

Research observations on the "Studies" reader's survey

Response rate: A good response rate for an online survey of a large population is usually around 30 - 35 percent, response rates of 50 percent or more are rare. The "Studies" readers' survey went out to the 1,973 active email addresses in the Assistancy database and 1,118 Jesuits responded for a response rate of 57 percent. This response rate may be understood as an indication of interest in the survey topic.

Responses by different age groups: CARA research regularly examines survey respondents by generational groups. This proves to be very helpful in our research on American Catholics and especially so in our research on the members of religious institutes. The "Studies" reader's survey is notable in two ways... First, the response rate is generally balanced by generation. The older generation was a little less likely to respond and the younger generation was a little more likely but the difference is not great. Second, the responses by generation are not all that different. By and large there is no great difference in the interests and valuation of the old and the young.

Number of open-end responses: The number of responses to open-ended survey questions may serve as an indicator of the respondents' interest in the topic. If the topic is not particularly interesting, then there is an increased likelihood that the open-ended questions are skipped. Over 900 Jesuits responded to the question of how they have used "Studies" personally and in their ministries - more than 80 percent chose to write something. And over 50 percent of the respondents offered suggestions for future issues of "Studies."

Taken together the response rate, the balance of responses across generations, and the volume of open-ended responses indicate a good level of interest and engagement with "Studies."

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