

December 2017

Parish Life Survey

**Saint Patrick Parish
Milford, New Hampshire**

Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate
Georgetown University
Washington, DC

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Table of Contents

Executive Summary	1
Introduction	6
Interpreting This Report.....	6
Section I: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents	8
Age and Generation	8
Gender and Marital Status	11
Children in the Household	13
ZIP Code of Primary Residence.....	14
Section II: Religious Characteristics of Respondents	15
Relationship to the Catholic Church.....	15
Relationship to the Parish.....	16
Frequency of Religious Behaviors.....	18
Section III: Assessment of Parish Life and Needs	19
Evaluation of Aspects of Parish Life	20
Evaluation of Areas of Faith Formation	24
Evaluation of Areas of Worship.....	26
Evaluation of Parish Efforts	30
Evaluation of Parish Outreach	32
What Parishioners Like Best about the Parish	38
Effectiveness of Ways of Communicating.....	42
Priority for Parish Needs	45
Needed Ministries and Programs	49
Importance of Religious Behaviors	55
Attraction to the Parish.....	59
Reasons for Attending Mass	63
Reasons for Missing Mass	66
Ways Parents Can Be Involved in Children’s Religious Education	68
Likelihood of Future Behaviors.....	69
Impediments to Contributing More Financially to the Parish	75
Preference for Times of the Week Available for Religious Education Programs.....	77
Attitudes about Parish Life.....	79
Appendix I: Response Frequencies to All Questions	82
Appendix II: Complete Transcription of Open-ended Comments	85
Q 107: What one thing do you like best about the parish?	86
Q 108: What is the most important need for our parish to focus on in the next 1-3 years?.....	101



Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate

Parish Life Survey **Saint Patrick Parish** **Milford, New Hampshire**

Executive Summary

The St. Patrick Parish Life Survey was designed by the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) at Georgetown University. Most of the questions were derived from CARA's database of nationally tested questions, with some questions designed specifically for the parish. The parish distributed the questionnaire to those attending its liturgies over one weekend in November 2017. In all, there were 471 valid responses, with an additional 20 respondents under age 16 not included in the overall analysis.

Major findings can be summarized as follows:

Demographic Characteristics

- The average age of valid respondents to the in-pew survey at St. Patrick Parish is 60. Half are 62 or younger.
- CARA divides Catholics into four generations, reflective of the age categories used by many other social scientists. The most common generation at St. Patrick Parish is the Vatican II Generation, ages 57 to 74.
- Six in ten respondents to the survey are female and four in ten are male. Nearly three in four say they are currently married or remarried. One in ten has never married, one in 20 is divorced or separated, and just over one in ten is widowed. Almost three in ten report having at least one child or stepchild under age 18 living with them.
- More than four in ten respondents to the survey report a ZIP code from Milford, with another quarter from Amherst and another one-tenth from Brookline.

Religious Characteristics of Respondents

- Almost eight in ten identify the parish as their primary place of worship and say they are registered there. Just over one in ten says she or he regularly attends the parish but is *not* registered there, and another one in 20 identifies as a visitor.
- About three in four say they have been active Catholics since birth, just over one in ten is a returned Catholic, and one in 20 is a convert to Catholicism. One percent each identifies as an inactive Catholic, non-Catholic, or as not religious.

Assessment of Parish Life and Needs

- Nine in ten (91%) give St. Patrick Parish overall a positive evaluation (“good” and “excellent” combined). Three in ten rate it as “excellent.”
- Four-tenths to half report being attracted to the parish “very much” by the following: the quality of the homilies, the quality of the liturgy, the sense of belonging they feel, and its open and welcoming spirit.
- When asked to write in what they like best about the parish, respondents are particularly likely to mention the sense of community and feeling of welcome, the worship life, and the pastor and staff.
- Youth ministry, young adult ministry, and adult faith formation are especially likely to receive high priority from respondents. More than half give each “very much” priority.
- When asked to write in what the most important need for the parish to focus on in the next one to three years, respondents are particularly likely to cite needs related to evangelization and outreach to specific groups, youth and young adult ministry, and formation.
- Seven in ten report being “very” likely to attend a parish activity or function besides weekend Mass in the next year.

Leadership

- Six in ten give a positive evaluation to the vision provided by parish leaders, with a quarter rating it as “excellent.”
- More than half give an “excellent” rating to the friendliness of the parish office staff.
- Nearly nine in ten give “somewhat” or “very much” priority to having informal conversations with the Pastor and parish staff.

Worship

- Masses and liturgies in general receive a positive evaluation from more than nine in ten respondents. Nearly half rate them as “excellent.”
- Just over one-third rate the hospitality or sense of welcome at worship as “excellent.” Parish outreach to visitors and guests receives an “excellent” evaluation from two in ten respondents.
- The liturgical decorations and environment in general are given an “excellent” rating by half of respondents.
- Nearly half give an “excellent” rating to the music in general at the parish.

- The homilies in general receive an “excellent” rating from almost half of respondents. The older the generation, the more likely responding members are to rate them as “excellent.”
- Nine in ten attend Mass at least once a week and almost another one in ten attend once or twice a month.
- When asked why they attend Mass, about eight in ten respondents say the following “very much” explain why they attend: the Mass means a lot to them and receiving Communion is important to them. About six in ten “very much” cite that attending is their obligation. The older the generation, the more likely its members are to say those reasons explain why they attend Mass.
- Catholics who say they have missed Mass in the last six months are especially likely to cite the following reasons: not believing that missing Mass is a sin, conflicts with work, and their children’s scheduled activities.
- A quarter indicate that participating frequently in the Sacrament of Reconciliation or Confession is “very” important to them. Half report going to Confession/Reconciliation at least once a year, with one in ten attending at least once a month.
- A third give “very much” priority to the parish providing more small group prayer opportunities.

Sense of Community

- The sense of community within the parish receives a positive rating from about three in four respondents. Just over two in ten give it an “excellent” rating.
- Social activities receive an “excellent” rating from a little more than one in ten respondents.
- Nearly half say the parish should give “very much” priority to fellowship/coffee and donuts after Mass.

Formation

- Parish efforts to educate parishioners in the faith receive a positive evaluation from about eight in ten respondents, with three in ten giving these efforts an “excellent” rating.
- Efforts to foster spiritual growth and to nurture one’s relationship with Jesus Christ receive an “excellent” rating from about three in ten respondents.
- A quarter rate as “excellent” efforts to offer a Catholic view on current issues and help them practice gospel values in their daily lives.

- Children’s religious education programs receive an “excellent” rating from a third, with a quarter giving as high a rating to youth ministry.
- When asked how they parents should be more involved in the religious education of their children, more than eight in ten recommend them attending Mass weekly with their children.
- When asked for their preference for when religious education programs are offered, just over a third each prefer after school and Sunday evenings.
- Nearly two in ten say they have attended adult faith formation classes at the parish. Faith formation for adults receives an “excellent” rating from almost a quarter of respondents.
- Nearly six in ten place “very much” priority on adult faith formation. Almost four in ten report being “very” likely to spend time learning more about their faith.

Stewardship

- Parish efforts to encourage parishioners to share their time, talents and treasure with the parish receive a positive evaluation from three in four. Almost a quarter rate these efforts as “excellent.”
- Parish efforts to invite participation in ministries receive an “excellent” evaluation from nearly a quarter respondents. A third say they volunteer for a parish ministry at least once a month.
- Three in ten indicate they are “very” likely to offer their time and talent in volunteer opportunities. Almost three in ten report being as likely to volunteer for a parish ministry.
- When asked how much different factors prevent them from contributing more financially to the parish, respondents are particularly likely to say already contributing as much as they can afford “very much” prevents them from doing so.

Evangelization and Parish Outreach

- Efforts to spread the Gospel/evangelize receive a positive rating from just over seven in ten respondents. About two in ten give these efforts an “excellent” rating.
- Half say they invite someone to attend a parish worship service or activity at least once a year. Two in ten say they are “very” likely to invite someone to a parish service or activity in the next year.
- When asked to evaluate parish outreach to 13 groups, respondents are most likely to give an “excellent” rating to outreach to senior citizens and those sick and homebound. They are least likely to give the same rating to outreach to inactive Catholics, single parents, and married young adults.

- One in six gives an “excellent” rating to the parish’s outreach to new parishioners.
- About two in ten say parish outreach to families and teens is “excellent.” However, among those with children under age 18 living with them, about one in 20 rate outreach to those groups that highly.
- Parish outreach to inactive Catholics receives an “excellent” rating from one in ten respondents.
- Just over a third report being “very” likely to talk to someone about their faith in the next year. One in six is as likely to invite someone to join the parish.

Social Justice

- Outreach to those in need receives a positive rating from more than eight in ten respondents. Just under four in ten rate these efforts as “excellent.”
- A quarter rate parish outreach to those sick or homebound as “excellent.” Outreach to the caretakers of the sick and homebound receives as high a rating from two in ten respondents.

Parish Communications

- Parish efforts to communicate with parishioners receive a positive evaluation from eight in ten respondents, with almost three-tenths rating these efforts as “excellent.”
- Responding parishioners are particularly likely to say the Sunday bulletins and announcements read at Mass are “very” effective ways of communicating parish news to them.
- Three in ten of those not involved in any parish ministries or activities say the parish website is “very” effective for them, compared to less than two in ten respondents who are more involved.

Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate

Parish Life Survey Saint Patrick Parish Milford, New Hampshire

Introduction

The St. Patrick Parish Life Survey was designed by the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) at Georgetown University. Most of the questions were derived from CARA's database of nationally tested questions, with some questions designed specifically for the parish. The parish distributed the questionnaire to those attending its liturgies over one weekend in November 2017. In all, there were 471 valid responses, with an additional 20 respondents under age 16 not included in the overall analysis. Following standard assumptions of statistical inference, a sample size of 471 provides a margin of error of approximately ± 4.5 percentage points.¹

Interpreting This Report

Most of the questions in this survey use four point response scales (“not at all,” “only a little,” “somewhat,” “very much”; or “poor,” “fair,” “good,” “excellent”). These scales allow half of the responses to be interpreted as relatively more “negative” (“poor” and “fair,” for example) and half as relatively more “positive” (“good” and “excellent,” for example). In parts of the analysis in this report, these responses are combined to allow for clearer comparisons. However, sometimes examining the most positive response distinguishes important contrasts in level of support.

In addition, readers may also wish to compare the difference between the two extreme responses, say “poor” and “excellent,” to compare the level of intensity with which opposing opinions are held. These comparisons and others may be drawn by referring to the actual percentage responses given in Appendix I. That appendix shows the percentage responses for each item, calculated out of 100%, as well as the percentage of all respondents that did not respond to each question, separately calculated out of 100% for clarity of comparison.

In addition to summarizing the responses to most questions for respondents as a whole, the report also compares the responses of those from selected subgroups. The first section of the report describes the characteristics of the respondents as well as the subgroups that are used in the analyses that follow. Throughout the report, the tables and charts that compare differences between

¹Strictly speaking, it is necessary to know the total population (in this case, the total number of adult parishioners) to calculate margin of error. CARA's standard assumption for its in-pew parish surveys is that about half of parishioners are represented. For obvious reasons, those who are represented in a given in-pew survey are disproportionately more frequent Mass attenders.

and among these various subgroups are presented following the responses for parishioners as a whole in each section.

The margin of error for *differences between subgroups*, such as the differences among those of different generations or those with different levels of involvement, depends on the size of the subgroups being compared. Unless otherwise noted, all subgroup differences described in the graphs of this report are statistically significant: that is, they pass standard tests of statistical inference and can be considered to be “real” differences. In some instances, differences between or among subgroups that are not statistically significant are also noted. These differences should be treated as merely suggestive of real differences that may exist between the subgroups under consideration.

CARA regularly conducts parish surveys through its Parish Life Surveys. Parish Life Surveys are a series of dynamic survey instruments for pastoral planning, including survey data collection, analyses of key stakeholders and demographic groups, and user-friendly reports and products. From the aggregate data collected through the Parish Life Survey services over the past 15 years, CARA has a database of characteristics of parish life gathered from more than 900 parishes nationwide. While this database is not a random sample of parishes, and therefore not necessarily representative of all parishes nationwide, it is the most comprehensive source of data of its kind and covers a broad range of topics important to vibrant parish life.

In this report, where possible, results from St. Patrick Parish current Parish Life Survey are compared to the aggregate responses from the Parish Life Survey National Database of Parish Life to put the parish results into a larger national context. Additionally, where available, comparisons are made to findings from a 2012 study of Catholics in-pew at 23 parishes across the country. Finally, comparisons are made to findings from CARA’s nationally representative surveys of adult self-identified Catholics conducted since 2012. For all of these comparisons, only differences of 10 percentage points or more are treated as meaningful.

In addition to the quantitative data analyzed in this report, two open-ended questions on the survey collected qualitative data. For these data, respondents were prompted with a question and given an open box for written comments, rather than select from a set of response options. These comments are analyzed along with the quantitative data as well as in separate sections throughout this report. While these responses are not suitable for statistical analyses, they do add depth to the data that is not attainable through closed-ended questions only.

The results of this survey fairly represent the characteristics and attitudes of people ages 16 and older who attend Mass at St. Patrick Parish. It cannot be used to make inferences about populations outside of Mass attendees at the parish; it is not representative of those who do not attend Mass or those who are only involved in parish functions excluding Mass.

Section I: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

This section of the report includes demographic and other descriptive data for the 471 valid respondents to this survey. These data may be helpful in considering who responded to the survey, which populations are represented in the data, and characteristics of those attending Mass on a typical weekend at the parish.

Age and Generation

Valid respondents at St. Patrick Parish surveyed in 2017 were born between 1918 and 2001.¹ The average age of respondents is 60.4, with half saying they are 62 or younger. Although not directly comparable as the national data comes from 2012, this is higher than the median age of 49 among all self-identified Catholics nationally.² The most common age range reported is 55 to 64.

Age Range	St. Patrick	Catholics In Pew Nationally*	Catholics Nationally**
18-24***	2%	4%	9%
25-34	3	9	17
35-44	8	20	20
45-54	16	23	19
55-64	26	19	20
65-74	24	15	10
75 or older	21	10	5

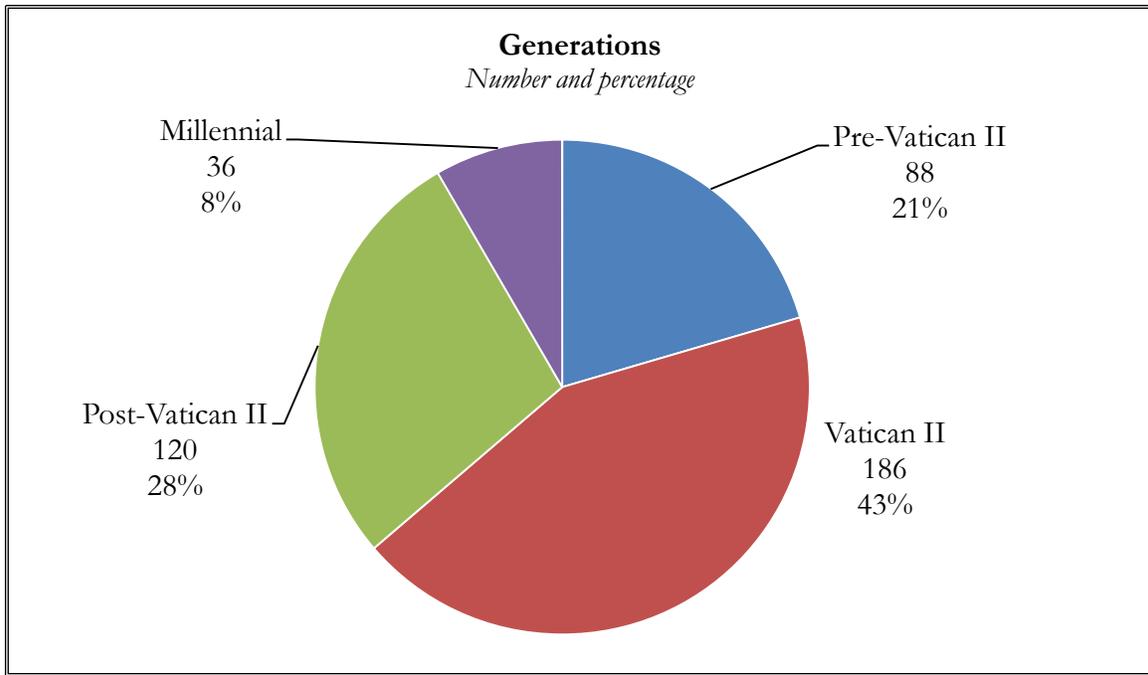
*Source: CARA's 2012 Emerging Models study
 **Source: CARA's 2012 Media Use study
 ***For comparison purposes, 16 year olds (11 respondents) and 17 year olds (1 respondents) are omitted from this table

- Overall, St. Patrick respondents report being older those responding in-pew nationally. Some 13% of St. Patrick respondents are under age 45 compared to 33% of Catholics in pew nationally.
- They differ significantly from Catholics nationally as well. Some 13% of St. Patrick respondents are under age 45 compared to 46% of Catholics nationally.

¹ The 20 respondents ages 15 and younger are not included in the general analysis as the survey is not designed for respondents that young. However, where applicable, their responses (combined with those ages 16 and 17) to select items are presented in footnotes throughout the report.

² Source: Mark M. Gray, and Mary L. Gautier. 2012. *Catholic New Media Use in the United States, 2012*.

Important differences between groups in parishes are typically found among those who belong to different generations. CARA divides Catholics into four generations, reflective of the age categories used by many other Catholic researchers. The most common generation among St. Patrick respondents is the Vatican II Generation, followed by the Post-Vatican II Generation.



- *The “Pre-Vatican II Generation,” ages 75 and over in 2017:* The Pre-Vatican II Generation was born in 1942 or earlier. Its members came of age before the Second Vatican Council. Members of the Pre-Vatican II Generation make up 21% of the respondents at St. Patrick Parish. This is similar to the percentage among Catholics in-pew nationally (18%) but higher than the percentage among Catholics nationally (10%).
- *The “Vatican II Generation,” ages 57-74 in 2017:* These are the “Baby Boomers” who were born between 1943 and 1960, a time of great demographic and economic growth. They came of age during the time of the Second Vatican Council and their formative years likely spanned that time of profound changes in the Church. Members of the Vatican II Generation at St. Patrick Parish represent 43% of respondents. This is higher than the percentage among Catholics in-pew nationally (35%) and higher than the percentage among Catholics nationally (32%).
- *The “Post-Vatican II Generation,” ages 36-56 in 2017:* Born between 1961 and 1981, this generation, sometimes called “Generation X” or “Baby Busters” by demographers, has no lived experience of the pre-Vatican II Church. Some 28% of those at St. Patrick Parish are members of this generation. This is less than the percentage among Catholics in-pew nationally (39%) and less than the percentage among Catholics nationally (38%).

- *The “Millennial Generation,” ages 16-35 in 2017:* This generation, born in 1982 or later (up to 1996 among adults), has come of age primarily under the papacies of John Paul II, Benedict XVI, and Francis. Because some still live with their parents, their religious practice is often closely related to that of their families of origin. Some 8% of respondents at St. Patrick Parish belong to the Millennial Generation. This is similar to the percentage among Catholics in-pew nationally (8%) but less than the percentage among Catholics nationally (19%).

Generation, Compared to Catholics Nationally			
Generations	St. Patrick	Catholics In Pew Nationally*	Catholics Nationally**
Pre-Vatican II (born 1942 or earlier)	21%	18%	10%
Vatican II (born 1943 to 1960)	43	35	32
Post-Vatican II (born 1961 to 1981)	28	39	38
Millennial (born 1982 to 2000)	8	8	19

**Source: CARA’s 2012 Emerging Models study*
***Source: CARA’s 2012 Media Use study*

Where applicable throughout this report, responses from the various generations will be compared to one another.

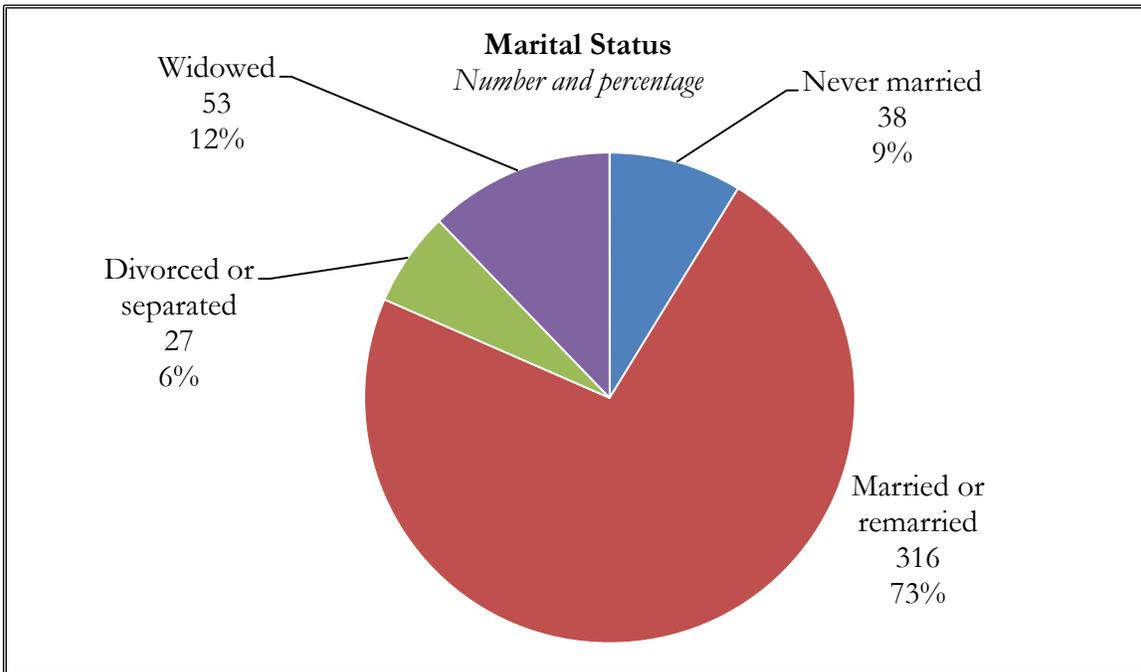
Gender and Marital Status

Six in ten (59%) of respondents at St. Patrick identify as female. This is slightly less than Catholics nationally in pew (64%) but higher than the percentage of self-identified Catholics nationally identifying as female (51%).

Gender, Compared to Catholics Nationally			
<i>Percentage responding</i>			
	St. Patrick	Catholics In Pew Nationally*	Catholics Nationally**
Female	59%	64%	51%
Male	41	36	49

*Source: CARA's 2012 Emerging Models study
**Source: CARA's 2012 Media Use study

Nearly three in four respondents at St. Patrick are currently married or remarried. One in ten has never married, one in 20 is divorced or separated, and just over one in ten are widowed.



Marital status at the parish is compared to the national data in the table below. The percentage married or remarried at St. Patrick Parish is similar to the percentage among Catholics in-pew nationally (70%) and higher than the percentage among Catholics nationally (62%).

Marital Status, Compared to Catholics Nationally			
<i>Percentage responding</i>			
Marital Status	St. Patrick	Catholics In Pew Nationally*	Catholics Nationally**
Never married***	9%	15%	24%
Married or remarried	73	70	62
Divorced or separated	6	8	9
Widowed	12	7	5

**Source: CARA's 2012 Emerging Models study*
***Source: CARA's 2012 Media Use study*
****The Media Use study includes those responding "living with a partner," who are included in the "never married" category here*

- One in ten (9%) at St. Patrick Parish have never married, compared to about one-tenth in-pew Catholics nationally (15%) and a quarter of adult Catholics nationally (24%).
- One in 20 (6%) is divorced or separated, compared to almost one in ten Catholics in pew (8%) and nationally (9%).
- Slightly over in ten (12%) at St. Patrick respondents overall have been widowed, compared to about one in twenty (7%) of those in pew and (5%) nationally.

Differences by Generation

Marital status differs by generation. Members of the Millennial Generation at St. Patrick are particularly likely to have never married (58%); those of the Vatican II Generation and Post-Vatican II are most likely to be married (82% and 81%, respectively); and those of the Pre-Vatican II Generation are most likely to be widowed (38%).

Marital Status, by Generation				
<i>Percentage responding</i>				
	Pre-Vatican II	Vatican II	Post-Vatican II	Millennial
Single, never married	1%	3%	8%	58%
Married or remarried	58	82	81	39
Divorced or separated	3	8	8	0
Widowed	38	7	3	3

Children in the Household

Respondents report having from zero to seven of their children or stepchildren living with them. Some 130 respondents (28%) have at least one child (including stepchildren) living with them. One in six (17%) have at least one child under age 18 living with them. One in seven (15%) report having at least one child ages 18 and older living with them. Note however, that in some households two parents may have responded to this question.³

Number of Children or Stepchildren Living with You	
<i>Percentage responding</i>	
No children	72%
One child	11
Two children	11
Three or more children	6
Ages 17 or younger	169
Age 18 or older	94

³ This was calculated using the yes/no response to this question: “Did/will your spouse also complete this survey?”.

ZIP Code of Primary Residence

The most common ZIP codes reported among Mass attenders are 03055, 03031, and 03033. Sixteen percent left this question blank. ZIP codes reported by at least two respondents are shown in the table below, with all city centers reported in New Hampshire.

Top Respondent Residential ZIP Codes			
ZIP Code	Number Responding	Percentage Responding	City Center
03055	174	44%	Milford
03031	94	24	Amherst
03033	43	11	Brookline
03057	30	6	Mt. Vernon
03086	15	4	Wilton
03082	12	3	Lyndeborough
03054	4	1	Merrimack
03049	3	1	Hollis
03063	3	1	Nashua
03070	3	1	New Boston

In addition, one respondent each reports ZIP codes of 01960, 02341, 03037, 03048, 03050, 03051, 03052, 03062, 03065, 03070, 03084, 03102, 03110, 03131, and 34211.

Section II: Religious Characteristics of Respondents

This part of the report describes several characteristics of the Catholics valid respondents to the survey that relate to their religious attributes and parish-related behaviors.

Relationship to the Catholic Church

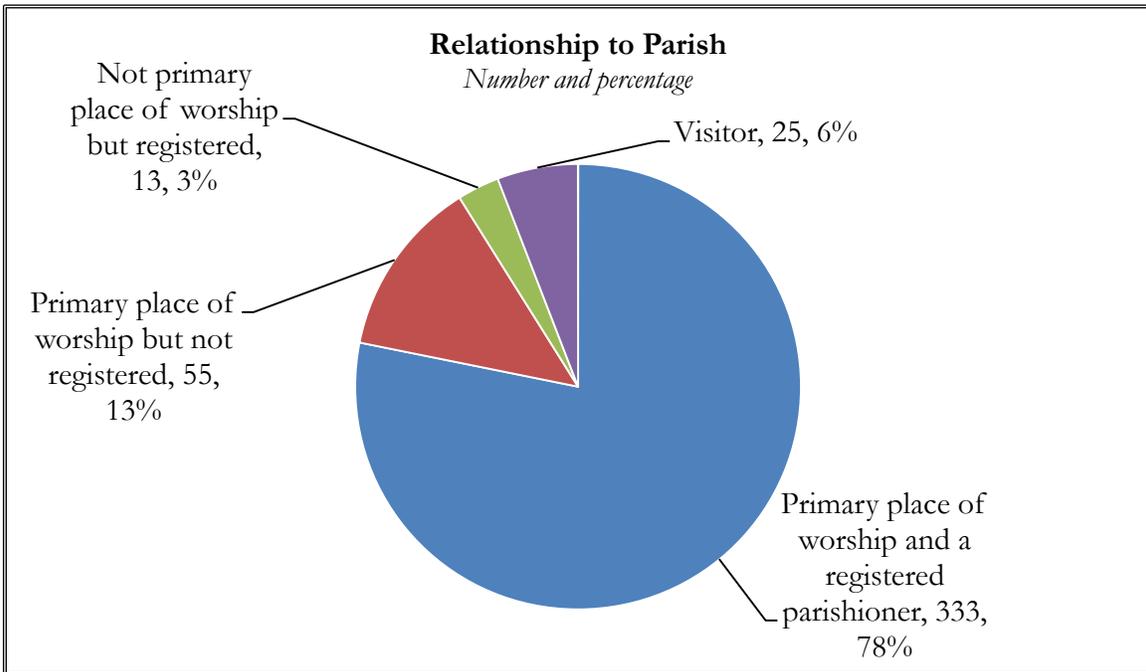
About three in four (77%) St. Patrick respondents say they have been active Catholics since birth, with 15% saying they are returned Catholics and 6% identifying as converts to Catholicism. One percent each says they are either inactive Catholics, non-Catholics, or not religious.

<i>What best describes you?</i>		
<i>Percentage responding</i>		
	St. Patrick	Catholics In Pew Nationally*
Active Catholic since birth	77%	74%
Returned Catholic	15	11
Catholic convert	6	11
Inactive Catholic	1	2
Non-Catholic	1	2
Not religious**	1	–

**Source: CARA's 2012 Emerging Models study*
***This response option was not given on the national in-pew study*

Relationship to the Parish

Of all respondents, 91% report that St. Patrick Parish is their primary place of worship and 80% say they are registered there. The figure below shows those two measures in relationship to one another. Nearly eight in ten (78%) say that the parish is their primary place of worship and that they are registered there. Just over one in ten (13%) says the parish is their primary place of worship but that they are *not* registered there. Fewer (3%) say they are registered there but the parish is not their primary place of worship. One in 20 says she or he is a visitor (6%) to the parish.



Compared to Catholics in pew nationally (78%), St. Patrick respondents are as likely to identify the parish as their primary place of worship and to be registered there. St. Patrick parishioners are very similar to in-pew respondents in the other measures as well.

Relationship to the Parish		
	St. Patrick	Catholics In Pew Nationally*
Primary place of worship <i>and</i> a registered parishioner	78%	78%
Primary place of worship but <i>not</i> registered	13	13
<i>Not</i> primary place of worship but registered	3	2
Visitor to the parish	6	7

**Source: CARA's 2012 Emerging Models study*

Frequency of Religious Behaviors

Nine in ten attend Mass at least once a week, with nearly two in ten attending more often than that. Almost one in ten attends once or twice a month.

<i>How often do you do the following?</i>					
<i>Percentage responding</i>					
	More Than Once a Week	Once a Week	Once or Twice a Month	Once or Twice a Year	Never or Rarely
Attend Mass	18%	73%	8%	0%	1%
Volunteer for a parish ministry	7	12	13	18	50
Attend a parish function besides Mass	4	7	17	42	30
Encourage someone to come to a parish worship service or activity	3	6	12	29	50
Go to Reconciliation/ Confession	1	2	7	40	50

- Half (50%) say they volunteer for a parish ministry at least once a year. Two in ten (19%) do at least once a week.
- Seven in ten (70%) report attending a parish function besides Mass at least once a year. One in ten (11%) do so at least once a week.
- Half (50%) say they have encouraged someone to come to a parish worship service or activity at least once in the past year, with one in ten (9%) having done at least weekly.
- Half (50%) indicate that they go to Reconciliation/Confession at least once a year. One in ten (10%) does so at least once a month.

Level of Involvement

Throughout the rest of this report, comparisons will be made based on how involved respondents are in the life of the parish. The measure was constructed by combining two of the variables above, the frequency of volunteering for a parish ministry and the frequency of attending a parish function besides Mass. The three groups compared are:

- Rarely involved with parish ministries or activities (112 respondents or 27%)
- Involved once or twice a year (190 respondents or 47%)
- Involved at least once a month (107 respondents or 26%)

Section III: Assessment of Parish Life and Needs

Overall, the results of the St. Patrick Parish Life Survey are very positive. Nineteen particular areas were addressed in the survey instrument. These areas are featured in this section of the report, though readers are advised to consult the response frequencies in Appendix I of this document for response rates and other pertinent information about these data. The areas of parish life addressed are:

- Evaluation of Aspects of Parish Life
- Evaluation of Areas of Faith Formation
- Evaluation of Areas of Worship
- Evaluation of Parish Efforts
- Evaluation of Parish Outreach
- What Parishioners Like Best about the Parish
- Effectiveness of Ways of Communicating
- Needed Ministries and Programs
- Priority for Parish Needs
- Importance of Religious Behaviors
- Attraction to the Parish
- Reasons for Attending Mass
- Reasons for Missing Mass
- Ways Parents Can Be Involved in Children's Religious Education
- Likelihood of Future Behaviors
- Impediments to Contributing More Financially
- Times of the Week Available for Faith Formation
- Preferences for Times of the Week Available for Religious Education Programs
- Attitudes about Parish Life

Evaluation of Aspects of Parish Life

This section presents the survey’s most general evaluation of parish life. Besides an evaluation of the parish overall, the other items are very general measures of CARA’s seven elements of parish life: community, worship, leadership, faith formation, stewardship, social justice, and evangelization.

Nine in ten respondents give a positive rating (“good” and “excellent” combined) to St. Patrick Parish overall. Three in ten rate it as “excellent” overall.⁴

<i>Please evaluate these aspects of parish life</i>		
<i>Percentage responding</i>		
	“Good” or “Excellent”	“Excellent” Only
Masses and liturgies in general	93%	45%
Friendliness of the parish office staff	91	54
St. Patrick Parish overall	91	31
Outreach to those in need	83	38
Efforts to educate parishioners in the faith	81	30
Encouragement to share your time, talents and treasure with the parish	74	23
Sense of community within the parish	72	22
Spreading the Gospel/evangelizing	72	22
Vision provided by parish leaders	70	24
Usefulness of parish website	66	20
Social activities	64	14

Between eight- and nine-tenths give a “good” or “excellent” evaluation to Masses and liturgies in general, the friendliness of the parish office staff, outreach to those in need, and efforts to educate parishioners in the faith. About two-thirds to three-quarters rate the following positively: encouragement to share one’s time, talents and treasure with the parish; sense of community within the parish; spreading the Gospel or evangelizing; vision provided by parish leaders; usefulness of the parish website; and social activities.

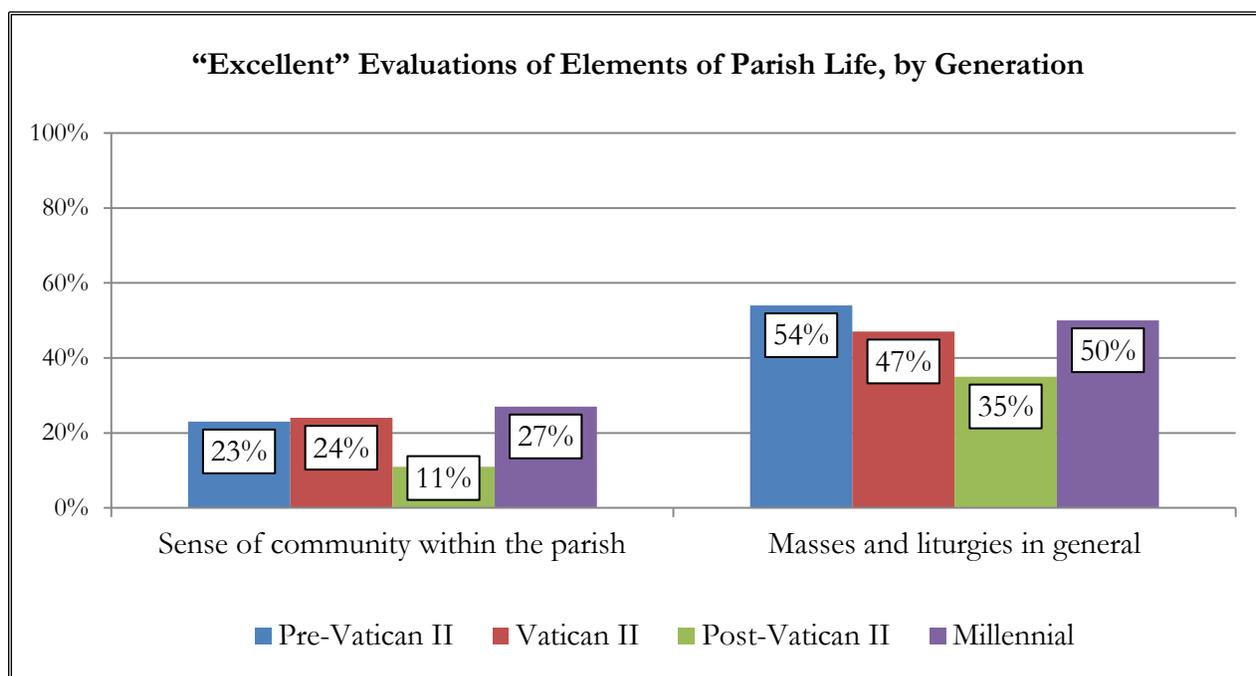
- More than half rate the friendliness of the parish office staff as “excellent.”
- Masses and liturgies in general are rated as “excellent” by more than four in ten.
- Outreach to those in need receives an “excellent” evaluation from nearly four in ten.
- Three in ten say efforts to educate parishioners in the faith are “excellent.”

⁴ Respondents ages 17 and younger are similar to others for each of these questions except one: Only 33% say the usefulness of the parish website is “good” or “excellent.” Eleven percent say it is “excellent” only.

- About two in ten give an “excellent” rating to the vision provided by parish leaders; encouragement to share one’s time, talents and treasure with the parish; the sense of community within the parish; efforts to spread the Gospel or evangelize; and the usefulness of the parish website.
- Social activities receive an “excellent” evaluation from just over one in ten respondents.

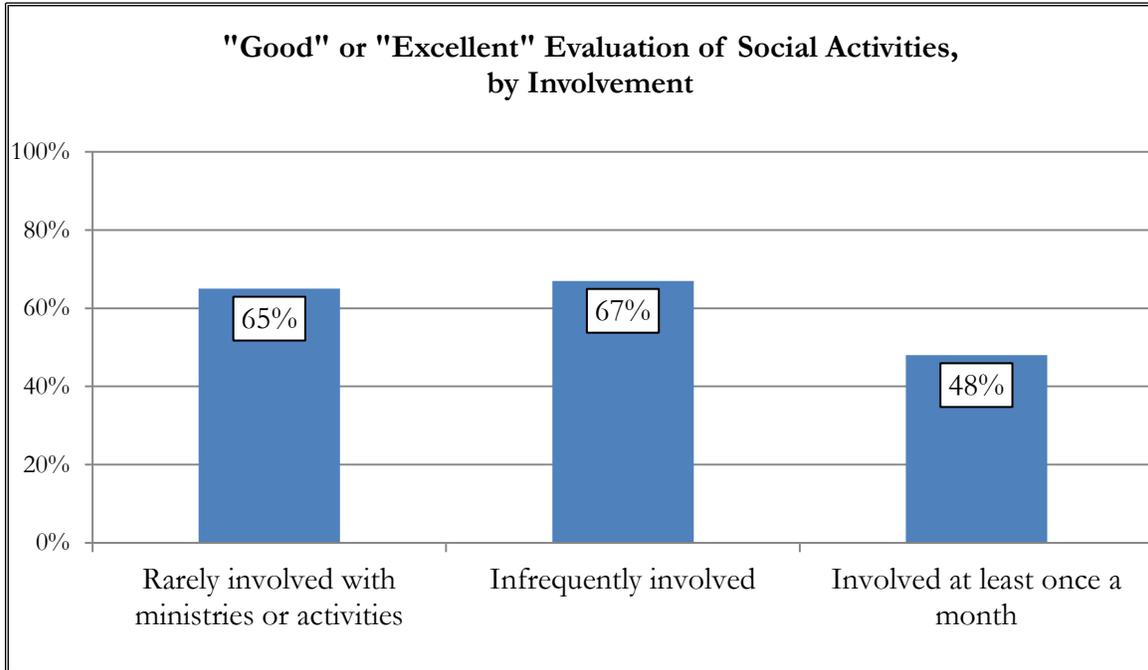
Differences by Generation

Members of the Post-Vatican II Generation are *least* likely to evaluate the sense of community within the parish and Masses and liturgies in general as “excellent.”

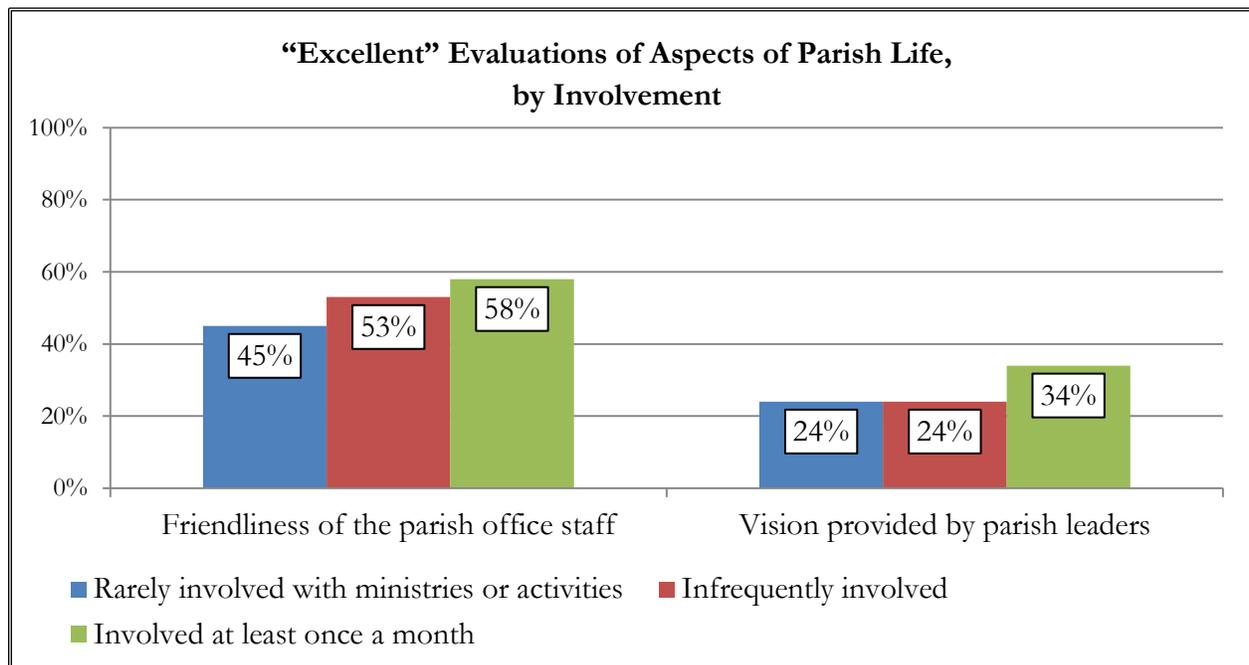


Differences by Level of Involvement

Those who are involved with a parish ministry or attend a parish activity at least once a month are *least* likely to give a positive evaluation to social activities.



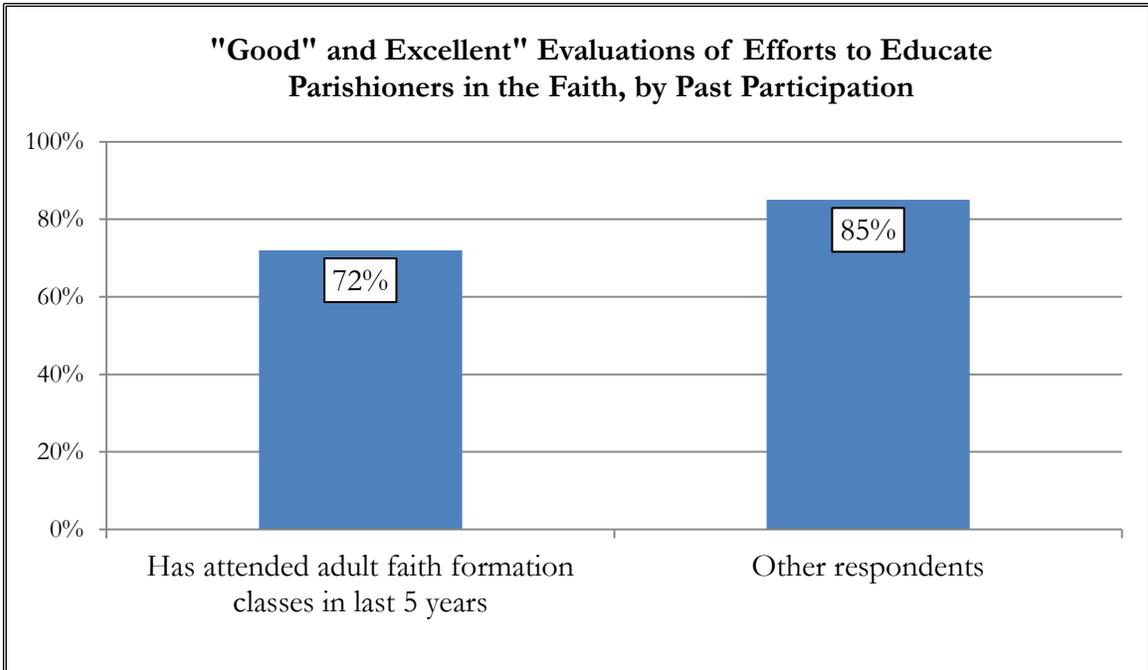
Those involved with a parish ministry or who attend a parish activity at least once a month are most likely to rate as “excellent” the friendliness of the parish staff and efforts to educate parishioners in the faith.



Differences by Past Participation in Formation Programs

Those whose children have attended religious education classes at the parish in the past five years do *not* differ significantly from others in how they evaluate efforts to educate parishioners in the faith.

Slightly more than seven in ten respondents who have attended adult religious education classes at the parish in the past five years give a positive evaluation to efforts to educate parishioners in the faith (72%), compared to more than eight in ten other respondents (85%).



Evaluation of Areas of Faith Formation

Three in four respondents give a positive rating (“good” and “excellent” combined) to children’s religious education programs, with two in three giving a positive rating to youth ministry. Just under two in evaluate faith formation for adults positively.

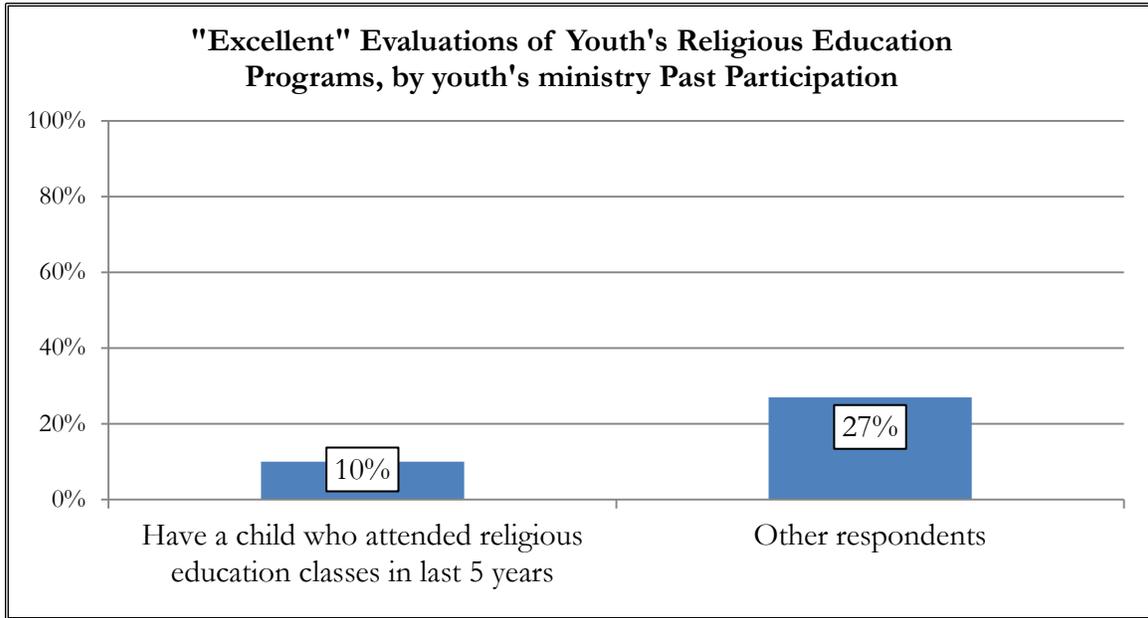
<i>Please evaluate the following areas of faith formation</i>		
<i>Percentage responding</i>		
	“Good” or “Excellent”	“Excellent” Only
Children’s religious education programs	75%	35%
Youth ministry	67	26
Faith formation for adults	65	23

Children’s religious education programs receive an “excellent” evaluation from just over a third of respondents. About a quarter give an “excellent” rating to youth ministry and faith formation for adults.⁵

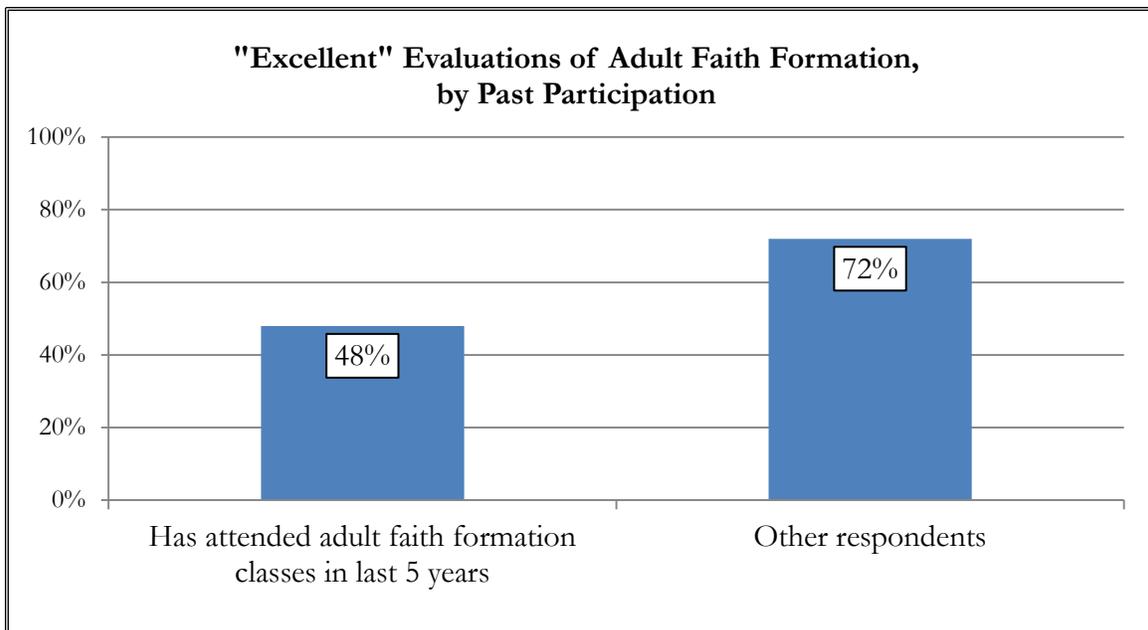
⁵ Respondents ages 17 and younger are relatively more likely than others to give an “excellent” evaluation to children’s religious education programs (53%) and youth ministry (33%).

Differences by Past Participation in Formation Programs

Those who have children who have attended religious education classes at the parish in the past five years do *not* differ significantly from others in how they evaluate children's religious education programs. Those whose children have attended religious education programs are, however, *less* likely to give an "excellent" evaluation to youth ministry.



Nearly half of those who have attended religious education classes at the parish in the past five years evaluate adult faith formation as "excellent," compared to about seven in ten other respondents.



Evaluation of Areas of Worship

More than nine in ten St. Patrick respondents give a positive rating to the weekend Masses in general. Half rate them as “excellent.”

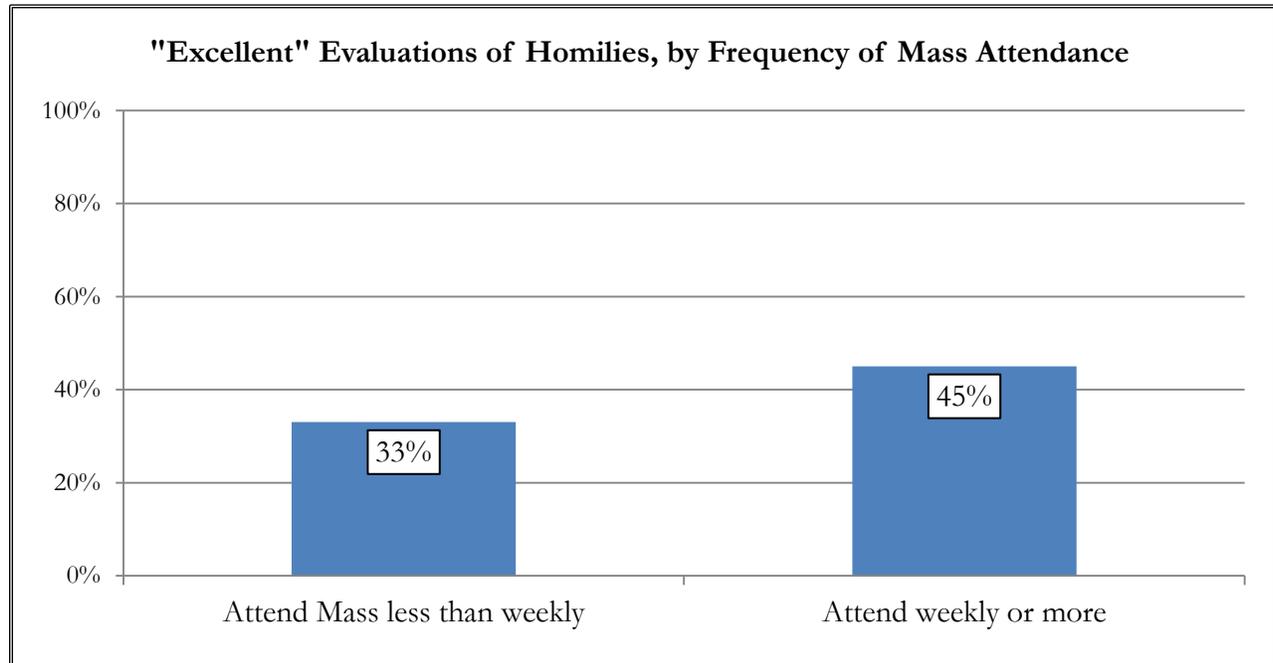
<i>Please evaluate these areas of worship in general</i>		
<i>Percentage responding</i>		
	“Good” or “Excellent”	“Excellent ” Only
Weekend Masses in general	93%	50%
Homilies	86	47
Music program	86	46
Liturgical decorations and environment	84	51
Devotions	84	29
Hospitality or sense of welcome	79	35

Between 79% and 86% give a positive evaluation to each of the areas of worship evaluated.

- The liturgical decorations and environment, homilies, and music program receive an “excellent” evaluation from about half of responding parishioners.
- Just over a third say the hospitality or sense of welcome is “excellent.”
- Devotions are given an “excellent” evaluation by three in ten respondents.

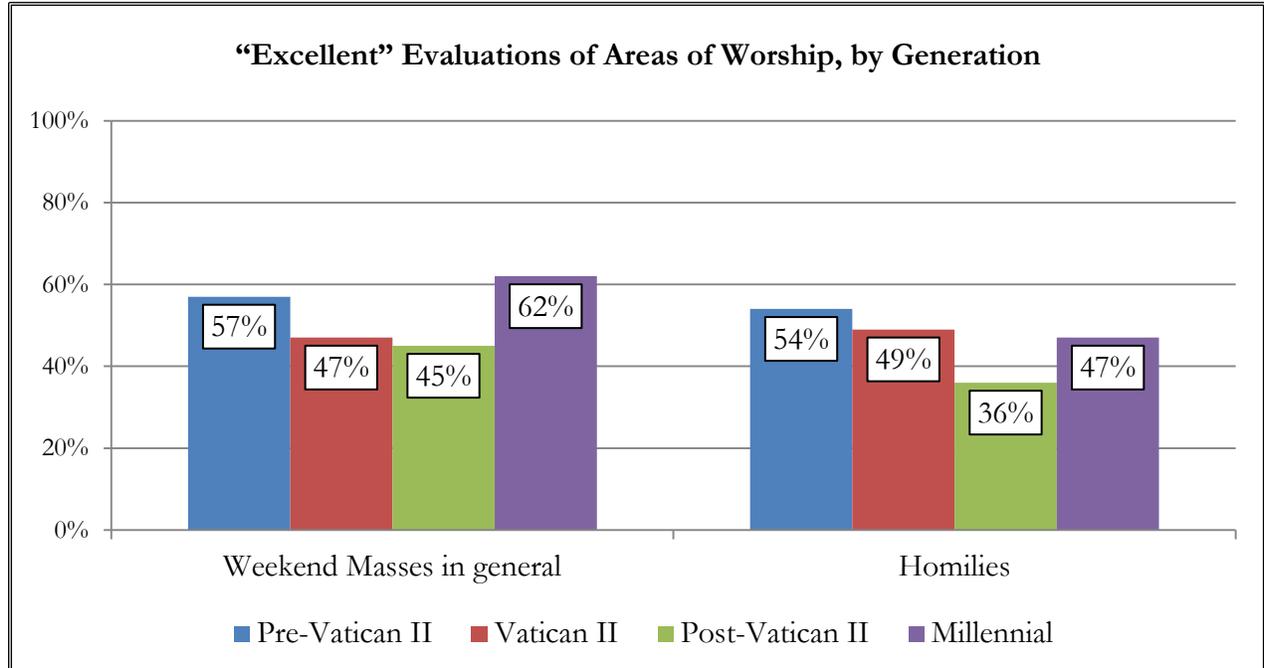
Differences by Frequency of Mass Attendance

Those who usually attend Mass at least once a week are more likely than those who attend less frequently to give the homilies an “excellent” evaluation.



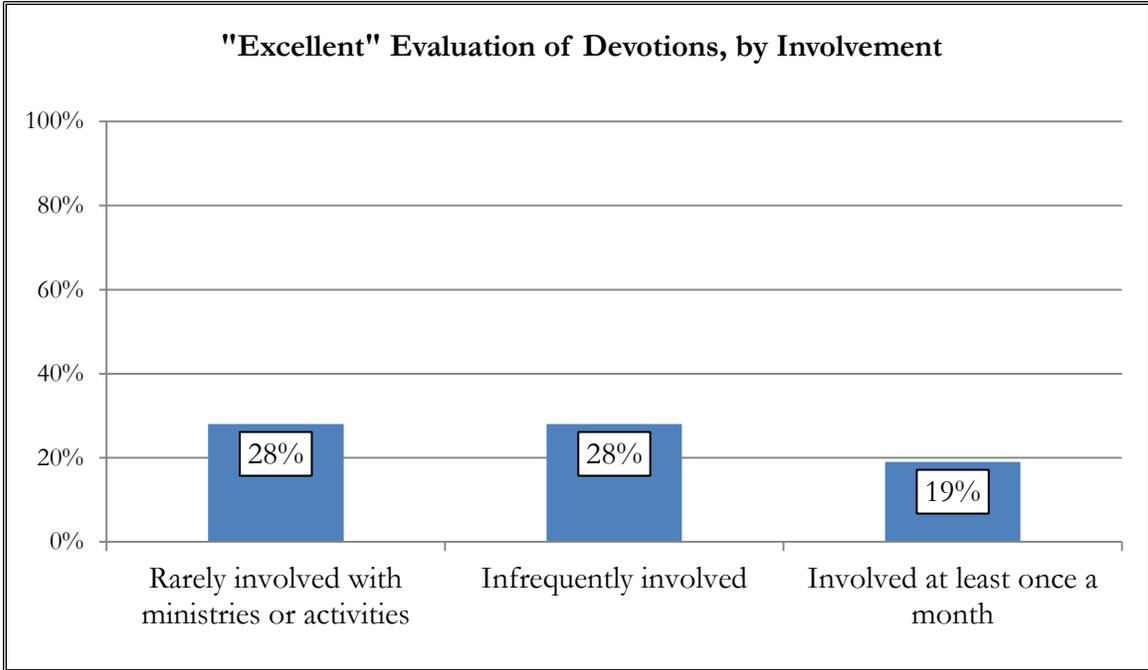
Differences by Generation

Members of the oldest and youngest generations are especially likely to give an “excellent” evaluation to the weekend Masses in general and to the homilies.



Differences by Level of Involvement

Those who volunteer for a parish ministry or attend an activity at the parish at least once a month are *least* likely to give an “excellent” evaluation to devotions in general.



Differences by Relationship to the Parish

Visitors at the parish do *not* differ significantly from others in how they evaluate the hospitality or sense of welcome at parish liturgies.

Evaluation of Parish Efforts

With three exceptions, more than two-thirds of respondents give a positive evaluation to each of the parish efforts presented in the table below. The three exceptions concern efforts related to evangelization and building community.

<i>Please evaluate parish efforts to:</i>		
<i>Percentage responding</i>		
	“Good” or “Excellent”	“Excellent” Only
Encourage you to contribute generously to the parish	93%	48%
Nurture your relationship with Jesus Christ	84	31
Help you practice gospel values in your daily life	80	25
Communicate with parishioners	79	28
Foster spiritual growth	79	28
Invite you to participate in parish ministries	74	23
Offer a Catholic view on current issues	71	24
Be sensitive to the needs and concerns of the parishioners	69	21
Help you to meet other parishioners	52	13
Reach out to area Catholics who do not come to Mass regularly	32	8
Reach out to those who do not belong to a faith community	31	6

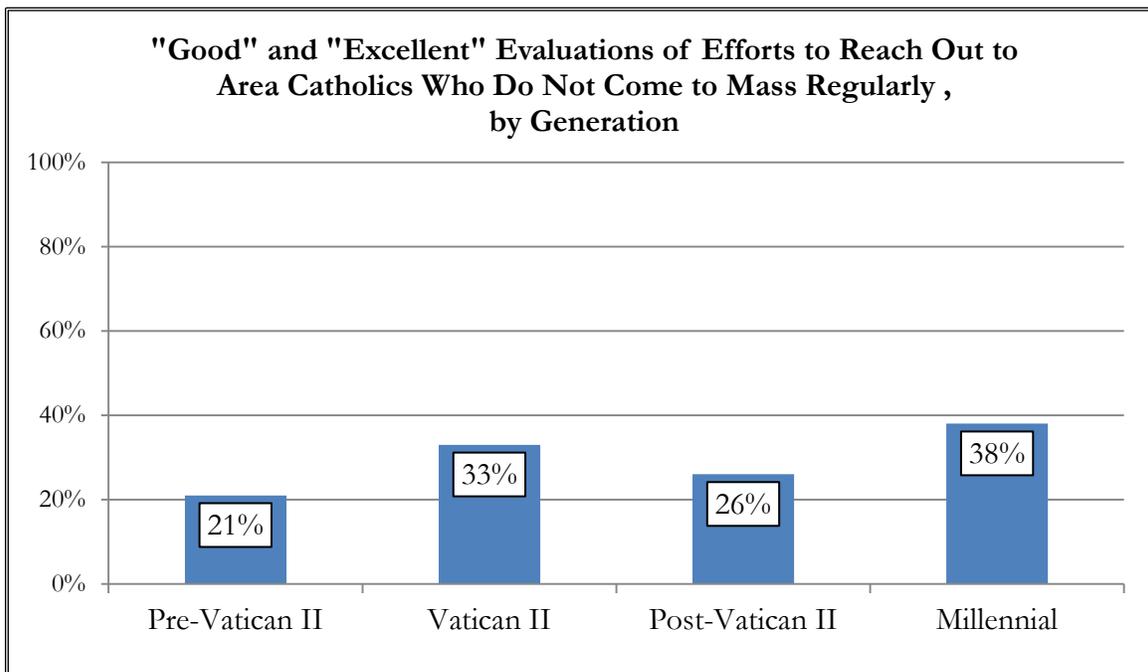
Nearly half say the parish is “excellent” at encouraging parishioners to contribute generously to the parish. Almost a quarter give as high a rating to efforts to inviting participation in parish ministries.

- A quarter to three-tenths rate the parish as “excellent” in its efforts to nurture their relationship with Jesus Christ, to help them practice gospel values in their daily lives, and to foster spiritual growth.
- Communication with parishioners receives an “excellent” evaluation from a nearly three in ten respondents.
- A quarter say efforts to offer a Catholic view on current issues is “excellent.”
- Two in ten give an ‘excellent’ rating to efforts to be sensitive to the needs and concerns of parishioners.
- Efforts to help meet other parishioners receive an “excellent” evaluation from just over one in ten.

- Less than one in ten give an “excellent” evaluation to evangelization efforts to reach out both to area Catholics who do not come to Mass regularly and to those who do not belong to a faith community.

Differences by Generation

Members of the Millennial and Vatican II Generations are especially likely to rate efforts to reach out to area Catholics who do not attend Mass regularly as “excellent.”



Evaluation of Parish Outreach

With the exception of outreach to inactive Catholics, half to three-quarters of St. Patrick respondents give a positive evaluation to the parish outreach given to all of the groups in the table below. Outreach to families, adults, those sick or homebound, and senior citizens are particularly likely to receive a positive evaluation.

<i>Please evaluate parish outreach to the following groups:</i>		
<i>Percentage responding</i>		
	“Good” or “Excellent”	“Excellent” Only
Families	76%	21%
Adults	73	19
Those sick or homebound	72	25
Senior citizens (ages 65 and older)	71	26
Those who are grieving	68	20
Visitors and guests	66	20
Teens	65	23
Caretakers of the sick or homebound	61	19
Young adults	56	18
Married young adults	52	14
New parishioners	51	17
Single parents	49	11
Inactive Catholics	36	10

A quarter say the parish is “excellent” at reaching out to those sick or homebound and senior citizens. Two in ten give as high a rating to outreach to the caretakers of the sick and homebound.

- About two in ten say the parish is “excellent” in its outreach to families. One in ten gives outreach to single parents as high a rating.⁶
- Outreach to teens, adults, and young adults receive an “excellent” evaluation from just over two in ten respondents. Just over one in ten give as high a rating to outreach to married young adults.
- Two in ten evaluate outreach to those who are grieving as “excellent.”
- Outreach to new parishioners receives an “excellent” rating from one in six respondents.

⁶ Respondents ages 17 and younger are more likely to give outreach to families an “excellent” evaluation (39%) and are slightly more likely to give outreach to teens as high an evaluation (26%).

- One in ten say the outreach to inactive Catholics is “excellent.”

Non-response Rate

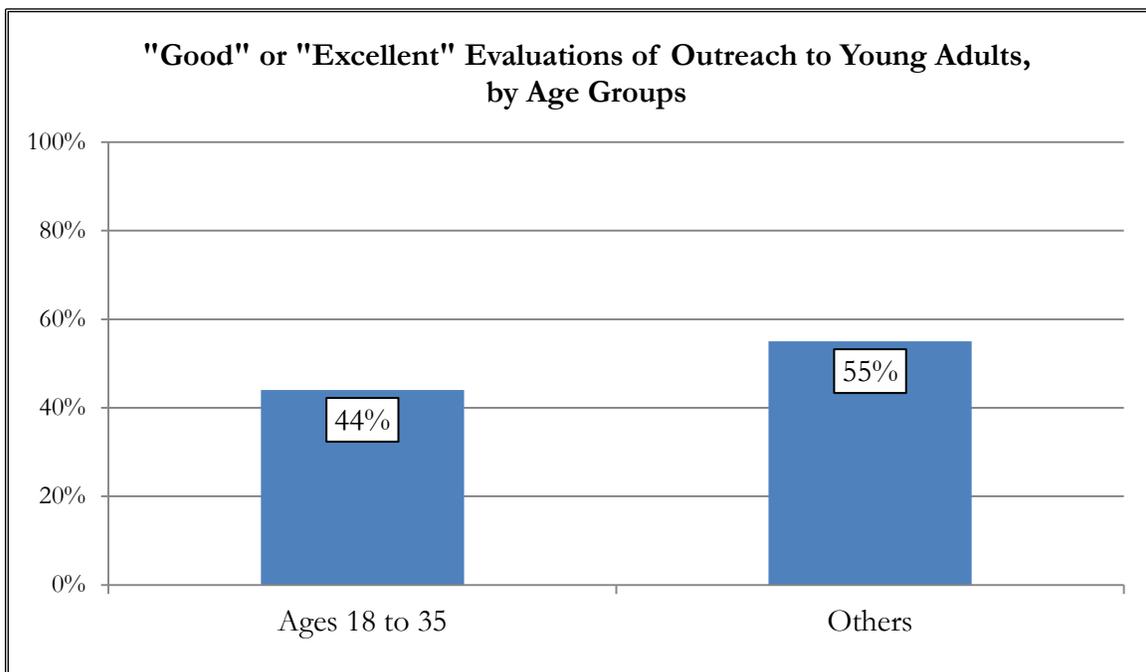
Perhaps due to being unfamiliar with parish outreach to some groups, non-response rates are more than 40% for outreach to the following groups:

- 57% for single parents
- 55% for caretakers of the sick or homebound
- 49% for inactive Catholics
- 46% for new parishioners
- 45% for those who are grieving
- 43% for married young adults

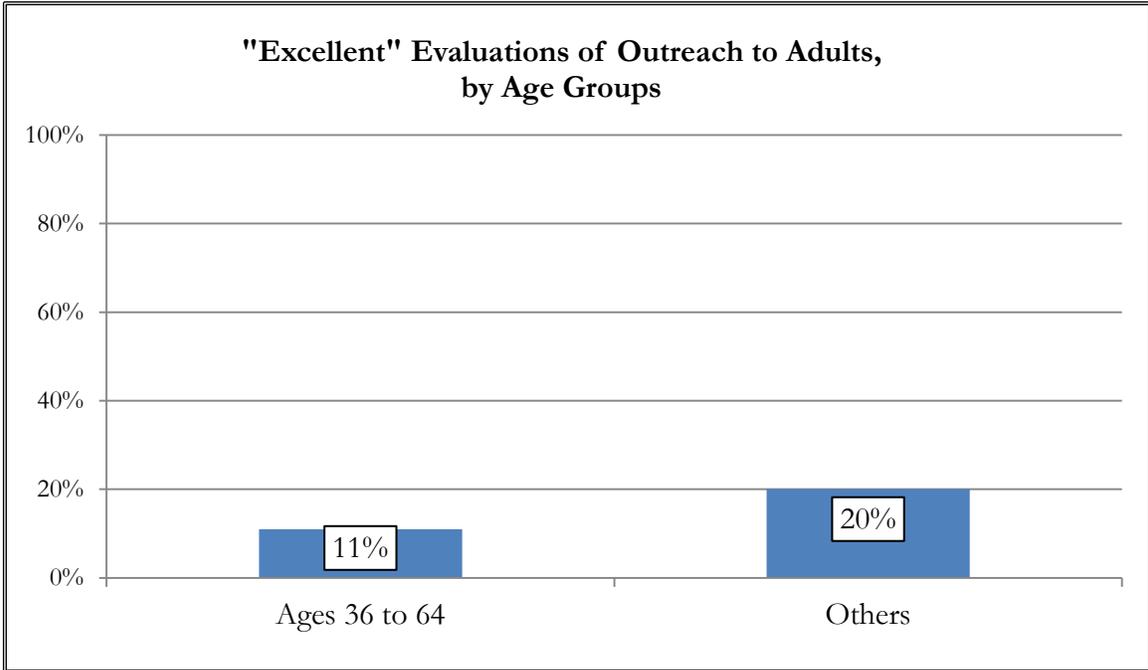
While it is impossible to know why a respondent did not provide a response to a question, these high non-response rates might be suggestive that the parish has not made these programs well known.

Differences by Age Group

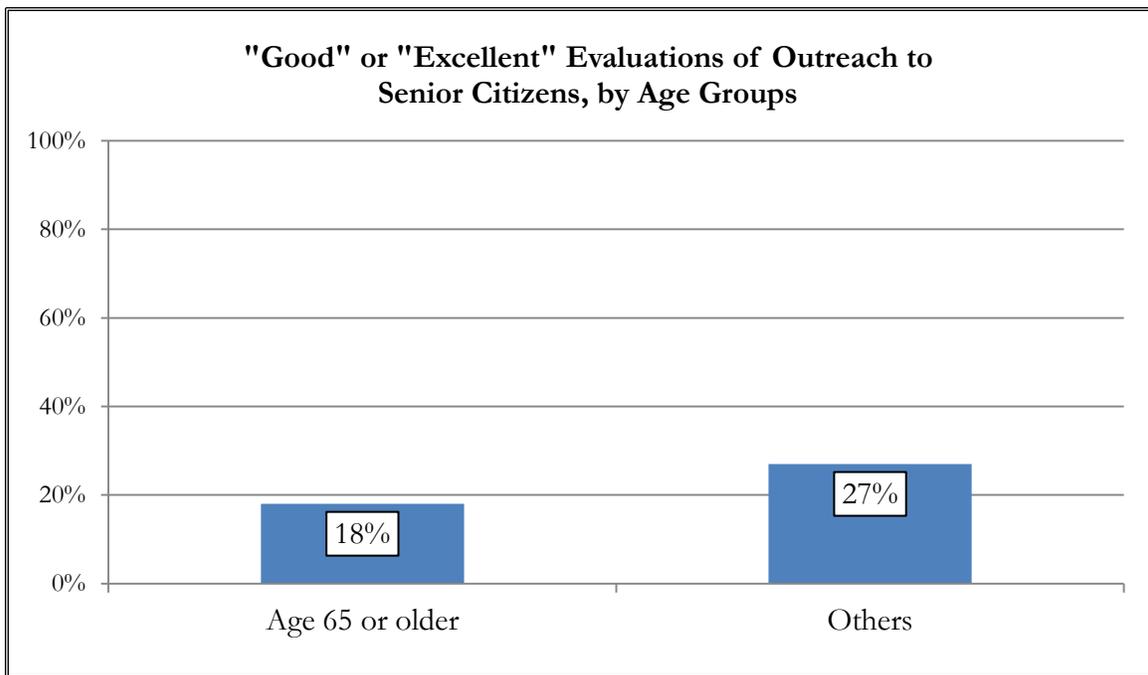
Those ages 18 to 35 are *less* likely than others to give a positive evaluation to parish outreach to young adults.



Respondents ages 36 to 64 are *less* likely than others to give an “excellent” evaluation to parish outreach to adults.

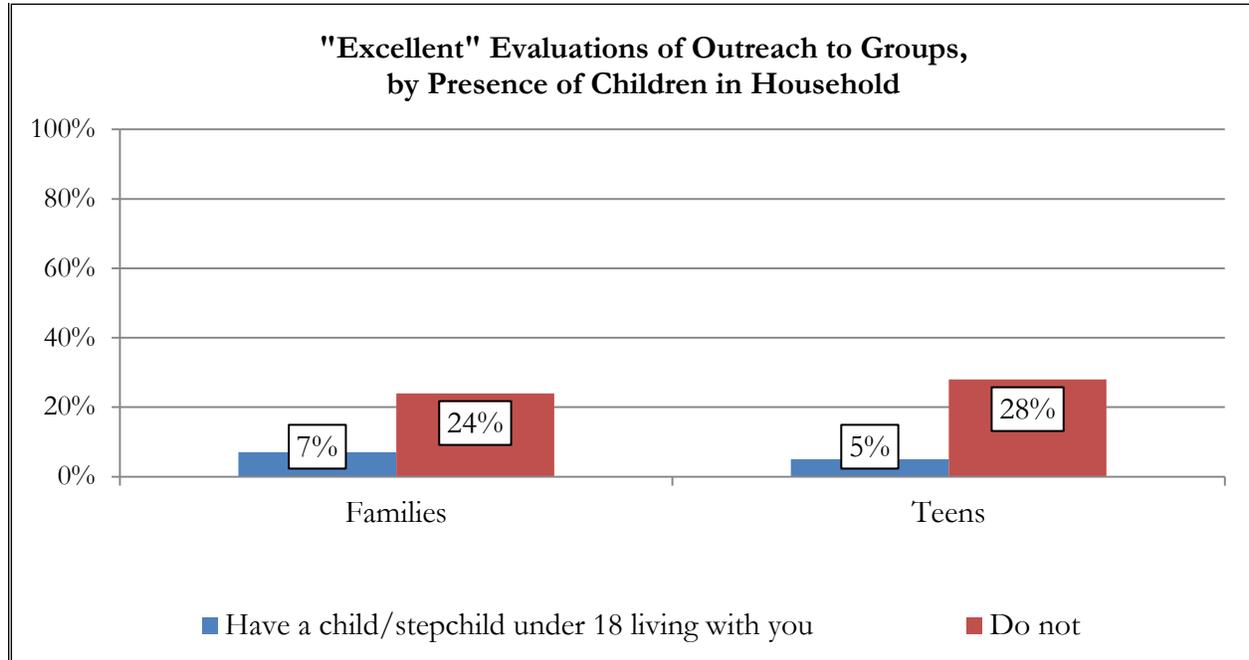


Those ages 65 or older are *less* likely than others to give an “excellent” evaluation to parish outreach to senior citizens.



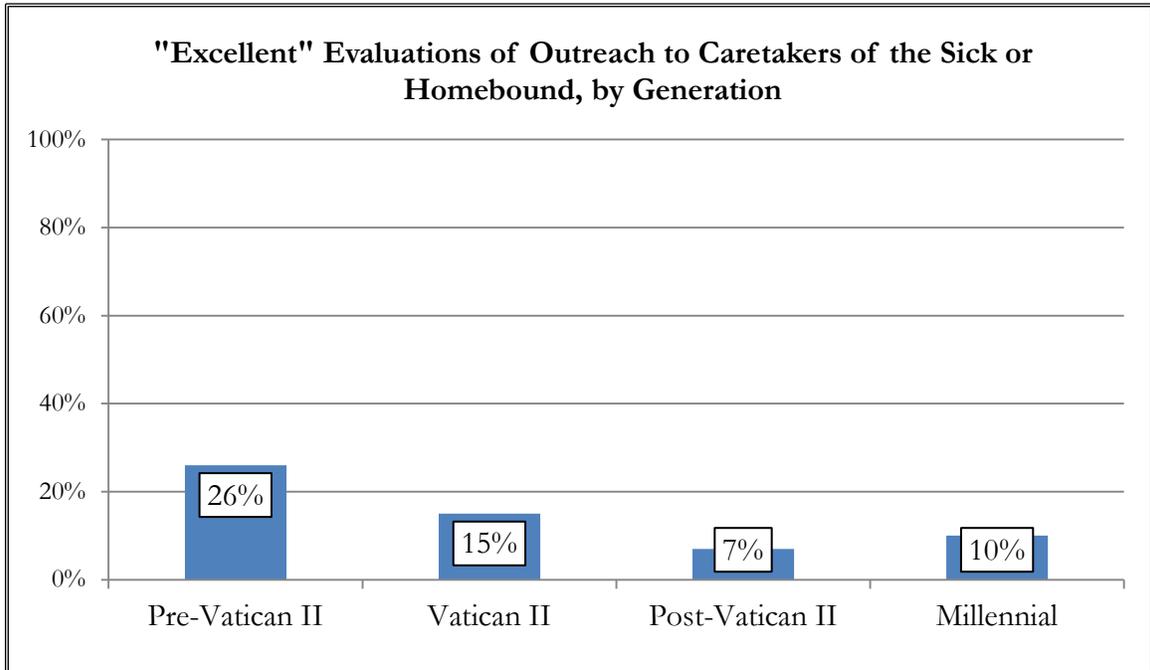
Differences by Children Present in the Household

Respondents with children or stepchildren living with them are *less* likely than others to give a positive evaluation to parish outreach to children ages 12 or younger.



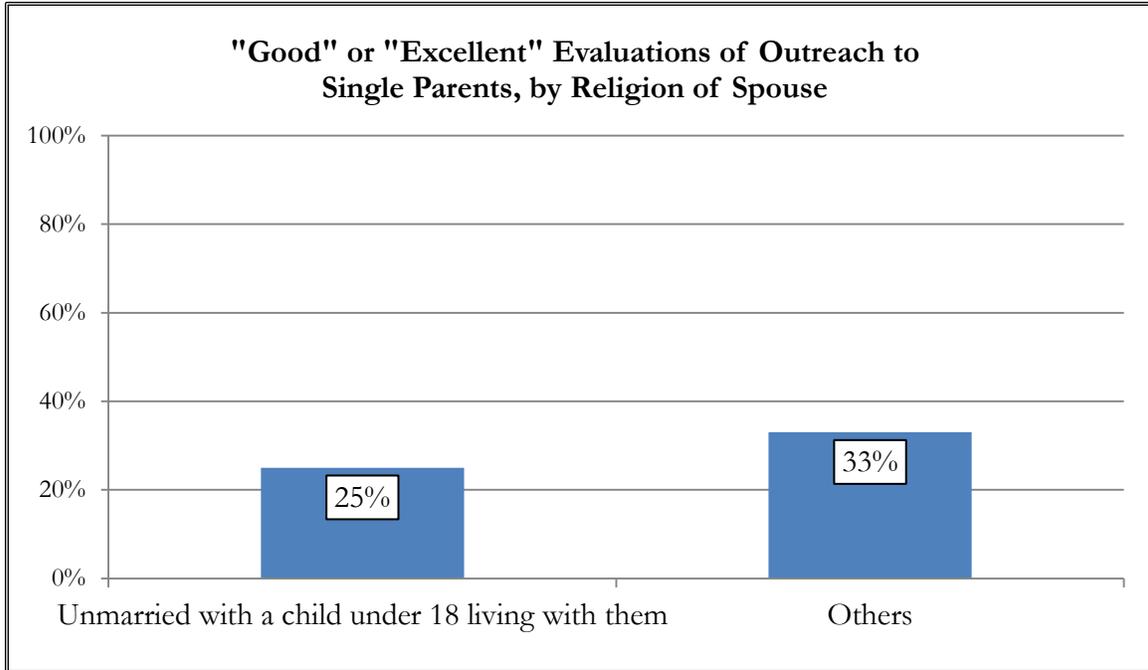
Differences by Generation

The oldest generation is most likely to give a “good” or “excellent” evaluation to parish outreach to caretakers of the sick and homebound.



Differences by Marital Status of Parent

Unmarried respondents with a child under age 18 living with them are *less* likely than others to give a positive evaluation to parish outreach to single parents.



Not shown in a graphic, *no* unmarried respondents with children/stepchildren under age 18 living with them give an “excellent” evaluation to parish outreach to single parents, compared to 11% of other respondents.

Finally, those who are married and are ages 18 to 35 do *not* differ significantly from others in their evaluation of parish outreach to married young adults.

Differences by Relationship to the Parish

Visitors at the parish do *not* differ significantly from others in how they evaluate parish outreach to visitors.

What Parishioners Like Best about the Parish

Some 364 respondents wrote in their answer to this question: *What one thing do you like best about the parish?* Contrary to the wording, many wrote in more than one thing they like. The most commonly mentioned things they like are related to the sense of community and worship at the parish.

The most common topics, listed in order of their frequency, mentioned are:

- Sense of community and welcome
- Worship
- Pastor, staff, and leadership
- Beauty of facilities and worship space
- Location of the church
- Faith formation
- Personal history with the church

- Other

Below, each of the comments is summarized for each topic and examples of the written comments are presented.

Sense of Community and Welcome

About four in ten comments mentioned some aspect of the sense of community at the parish as what they like best about it. While some mentioned the sense of belonging they feel there directly, others mentioned how friendly and welcoming the parish is. A few others, however, added the caveat that it took them many years to achieve feeling a part of the community. Below are some representative comments.

Feeling of community.

The people.

The warmth and friendly atmosphere.

People care about each other.

It feels like family.

It's become like home.

Seeing my friends at Mass and at activities.

The warmth and closeness of the Church, priest and parishioners.

We know a lot more people and feel part of the community but it took at least 10 years.

Sense of community, Mass, coffee, donuts, socializing after Mass.

That we've been going here in a long time and know lots of people.

Worship

The worship life of the parish is also commonly mentioned, with almost four in ten making mention of some aspect of worship in their comments. The Masses in general, homilies, and music ministry are most likely to be mentioned. Below are some of these comments.

I think the Masses and ceremonies are beautiful (the music, decorations, homilies, etc.).

The liturgies and meaning behind them.

Starting to become more traditional (move tabernacle, altar boys, incense, adoration).

Mass and quality of homily and relevance to life.

Fr. Dennis' homilies and receiving the Eucharist.

Homilies have solid message and content. Father Dennis is well prepared and thoughtful.

Large attendance, traditional Mass and music.

Music--Henry Kopczynski is a great director.

Traditional music, thought provoking homilies, friends (it took awhile to make friends but over 19.5 years).

Many Mass times.

Pastor, Staff and Leadership

The pastor, staff members, and leadership of the parish are mentioned by a little more than one in ten respondents to the question. Some note that the leadership has improved under the present pastor, with others mentioning the friendliness of the staff.

Enthusiasm of the priests

I feel that the Church does well overall. Fr. Dennis has been so helpful to me.

Trying to find out what people want and trying to provide it.

Our new pastor, Father Dennis. He has made so many positive changes.

How comforting the priest is during confession.

The staff.

Open welcoming spirit of parish members and staff.

Beauty of Facilities and Worship Space

Slightly fewer than one in ten mention the beauty of the facilities as what they like best about the parish. Its traditional atmosphere and its history within the town are also mentioned. These are some typical comments.

The beauty of the Church itself--that you can see the steeple from a distance. The rich history of the Church in our community.

Traditional look and feel of the church.

The structure and interior.

Ceilings.

"Art"--Stained glass windows. Office staff very nice.

Decorations.

The traditional church building and Catholic setting.

Location of Church

The convenience of going to church locally is mentioned among the things they like best about the church by about one in 20 respondents to the question. Below are some typical comments.

It is part of my community (close to home).

The location.

Convenient.

Closeness to home and Mass times.

Faith Formation

Faith formation programs and staff members are mentioned as things they like best about the parish by about one in 20 respondents. Their comments include the following.

Kids program, religious school.

Confirmation program.

Adult education classes.

RCLA. Terry Sherlock.

Personal History with Church

The personal history some respondents have with the church is what nearly one in 20 like best about the parish. Their comments include the following.

I was born in this parish, comfortable here.

I like that St. Patrick has been our parish for 41+ years. Our older 2 children received 1st Communion, reconciliation, and Confirmation. Our youngest received all sacraments here. Our older daughter was married here. Two of our grandchildren were baptized here and received 1st Communion and reconciliation here. We feel a great connection to this parish.

It's a beautiful Church that I have so many wonderful memories—my wedding, Christmas Masses, my children's baptisms, etc.

Other

Almost one in ten respondents mentioned something they like best about the parish that do not easily fit into the categories above. Topics include stewardship and social justice, but others are unique and were only mentioned by one respondent. Below are some examples.

Opportunities to help others in/out of our community.

Talented, dedicated, committed parishioners who devote time and talent to our parish. There are always opportunities to get involved in ministries.

Consistency.

Old style way of doing things.

Conservative nature.

Jesus Christ.

Effectiveness of Ways of Communicating

More than nine in ten indicate that the Sunday bulletins and announcements read at Mass are “somewhat” or “very” effective ways of communicating parish news to them. About two in three say these ways are “very” effective.

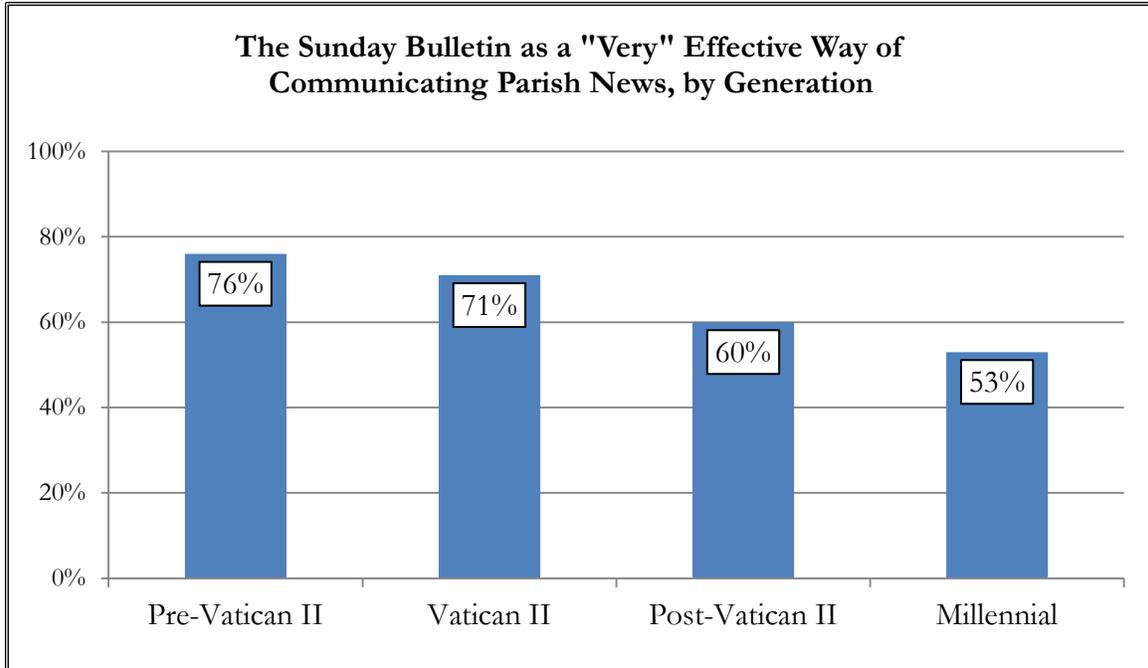
<i>How effective are these ways of communicating parish news to you?</i>		
<i>Percentage responding</i>		
	“Somewhat” or “Very”	“Very” Only
Sunday bulletins	96%	68%
Announcements read at Mass	95	66
Parish website	56	22
Social media (Facebook, Twitter)	39	17

- The parish website is seen as an at least “somewhat” effective way of communicating parish news to nearly six in ten respondents. Just over two in ten say the website is “very” effective.
- Four in ten report that social media such as Facebook and Twitter are “somewhat” or “very” effective for communicating parish news to them. One in six rate social media as “very” effective for communicating such news.⁷

⁷ Respondents age 17 and younger differ some from others in this section. Only 31% say the bulletin is a “very” effective way of communicating parish news to them. Moreover, 59% say social media is “not at all” effective.

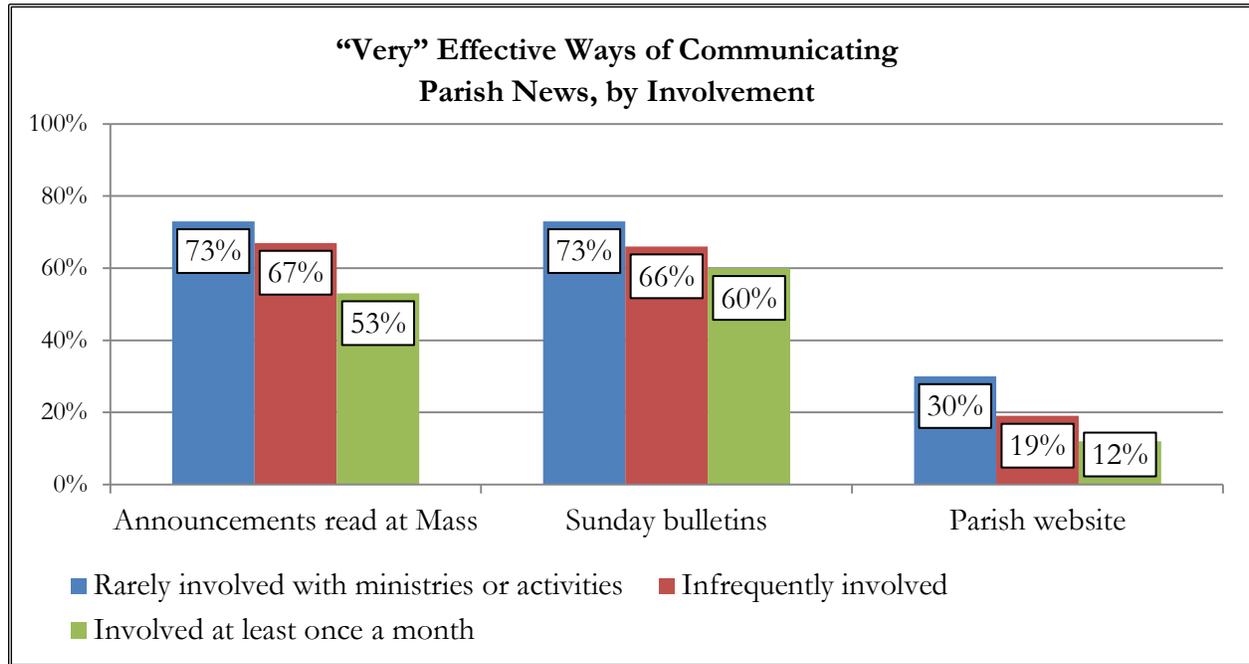
Differences by Generation

The older the generation, the more likely they are to report that the Sunday bulletin is a “very” effective way to communicate parish news to them.



Differences by Level of Involvement

The less involved respondents are with parish ministries or parish activities, the more likely they are to identify the announcements read at Mass, Sunday bulletins, and parish website as “very” effective ways to communicate parish news to them.



Priority for Parish Needs

Eight in ten or more give at least “somewhat” priority to each of the needs listed in the table below. Priority is especially likely to be given to youth ministry and adult faith formation, with nearly all saying the parish should give those needs “somewhat” or “very much” priority.

<i>How much priority should the parish give the following?</i>		
<i>Percentage responding</i>		
	“Somewhat” or “Very Much”	“Very Much” Only
Youth ministry	97%	79%
Adult faith formation	97	56
Young adult ministry	92	67
Fellowship/coffee and donuts after Mass	88	47
Informal conversations with the Pastor and the parish staff	85	42
More small group prayer opportunities	81	32
Providing retreat opportunities	80	47

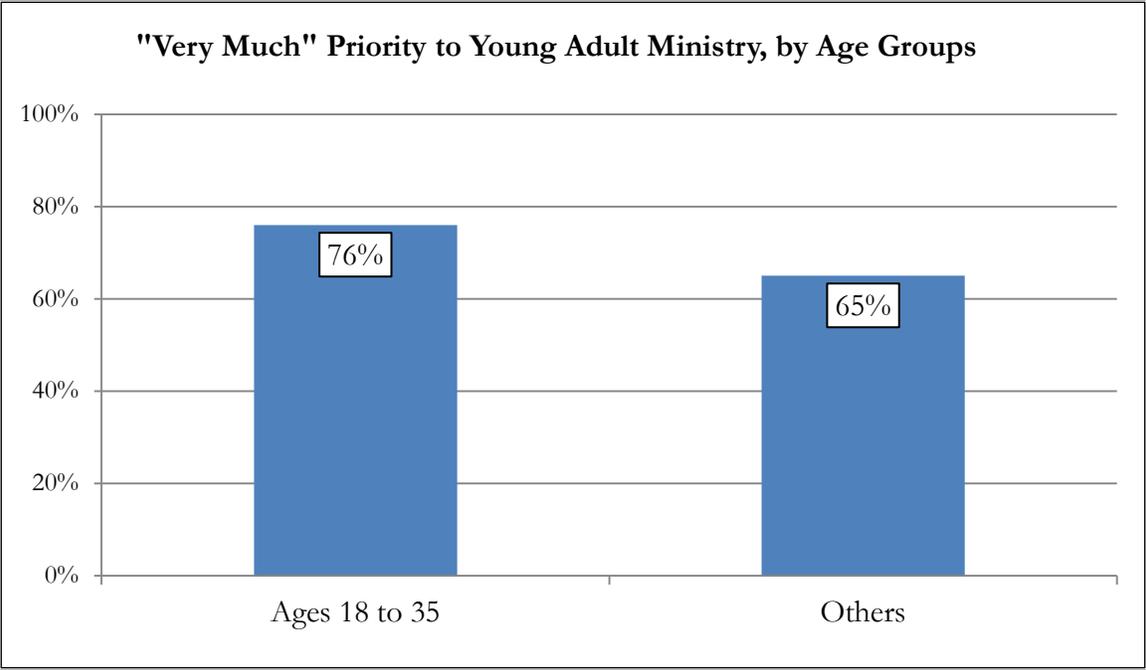
Eight in ten place “very much” priority on youth ministry. Young adult ministry receives as much priority from two in three respondents.⁸

- Adult faith formation is given “very much” priority by nearly six in ten respondents.
- Nearly half say the parish should give “very much” priority to fellowship/coffee and donuts after Mass.
- Provision of retreat opportunities receives “very much” priority from almost half of respondents. A third give as much priority to more small group prayer opportunities.
- Just over four in ten place “very” much priority on informal conversations with the Pastor and the parish staff.

⁸ No respondents ages 17 and younger say the parish should give “no” priority to youth ministry, 4% say the parish should give it “only a little,” 40% say the parish should give it “somewhat” priority, and 56% say the parish should give it “very much” priority.

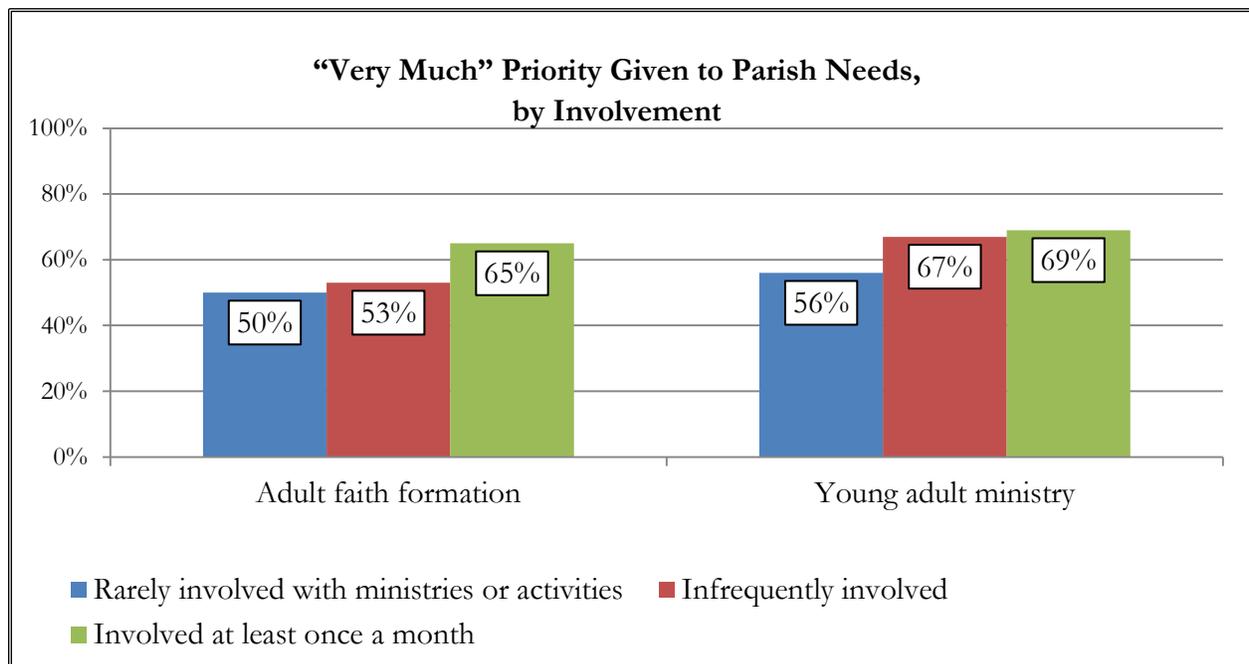
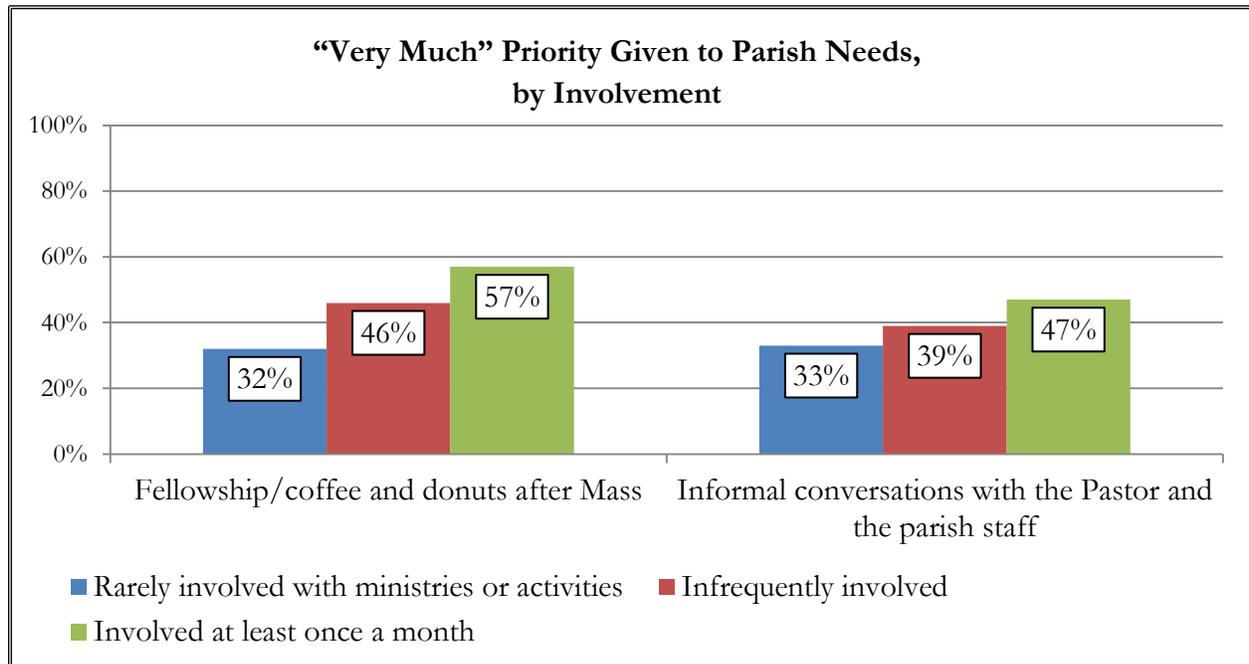
Differences by Age Group

Those ages 18 to 35 are more likely than others to say the parish should give “very much” priority to young adult ministry.



Differences by Level of Involvement

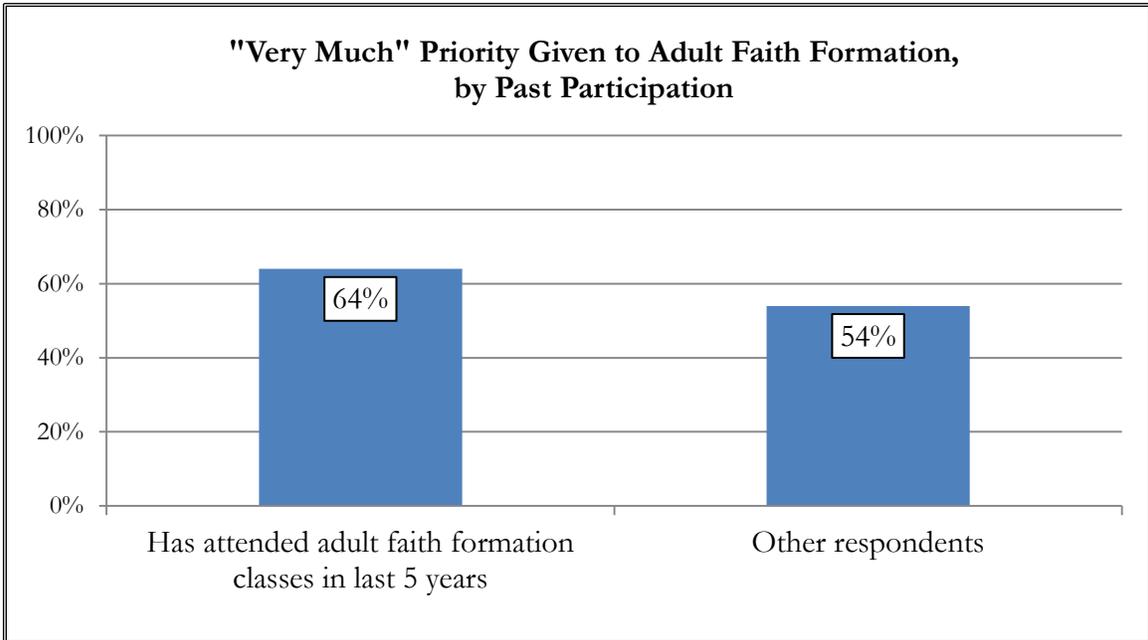
The less involved respondents are with parish ministries or parish activities, the more likely they are to identify the announcements read at Mass, Sunday bulletins, and parish website as “very” effective ways to communicate parish news to them. In addition, those most involved in parish ministries or parish activities are most likely to give “very much” priority to adult faith formation, but are *least* likely to give as high a priority to young adult ministry.



Differences by Past Participation in Formation Programs

Those whose children have attended religious education classes at the parish in the past five years do *not* differ significantly from others in how much priority they say the parish should give to youth ministry.

Respondents who have attended adult religious education classes at the parish in the past five years are more likely than others to say the parish should give “very much” priority to adult faith formation.



Needed Ministries and Programs

Respondents were asked to write a response to the following question: *What is the most important need for our parish to focus on in the next one to three years?* Some 338 wrote in a response to that question. Appendix II presents the complete transcription of all open-ended responses to this question.

Responses can be grouped into the ten broad categories below. A discussion of each category follows.

- Evangelization and outreach to groups
- Youth and young adult ministry
- Formation
- Worship
- Facilities
- Building community and being welcoming
- Social justice
- Financial management
- Stewardship

- Other needs

Evangelization and Outreach to Groups

About four-tenths of respondents note that they would like the parish to focus on evangelization and outreach to specific groups. While some respondents talked about evangelization more generally (such as attracting and retaining new members), others mentioned specific groups. The most common group mentioned by far were youth and young adults, with the analysis of those comments following this section. Other groups mentioned include inactive Catholics, new parishioners, families, children, families with young children, those in mixed marriages, adults, the elderly, those with special needs, those with disabilities, those homebound, those grieving, those widowed, LGBT individuals, immigrants, non-Catholic local churches, and the local community. Some examples of these responses appear below.

Targeting lapsed Catholics like myself.

Find a way to make more people attend Mass regularly and not just for Christmas and Easter.

Retain parishioners.

Re-attracting the many families who left St. Patrick's for other area churches.

Activities for seniors.

Children and young families.

Continue getting out to those who are sick or shut in including nursing homes.

Outreach to people who don't fit with mainstream, e.g.: LGBT+, autistic, immigrants, etc. Support for others, not just during big emergencies.

As a returning Catholic, since April, I enjoy going to St. Patrick Church. It's not easy to be a "New Bee" in any situation. Possibly to welcome new parishioners a guest book at the entrance of the church for new members or guests to sign when visiting etc. This guest book, or whatever is used to connect with visitors or new parishioners, along with a follow up phone call to welcome them into our Faith Community. Possibly also a packet with information, including the missions and or organizations within the church. Also a follow up phone call from "Head" of the group to invite and encourage the newbee to come and see what the group is all about. Personal invites are important.

Reach out to those who suffer from depression.

Increase visibility and participation in community activities.

Youth and Young Adult Ministry

Nearly three in ten respondents say the most important need for the parish is to focus on attracting and forming the youth and young adults. Below are a few typical responses:

Making it a welcome place for youth, young adults to be part of parish and making them feel it's their Church.

Get younger! Where are the kids? No one at 4 pm Mass is under 50.

Youth ministry.

Outreach to teens.

Attracting young people by making Mass interesting to them.

Young adult and teen programming. I am 24 and would love a Bible study group to join. After CCD in middle school and after confirmation, I felt like there was nothing more for me to continue to grow in my faith. A teen program and a young adult program would be great.

The youth programs to make better Catholics and help them make good decisions.

Find what attitudes are alienating our young people and bring them back.

I disagree with the move to change confirmation to the same time as First Communion and First Reconciliation. The concept of the Bread and Wine being the Body and Blood of Christ is already a difficult concept for young children to grasp. Adding the concept of the Holy Spirit seems even more difficult to teach to young children, along with the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and the 7 deadly sins. I seem to remember I learned about these near Confirmation. I believe we will lose parishioners once the children have all the Sacraments. Therefore, the most important challenge will be youth programs to keep families going to weekly Mass after sacraments are fulfilled. This could also create economic issues for parishes.

Formation

About a quarter of participants say the parish should focus on needs related to faith formation, including adult faith formation, children's religious education programs, and Bible studies. A sampling of these responses follows:

Focus on clearly communicating the basic truths of Catholicism.

Explain the goodness of God/Catholic morals.

Faith formation for adults.

Revamp religious ed. with focus on adults.

Community. Consider Sunday evening Mass. Chats with Father after Mass. Adult ed. with child care or at the same time as religious ed.

Evangelizing Milford area. Teaching authentic Catholic faith. Especially the "hard" teachings.

Bringing in new parishioners and keeping parishioners we have and especially in teaching/encouraging our youth to live their faith.

Bringing youth back to religious education – more understanding of family demands and less demands of parents.

Bible studies for young adults with special needs.

Bring speakers in to talk about Catholic faith. Ex: Chris Stefanek and others from EWTV.

Needs to be more welcoming. Retreats, Christmas, Easter time.

Worship

About one in seven wants the parish to focus on needs related to worship, including the homilies, style of worship, the worship environment, worship vestments, the Mass schedule, the Confession schedule, and opportunities for devotions. Below are a few examples:

Reconnect with people. Stop reading canned homilies.

Providing a welcoming atmosphere and facilities for families with young children. Maintaining a traditional liturgy.

Attracting youth, offer more contemporary worship at Mass.

Liturgy, better lectors and altar servers.

Would like to see more opportunities for Masses on Holy Days of Obligation.

Spiritual advising with priest. More in areas like Eucharistic adoration, first Saturday devotion.

More frequent confession/renovations.

Facilities

Facilities-related needs are mentioned by a little more than one in ten respondents to this question. Some sample comments follow:

Modernization of the church, needs captions for the hard of hearing.

Update interior and exterior.

Clean inside of Church. Look up--fans are filthy. Stop closing parishes.

New floor, remove rug.

Paint the church.

Improve handicap access.

More seating for seniors with walkers.

Building Community and Being Welcoming

Building community and being welcoming and friendly are needs mentioned by just over one in ten survey participants. Here are some typical responses:

To build a sense of community--a parish family.

Hospitality--growing a sense of community and genuine outreach toward newcomers. Being welcoming and having fellowship opportunities. Need to be more friendly.

To be more welcoming.

Quit complaining about finances and build a better sense of community here; more traditional/historical Catholic education and reference during Mass.

Fellowship and kindness.

Leadership

Just over one in 20 lists a need related to leadership at the parish. Topics include the pastor and priests, staff members, communication, and the need for better leadership in specific areas. Below are some examples:

The pastor being more reachable.

Listening to the parishioners that have been coming here for many years.

For the priest to really get to know his parishioners. A tremendous amount of money was spent on remodeling by an outside source--we have parishioners who could have done this work for much less money, especially if we need to make more improvements to the church--flooring, etc.

General meetings for parishioners to contribute to operation decisions.

Communicating the financial positions--details of finances allowing parishioners a say in how the parish is run.

Get a youth minister who is young and reach out to young adults (drink and discuss).

Social Justice

About one in 20 respondents notes that they would like the parish to focus on needs related to social justice. Some examples of these responses appear below.

Reach out to those in need.

Missions and outreach to the needy--perhaps things like Habitat for Humanity, food drives, clothing drives.

More support to needy and elderly.

Involving the youth – mission trips.

Financial Management

About one in 20 respondents say the parish should focus on the financial welfare of the church. Others, however, suggest the parish place less emphasis on the topic of finances. Below are a few typical responses:

Communicating the financial positions--details of finances allowing parishioners a say in how the parish is run.

Fiscal responsibility/stewardship/communication.

We are spending too much money on things that are not priority. Reread at expenses!

Please stop the constant requests for money--am thinking of joining another parish due to this.

Stewardship

Less than one in 20 participants say the parish should focus on stewardship-related needs like providing more opportunities for parishioners to volunteer. Following are a sampling of these responses:

Religious ed. needs consideration. Opportunities for family volunteerism—focus on social justice.

Getting the kids of all ages more involved in the Mass such as reading, money collecting, greeters.

Parents with children attending religious ed. – have them contribute more of their time and talent in religious ed.

Other Needs

Slightly more than one in 20 mentioned needs that do not easily fit into any of the categories above, including needs related to vocations. Below are a few examples:

Providing a refuge and response to the sinfulness of secular life.

Dwindling number of priests.

Women priests!

Women deacons and Cross with Risen Christ.

Keep being a traditional Catholic Church.

Understanding direction of USCCB!

Keep our Church open for Milford.

This was an awful use of Mass time. Please give a message instead of addressing business.

Importance of Religious Behaviors

More than nine in ten say the following are “somewhat” or “very” important to them: receiving the Eucharist, living their faith in their daily lives, and attending Mass weekly. Just under six in ten place at least “somewhat” importance on participating frequently in the Sacrament of Reconciliation or Confession.

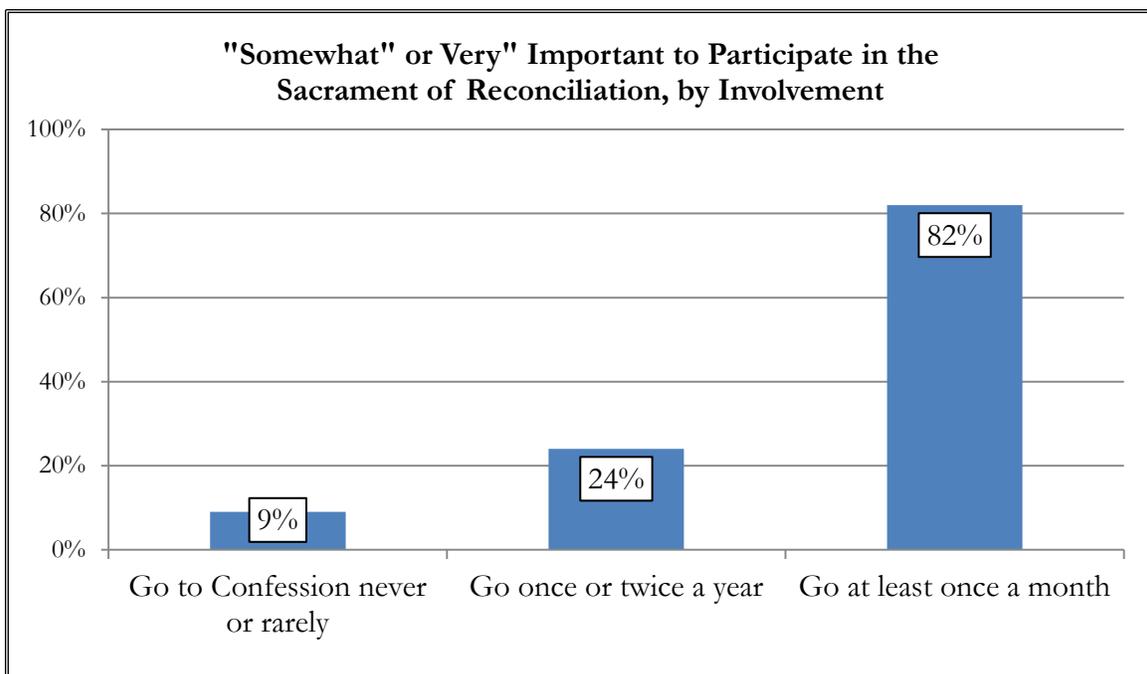
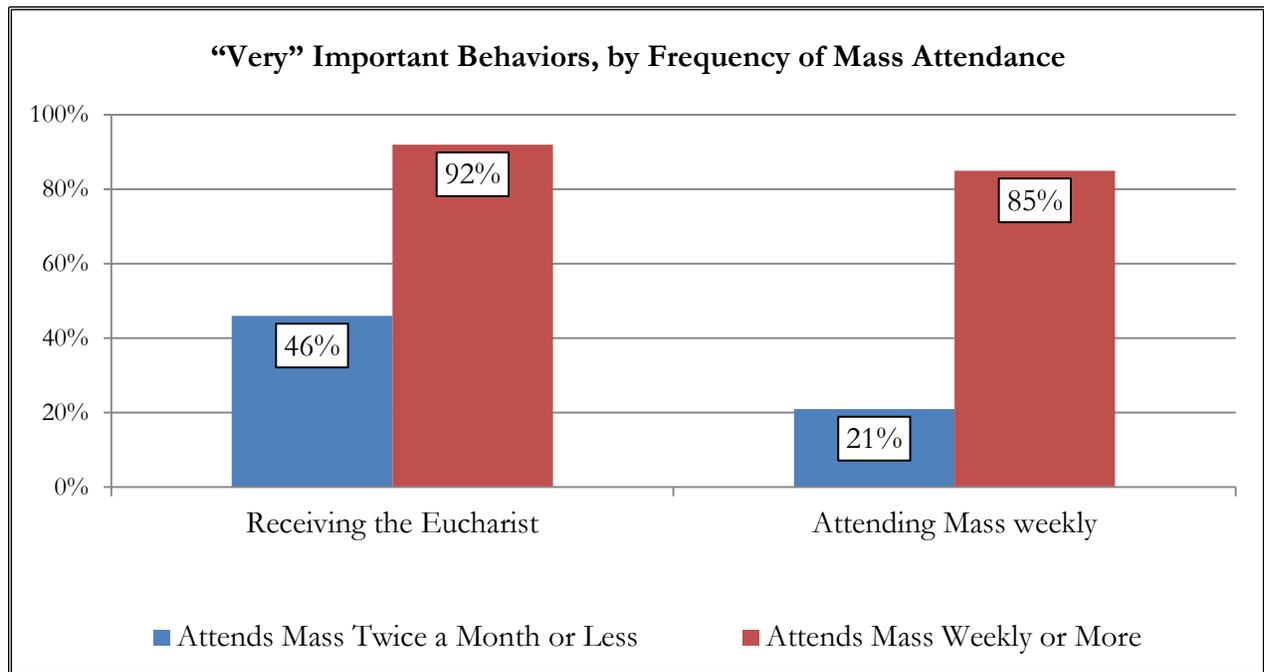
<i>How important are the following to you?</i>		
<i>Percentage responding</i>		
	“Somewhat” or “Very”	“Very” Only
Receiving the Eucharist	98%	88%
Living your faith in your daily life	97	81
Attending Mass weekly	96	79
Participating frequently in the Sacrament of Reconciliation/Confession	58	23

Nearly nine in ten say receiving the Eucharist is “very” important to them, with eight in ten saying living their faith in their daily lives and attending Mass weekly is as important to them. Participating frequently in the Sacrament of Reconciliation or Confession is “very” important to just under a quarter of respondents.⁹

⁹ The 30 or so respondents ages 17 and younger who responded to the questions in the table above differ significantly in some ways from other respondents. Only 48% say living their faith in their daily life is “very” important to them, 45% say attending Mass weekly is “very” important to them, and 72% say receiving the Eucharist is “very” important to them.

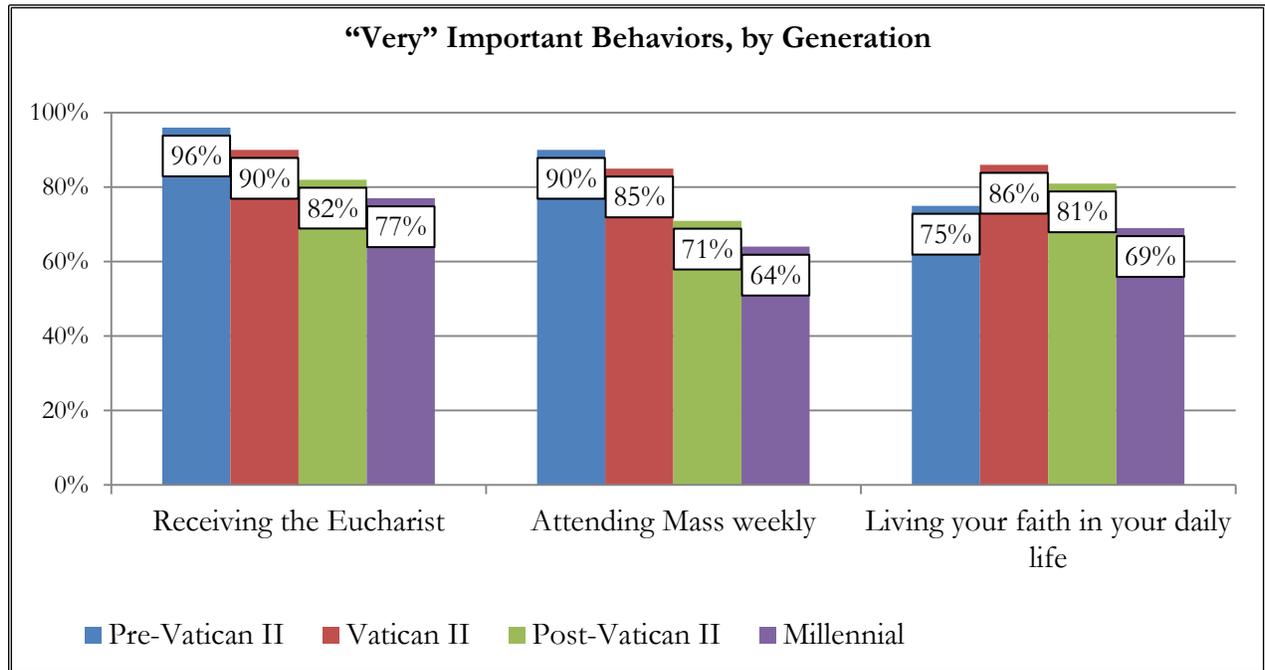
Differences by Frequency of Participation in Mass and Confession

Those who attend Mass at least once a week are considerably more likely than others to say receiving the Eucharist and attending Mass weekly are “very” important to them. Similarly, the more frequently one reports participating in the Sacrament of Reconciliation or Confession, the more likely they are to say participating in that sacrament is “very” important to them.



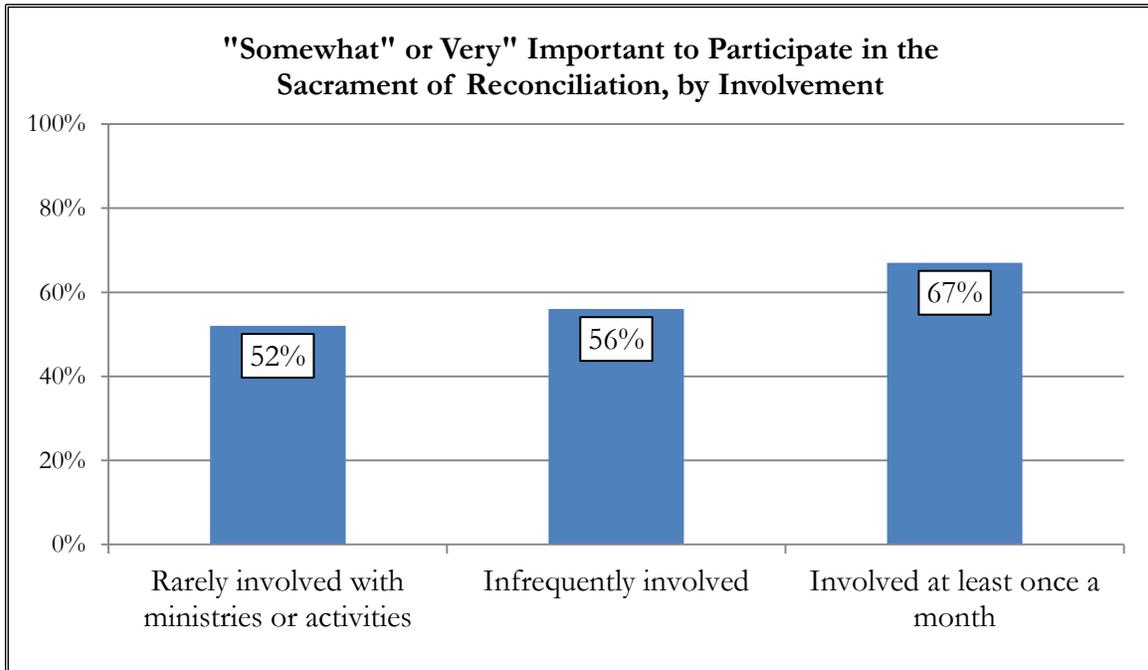
Differences by Generation

The older the generation, the more likely its members are to say that receiving the Eucharist and attending Mass weekly are “very” important to them. In addition, members of the Vatican II Generation are most likely to say that living their faith in their daily lives is “very” important to them.



Differences by Level of Involvement

Those who volunteer for a parish ministry or attend an activity at the parish at least once a month are particularly likely to say that participating in the Sacrament of Reconciliation of Confession is “somewhat” or “very” important to them.



Attraction to the Parish

Those attending Mass at the parish report being especially attracted to the parish by the quality of the liturgy, the quality of the homilies, its open and welcoming spirit, and the sense of belonging they feel there. About eight- to nine-tenths say these elements attract them “somewhat” or “very much.”¹⁰

<i>How much do the following attract you to the parish?</i>		
<i>Percentage responding</i>		
	“Somewhat” or “Very Much”	“Very Much” Only
The quality of the liturgy	90%	50%
The quality of the homilies	86	51
Its open, welcoming spirit	80	39
The sense of belonging you feel here	78	42
Its opportunities for spiritual growth	65	23
The programs and activities of the parish	62	16
Its faith formation for adults	51	17

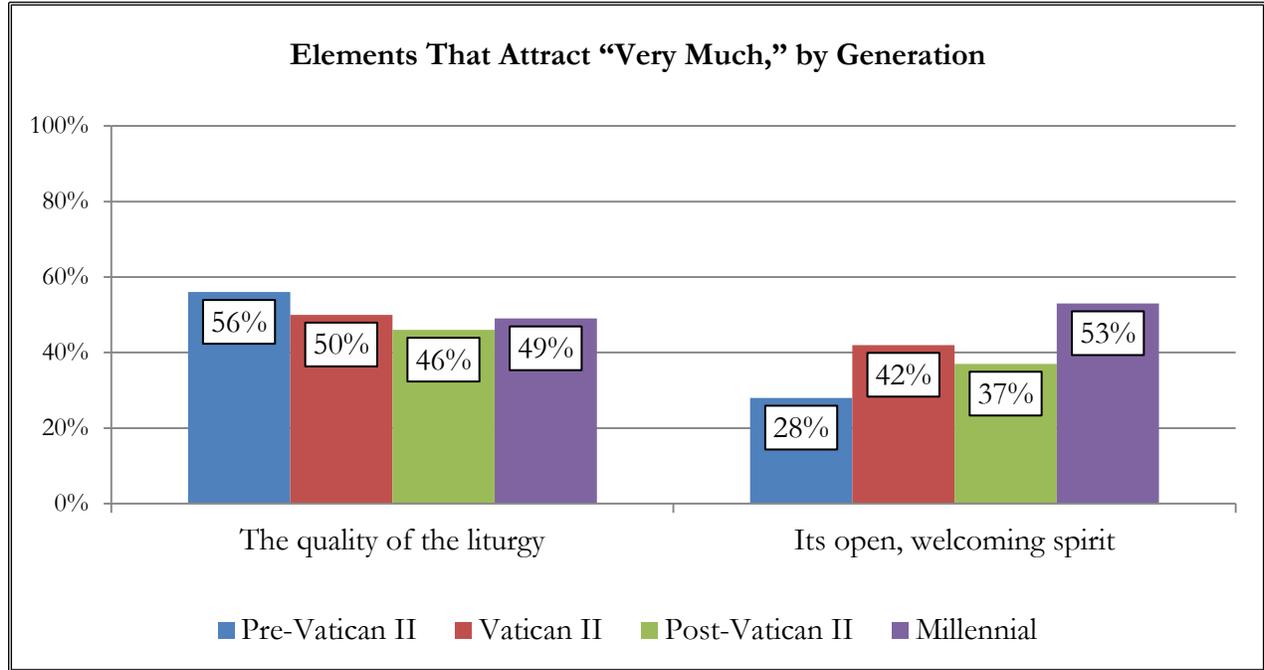
Half say they are attracted to the parish “very much” by the quality of the liturgy and the quality of the homilies.

- About four in ten report being “very much” attracted to the parish by its open and welcoming spirit and the sense of belonging they feel there.
- The parish’s opportunities for spiritual growth attract just under a quarter “very much.”
- One in six reports being attracted “very much” by its faith formation for adults and the programs and activities of the parish.

¹⁰ The 30 respondents ages 17 and younger are generally similar to the other respondents in this section except that they are more likely to report that the parish’s open and welcoming spirit attract them “very much” (49%) and less likely to be as attracted by the quality of the liturgy (30%).

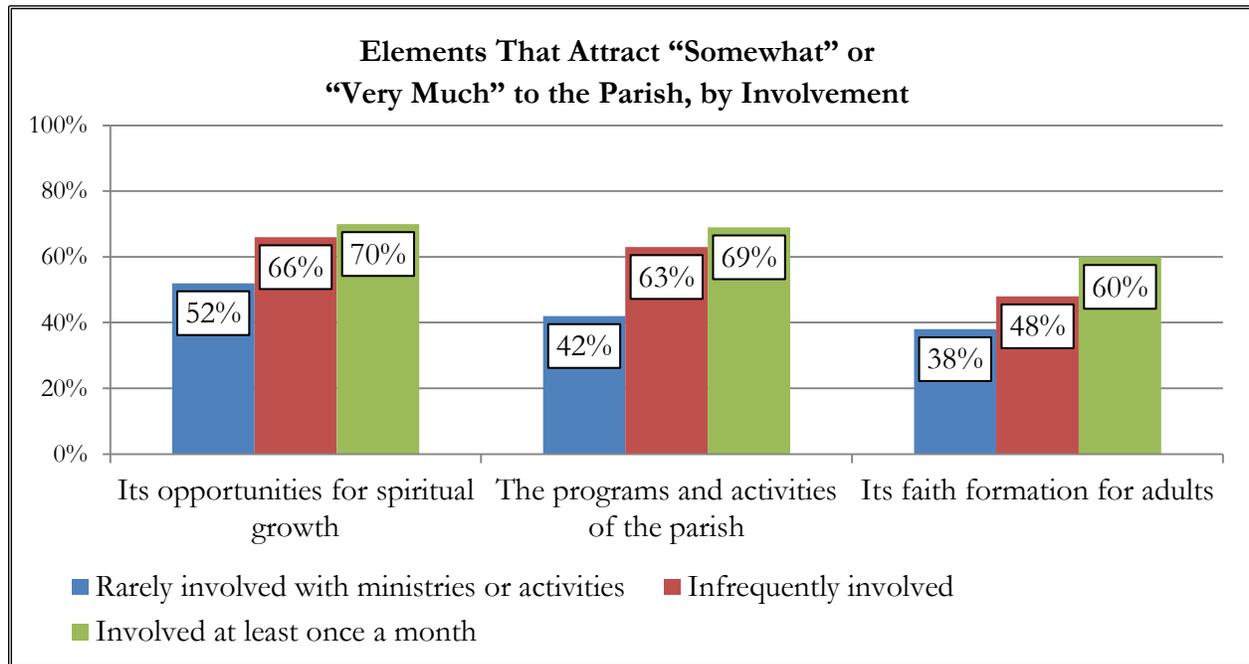
Differences by Generation

The oldest generation is especially likely to say the quality of the liturgy attracts them to the parish “very much.” Those of the youngest generation, on the other hand, are most likely to report being attracted “very much” by its open and welcoming spirit.



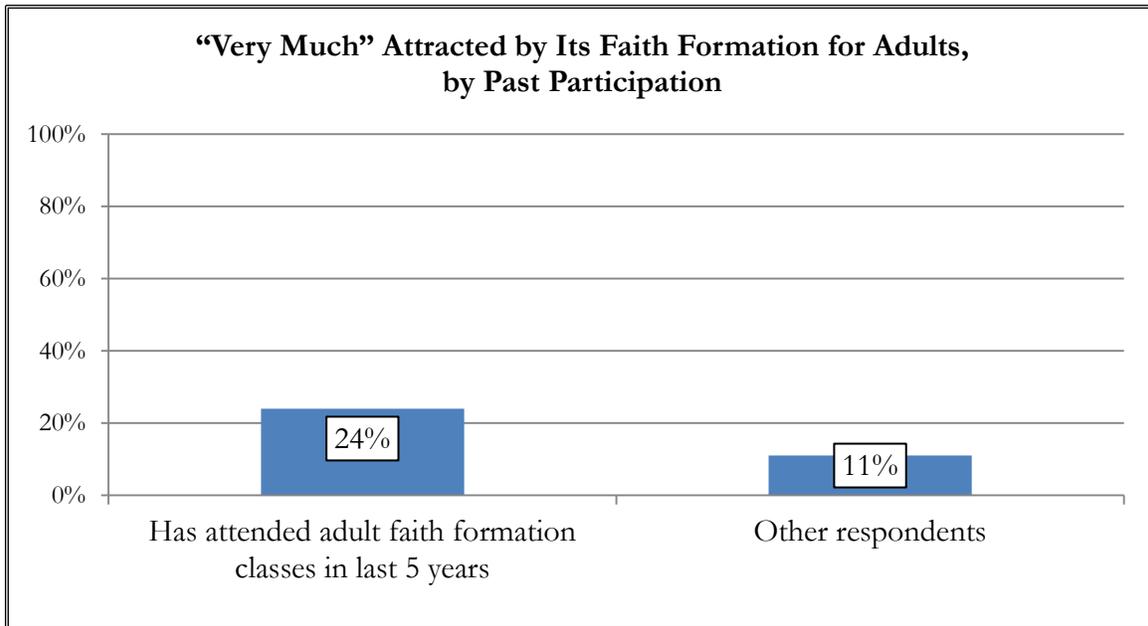
Differences by Level of Involvement

The less involved respondents are with parish ministries or parish activities, the more likely they are to identify the announcements read at Mass, Sunday bulletins, and parish website as “very” effective ways to communicate parish news to them. In addition, those most involved in parish ministries or parish activities are most likely to give “very much” priority to adult faith formation, but are *least* likely to give as high a priority to young adult ministry.



Differences by Past Participation in Formation Programs

A quarter of respondents who have attended adult religious education classes at the parish in the past five years say they are “very much” attracted to the parish by its faith formation for adults, compared to just over one in ten others.



Reasons for Attending Mass

Nearly all responding parishioners say that the Mass meaning a lot to them and receiving Communion weekly being important to them explains their Mass attendance at least “somewhat.” Just over eight in ten report feeling it is their obligation to attend at least “somewhat” explains their attendance.

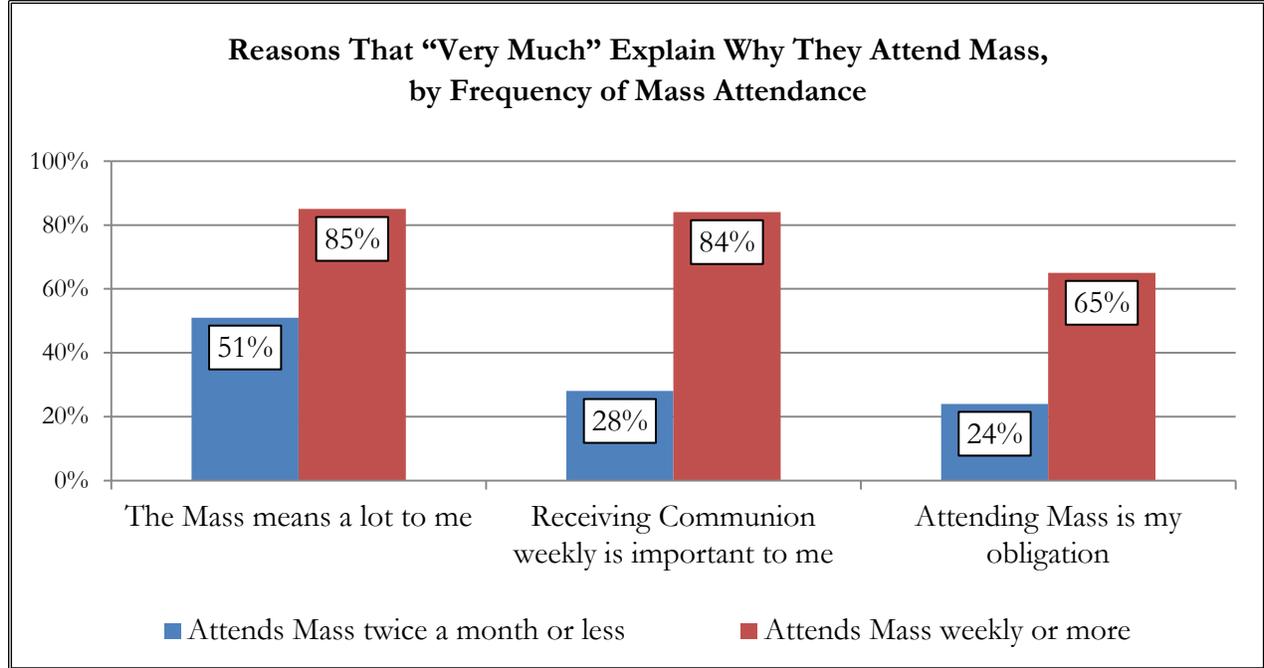
<i>How well do the following explain why you attend Mass?</i>		
<i>Percentage responding</i>		
	“Somewhat” or “Very Much”	“Very Much” Only
The Mass means a lot to me	97%	83%
Receiving Communion weekly is important to me	96	80
Attending Mass is my obligation	83	62

About eight in ten report that the Mass meaning a lot to them and that receiving Communion weekly being important to them “very much” explain why they attend Mass. Just over six in ten cite attending Mass being their obligation as “very much” explaining it.¹¹

¹¹ The 27 to 31 respondents ages 17 and younger differ some in their responses in this section. Thirty-three percent say the Mass meaning a lot to them “very much” explains why they attend Mass, 36% say receiving Communion weekly “very much” explains it, and 37% say feeling obligated to go “very much” explains it.

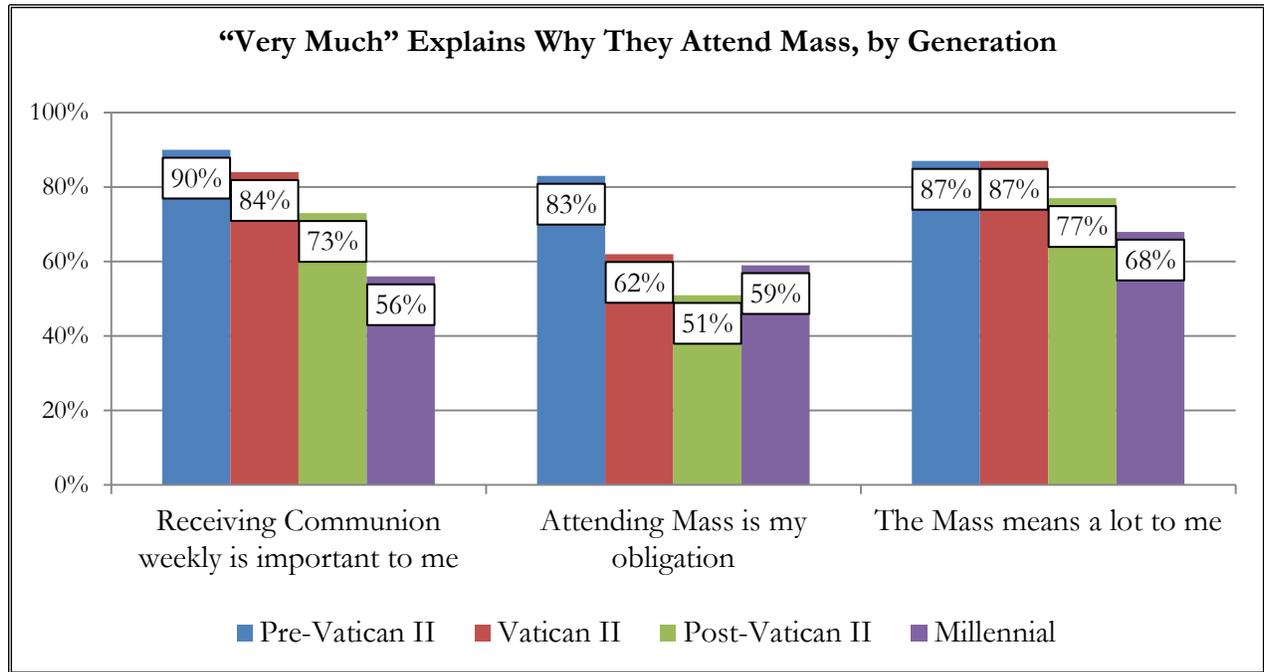
Differences by Frequency of Mass Attendance

Those who attend Mass at least once a week are considerably more likely than others to say that each of the reasons inquired about in this section “very much” explain why they attend Mass.



Differences by Generation

The older the generation, the more likely its members are to say that receiving Communion weekly being important to them “very much” explains why they attend Mass. Those of the oldest generation are also most likely to explain their attendance as part of their obligation. Finally, members of the Millennial Generation are *least* likely to say that the Mass meaning a lot to them “very much” explains their attendance.



Reasons for Missing Mass

A quarter to a third report that these three reasons at least “somewhat” explain why they have missed Mass in the last six months: not believing missing Mass is a sin, a conflict with work, and their children’s scheduled activities. Some 13% to 18% report that these reasons explain their missing Mass “very much.”

Sometimes Catholics miss weekend Mass. If you have missed Mass in the last six months, how well do the following explain why you missed Mass?

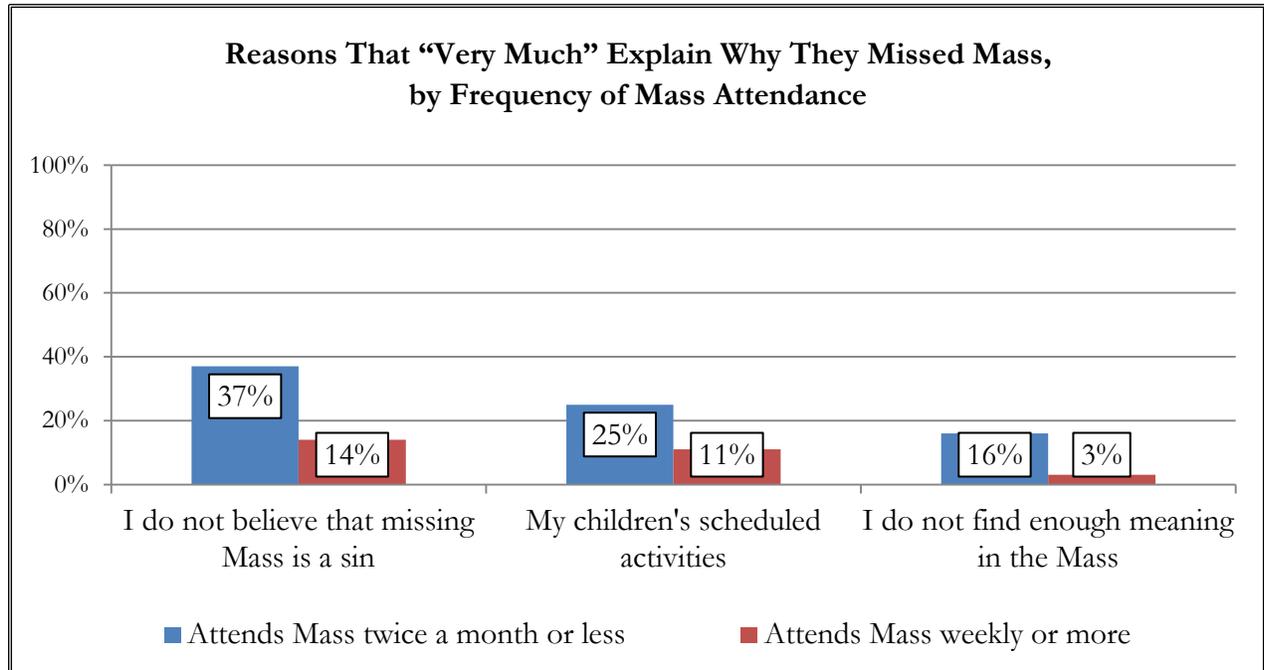
Percentage responding

	“Somewhat” or “Very Much”	“Very Much” Only
I do not believe missing Mass is a sin	33%	16%
Conflict with work	29	18
My children’s scheduled activities	25	13
I do not find enough meaning in the Mass	11	5

One in ten indicates that not finding enough meaning in Mass at least “somewhat” explains why they have missed Mass in the last six months. One in 20 indicates that that reason “very much” explains why they missed Mass.

Differences by Frequency of Mass Attendance

Those who attend Mass less than once a week are most likely to say that each of the reasons shown in the figure below “very much” explain why they missed Mass in the last six months.



Differences by Presence of Children in the Household

A quarter (26%) of those with at least one child or stepchild living with them say their children’s scheduled activities “very much” explain why they have missed Mass in the last six months.

Ways Parents Can Be Involved in Children’s Religious Education

Responding parishioners were invited to indicate which of three options they most recommend for parents being more involved in the religious education of their children. More than eight in ten recommend they do so by attending Mass weekly with their children. About one in ten each recommends doing so by attending religious education with their children either monthly or weekly.

<i>Parents are the first educators of their children. How would you recommend parents be more involved in the religious education of their children? Percentage responding</i>	
Attend Mass weekly with your children	82%
Attend religious education with your child(ren) monthly	11
Attend religious education with your child(ren) weekly	7

Differences by Presence of Children in the Household

Those who report having at least one child or stepchild living with them do *not* differ significantly in their responses to this question from other respondents.¹²

¹² Twenty-four respondents ages 17 and younger responded to this question. They are even more likely than other respondents to recommend that the parents attend Mass weekly with their children (92 percent).

Likelihood of Future Behaviors

Between eight- and nine-tenths of responding parishioners report being at least “somewhat” likely to contribute weekly to the support of the parish and spend time learning more about their faith in the coming year. In addition, about two in three are at least “somewhat” likely to attend a parish activity or function besides Mass, talk to someone about their faith, and offer their time and talent in volunteer activities.

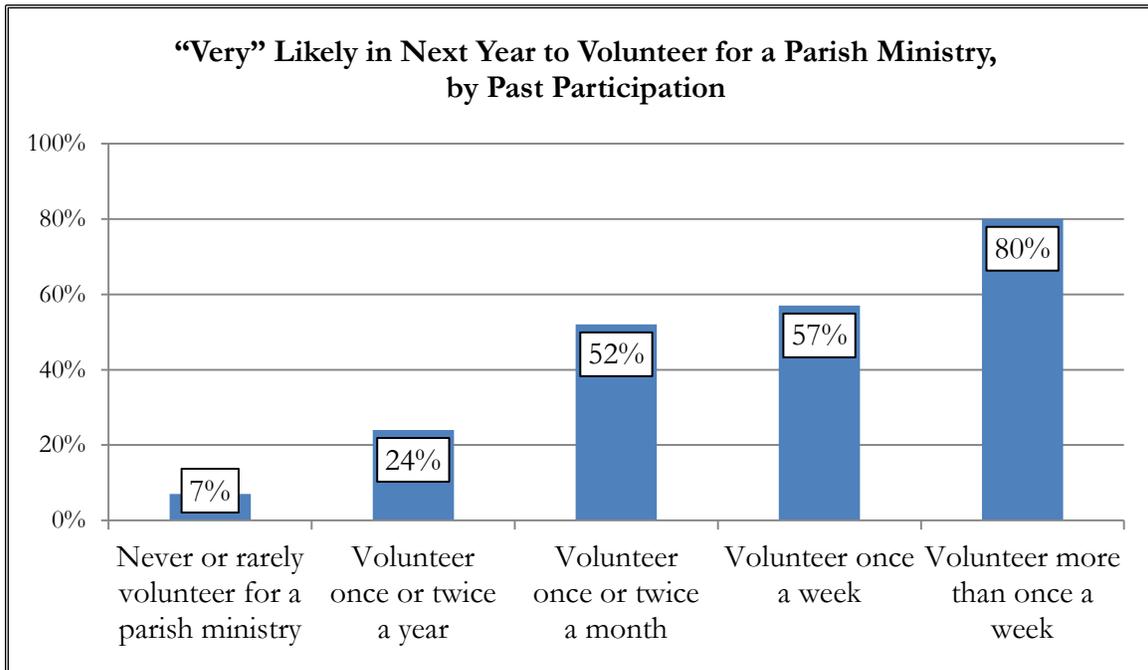
<i>How likely are you to do the following in the next year?</i>		
<i>Percentage responding</i>		
	“Somewhat” or “Very”	“Very” Only
Contribute weekly to the support of the parish	91%	73%
Spend time learning more about your faith	79	37
Attend a parish activity or function besides Mass	69	34
Talk to someone about your faith	68	36
Offer your time and talent in volunteer opportunities	64	31
Volunteer for a parish ministry	54	28
Invite someone to attend one of our parish services or activities	52	22
Participate in a small faith-sharing group	47	17
Invite someone to join our parish	45	16

Almost three-quarters of parishioners report being “very” likely to contribute weekly to the support of the parish in the next year.

- More than a third say they are “very” likely to spend time learning more about their faith and to attend a parish activity or function besides Mass in the next year.
- Just over a third report being “very” likely to talk to someone about their faith in the next year. Between one-sixth and two-tenths are as likely to invite someone to attend a parish worship service or activity or to invite someone to join the parish.
- About three in ten indicate being “very” likely to offer their time and talent in volunteer opportunities or to volunteer for a parish ministry.
- One in six says they are “very” likely to participate in a small faith sharing group in the next year.

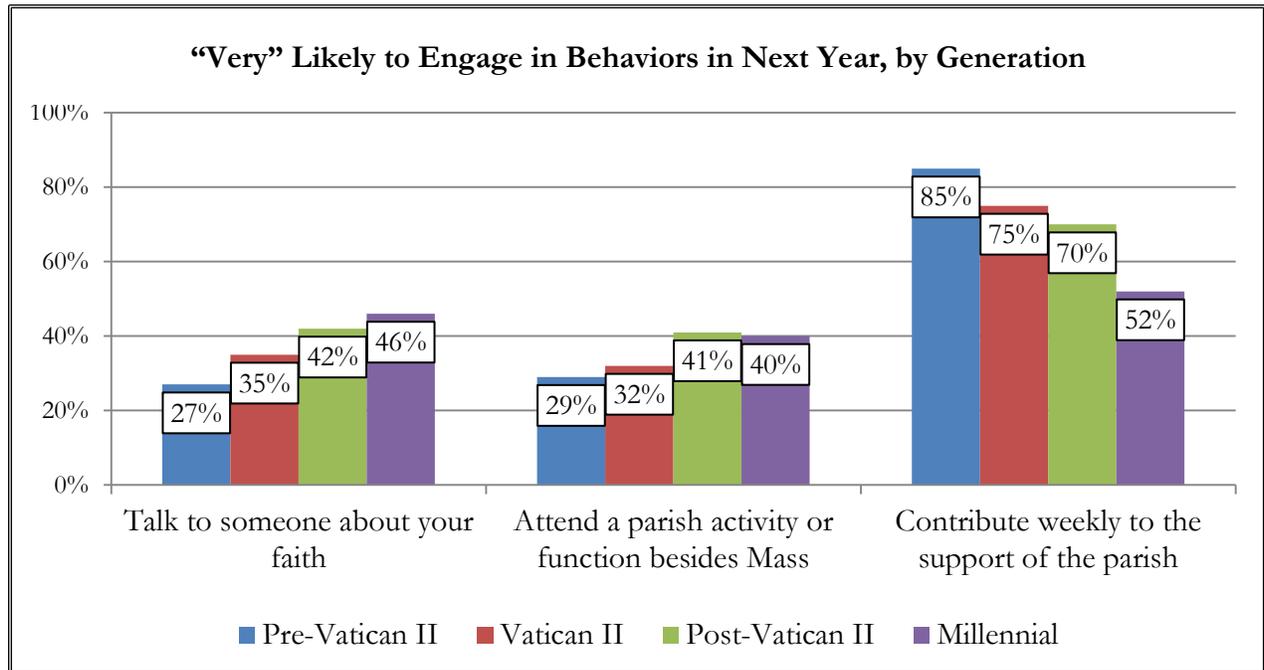
Differences by Frequency of Volunteering for Parish Ministries

Respondents differ on how likely they are to volunteer for a parish ministry in the next year by how involved with parish ministries they are currently. Examining this group, 7% of those who currently do not participate in any parish ministries say they are “very” likely to volunteer for one in the next year.

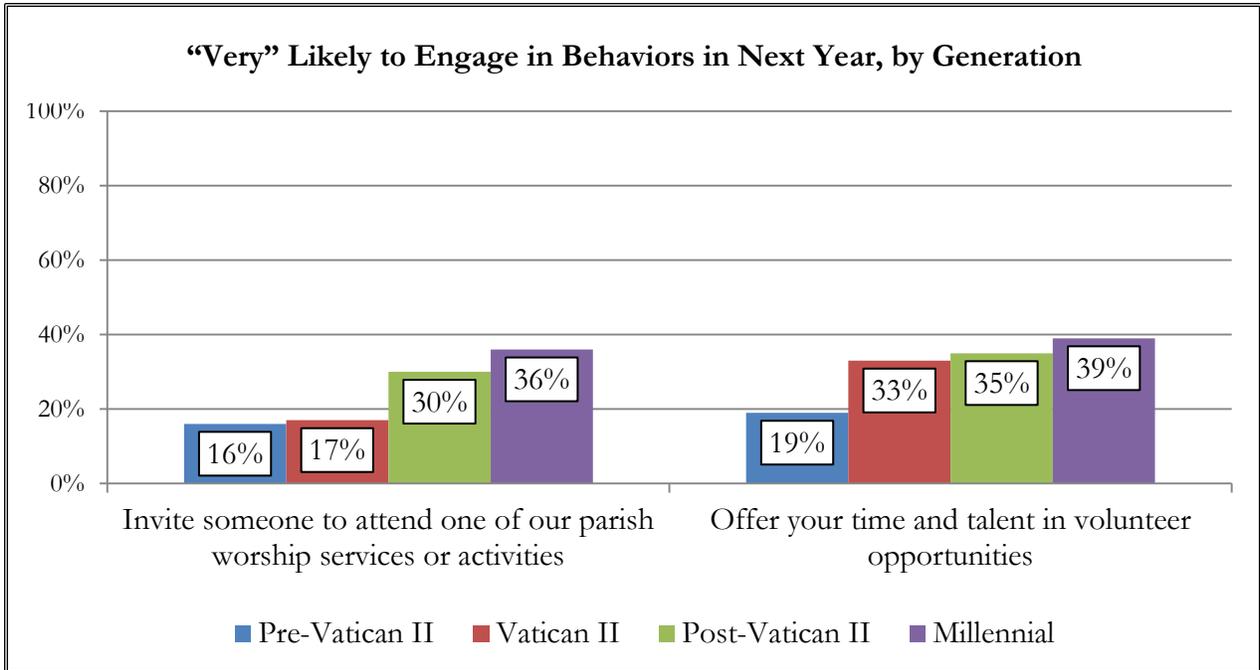


Differences by Generation

The younger the generation, the more likely its members are to say they are “very” likely in the next year to talk to someone about their faith and attend a parish activity or function besides Mass. The older respondents are, on the other hand, the more likely they are to report being “very” likely to contribute weekly to the support of the parish.

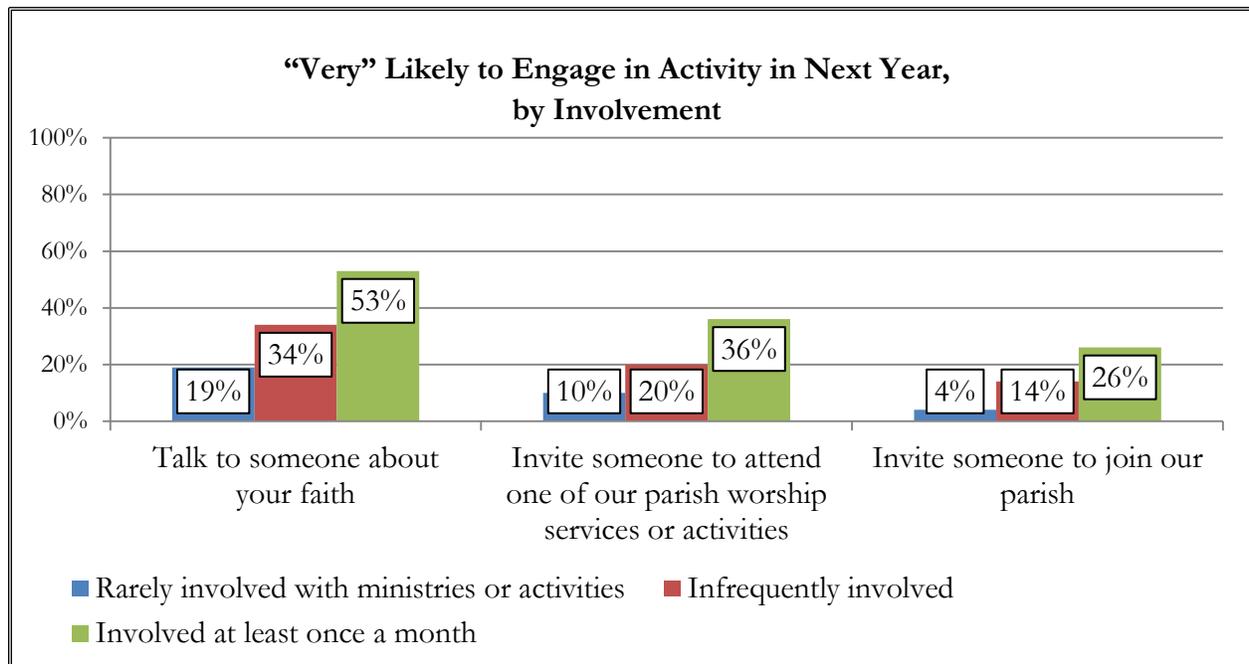
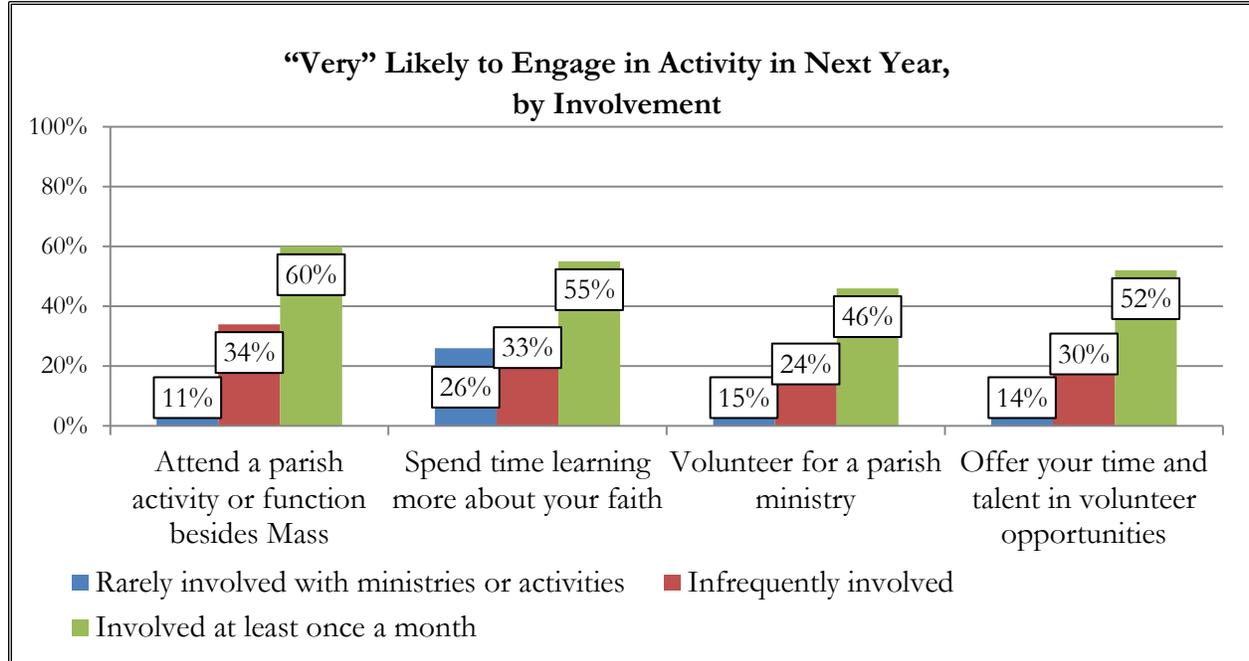


Members of the youngest two generations report being most likely to invite someone to attend a parish worship service or activity in the next year. Finally, those of the oldest generation are *least* likely to say they will be “very” likely to offer their time and talent in volunteer opportunities in the next year.

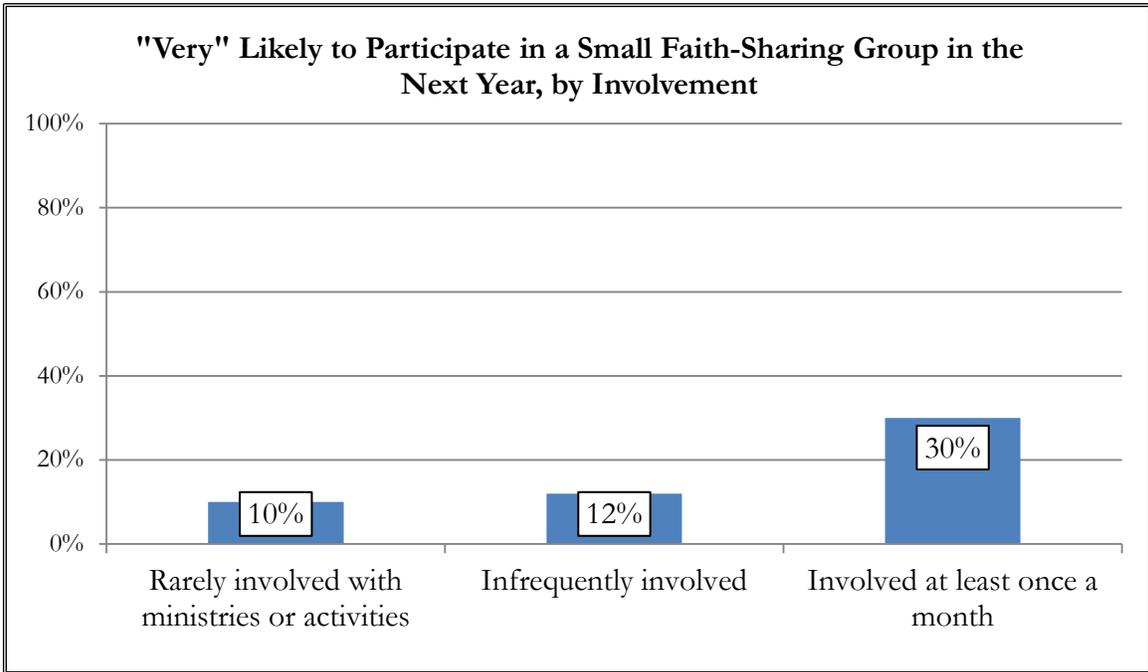


Differences by Level of Involvement

The more involved respondents are with parish ministries or parish activities, the more likely they are report being “very” likely to engage in the activities shown in the two figures below.



In addition, those most involved in parish ministries or parish activities are most likely to say they are “very” likely to participate in a small faith-sharing group in the next year.



Impediments to Contributing More Financially to the Parish

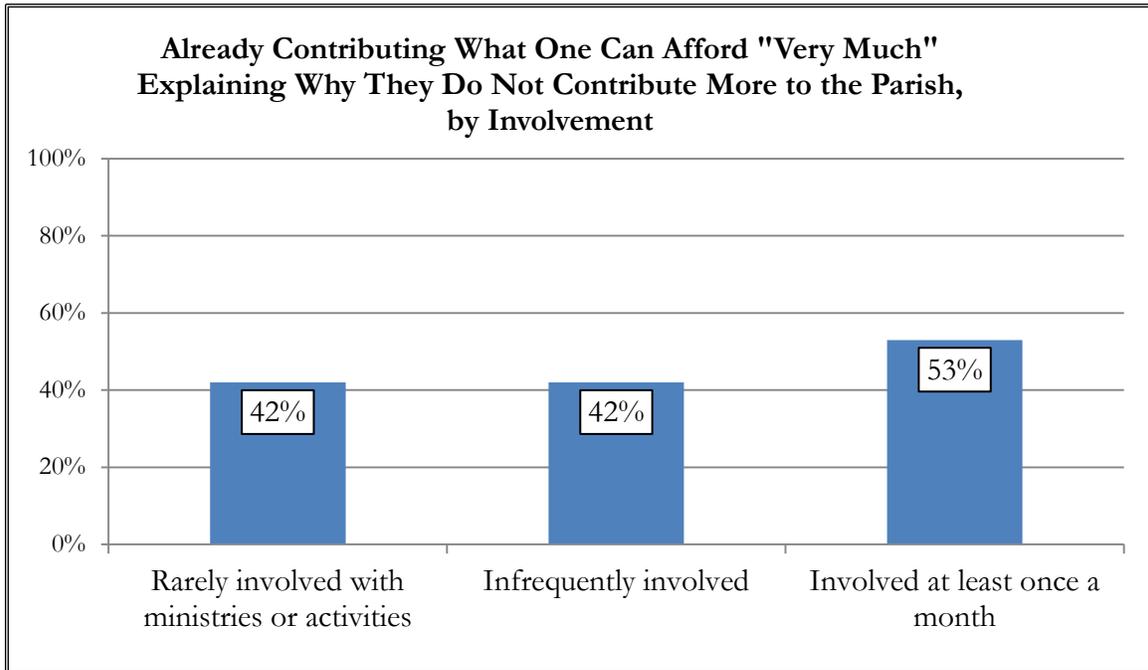
Eight in ten cite that they already contribute all they can afford as the reason that at least “somewhat” explains why they do not contribute more financially to the parish. Nearly half say this reason “very much” explains why they do not contribute more.

<i>How much do the following prevent you from contributing more financially to the parish?</i>		
<i>Percentage responding</i>		
	“Somewhat” or “Very Much”	“Very Much” Only
Already contributing all you can afford	80%	47%
Not being aware of the parish’s needs	37	14
Attending Mass at more than one parish	30	14

For between 30% and 37% of respondents, the reasons of not being aware of the parish’s needs and attending Mass at more than one parish at least “somewhat” explains why they do not contribute more financially to the parish. For just over one in ten, these reasons “very much” explain why they do not.

Differences by Level of Involvement

Those most involved in parish ministries or parish activities are most likely to say that already contributing what they can afford “very much” explains why they do not contribute more financially to the parish.



Preference for Times of the Week Available for Religious Education Programs

The time of the week when respondents most commonly say they are available to participate in parish activities are after school (36%) and on Saturday afternoons (35%). Nearly two in ten list Saturday mornings (18%) as their preferred time, with one in ten listing summer programs for junior and senior high school students (11%) as their preferred time.

<i>Your preference for when religious education programs are offered?</i>	
<i>Percentage responding</i>	
After school	36%
Saturday afternoons	35
Saturday mornings	18
Summer program (Junior and Senior High)	11

Differences by Generation

A majority of those of the oldest generation list Saturday mornings as their preferred time for religious education programs, with half of those of the youngest generation instead listing Sunday evenings. The other two generations are especially likely to list Sunday evenings and after school as their preferred times.

Times Regularly Most Available to Participate in Parish Activities, by Generation				
	Pre- Vatican II	Vatican II	Post- Vatican II	Millennial
Saturday mornings	55%	21%	10%	17%
Sunday evenings	9	31	38	50
After school	36	37	41	21
Summer program (Junior and Senior High)	0	11	11	13

Differences by Presence of Children

Those who report having at least one child or stepchild under age 18 living with them are split between Sunday afternoons and after school as their preferred time for when religious education programs are offered. Those times of the week are only slightly less popular among those without any children of that age living with them.¹³

Times Regularly Most Available to Participate in Parish Activities, by Presence of Children or Stepchildren in the Household		
	Has at Least One Child or Stepchild Under Age 18 Living with Them	Does Not
After school	40%	34%
Sunday evenings	40	32
Saturday mornings	12	22
Summer program (Junior and Senior High)	8	13

¹³ Twenty-nine individuals ages 17 and younger responded to this question. Thirty-five percent indicated a preference of Sunday evenings, 31% indicated after school, 21 percent indicated a summer program, and 14 percent indicated Saturday mornings.

Attitudes about Parish Life

More than nine in ten at least “somewhat” agree that they enjoy attending Mass at this parish. More than six in ten “very much” agree that they do.

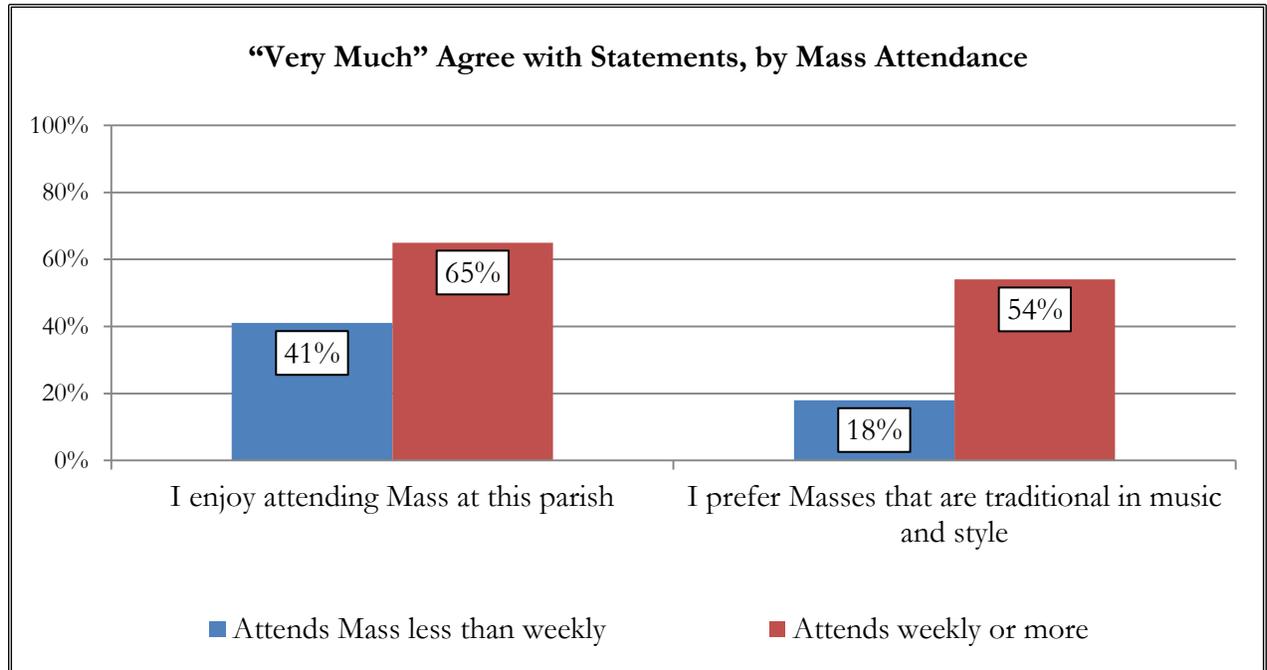
<i>How much do you agree with the following?</i>		
<i>Percentage responding</i>		
	“Somewhat” or “Very Much” Agree	“Very Much” Agree Only
I enjoy attending Mass at this parish	93%	63%
I prefer Masses that are traditional in music and style	77	51
I prefer Masses that are contemporary in music and style	55	24

- Just over three in four “somewhat” or “very much” agree that they prefer Masses that are traditional in music and style. Half “very much” agree that they do.
- More than half at least “somewhat” agree that they prefer Masses that are contemporary in music and style. A quarter “very much” agree that they do.¹⁴

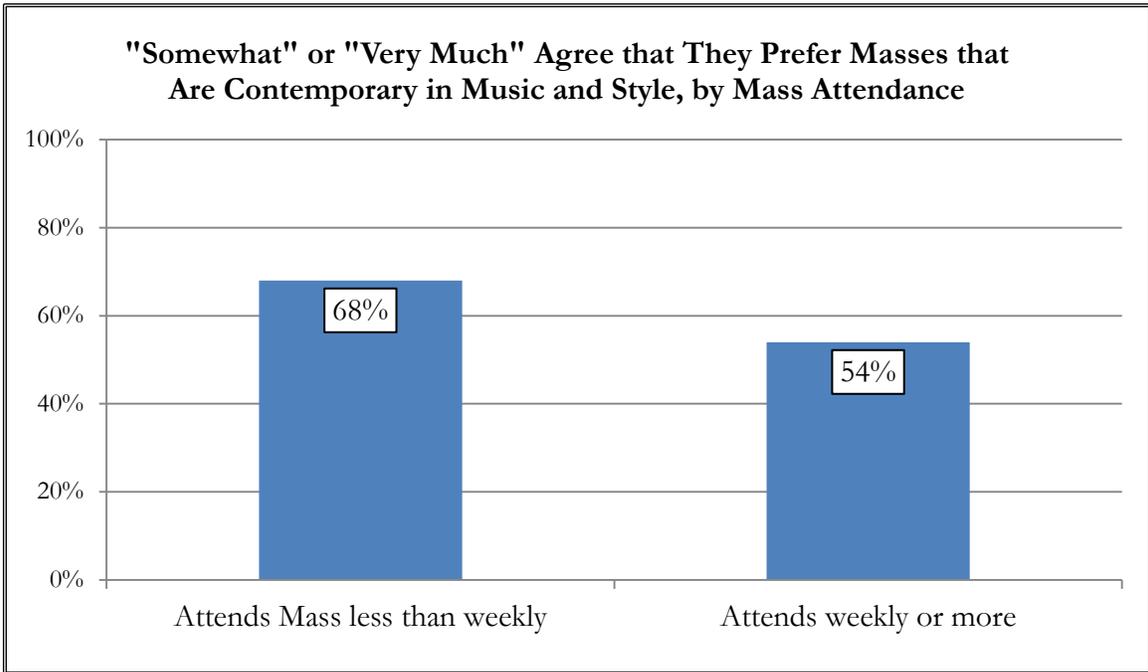
¹⁴ The 25 to 28 respondents ages 17 and younger differ some in how they respond to the questions in this section. Forty-one percent “very much” agree that they enjoy attending Mass at the parish and 16% “very much” agree that they prefer Masses that are traditional in music and style. They do not differ significantly in their response to the other question.

Differences by Frequency of Mass Attendance

Those who attend Mass at least once a week are relatively more likely than those attending less frequently to “very much” agree that they enjoy attending Mass at this parish and that they prefer Masses that are traditional in music and style.



Those who attend Mass less than weekly are especially likely to at least “somewhat” agree that they prefer Masses that are contemporary in music and style.



Appendix I: Response Frequencies to All Questions

Please use these responses for the questions below.

1=Not at All 3=Somewhat
2=Only a Little 4=Very or Very Much
Blank=Don't Know or Not Applicable

How much do the following **attract** you to this parish?

1 2 3 4 NR

- 4 15 41 39 12 65. Its open, welcoming spirit
1 9 40 50 12 66. The quality of the liturgy
3 10 36 51 12 67. The quality of the homilies
8 31 45 16 20 68. The programs and activities of the parish
15 34 34 17 29 69. Its faith formation for adults
7 28 42 23 24 70. Its opportunities for spiritual growth
6 16 37 42 13 71. The sense of belonging you feel here

How **important** are the following to you?

1 2 3 4 NR

- 1 2 16 81 8 72. Living your faith in your daily life
2 2 17 79 7 73. Attending Mass weekly
1 1 10 88 8 74. Receiving the Eucharist
15 27 35 23 12 75. Participating frequently in the Sacrament of Reconciliation/Confession

How **well** do the following explain why you attend Mass?

1 2 3 4 NR

- 1 2 15 83 7 76. The Mass means a lot to me
1 3 16 80 9 77. Receiving Communion weekly is important to me
6 11 21 62 9 78. Attending Mass is my obligation

How much do these **prevent** you from contributing more financially to the parish?

1 2 3 4 NR

- 40 23 23 14 30 79. Not being aware of the parish's needs
54 16 16 14 30 80. Attending Mass at more than one parish
8 12 34 47 16 81. Already contributing all you can afford

Sometimes Catholics miss weekend Mass. If you have missed Mass in the last 6 months, how well do the following **explain why you missed Mass**?

1 2 3 4 NR

- 67 8 12 13 52 82. My children's scheduled activities
63 8 11 18 48 83. Conflict with work
82 7 6 5 50 84. I do not find enough meaning in the Mass
55 12 16 16 44 85. I do not believe that missing Mass is a sin

How much do you **agree** with the following?

1 2 3 4 NR

- 1 6 30 63 9 86. I enjoy attending Mass at this parish
10 12 26 51 15 87. I prefer Masses that are traditional in music and style
23 22 31 24 23 88. I prefer Masses that are contemporary in music and style

89. Parents are the first educators of their children. How would you recommend parents be more involved in the religious education of their children?

Please select only one. NR= 35

- 7 1. Attend religious ed. with your child(ren) weekly
11 2. Attend religious ed. with your child(ren) monthly
82 3. Attend Mass weekly with your child(ren)

90. If applicable: **Your preference** for when religious education programs are offered: (Select only one.)
18 1. Saturday morning 11 4. Summer program (Junior and Senior High)
35 2. Sunday evenings
36 3. After school NR=64

Please use these responses for the questions below.

1=Never or rarely 4=Once a week
2=Once or twice a year 5=More than once a week
3=Once or twice a month
Blank=Don't Know or Not Applicable

How **often** do you do the following?

1 2 3 4 5 NR

- 1 0 8 73 18 8 91. Attend Mass
51 40 7 2 1 14 92. Go to Reconciliation/Confession
51 18 13 12 7 19 93. Volunteer for a parish ministry
30 42 17 7 4 18 94. Attend a parish function besides Mass
50 29 12 6 3 18 95. Encourage someone to come to a parish worship service or activity

96. What **best** describes you? Please select only one.

- 77 1. Active Catholic since birth 1 4. Inactive Catholic
15 2. Returned Catholic 1 5. Other religion
6 3. Catholic convert 1 6. Not religious

NR=8

Yes No NR

- 80 20 8 97. Are you registered in this parish?
91 9 8 98. Is this parish your primary place of worship?
25 75 27 99. Have any of your children attended religious education classes here in the past 5 years?
18 82 16 100. Have you attended adult religious education classes here in the past 5 years?

Avg NR

- 1957 9 101. Year you were born: _____ (4-digit year)
102. Gender: 41 1. Male 59 2. Female NR=8

103. What **best** describes your current marital status?
9 1. Single, never married 6 3. Divorced or separated
73 2. Married or remarried 12 4. Widowed NR=8

Number of your children or stepchildren living with you who are: **Leave blank if none or not applicable.**

Sum

Sum

- 169 104. Under age 18 96 105. Ages 18 and older
106. ZIP code of your primary residence: __. NR=16

107. What one thing do you like best about the parish?

108. What is the **most important need** for our parish to focus on in the next 1-3 years?

Thank you for completing this survey.

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Appendix II: Complete Transcription of Open-ended Comments

Q 107: What one thing do you like best about the parish?

Beautiful church. Staff is always welcoming.

Warmth of love felt here reminds me of my childhood church. Like family.

The friendliness of the parishioners.

I enjoy my friends at the church very much. We just have fun. Keep the morning weekly breakfast after Mass. It's a great time to socialize.

I like that St. Patrick has been our parish for 41+ years. Our older 2 children received 1st Communion, reconciliation, and Confirmation. Our youngest received all sacraments here. Our older daughter was married here. Two of our grandchildren were baptized here and received 1st Communion and reconciliation here. We feel a great connection to this parish.

I like that the church is old. I like a traditional church with kneelers and stained glass. It reminds me of all the hard work and dedication to our church from generations that preceded us.

Love father Dennis' homilies. Truly spirit filled and uplifting. Thank you Father for sharing your gifts with us.

Great community.

I like attending weekly Mass.

Welcoming peaceful. Fr. Dennis, music.

Father Dennis.

The goodness of the regular parishioners at St. Patrick. Our Lady of the Mountains is my alternate.

Peace, music.

Our pastor Fr. Dennis and the wonderful parishioners.

That we've been going here in a long time and know lots of people.

Several Mass choices.

Community activities.

Other parishioners at 7 am Mass.

Staff.

Homilies.

Sunday sermons.

The church.

Historic architecture of church.

The way it was.

Coffee and donuts and the laughter around the church at coffee and donuts.

Sunday and daily Mass.

Parish friends.

I feel comfortable and welcome here.

It's like a family.

People of the parish—spirit of concern and interest.

Size and structure—neighborhood feel.

Consistency.

4 o'clock Mass—Baptism and weddings not held at this Mass. Good homilies.

Masses and community.

Mass homilies.

Music ministry. Adult religious classes (currently Book of Isaiah).

Bible studies.

Homilies.

Homilies/Masses.

I feel connected since high school and a real sense of belonging.

I feel no charge for religious classes!

Beautiful church.

Father Dennis.

Homily.

The Mass.

Attention to community.

The activities we could use more to bring people together. Simple people's interests.

Friendly attitude.

Most friends attend. Although some have left for other Catholic churches in the area.

New priest.

The location.

The Masses.

Mass/easy to Church.

It is a beautiful church and the Masses are beautiful. I love the liturgy and music.

Music very upbeat! Has a way of making feelings inside come out! Thankful that bells at consecration are back.

Attending Mass.

Friendly people.

Jesus Christ.

Father Dennis.

As a long-term resident of Milford, I like that I know many parishioners and how welcoming this parish is.

Music.

4 pm Mass.

Family.

The people.

The music at Mass.

Talented, dedicated, committed parishioners who devote time and talent to our parish. There are always opportunities to get involved in ministries.

Music.

Homilies, music.

Welcoming attitude of all parish staff.

Size of church, seeing the same faces every week.

Community.

Location and atmosphere. Traditional Mass and the new pastor is great.

I feel in Communion with the Lord here. St. Patrick's is truly a holy place.

Father's homilies.

People are very friendly.

Feeling of community.

Mass and homily.

Mass schedule. Father's explanation of Gospel and readings.

I am able to receive the Eucharist and Holy Spirit openly.

Homilies with interpretation to help me with my faith and understanding of readings.

Coming to Mass – the beauty of this church and seeing the same faces every week.

Pastor's ability to articulate a relevant message during his homily.

Church interior.

Religious education.

Traditional mass of worship.

First communion as a large groups vs. done during a regular Mass; having their own special Mass.

Feeling of community.

I find Father's homilies interesting and easy to follow/understand and the friendliness of other parishioners. I find Fr. Dennis easy to approach and willing to talk.

People.

Our new Father Dennis and his devotion to people.

Pastor and his insight.

Mass. Pastor.

Religious education.

Sense of community.

Faith formation. Liturgy of the Word.

Liturgies/priest.

Eating coffee and donuts downstairs on Sundays.

Quality of liturgy and homily.

I like the traditional Mass style.

Father Dennis has the best homilies I've heard in years.

The music ministry.

The church building.

Masses and music.

Mass itself.

The messages presented in the homilies each week.

Welcoming.

It gives donuts at the end of Sunday Mass.

Giving food at the end of Mass.

The reverence.

Sunday worship.

Location. My pew friends. Music of church.

My Mass and homilies.

Weekly homilies.

Friendship.

The pastor.

Location to home.

Music.

Music.

Music.

This was our first week here. We just moved to NH.

This was our first week here. We just moved to NH.

Getting to grow my faith.

Warm welcoming atmosphere.

Music ministry.

I enjoy the Mass. Would like to be more upbeat—pastor not friendly.

Convenient.

No pressure.

Parish staff and parish community.

It's a beautiful church that I have so many wonderful memories – my wedding, Christmas Masses, my children's baptisms, etc.

Coffee and donuts.

The traditional church building and Catholic setting.

Staying within the traditions of the Church.

Fellow parishioners.

Church.

It is a welcoming parish.

Provides fulfillment of weekly obligations.

Accessibility of the sacraments.

The staff are very friendly.

Fr. Dennis and the staff are one of my favorite parts. I also love the beauty of the church.

Location and time of Mass.

Friendly people.

Fellowship.

Religious services.

Religious services.

Decorations.

Decorations.

Friendliness.

Closeness to home and Mass times.

The friendliness of the parishioners.

I feel comfortable.

It has gone downhill.

Maintaining traditions.

The liturgy and traditional feel of the Mass (music is great).

The welcoming Catholic community.

Traditional music, thought provoking homilies, friends (it took awhile to make friends but over 19.5 years).

Open welcoming spirit of parish members and staff.

Music, location.

I enjoy Fr. Dennis' homily, the beauty of church.

I enjoy our new pastor.

Friendliness and welcoming.

Father Dennis.

Music, homilies, and sense of welcoming.

The Catholic traditions.

Traditional style of facility, location.

Opportunities to help others in/out of our community.

Like Fr. Audet. He is an effective speaker as well.

Mass and community.

The homilies.

Welcoming feel to regular and new members.

Beautiful church, willingness to hear us.

Mass quality and hours offered.

Father Dennis has thought-provoking homilies. My kids love the donuts too! I love the building itself.

Sense of community among parishioners.

Music ministry.

Mass and opportunities to serve our Lord. The parish family.

Music.

The friendships.

How comforting the priest is during confession.

Mass.

Mass.

Father. Small church close to home.

Homilies/interpretation of the scriptures. Fellowship.

Traditional look and feel of the church.

Sense of belonging.

Sermons.

Sense of community.

People, friends.

Good 9 pm parish Mass. 1 hour long enough.

Old style way of doing things.

Old style. Fr. Don, Fr. Dennis.

The pastor.

We like Father Dennis, his homilies are relatable.

The parish and Fr. Dennis.

The parish.

Kids program, religious school.

Community sense.

Meaningful homily.

Welcome atmosphere.

I attend Mass 3-4 times each year. I love and enjoy my visits to St. Patrick's, is loved and appreciated.

Welcoming.

Accessibility.

Homily and music (Henry).

I like going to a parish in community but may join another.

Homilies have solid message and content. Father Dennis is well prepared and thoughtful.

Sense of community.

We finally have a good pastor.

The readings/teachings.

Homilies that apply to everyday experiences.

Other parishioners.

Adult education classes.

That they also have adult classes for people who want to expand their knowledge on their faith.

Fr. Dennis and past priests are very well spoken and impart their knowledge about the Gospel in their homilies. Mass is a very spiritual experience in this parish.

RCIA. Terry Sherlock.

People care about each other.

Mass.

7 o'clock Mass.

Always feeling welcomed.

Feeling of belonging.

Parishioners.

Size.

Mass.

The people.

Music and the members.

"Art" – Stained glass windows. Office staff very nice.

Weekly Mass.

Homilies.

Location of church.

Friendly.

Weekend worship times.

Friendly.

Music.

Friendly.

Homey feeling.

Sense of community, the Spirit of God.

It is part of my community (close to home).

Father's homilies.

Sense of community.

Music.

I like it.

Friendliness of everyone.

Fr. Dennis' homilies.

Homilies.

Overall sense of community.

Community.

Where I grew up.

Friendliness.

Celebration of the Mass.

My parish is there for me.

Welcoming feeling and consistency.

I like the fact there are a lot of choices to go to Mass.

My historical connection made my confirmation here. My parish Sacred Heart in Wilton is closed.

It is close.

Enthusiasm of the priests.

Homily of Fr. Dennis.

Listening to the homily and apply to daily life.

Fr. Dennis' homilies and receiving the Eucharist.

The homilies.

Attending Mass.

Seeing my friends at Mass and at activities.

The beauty of the church itself – that you can see the steeple from a distance. The rich history of the church in our community.

The staff.

The liturgies and meaning behind them.

I feel welcome and part of a community.

The feel.

The people in the parish.

Feeling of belonging and being welcomed back. Father Dennis was so helpful and welcoming.

Good Mass (sermons).

Father Dennis.

Sunday Mass without "music".

Efforts made to meet the needs of the parishioners.

The structure and interior.

Its potential.

It's home!

Multiple Mass times on weekends.

Homilies, education.

The priests since 1972.

Beautiful church, Mass schedule.

Our new pastor, Father Dennis. He has made so many positive changes.

Friendly and inclusive.

Opportunities offered.

I was born in this parish, comfortable here.

7 am Mass on Sunday, and the 5:30 pm weekday Mass during Lent.

Community.

Friendly.

The 7 am Mass.

Everything.

Welcoming and supportive.

Mass and quality of homily and relevance to life.

Good Mass – succinct homily with music..

Sense of welcome.

Confirmation program.

Pastor.

Good community, inspiring priest, religious education.

Sense of community.

Friendliness.

It's a beautiful traditional church. As well as in the town we reside in.

Sense of community, Mass, coffee, donuts, socializing after Mass.

Location.

Outreach to those in need.

Sense of community.

Welcoming, sense of belonging, homilies, music.

Music program.

Large attendance, traditional Mass and music.

Community spirit. Activities where we can gather as a parish, coffee and donuts, dinners, Christmas fair, etc.

Music and community.

Its members and activities.

1st time in parish – did not enjoy this survey instead of having a homily, I like homilies.

I just moved to Milford and it is my first time at St. Patrick's.

Ceilings.

Confession/sacraments.

Community.

Feels like home.

Music--Henry Kopczynski is a great director.

It feels like family.

Many Mass times.

The sense of belonging.

The people.

Near my home.

Great priest, great parishioners.

Its community atmosphere.

Trying to find out what people want and trying to provide it.

We know a lot more people and feel part of the community but it took at least 10 years.

You know my name and my family.

My sense of belonging.

The parish is very open to the needs of the parishioners and others.

Traditional services.

Many friendly people.

Church is very traditional.

We moved to NH relatively recently and haven't settled into parish life yet.

I think the Masses and ceremonies are beautiful (the music, decorations, homilies, etc.).

Starting to become more traditional (move tabernacle, altar boys, incense, adoration).

Mass on Sunday.

Mass on Sunday.

Consistent times for Mass.

The office staff. The friends I have made.

Tradition.

Father Dennis.

Very dedicated parishioners. Music ministry – beautiful at Mass.

Love the homily and readings.

Welcoming community.

How informative our parish is offering to us help for the future of our souls.

I feel that the church does well overall. Fr. Dennis has been so helpful to me.

The warmth and closeness of the church, priest and parishioners.

Father's homilies and capturing of living in faith.

Greetings.

Mass schedule, near to home.

Close to home, not far away.

The church building.

Like Father Don's ability to talk to and relate to people.

The friendliness.

Leadership.

It's become like home.

The small, hometown feel and historic building. Proximity to my home.

The welcoming community.

Very welcoming.

It's a nice parish that I have been coming to for 33 years.

Friendly, open parishioners.

Nice old church and nice music. Thank you Henry!

Friends I know here.

Conservative nature.

Traditional mass.

The community and sense of welcoming.

The warmth and friendly atmosphere.

Fall back/to prior to Vatican 2, 1950 – not after.

Q 108: What is the most important need for our parish to focus on in the next 1-3 years?

Attract more youth. No artificial flowers. Not to lock up the church while the pastor is away. There are many priests who would love to help out and say Mass for us.

Reaching out to our young adults.

In the book "Laudato Si" by Pope Francis, our environmental needs are very great. We need to do a better job at recycling in our church. We can help save money on our taxes and make this world a better place to live.

I wish for a more personal connection between the parish and the parishioners. I would like more uplifting homilies. I would like to see the plaques with our former priests back up in the church. I also liked the picture of the last supper displayed.

I disagree with the move to change Confirmation to the same time as First Communion and First Reconciliation. The concept of the Bread and Wine being the Body and Blood of Christ is already a difficult concept for young children to grasp. Adding the concept of the Holy Spirit seems even more difficult to teach to young children, along with the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and the 7 deadly sins. I seem to remember I learned about these near Confirmation. I believe we will lose parishioners once the children have all the Sacraments. Therefore, the most important challenge will be youth programs to keep families going to weekly Mass after sacraments are fulfilled. This could also create economic issues for parishes.

As a returning Catholic, since April, I enjoy going to St. Patrick Church. It's not easy to be a "New Bee" in any situation. Possibly to welcome new parishioners a guest book at the entrance of the church for new members or guests to sign when visiting etc. This guest book, or whatever is used to connect with visitors or new parishioners, along with a follow up phone call to welcome them into our Faith Community. Possibly also a packet with information, including the missions and or organizations within the church. Also a follow up phone call from "Head" of the group to invite and encourage the newbie to come and see what the group is all about. Personal invites are important.

Evangelization of Catholic parents.

Restructure religious education program. Confirmation in 8th grade.

Targeting lapsed Catholics like myself.

Rebuilding after priest change. Recruiting clergy.

Relating to everyday life.

Community building activities.

Community outreach.

Programs to deepen our understanding of our faith for all ages, community building.

Being more welcoming to all.

Talk to us, not lecture at us.

Retain parishioners.

Week night adult religious education.

Life in Spirit seminars. Fr. Michael's retreats.

Engaging youth.

Faith formation for all ages; be active in the community in order to attract members (lapsed Catholics/converts).

Recognize importance of lay ministers. More personal ministry. Really listening to individuals.

New floor in church.

Getting young people engaged

Rebuild community beginning with young adults and young families.

Greater variety of social activities, more ways to interact with parishioners.

Political and social activity.

Return to the beauty of the church of old.

Evangelism.

Listening to the parishioners that have been coming here for many years.

More Masses @.5:30.PM.

Welcome those who join the parish. A phone call would be nice.

Social activities, Bible studies.

Outreach to teens and young adults.

I think there is a need for more places for handicap/people in wheelchairs.

Encouraging people to belong.

The pastor needs to get off his high horse and be more in tune with people.

Changing religious ed. from after school.

Providing a refuge and response to the sinfulness of secular life.

Children and young families.

Reach out to the young with more problems.

Encourage more volunteering.

Bring more youth activities so they may continue when they are older. They are the Church's future!

A vibrant music ministry. Create a committee to improve.

More community. Homilies current. Clean church, fans and paint.

Youth.

Youth participation.

More activities with youth should be current events. Allow priests to marry and women priests.

Faith groups/Bible studies for young adult communities (not just men!). More opportunities to volunteer as a faith community. I would love if we varied daily Mass times – I can't make the current times because of work.

Would like to see 12:10 pm Masses on holidays...example: Ash Wednesday! For older folks and those who work.

Keep young children involved in church activities.

Ecumenical involvement.

The preservation of the building. Spreading the Gospel.

Music at Mass – wish it was better. Getting more members.

Increase the number of parishioners attending our church. What can we do to reach out to inactive Catholics?

Find a way to make more people attend Mass regularly and not just for Christmas and Easter.

Repairs and finance.

Turn off A/c – way too cold in church.

Youth ministry.

Young adult education opportunities.

Attracting young people.

Forming groups for seniors, young adults, grieving. More devotions: Rosary before Mass, more times for Adoration.

Develop means strategies to reach out and invite Catholic to return, develop ministries targeting youth, bereaved and widows. Encourage more to join in music ministry.

Compassion.

Explaining Catholic laws and doctrines at Mass. How do Catholics differ from other Christians?

Women priests!

Meaningful parent support to raise Catholic children.

To bring more young people back to Church.

Building up the parish in attendance. St. Patrick's is a rapidly aging parish.

Welcoming new and returning Catholics.

Update the floors.

Working on the beautiful, timeless church itself.

Increase visibility and participation in community activities.

Encouragement of more people to attend Mass. Maintenance of the property.

Support groups. Not to take up time for worship and spiritual wellness for filling out a survey!

Community and parishioner engagement.

Relevance for youth and young adults. Connect where they are on the problems they face.

Continue to help people understand the importance of faith; the love of our Lord and power of community.

Building maintenance.

Keeping people feeling welcome.

Have more parishioners help in ministries.

Making homilies more pertinent for children; inviting them to attend.

Dwindling number of priests.

Find what attitudes are alienating our young people and bring them back.

To attract young people.

Although I like the traditional Mass, I find my children (grown) do not like predetermined rote responses. They seem to feel it is just repeating things. Perhaps engaging parishioners in discussions.

To keep everything according to Catholic traditions.

Youth outreach and expand base. Facilities, money.

Outreach; growing the community; financials. More social groups.

Catechesis and keeping kids and adults in the Church.

Faith formation. Number of scheduled Masses.

More opportunities for adult fellowship and education. Need to work on the needs of our young adults.

Adult religious education.

Having more young people join the parish.

Increased participation for 30-50. Don't get liberal.

Keep being a traditional Catholic Church. Don't sell out!

Keep being a traditional Catholic Church.

Bringing and keeping younger families.

To focus on the return of young adults to parish life, Mass, activities.

Clean and repair church building.

Outreach to people who don't fit with mainstream, e.g.: LGBT+, autistic, immigrants, etc. Support for others, not just during big emergencies.

Hospitality – growing a sense of community and genuine outreach toward newcomers. Being welcoming and having fellowship opportunities.

Fellowship, more faith formation outside of Mass.

Involving the youth – mission trips.

Youth and bring back inactive Catholics.

I don't know.

Devotion to the Eucharist and Rosary. Learning scripture and confession.

Balance the budget. Attract more parishioners.

Focus on our teens. Happy music and more focus on their needs.

Helping seniors deal with elderly relatives.

Nothing.

Build stronger, more active community – mission trips.

Involve the youth more, ex: retreats, mission trips.

Mission trips.

Youth ministry – homilies need to be more real life relatable for them.

More teens/children in the parish.

Encourage piety, devotion, and purity in family life.

We are spending too much money on things that are not priority. Relook at expenses!

Bringing youth back by making Mass meaningful to them.

Encouraging families to rediscover/deepen their Catholic faith and welcoming them to St. Patrick Church.

For the priest to really get to know his parishioners. A tremendous amount of money was spent on remodeling by an outside source – we have parishioners who could have done this work for much less money, especially if we need to make more improvements to the church – flooring, etc.

New flooring.

New flooring.

Including new parishioners as ushers, etc.

Youth education and keeping youth interested.

More uplifting homilies and warmer welcoming.

Flooring.

Getting young people (teens) back into the Church as participants in the Mass.

To get more people to attend Mass.

Dangerous stairs to choir loft. I had to drop out. Handicapped access. Front stairs are dangerous. Evacuation via elevator would not work.

Getting involved with youth.

Music at Mass; to reflect the awe and honor of God and not sentimental.

Adult education and Bible study.

Educating everyone on the Church – not just children.

Attracting new parishioners.

Creating a younger community.

Adult education. Community.

"Community" presently weak.

Focus more on teens.

Teen/young adult/family interaction. Fun.

Community growth.

Not most but small faith sharing groups.

Bringing more youth/families into the parish.

Find someone who can sing.

Keeping in good repair. Return the tabernacle to the center main altar.

Get the right pastor.

Religious ed. program. It is in dire need of improvement.

Better youth outreach.

Reaching out to young adults and to Catholics in mixed faith marriages.

Parents with children attending religious ed. – have them contribute more of their time and talent in religious ed.

Be more accepting of all God's people. The gay and divorced, etc. Concentrate on young families, keep them coming. Changing confirmation age – people are going to leave sooner. Focus on parents staying at church while kids are at CCD.

Floor repair, cushions for pews.

Floor repairs.

Religious education alternatives for study at home with monthly meetings.

Focus on including religious activities in households with two working (full time) parents.

Involve children more. They seem forgotten, add more kids' activities.

Maintaining a strong and involved community connection.

Stressing the role we have as Catholics in improving our society.

Keeping young people-teens, young adults interested.

Growth of the parish community.

More education about Holy Days and celebrations.

More Masses and more priests.

Faith formation.

Getting young people to attend Mass and become Christians.

Make an effort to bring more minorities to Mass. Have minority priest too visit Mass.

More community outreach. More teen/young adult outreach.

Religious education and volunteering. Would like to hear need for Mass in other languages, i.e.: Spanish.

Religious ed. needs consideration. Opportunities for family volunteerism – focus on social justice.

Revitalize youth ministry.

Reach out to those in need.

To build a sense of community – a parish family.

Adult religious formation.

Growing the youth group.

Getting younger people involved.

Activities for seniors.

Activities for seniors.

Bring a young and family element. Aging population hard to attract families.

Missing the décor. The floor to be repaired, replaced. Our priest to be a bit more social and to feel like we are welcomed.

Replacing the floor.

Bringing in younger adults.

Young people coming to Mass.

Not extra envelopes. Shorten homily.

Need to be more friendly.

Connection with Father.

Involvement of young people.

It would be nice if there was a baby room (keep doors closed). More welcoming with babies/small children. Focus on families with young children.

Grounds and community outreach.

Grounds and outreach in the community.

I would like to attend education while my kids are at school not like now, after school.

Reinvent the way to approach the new generations.

Keeping faith in God alive.

More vibrant youth programs.

Unsure – new to parish.

Stay open.

Please stop the constant requests for money – am thinking of joining another parish due to this.

Relevancy! Helping people to understand why they come to Mass. Giving people a reason for their hope.

Sermons need to tie together the Gospel with today's life events so people understand God's message better.

Getting young people involved in the Church.

Serious help in the youth program, not exciting enough. We don't have power.

Teen sports and activities.

Community. Consider Sunday evening Mass. Chats with Father after Mass. Adult ed. with child care or at the same time as religious ed.

A youth group.

More events to bring the people together like picnics and BBQs.

Parent and child education and participation.

Women deacons and cross with Risen Christ.

Understanding direction of USCCB!

Community support and welcoming atmosphere.

This was an awful use of Mass time. Please give a message instead of addressing business.

Exposure to our children.

Continue getting out to those who are sick or shut in including nursing homes.

Adult education.

Focus on children.

More Eucharistic education.

Sense of community.

Bring speakers in to talk about Catholic faith. Ex: Chris Stefanek and others from EWTN.

The pastor being more reachable.

Homilies to be addressing real life problems and issues.

Needs to be more welcoming. Retreats, Christmas, Easter time.

The effect of government on religion.

More daily Masses.

Improve handicap access.

Youth involvement.

Drugs and education.

Helping the oppressed.

Getting more young people to attend Mass.

Keeping up with needed upkeep, repairs.

Outreach.

Adult education on weekends.

Fostering community.

Focus on the youth and the family.

Educating/attracting youth and young adults.

Get younger! Where are the kids? No one at 4 pm Mass is under 50.

Bring more people into the faith.

To grow.

General meetings for parishioners to contribute to operation decisions.

Getting the kids of all ages more involved in the Mass such as reading, money collecting, greeters.

Clean inside of church. Look up – fans are filthy. Stop closing parishes.

More seating for seniors with walkers.

The return of people to Mass or the sacraments.

Current times.

Have homily relate to everyday life. Encourage prayer and strengthen faith.

Increasing attention to elderly widows and widowers. Transportation.

Fellowship and kindness.

Upkeep of the parish church.

Get the young people back to Church.

Continual adult formation.

Church is cold, a little heat please.

Religious education.

Explain the goodness of God/Catholic morals.

Increasing active membership.

Tolerance and inclusion of all.

Focus on the Word.

Liked fresh flowers, not a fan of fake flowers. Seems cheap and not in keeping with our beautiful church. Would like the bulletin to share news of Baptisms and weddings with congratulations.

Focus on clearly communicating the basic truths of Catholicism.

The youth programs to make better Catholics and help them make good decisions.

Revamp religious ed. with focus on adults.

Faith formation for adults.

Would like to see more opportunities for Masses on Holy Days of Obligation.

New floor, remove rug.

Continue to function as presently.

Paint the church.

Reach out to those unable to attend Mass. Take Communion to these people.

Modernization of the church, needs captions for the hard of hearing.

Not sure – new parishioner.

Encourage involvement.

Quit complaining about finances and build a better sense of community here; more traditional/historical Catholic education and reference during Mass.

Communication of programs.

Outreach.

Reaching out to elderly parishioners who no longer drive.

Growth, especially of younger parishioners.

The previous priest renewed my faith and I stay here, not a member of parish and single coming here. Not involved in activities.

Attendance by young families and children. CCD for children, not learning catechism as much as prior generations.

Spiritual advising with priest. More in areas like Eucharistic Adoration, first Saturday devotion.

Youth ministry.

Making the homilies a little more relatable and not going past one hour Mass.

Missions and outreach to the needy – perhaps things like Habitat for Humanity, food drives, clothing drives.

Focus on youth.

Sense of community.

Ability to communicate the needs of the parish and to emphasize what it takes to be a good Catholic. Admit the church and the community that control it is not perfect – then we can move on as a community. Ask for prayer and help of parish more.

Fellowship.

Retention, outreach to parishioners 20-40 years old.

Making it a welcome place for youth, young adults to be part of parish and making them feel it's their church.

Homilies, don't read off paper.

More youth programs either during or after Mass.

Acceptance, prayerfulness.

A homily at every mass.

Floors.

More frequent confession/renovations.

Liturgy, better lectors and altar servers.

To attract and educate more parishioners.

Reach out to those who suffer from depression.

Bringing in new parishioners and keeping parishioners we have and especially in teaching/encouraging our youth to live their faith.

More time to get to confession.

Encouraging young families to join, attend Mass, encourage their children to receive sacraments.

Fight to unify all Christian churches.

Evangelizing Milford area. Teaching authentic Catholic faith. Especially the "hard" teachings.

Growing members.

Get the kids back in and reach out to those who are registered but don't come.

Bringing back the families that left St. Patrick's.

Re-attracting the many families who left St. Patrick's for other area churches.

Education of young adults.

For parents with children to be more involved with the Church.

Start using social media to attract and outreach to new parishioners.

Convening attendees and inviting Catholics not attending to return.

Fiscal responsibility/stewardship/communication.

Communicating the financial positions – details of finances allowing parishioners a say in how the parish is run.

Working together would be good.

Be active reaching out to non-attending families at Mass.

Update interior and exterior.

Attracting youth, offer more contemporary worship at Mass.

Young adult and teen programming. I am 24 and would love a Bible study group to join. After CCD in middle school and after confirmation, I felt like there was nothing more for me to continue to grow in my faith. A teen program and a young adult program would be great.

Get a youth minister who is young and reach out to young adults (drink and discuss).

Keep our church open for Milford.

Teach Catholic Church doctrine whether politically correct or not.

Community activities.

Youth ministry.

Bible studies for young adults with special needs.

More support to needy and elderly.

How to help young people after confirmation to stay with the Church. Sacrament of Matrimony.

Children and young adult outreach.

I believe that Father and the church are focused on all the important needs of the parish.

Growth of sense of shared faith and fellowship.

To be more welcoming.

Social activities, to develop a sense of community.

Reconnect with people. Stop reading canned homilies.

Attract more parishioners, Catholic and not.

Not to close, show how faith is in daily life.

Providing a welcoming atmosphere and facilities for families with young children. Maintaining a traditional liturgy.

Outreach to teens.

Attracting young people by making Mass interesting to them.

Bringing youth back to religious education – more understanding of family demands and less demands of parents.

Engage younger parishioners in church activities.

Forgiveness.

Getting younger people to come to Mass. Need to make music and homily relevant to them as well.

Family, teen, children involvement. Somehow communicate with those who don't attend Mass – their needs.

More inviting when entering the church.

New altar server robes.

Make bulletin more informative.

Away from liberalism and back to the teachings of Jesus Christ, not popes.