaged at “very helpful” or above (4.35). The “Game Plan” series averaged marginally lower than the others (4).
- **Bulletin inserts** ranked just below “very helpful” (3.87). The “Game Plan” series again averaged marginally lower than the others (3.58).
- **Online resources** had large numbers of “No response” and “Didn't experience.” Based on an average number of 15 actual rankings, these scored just above “Somewhat helpful” (3.14).
- The single **small group** (Living More With Less) averaged just below “very helpful” (3.91).
- The detailed comments were generally positive. Read them in full below.

Full Responses

1. How helpful have these series been in helping you live out the Gospel in your daily life?

Ratings were:

1. Not helpful
2. A little bit helpful
3. Somewhat helpful
4. Very helpful
5. Extremely helpful

	No response	Didn't experience	Don't remember	1	2	3	4	5	Average
Preaching									
World As It Should Be	7	4	8	1	1	6	9	31	4.42
One Table	10	8	5	0	0	8	7	29	4.48
Living More With Less	10	4	1	0	1	9	7	35	4.46
Game Plan	11	9	6	1	2	10	11	17	4.00
Simply Christmas	8	7	8	1	2	5	9	27	4.34
Bulletin Inserts									
World As It Should Be	17	9	11	2	0	8	7	13	3.97
One Table	17	14	5	2	1	8	7	13	3.90
Living More With Less	15	11	2	3	2	8	9	17	3.90
Game Plan	17	12	7	3	2	10	6	10	3.58
Simply Christmas	15	10	8	2	3	5	8	16	3.97
Online resources									
World As It Should Be	25	20	6	3	2	4	4	3	3.13
One Table	26	21	7	2	2	4	2	3	3.15
Small groups									
Living More With Less	29	13	2	3	1	2	6	11	3.91

2. What has been most helpful for you about these message series?

- Intimate group settings.
- For me, it's pretty simple. I sing in the choir and I appreciate experiencing the music, readings, faith sharing and preaching all on the same theme or scriptures. It's reinforcing and makes it easier for salient points to stick in my mind throughout the week.
- Continuity of message from week to week. I really like having a theme.
- The topics have been quite relevant and the information was very practical and fairly easy to assimilate into my daily life actions.
- Love the cohesiveness. Love being able to access preachings through a blast email from the parish in which my family belongs.
- The preaching. Nothing else is necessary.
- There were a few days when I had hoped you would have used the theme in the Gospel more directly.

- I liked that there were themes. It gave me a focus. It allowed me to be specific in my intent to better my life.
- Good reminders and helpful to have a theme.
- Motivational
- Helping with daily life.
- Inspiration. Lived message.
- Really good to build on a theme.
- Examples of how the message applies in everyday life.
- Nothing. My life is already simple, prayerful, and includes others in a small prayerful outreach. Who thought this STUFF up anyway?!
- Content of message
- Continuity of message week to week
- Very much helpful
- It helps me to focus on the message throughout the week to understand the message of Christ in my daily living... know that Christ is with me every day.
- It helps me remember my faith in my daily life
- The homilies resonate/connect most
- I like that the series focus on a set of topics over a few weeks, which keeps the topic fresh in my mind. I think the bulletin inserts and online resources were very well written and presented. I especially enjoyed the "question of the week."
- I have enjoyed listening to the homilies/reflections on the different themes. The emails w/additional resources (and small groups as available) are a nice way to remember the topics outside of Sunday.
- Relating gospel to daily life
- Living more with less was a profound message that I continue to think about. The small group was beneficial.
- The message of inclusivity. The ideas of how to integrate these messages into our day to day lives, especially with children.
- I have appreciated the focus on how to integrate our faith in a real way in our daily lives. But I don't remember the content of specific inserts or homilies well enough to comment.
- Practical hints about how to live ethically and cooperatively
- The video for Lent was great. It brought the language and concerns of daily life to serious and complex (the small faith sharing group video)
- I love the pastor's homily - contemplative, prayerful, and practical
- Personal, caring rapport w/Priest
- A simple, consistent message that I can take away each week and work on. Also, has been enlightening -- really helped my understanding of the gospel and the readings. Also like the emailed bulletins!
- Very practical and doable.
- Interesting and inspiring messages and homilies
- Theme going from week to week. Able to connect weekly mass into every day more and keep it relevant in our minds
- It has been most helpful when the message series has involved members of the parish (lay people) giving the homily. Father William's homilies are great too but I think the fact that lay people give homilies here is something that makes St. Augustine's really special. Small groups were great, the materials provided for the groups wasn't that helpful.
- Father William's sermons about addiction and bearing the cross was helpful. Having a call to

action or a relatable message was helpful.

- Guidance toward a true, deeper spiritual awakening.
- Available to read
- Realizing closeness to other believing
- Small faith groups
- The ones with the most concrete, practical ideas have stood out the most (i.e. Living More w/Less & Simply Christmas). Loved the spring small group series!
- It's great to have a guiding framework w/which to explore these topics.
- I enjoyed the focused small group - but difficult to remember the others!
- Giving me an additional perspective and ideas about the scriptures for that Sunday, and an anchor for my meditations through the week.
- Having stability and knowing that we are worshipping God
- These have been contemporary & intellectual; also optimistic - not playing on 'Catholic guilt.'

3. How could we improve these series to better support you in living the Gospel in your daily life?

- Better discussion material; the video is dated.
- Continue to keep them simple, and don't try too hard to make every little thing fit the themes because it has the danger of seeming forced, especially to outsiders. I don't know how to elaborate on that, so far they have been good. I am sorry that I can't remember a specific example, but one concern is that sometimes things in Mass readings were not addressed in homilies because they didn't go with the theme. The homilies were still wonderful and Spirit-filled, but I felt that perhaps some stuff was passed over in order to stay within the box of the theme. I often wonder what leads to the choosing of themes, if it has to do with the Gospels that fall within the time or what it is, because sometimes it fits and sometimes it seems like we need to make it fit.
- I think they are working very well, but perhaps show calendar view of the series for the year. Very high level - it might be nice to see the journey the parish will take together over the course of a few months or more.
- Eliminate everything but the preaching. The preaching is more than enough!
- Remind people during mass that there are bulletin and online resources.
- I need more time to think about this, This is too much to do off the cuff. I will take a blank copy home. Maybe next time give it to us in one week.
- More emphasis on message each week
- Good enough.
- Keep up the good work
- Do not include them as a part of my worship - just another distraction from the prayer, daily mass, and rosaries.
- Bible study
- Have some retreat or seminars after or before mass & celebrate more feast day Mass celebrations aside from Xmas and Holy Week.
- Make them better aligned with the seasons of the church. Do not start one week before a major season (ie Lent).
- Perhaps occasionally a parish-wide activity that ties into a theme in a practical way.
- You're doing a great job now
- Pamphlets in the bulletin have been great. I also enjoyed the emailed messages, so keep that going.

- Produce videos and podcasts from our parish
- You are doing a wonderful ministry! Please keep it up
- Can't think of anything to improve
- Bulletin write-ups are nice to take home and reflect. I wasn't aware of online resources through the church.
- More homilies by lay people would be great. Better online resources/better small faith sharing group materials.
- They are great. I don't know how to improve them.
- Instill more depth & inspiration, must provide guidance toward a true, meaningful experience, go beyond what we've already been hearing most of our lives
- Make them more philosophical, more academic, less touchy-feely. I would still like to learn more about the centuries (millennia!) of great thinkers who have grappled with powerful issues (what is evil? how do you reconcile horrible events with a loving God? how do you let go of your own plans and make room for the mystery of faith?). I have found some of the topics thus far to be a little uninspiring.
- Have faith groups discuss
- I have gained strength from Rev. William's preaching and the small faith groups. Thank you!
- There were times when the 6 o'clock Mass didn't have a priest or one that seemed to understand the series.
- More SFG - without this it is not as deep.
- More focused homilies that coincide w/the material in the bulletin. Sometimes it seems the preacher is winging it, which is a little harder to do w/a precise subject.
- Not sure
- The series are going great and as a new member I really feel welcome as part of the team
- Send web links in the weekly emails; let the good + moving stories go viral

4. What could we do that would make you willing to invite someone else to experience a new series (sharing a web page/bulletin insert or inviting them to Mass or a small group)?

- I can't think of anything specific! Sorry. Outreach to others is my weakest point.
- Friday evening interfaith family mixer...something like shabbat for tots.
- I don't need anything to make me willing to invite someone. The preaching is more than enough!
- Perhaps create a welcome card with themes and dates in order to plan ahead.
- Nothing more.
- I wish I knew!
- I would have to ask around. I don't know who is interested in Christ or church.
- This is such nonsense! We need to learn about real scripture, the life of Christ, lives of the saints, and other real examples not just pity parties and people who need therapy. Whatever happened to the Beatitudes, the Fruits of the Spirit, Spiritual and Corporate Works of Mercy???
- Introduction of FATIMA msg & Divine Mercy proclamation
- My invitations have not been very effective--pray for me in this.
- More bulletin
- I'd like to see Strengthsfinder series return. I am interested in being a coach.
- Continue reaching out to young adults. Keep the focus on all the accepted and included.
- One small thing, when preaching use the word "we" and "us" INSTEAD of "you." This is more inclusive and includes the priest. Thank you & God's blessing be upon you.
- Nothing else. I already share a bulletin message when I see an opportunity to bring it up in a

discussion (raising it in discussions makes people curious about it; hopefully at some point they will be curious enough to come check us out).

- Very welcoming already. Gathering for meals is always nice on Sundays after Mass.
- The themed series are a good thing to invite new people to.
- Facebook group, bulletin.
- Evening
- I am satisfied. Thank you!
- Have a service project event, a church kickball/softball team, host a bocce ball tournament fundraiser for E House, get a parishioner to host a party like World Series or Superbowl or Grammy's etc. party, or a book club open to non-parishioners.
- Web site or tweet
- Keep the great music
- Right now I am new to the area so I don't know many people - I already share the information with my adult children and some friends who are not in this area.
- Open up in Rockridge News, local newspapers and church without walls. Block party in street.
- e-mail links to useful + short stories, anecdotes, parables