

January 2012

Parish Life Survey

**St Mary Parish
Crown Point, Indiana**

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

Parish Life Survey

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Crown Point, Indiana**

January 2012



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Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate Pastoral Assistance Surveys and Services (PASS)

Parish Life Survey for St. Mary Parish Crown Point, Indiana

Executive Summary

The St. Mary Parish Life Survey was designed by the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) at Georgetown University. The questions were derived from CARA's database of nationally tested questions. The parish distributed the questionnaire to those attending the parish liturgies over one weekend in December 2011. In all, there were 1,270 valid responses.

Major findings can be summarized as follows:

Aspects of Parish Life

- More than nine in ten respondents (97 percent) evaluate parish life at St. Mary Parish overall as "good" or "excellent."
- About six in ten respondents say that St. Mary Parish overall, Masses and liturgies in general, and the ministry of the professional ministry staff are "excellent."
- About nine in ten respondents evaluate vision provided by parish leaders and leadership of the parish pastoral council as "good" or "excellent."
- Eight in ten respondents agree "somewhat" or "strongly" that they understand the concept of stewardship and that stewardship is important to them.

Parish Strengths

Sacramental Preparation and Faith Formation

- More than six in ten respondents evaluate sacramental preparation for First Reconciliation, Baptism, First Holy Communion, and Confirmation as "excellent."
- Nine in ten respondents evaluate parish efforts to nurture their relationship with Jesus Christ and to meet people's spiritual needs as "good" or "excellent."
- Almost all respondents think that St. Mary School, children's faith formation, youth ministry, and adult faith formation should "somewhat" or "very much" be priorities at the parish.

Community

- Nine in ten respondents agree “somewhat” or “strongly” that their parish community is important in their life and that they are comfortable with the increasing racial or ethnic diversity in the parish, with about six in ten “strongly” agreeing.
- More than eight in ten respondents agree “somewhat” or “strongly” that they feel included in parish life and that they feel well informed about what goes on in the parish.
- More than nine in ten respondents want developing a parish sense of community and building community among parishioners as “somewhat” or “very much” a priority.

Opportunities for Improvement

Parish Outreach

- Almost one in three respondents evaluate parish outreach to senior citizens as “fair” or “poor.” One in five evaluates outreach to adults as “fair” or “poor.”
- More than one in three respondents evaluate parish efforts to reach out to area Catholics who do not come to Mass as “fair” or “poor.” One in four respondents evaluate parish efforts to offer a Catholic view on current issues as “fair” or “poor.”
- Two in five respondents place St. Mary School as the first priority for the parish.

Parish Involvement

- Half of respondents “strongly agree” that their busy schedule or lack of time prevents them from volunteering more for the parish. Four in ten agree “somewhat” or “strongly” that they are already volunteering as much as they’d like. However, seven in ten respondents agree “somewhat” or “strongly” that they want to volunteer more for the parish.
- Seven in ten respondents say they are “somewhat” or “very” likely to attend a parish activity or function besides weekend Mass. About the same number are “somewhat” or “very” likely to contribute generously in support of the parish.
- Challenges facing the parish were identified as the parish plant and facilities, growth of the parish and the surrounding community, spiritual challenges facing people in the parish, and larger cultural challenges facing the parish.

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Introduction

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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 percent, as well as the percentage of all respondents that did not respond to each question, separately calculated out of 100 percent 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 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

¹With a sample of 1,270 respondents, the margin of error means that if all registered households had responded to the questionnaire, the response to each question would vary no more than approximately 1.9 percentage points above or below the actual percentage reported in Appendix I.

of the subgroups being compared. Unless otherwise noted, all subgroup differences described in 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.

In addition to the quantitative data analyzed in this report, one open-ended question 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 can be used to represent the people ages 18 and older who attend Mass at St. Mary Parish. It cannot be used to make inferences about populations outside of Mass attenders at the parish; it is not representative of those who do not attend Mass or those who are involved in parish functions excluding Mass.

Section I: Responding Parishioners

This section of the report includes demographic and other descriptive data for 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 a typical weekend at the parish.

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Age and Gender

The average age of adult respondents is 57 years old.

| Age of Respondents | |
|------------------------------|----|
| <i>Percentage responding</i> | |
| 18-19 | 1% |
| 20-29 | 4 |
| 30-39 | 14 |
| 40-49 | 22 |
| 50-59 | 18 |
| 60-69 | 20 |
| 70-79 | 14 |
| 80 and above | 6 |
| Mean | 57 |
| Median | 57 |

Respondents were born between 1917 and 1994 and range in age from 18 to 95 years old. Those born between 1963 and 1972 (ages 40-49) represent the largest proportion of respondents. About one in five respondents (19 percent) are under the age of 40. The average (mean) age is 57. Comparatively, respondents at Catholic parishes nationally have an average age of 53 years.

Almost three in five respondents (58 percent) are female and just over two in five (42 percent) are male. This is very similar to other Catholic parishes for which CARA has collected data, with 62 percent of respondents being female, and 38 percent male.

Generation

Important differences between groups in parishes are typically found among those who belong to different generations. CARA divides Catholics into the following four generations, reflective of the age categories used by many other Catholic researchers.

| Generations | | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|---|
| <i>Percentage by group</i> | | | |
| | St. Mary Parish | Parishes Nationally | Adult Catholics Nationally² |
| Pre-Vatican II | 24% | 35% | 17% |
| Vatican II | 35 | 42 | 33 |
| Post-Vatican II | 36 | 23 ³ | 36 |
| Millennial | 5 | | 15 |

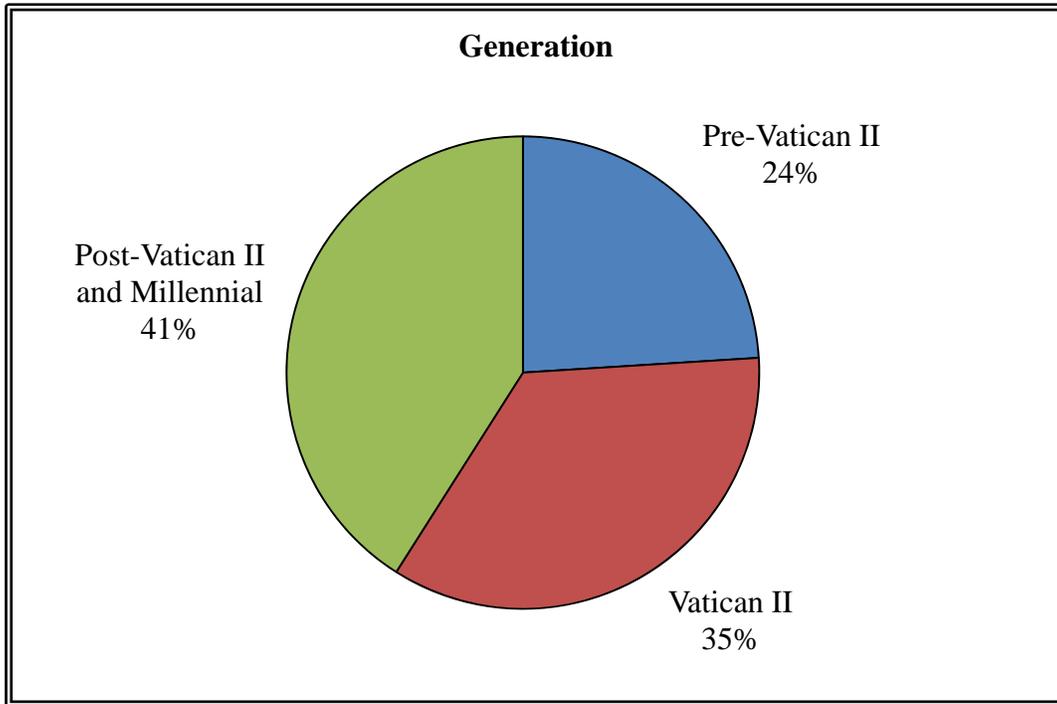
- *The “Pre-Vatican II Generation,” ages 70 and over in 2012.* The Pre-Vatican II Generation was born in 1942 or earlier. Its members came of age before the Second Vatican Council. Members of the Pre-Vatican II Generation make up 24 percent of the respondents, which is lower than the percentage found at parishes nationally (35 percent), but higher than that of adult Catholics nationally (17 percent).
- *The “Vatican II Generation,” ages 52-69 in 2012.* 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 are 35 percent of respondents, which is below that of other parishes surveyed by CARA (42 percent), and about the same as the national average of adult Catholics (33 percent).
- *The “Post-Vatican II Generation,” ages 31-51 in 2012.* 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. Thirty-six percent of respondents are members of the Post-Vatican II Generation, which is the same as the national average for adult Catholics (36 percent). Comparative data for other parishes surveyed by CARA do not distinguish between the Post-Vatican II Generation and the Millennial Generation because CARA has only recently begun to collect these data separately for these two generations.

²Source: Gray, Mark M. and Paul M Perl. 2008. *Sacraments Today: Belief and Practice among U.S. Catholics*. Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate, Georgetown University: Washington, DC

³Note: Only since 2007 has there been a sufficient number of adult Millennial Catholics for CARA to include that group in its analyses of parish surveys.

- *The “Millennial Generation,” ages 18-30 in 2012.* This generation, born in 1982 or later (up to 1994 among adults), has come of age primarily under the papacies of John Paul II and Benedict XVI. Because some still live with their parents, their religious practice is often closely related to that of their families of origin. Five percent of respondents belong to the Millennial Generation, about one-third the size of this generation in the national adult Catholic population (15 percent).

Due to the small number of members of the Millennial Generation this group of respondents will be combined with the Post-Vatican II Generation for subgroup analyses presented in this report.



Marital Status

More than three in four respondents (76 percent) are currently married or remarried.

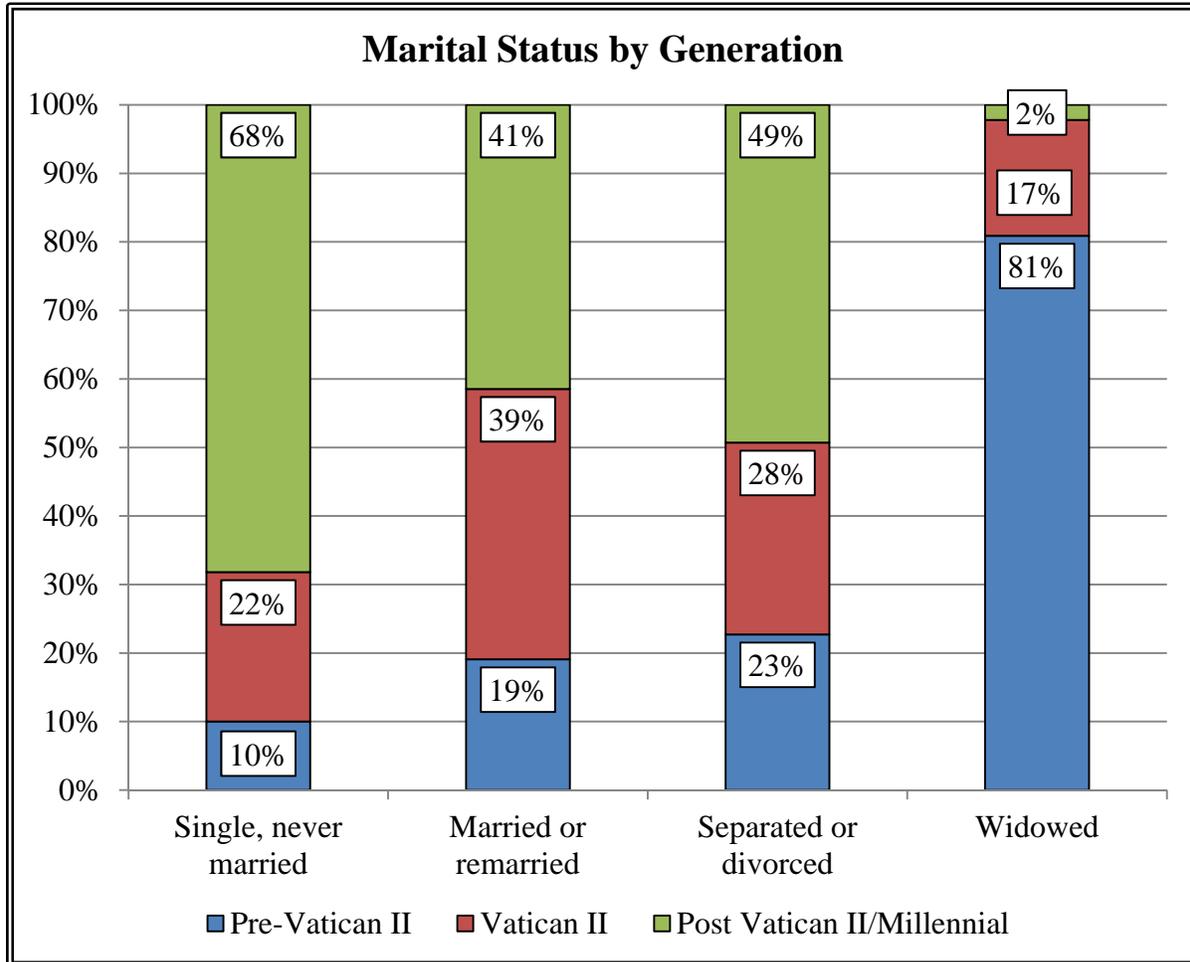
| | Marital Status <i>Percentage responding</i> | | |
|-----------------------|---|--------------------------------|---|
| | St. Mary Parish | Parishes Nationally | Adult Catholics Nationally⁴ |
| Single, never married | 10% | 12% | 29% |
| Married or remarried | 76 | 73 | 53 |
| Divorced or separated | 6 | 7 | 13 |
| Widowed | 8 | 8 | 5 |

- One in four respondents (24 percent) are currently not married, including those who have never been married (10 percent), those separated or divorced (6 percent), and widowed (8 percent).
- St. Mary Parish respondents are very similar to parishes nationally with regard to their marital status. At parishes nationally, 73 percent of respondents are currently married or remarried, compared to 76 percent of respondents at St. Mary Parish. However, compared to adult Catholics nationally, respondents at St. Mary Parish are more likely to be married (53 percent to 76 percent, respectively).

⁴ Source: Gray, Mark M., et al. 2007. *Marriage in the Catholic Church: A Survey of U.S. Catholics*. Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate, Georgetown University: Washington, DC.

Differences by Generation

About half of married respondents (49 percent) are in the Vatican II Generation, ages 51 to 68.



- More than two in three single, never married respondents (68 percent) are of the Post-Vatican II/Millennial Generation.
- Almost three in ten separated or divorced respondents are part of the Vatican II Generation.
- Eight in ten (81 percent) widowed respondents are in the Pre-Vatican II Generation.

Children in the Household

One in three respondents (34 percent) has a child in the household who is in high school or younger. Because respondents were given the instruction to “leave blank if none,” it is assumed that these respondents who did not answer this question do not have children in this age group living in their household.

| Children in the household | | |
|--|--|----------------------------------|
| <i>Respondents with one or more by age group</i> | | |
| | Percentage of all respondents | Number of respondents |
| Preschool or younger | 11% | 141 |
| Elementary school | 17 | 214 |
| Middle school | 12 | 153 |
| High school | 15 | 185 |
| College | 12 | 158 |

- One in ten respondents has either a preschool aged or younger child (11 percent) or college aged child (12 percent) living in the household.
- Almost one in five respondents (17 percent) has an elementary school aged child living in the household.

Number of Years Attending St. Mary Parish

Three in ten respondents (30 percent) have attended St. Mary Parish for 25 or more years. The average number of years that respondents report attending St. Mary Parish is 19.

| Number of Years Attending | |
|----------------------------------|-----|
| <i>Percentage responding</i> | |
| 0 - 4 | 18% |
| 5 - 9 | 20 |
| 10 - 14 | 15 |
| 15 - 19 | 10 |
| 20 - 24 | 6 |
| 25 + | 30 |
| Mean | 19 |

Religious Characteristics of Respondents

This section describes several characteristics of respondents that relate to their religious attributes and parish-related behaviors.

| <i>What best describes you?</i> | |
|---------------------------------|-----|
| Percentage responding | |
| Active Catholic since birth | 73% |
| Returned Catholic | 11 |
| Catholic convert | 10 |
| Inactive Catholic | 3 |
| Non-Catholic | 3 |

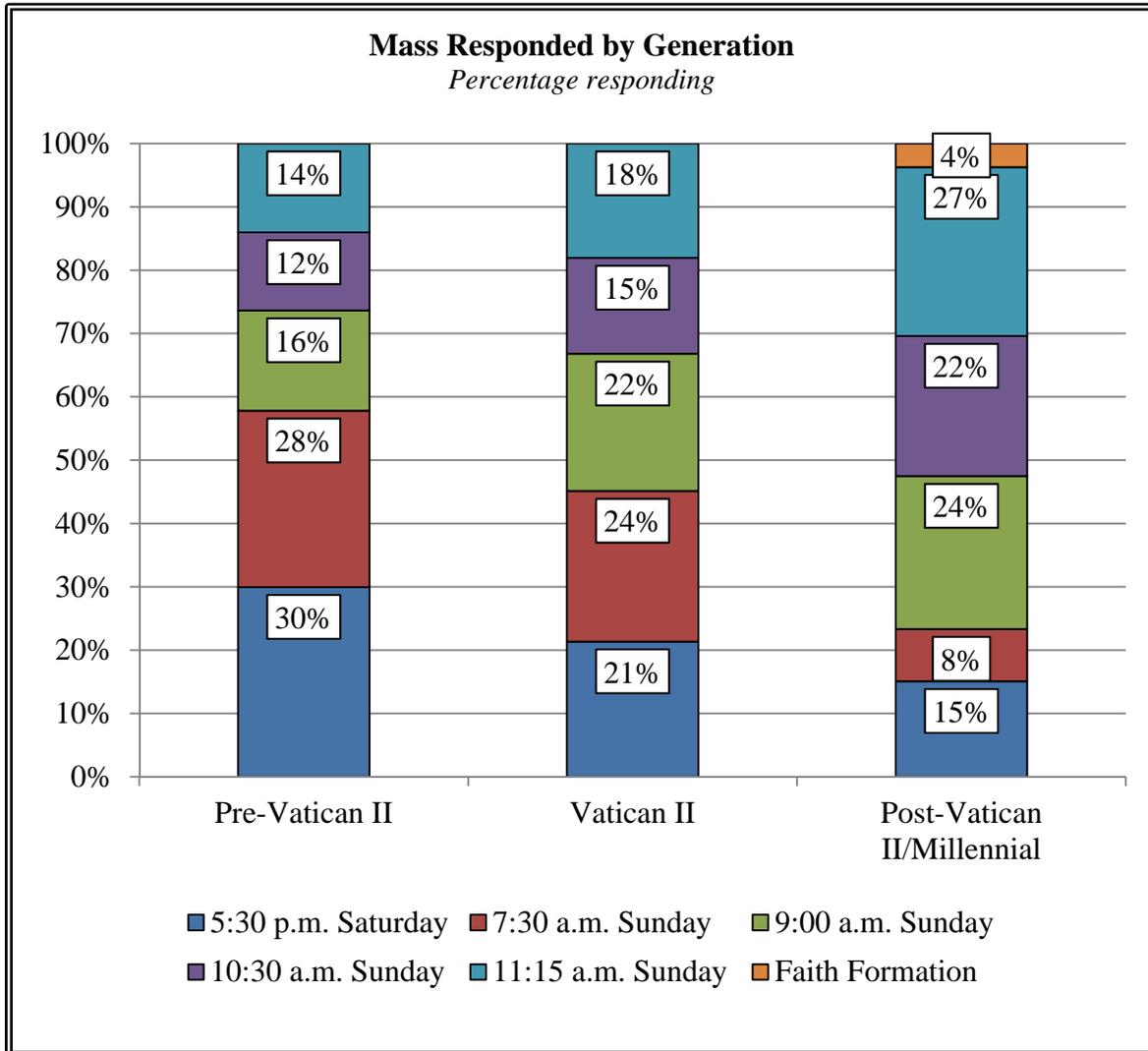
- Three in four respondents (73 percent) are active Catholics since birth.
- One in ten respondents is a returned Catholic (11 percent) or a Catholic convert (10 percent).
- Less than one in ten respondents is an inactive Catholic (3 percent) or is non-Catholic (3 percent).

Responses were evenly split among all five Masses, with about 20 percent of respondents coming from each Mass. Two percent of respondents (N = 21) completed their survey at faith formation on the weekend the survey was distributed in-pew.

| <i>Mass time of respondent</i> | |
|--------------------------------|-----|
| Percentage responding | |
| 5:30 p.m. Saturday | 20% |
| 7:30 a.m. Sunday | 19 |
| 9:00 a.m. Sunday | 21 |
| 10:30 p.m. Sunday | 21 |
| 12:00 p.m. Sunday | 18 |
| Faith formation | 2 |

Differences by Generation

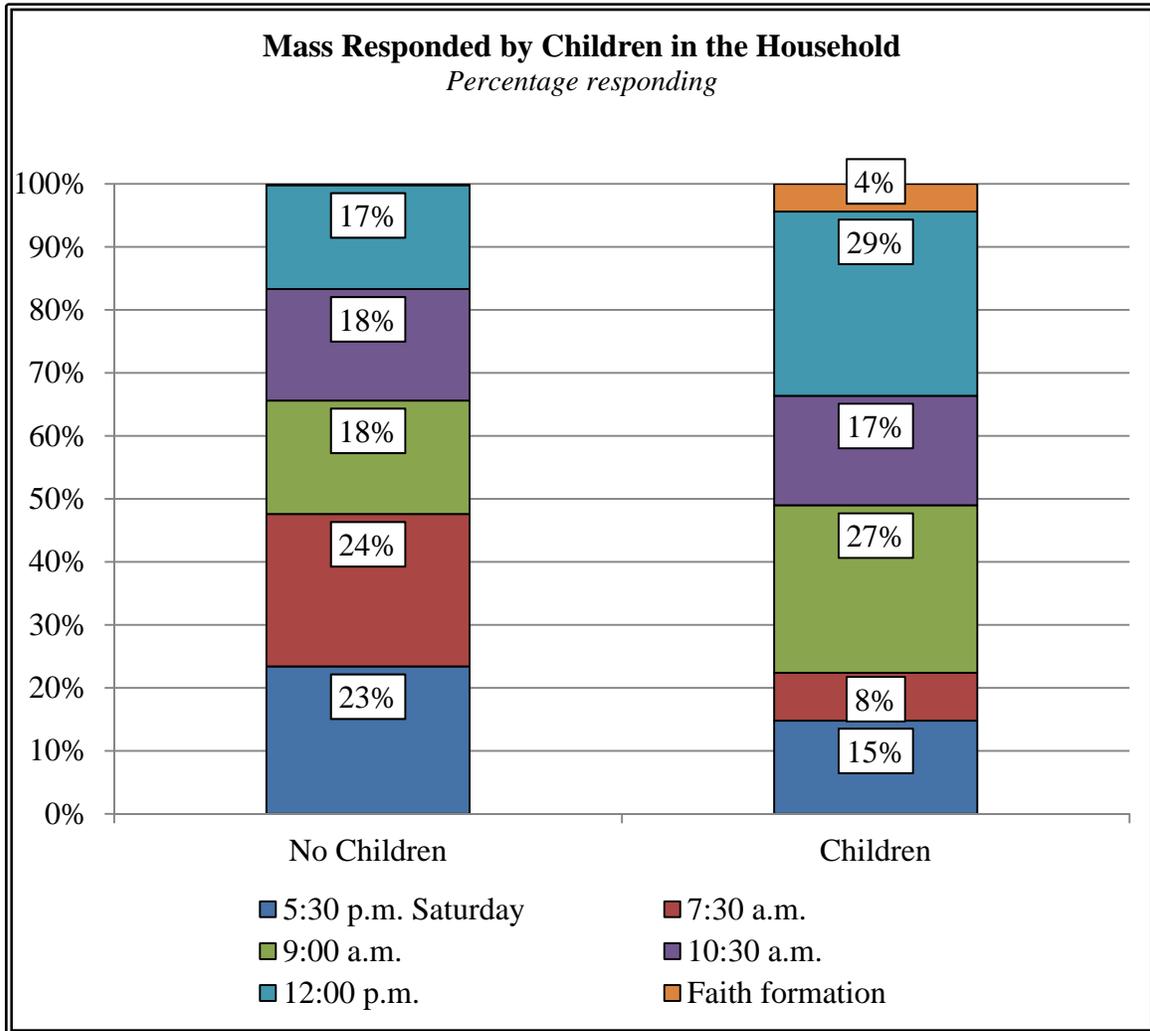
Three in ten respondents in the Pre-Vatican II Generation completed their survey during the 5:30 p.m. Saturday liturgy, compared to two in ten of the Vatican II and one in seven of the Post-Vatican II/Millennial Generation respondents.



- Three in ten Post-Vatican II/Millennial Generation respondents (27 percent) completed their survey at the 11:15 a.m. Sunday Mass.
- About a quarter of respondents in the Pre-Vatican II and Vatican II Generations completed their surveys during the 7:30 a.m. Sunday Mass, compared to just 8 percent of Post-Vatican II/Millennial respondents.

Differences by Children in the Household

One in three respondents with children in high school or younger in their household completed their survey at the 12:00 p.m. Sunday Mass, compared to just under one in five of those without children in the household.



- Those without children are more likely than those with children to have completed their survey at the 5:30 p.m. Saturday or at the 7:30 a.m. Sunday Masses.
- Those with children are more likely than those without to have completed their survey at the 9:00 a.m. or 12:00 p.m. Sunday Masses.

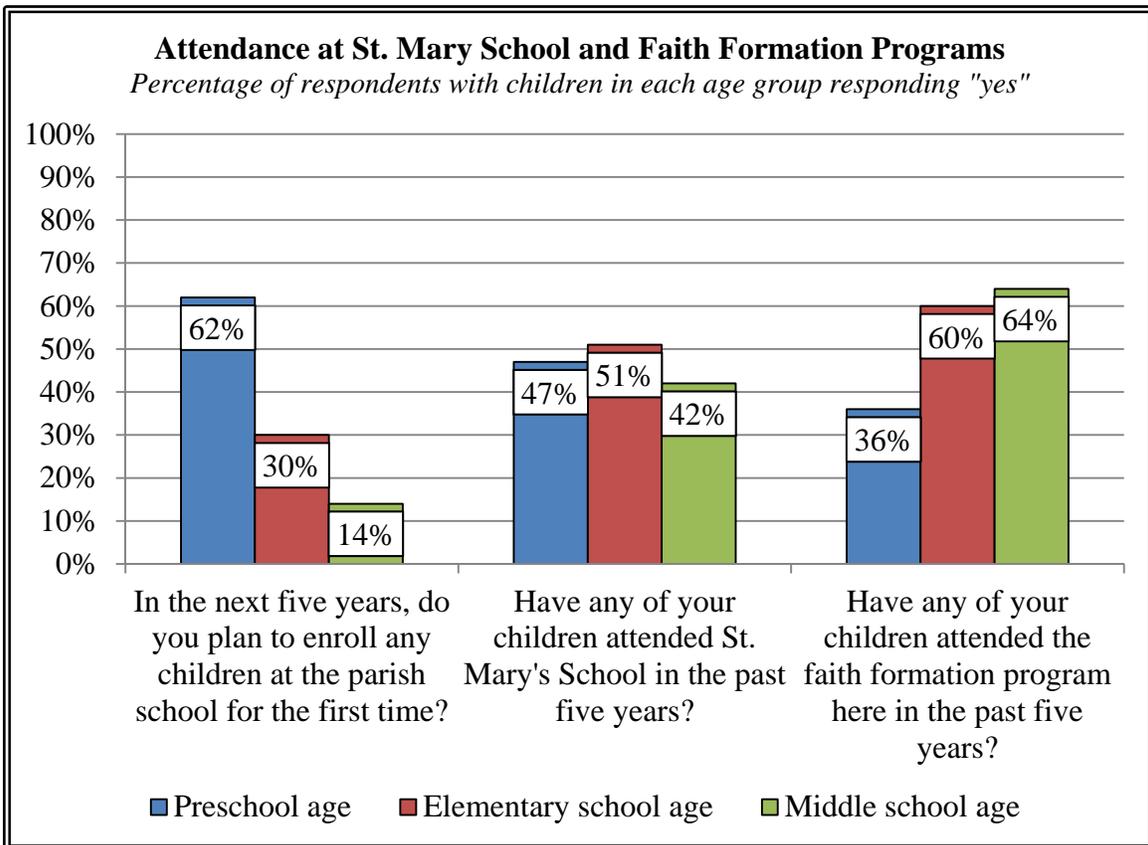
Level of Parish Involvement

While two in three respondents have attended a Catholic school (66 percent), about one in ten plans to enroll a child in the parish school for the first time in the next five years (11 percent).

| Involvement in Religious Education | |
|---|-----|
| <i>Percentage responding "yes"</i> | |
| Do/did you attend Catholic school? | 66% |
| Have any of your children attended the faith formation program here in the past five years? | 26 |
| Have any of your children attended St. Mary School in the past five years? | 22 |
| In the next five years, do you plan to enroll any children at the parish school for the first time? | 11 |

Differences by Children in the Household

Six in ten respondents with a preschool aged child in the household are planning on enrolling a child in the school for the first time in the next five years.



Three in five respondents are not involved in any activities or ministries at the parish.

***How many activities or ministries
are you involved with in the parish?***

Percentage responding

| | |
|--------------|-----|
| None | 59% |
| One | 23 |
| Two to four | 17 |
| Five or more | 1 |

Section II: Evaluation of Aspects of Parish Life

This section of the report outlines respondents’ evaluations of several aspects of parish life, including the overall evaluation of the parish, leadership, and stewardship.

Parish Life

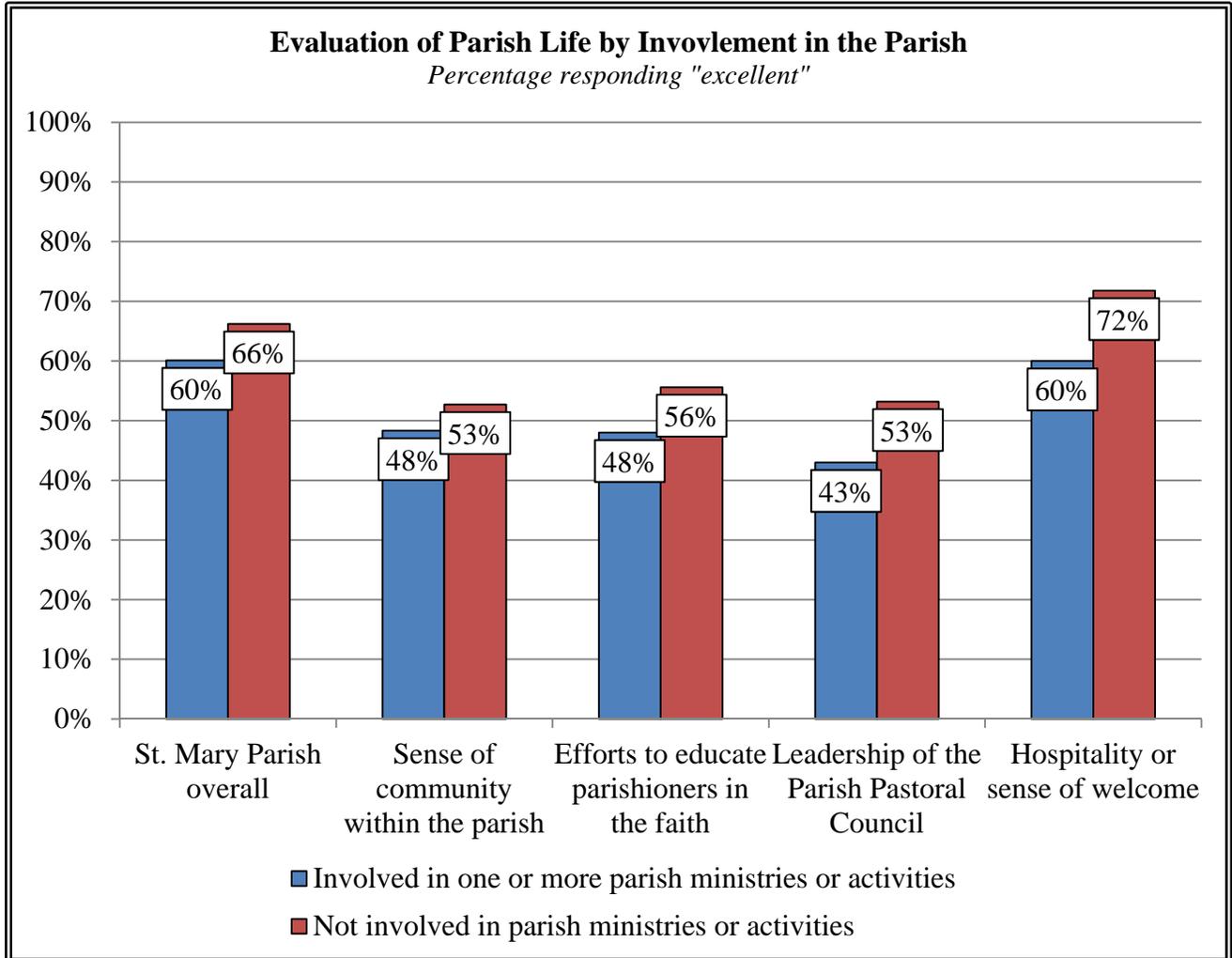
More than nine in ten respondents (97 percent) evaluate parish life at St. Mary Parish overall as “good” or “excellent.”

| <i>Please evaluate the following aspects of parish life:</i> | | |
|--|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <i>Percentage responding</i> | | |
| | “Good” or “Excellent” | “Excellent” Only |
| St. Mary Parish overall | 97% | 64% |
| Masses and liturgies in general | 96 | 60 |
| Ministry of the professional ministry staff | 95 | 60 |
| Hospitality or sense of welcome | 89 | 67 |
| Efforts to educate parishioners in the faith | 89 | 52 |
| Vision provided by parish leaders | 89 | 48 |
| Sense of community within the parish | 88 | 51 |
| Leadership of the parish pastoral council* | 88 | 49 |
| Promotion of responsible stewardship | 88 | 44 |
| Efforts to promote social justice | 83 | 42 |
| *Non-response is greater than 20 percent. | | |

- More than six in ten respondents (64 percent) evaluate St. Mary Parish overall as “excellent.”
- More than nine in ten respondents evaluate the Masses and liturgies in general and the ministry of the professional ministry staff as “good” or “excellent,” with six in ten evaluating them as “excellent.”
- About half of respondents evaluate efforts to educate parishioners in the faith, sense of community within the parish, leadership of the parish pastoral council, and vision provided by parish leaders as “excellent.”

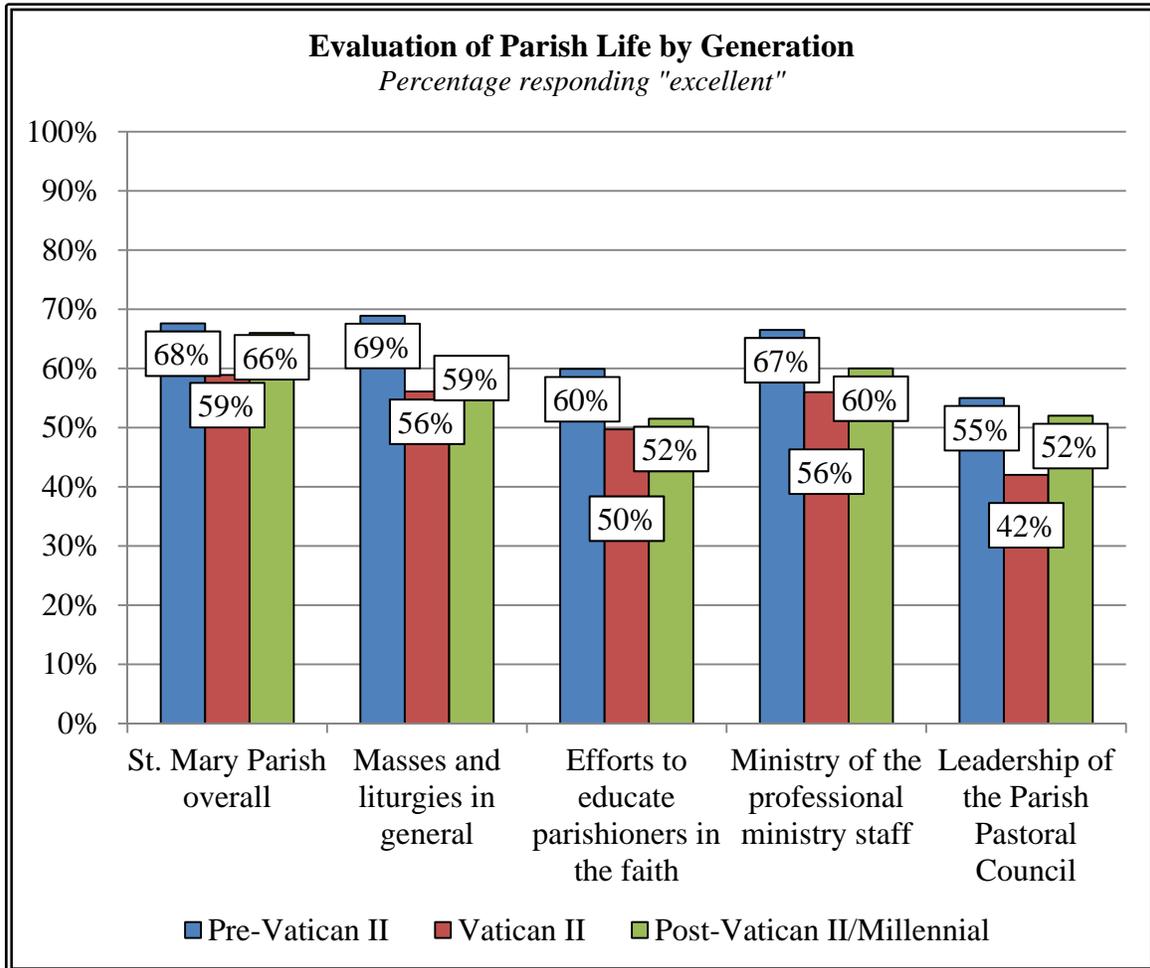
Differences by Involvement

Those involved in one or more parish ministry or activity are *not* more likely than those not involved in a parish ministry or activity to evaluate the parish overall, the sense of community, efforts to educate parishioners in the faith, leadership of the pastoral council, or the hospitality or sense of welcome at the parish as “excellent.”



Differences by Generation

Respondents from the Pre-Vatican II Generation evaluate parish life the most positively, followed by the Post-Vatican II/Millennial Generation respondents, and finally the Vatican II Generation respondents.



- Two in three respondents in the Pre-Vatican II Generation and Post-Vatican II/Millennial Generations evaluate St. Mary Parish overall as “excellent,” compared to six in ten Vatican II Generation respondents.
- While seven in ten Pre-Vatican II Generation respondents evaluate the Masses and liturgies in general as “excellent,” that figure drops to six in ten Post-Vatican II/Millennial respondents and just over half of Vatican II Generation respondents.
- About half of respondents in the Pre-Vatican II and Post-Vatican II/Millennial Generation respondents evaluate the leadership of the parish pastoral council as “excellent,” about two in five Vatican II Generation respondents evaluate parish pastoral council the same way.

Parish Leadership

About three in four respondents agree “strongly” or “somewhat” that parish pastoral council members are accessible to them, with one in three agreeing “strongly.”

| Evaluation of Parish Leadership | | |
|---|---|----------------------------------|
| <i>Percentage responding</i> | | |
| | “Somewhat” or “Strongly Agree” | “Strongly Agree” Only |
| <i>Please respond to these statements about parish life.</i> | | |
| There is sufficient qualified parish staff (paid and volunteer) to meet the parish’s needs* | 84% | 41% |
| Parish pastoral council members are accessible to me* | 73 | 34 |
| | “Good” or “Excellent” | “Excellent” Only |
| <i>Please evaluate these aspects of parish life</i> | | |
| Ministry of the professional ministry staff | 95% | 60% |
| Vision provided by parish leaders | 89 | 48 |
| Leadership of the parish pastoral council* | 88 | 49 |
| *Non-response rate is greater than 20 percent. | | |

- Two in five respondents (41 percent) agree “strongly” that there is sufficient qualified parish staff to meet the parish’s needs.
- More than nine in ten respondents (95 percent) evaluate the ministry of the professional ministry staff as “good” or “excellent,” with three in five (60 percent) saying it is “excellent.”
- Almost half of respondents (48 percent) evaluate the vision provided by parish leaders as “excellent,” with almost nine in ten finding the vision provided by parish leaders “good” or “excellent.”
- There are no statistically significant differences in evaluation of leadership by generation, involvement in parish ministries and activities, or children in the household (not shown in the table).

Qualitative data

When asked to name the greatest challenge facing the parish in the next three to five years, some respondents mentioned issues around the leadership of the parish. These issues include concerns about the declining number of religious vocations, concerns about supporting Fr. Pat in his ministry, concerns about Fr. Pat, and issues around communications and leadership in the parish.

Several respondents mentioned the declining number of religious vocations in the Catholic Church today as a challenge facing the parish in the next three to five years. Several simply wrote “lack of priests,” “shortage of priests,” and “priests.” Said one, a challenge facing the parish is a “shortage of priests,” and the parish needs “to promote the priesthood as a life choice.” Another pointed out that there is a “lack of priests and more people to work with and for.”

Relatedly, some mentioned that the parish is in need of additional pastoral help. Said one, the parish needs “a full time assistant priest or at least a deacon. A church this size and school is too much for Father Pat. Recently [Fr. Pat] had a funeral every day for six days and there [are] always Baptisms and weddings” for him to celebrate. Another echoed this sentiment, saying that it “seems to me that we should have two priests with such a large community and growing too much for one person to minister,” adding that “Father Pat is a saint.” Finally, another put the problem into perspective, saying that a challenge facing the parish is “meeting the needs of the parish community as it continues to grow,” and that a solution might be “accepting [or] asking for an associate pastor and/or a deacon.”

A few respondents simply mentioned Fr. Pat when asked about the future of the parish. Most of these comments were positive, such as one respondent’s note to the pastor that “Fr Pat, You have a special gift as a priest.” Another mentioned the challenge of “sustaining Fr. Pat's health, appreciating the gift he is to the parish and the enormous responsibilities that he has as our pastor.” Several respondents, however, mentioned the challenge of leadership transition facing the parish in the next few years. Said one, a challenge facing the parish is “the future of the Parish when Father Pat decides to retire. Hope at that time the parish will continue to be as great as it has been for me when my children and family come here for years to come. I wish we could keep Father Pat forever!” Another echoed this sentiment, saying that a challenge facing the parish is:

The possibility of losing Father Pat. I seem to remember that when Father Pat took over as pastor after Father Grass departed, Father Pat made a time-limited commitment to stay here, and as I recall it was something like six or eight years. I think that time period has either passed or is quickly approaching, and we know that Father Pat has many interests elsewhere, especially Campagna Academy, and possibly the principal’s chair at Adrean. (Rumor had it last year that you weren't coming back to us from your sabbatical.) St. Mary's has done very well under Father Pat's leadership, our finances are sound, we have involved many good people in leadership rolls, and the school remains strong. But it's a cloud hanging over us, that if Father Pat were to leave, whether by his choice or by reassignment by the bishop, we

could get an unknown leader, a 'who-knows-who' from 'who-knows-where,' and we may not fare so well. Acknowledging that tomorrow is promised to no one, we are worried about this possibility.

Finally, some respondents mentioned that the challenge facing the parish in the next three to five years is communications from the leadership of the parish. Said one the challenge lies in "providing the communication and location to deal with whatever the future brings. We need much more open, frank communication of all parish matters, from finances to budget to staff to the school, building and grounds, diocesan requirements, everything." Said another, the parish must "develop the ability to use modern technology to connect with our young and older people."

Stewardship

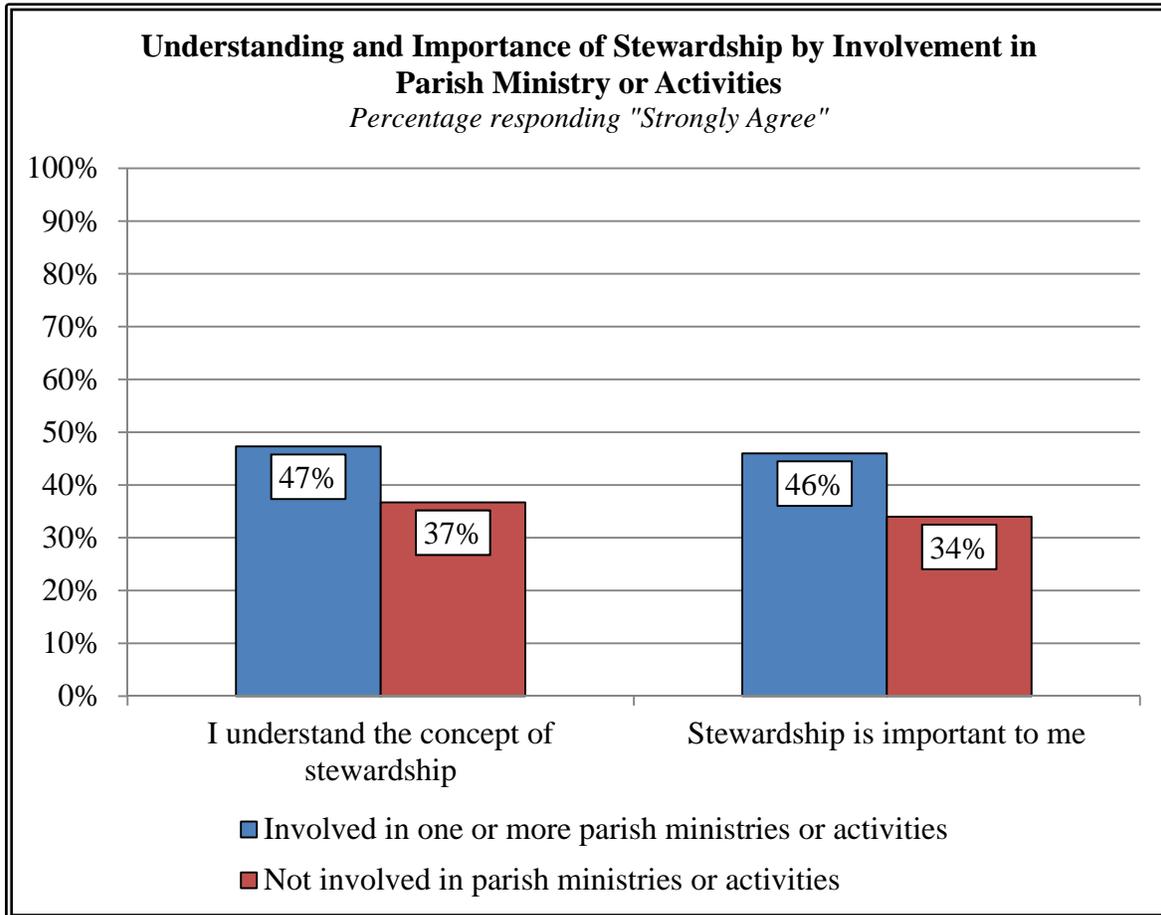
Eight in ten respondents “somewhat” or “strongly” agree that they understand the concept of stewardship and that stewardship is important to them.

| <i>Please respond to these statements about parish life.</i> | | |
|---|---|----------------------------------|
| <i>Percentage responding</i> | | |
| | “Somewhat” or “Strongly Agree” | “Strongly Agree” Only |
| I understand the concept of stewardship | 80% | 42% |
| Stewardship is important to me* | 80 | 40 |
| I feel adequately informed about parish finances | 67 | 27 |
| We need more space for parish meetings, activities, and other functions* | 45 | 18 |
| I would help support a building campaign* | 35 | 18 |
| *Non-response rate is greater than 20 percent. | | |

- Two in three respondents “somewhat” or “strongly” agree that they feel adequately informed about parish finances; however, that figure drops to about one in four (27 percent) who “strongly agree” that they are adequately informed about parish finances.
- Just over two in five respondents (45 percent) “somewhat” or “strongly” agree that they need more space for parish meetings, activities, or other functions. Only one in five (18 percent) agree “strongly.”
- One in three “somewhat” or “strongly” agree that they would help support a building campaign, but only one in five (18 percent) “strongly” agree.
- About two in five respondents (42 percent) think that the parish should prioritize “very much” helping parishioners discern their gifts or talents, while 85 percent think that this should “somewhat” or “very much” be a priority for the parish (not shown in the table).

Differences by Involvement

Those who are involved in one or more parish ministries or activities are more likely than those not involved in a parish ministry or activity to agree “strongly” that they understand the concept of stewardship and that stewardship is important to them.



Differences by Generation

Only one question is statistically significantly different by generation. Post-Vatican II/Millennial and Vatican II Generation respondents are less likely than Pre-Vatican II Generation respondents to agree “strongly” that they feel adequately informed about parish finances (23 percent and 26 percent compared to 40 percent respectively).

Qualitative Data

When asked to name the greatest challenge facing the parish in the next three to five years, many responded simply “finances,” “money,” and the “economy,” though some respondents also mentioned the local aspects of the recession. Said one, a challenge facing the parish is “economic hardships of the parish community... parish members out of work and financially struggling.” Another mentioned the challenge of “encouraging parishioners to give as the economy struggles,” while another said the challenge is “meeting societal needs while keeping the church financial viable...being able to do more with less.”

Section III: Parish Strengths

Overall, the results of the St. Mary Parish Survey are very positive. However, two areas in particular are consistently rated highly by respondents. While these areas are highlighted in this report, readers are advised to consult the response frequencies in Appendix I of this document for response rates and other pertinent information about these data. These two areas of parish strength include:

- Sacramental Preparation and Faith Formation
- Community

Sacramental Preparation and Faith Formation

More than six in ten respondents evaluate sacramental preparation for First Reconciliation, Baptism, First Holy Communion, and Confirmation as “excellent.”

| <i>Please evaluate the following areas of faith formation*:</i> | | |
|---|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <i>Percentage responding</i> | | |
| | “Good” or “Excellent” | “Excellent” only |
| Sacramental preparation for First Reconciliation | 96% | 64% |
| Sacramental preparation for Baptism | 96 | 62 |
| Sacramental preparation for First Holy Communion | 96 | 66 |
| Sacramental preparation for Confirmation | 95 | 63 |
| RCIA – Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults | 94 | 56 |
| Marriage preparation | 93 | 59 |
| Children’s faith formation program | 90 | 59 |
| Faith formation for young adults | 86 | 50 |
| Faith formation for adults | 86 | 46 |
| Youth ministry | 83 | 45 |
| *Non-response rate more than 40 percent. ⁵ | | |

- About three in five respondents evaluate RCIA, marriage preparation, children’s faith formation as “excellent.”

⁵ Non-response is high for these items because respondents were given the instruction that “if a question is not applicable to [them], leave it blank,” and many of these items – which are tied to the life cycle of mostly young people – may not be experiences that they have had at the parish.

- More than eight in ten respondents evaluate faith formation for young adults, adults, and youth ministry as “good” or “excellent.”

Differences by Children in the Household

Those with children in the household are significantly less likely than those without children in the household to evaluate youth ministry as “excellent.” While almost half of those without children evaluate youth ministry as “excellent” (49 percent), that figure drops to 38 percent of those with children in the house.

Differences by Generation

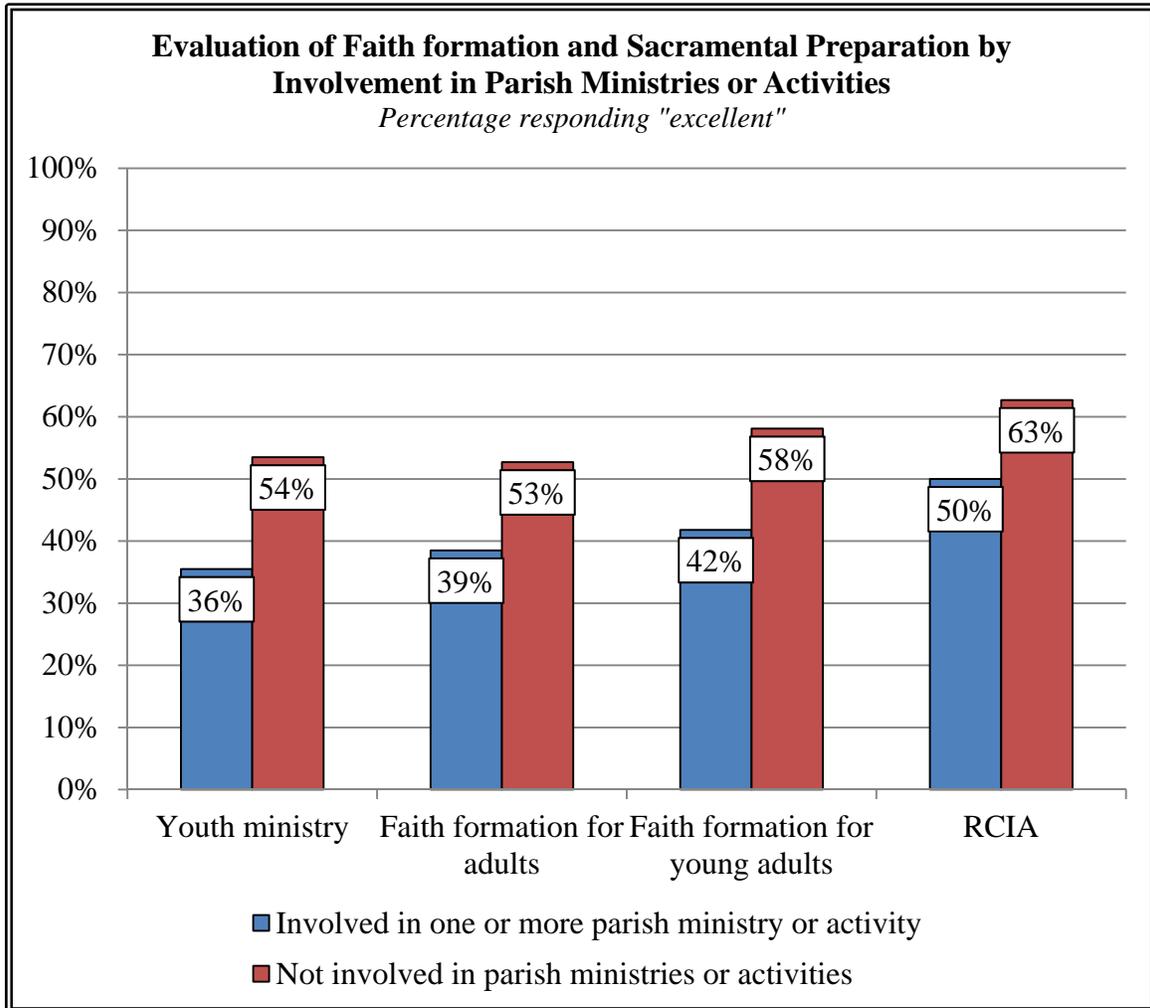
Respondents in the Pre-Vatican II Generation are more likely than other respondents to evaluate faith formation and sacramental preparation as “excellent.”

| Evaluation of Faith Formation and Sacramental Preparation by Generation | | | |
|--|-----------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <i>Percentage responding “excellent”</i> | | | |
| | Pre-Vatican II | Vatican II | Post-Vatican II/Millennial |
| Sacramental preparation for Confirmation | 71% | 57% | 67% |
| Children’s Faith Formation Programs | 67 | 53 | 62 |
| Faith formation for young adults | 62 | 49 | 46 |
| Youth ministry | 60 | 41 | 41 |
| Faith formation for adults | 54 | 40 | 47 |

- About seven in ten Pre-Vatican II Generation respondents evaluate sacramental preparation for Confirmation (71 percent) and children’s faith formation programs (67 percent) as “excellent,” while just over half of Vatican II and six in ten Post-Vatican II/Millennial Generation respondents evaluated them the same way.
- Six in ten Pre-Vatican II Generation respondents evaluate faith formation for young adults as “excellent,” compared to about half of Vatican II Generation respondents (49 percent) and 46 percent of Post-Vatican II/Millennial Generation respondents.
- While two in five Vatican II and Post-Vatican II/Millennial Generation respondents evaluate youth ministry as “excellent,” three in five Pre-Vatican II Generation respondents responded the same way.

Differences by Involvement

Those who are not involved in any parish ministries or activities are more likely than those that are involved in parish ministries or activities to evaluate faith formation and sacramental preparation as “excellent.”



Parish Efforts and Priority for Faith Formation

Nine in ten respondents evaluate parish efforts to nurture their relationship with Jesus Christ (92 percent) and to meet people’s spiritual needs (90 percent) as “good” or “excellent.”

| <i>Please evaluate parish efforts to...</i> | | |
|--|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <i>Percentage responding</i> | | |
| | “Good” or “Excellent” | “Excellent” Only |
| Nurture your relationship with Jesus Christ | 92% | 55% |
| Meet people’s spiritual needs | 90 | 49 |
| Help you practice Gospel values in your daily life | 86 | 42 |

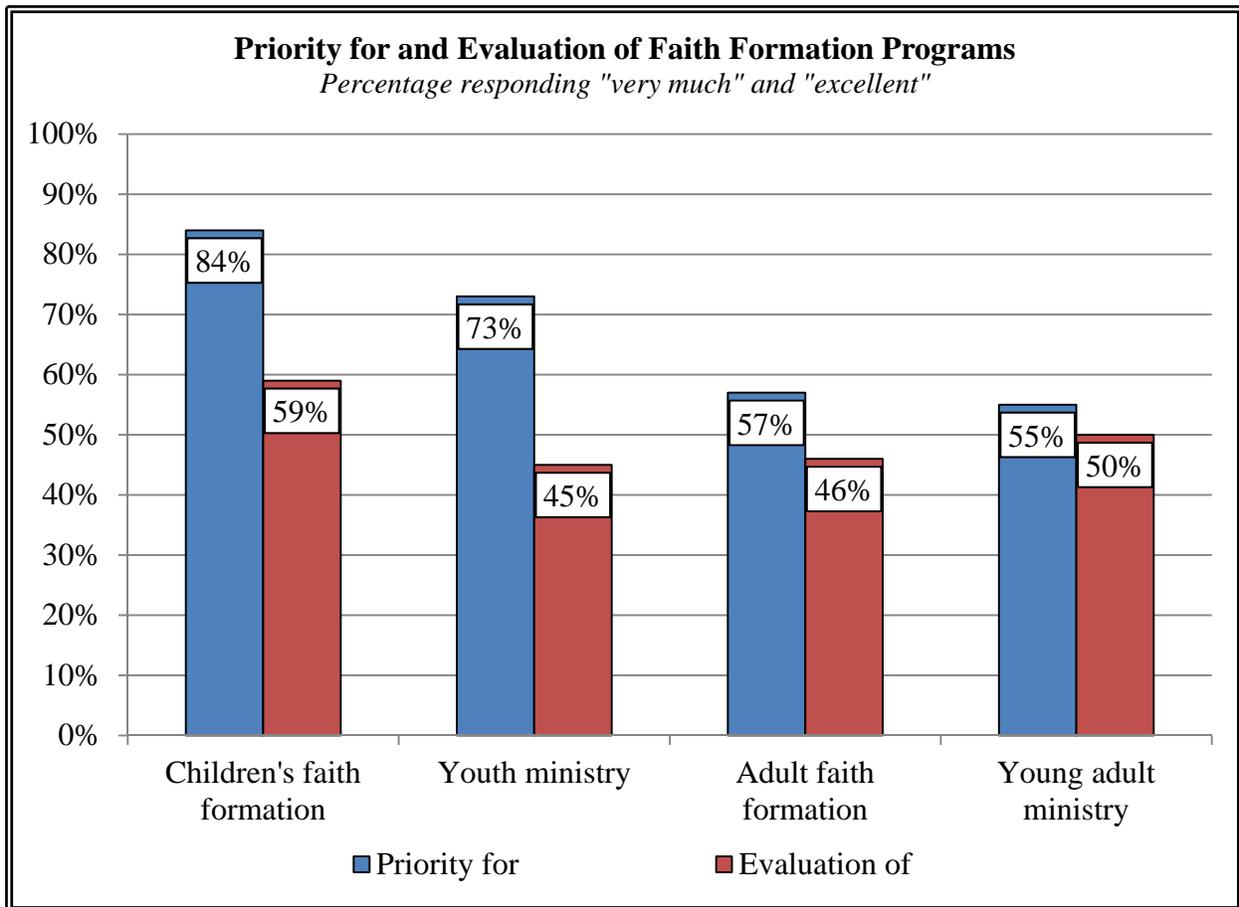
- Half of respondents evaluate parish efforts to nurture their relationship with Jesus Christ (55 percent) and to meet people’s spiritual needs (49 percent) as “excellent.”
- Almost nine in ten respondents evaluate parish efforts to help them practice Gospel values in their daily life as “good” or “excellent,” with two in five (42 percent) saying “excellent.”

Almost all respondents think that St. Mary School, children’s faith formation, youth ministry, and adult faith formation should “somewhat” or “very much” be priorities at the parish.

| <i>How much priority should the parish give to the following needs?</i> | | |
|---|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <i>Percentage responding</i> | | |
| | “Some” or “Very much” | “Very much” Only |
| St. Mary School | 98% | 86% |
| Children’s faith formation | 98 | 84 |
| Youth ministry | 98 | 73 |
| Adult faith formation | 96 | 57 |
| Young adult ministry | 93 | 55 |
| Senior citizen program | 91 | 56 |

- About six in ten respondents (57 percent) want adult faith formation to be “very much” a priority to the parish.
- Almost three in four respondents (73 percent) want youth ministry to be “very much” a priority to the parish.

- More than half of respondents want young adult ministry and a senior citizen program to be “very much” a priority for the parish.
- More than four in five respondents (85 percent) “somewhat” or “strongly” agree that the parish helps them to understand their baptismal responsibilities, with two in five (43 percent) saying they agree “strongly” (not shown in the table).



- While about six in ten respondents evaluate children’s faith formation as “excellent,” eight in ten place “very much” priority on children’s faith formation programs.
- Three quarters of respondents want youth ministry to be “very much” a priority; however, just under half of respondents (45 percent) evaluate youth ministry as “excellent.”

Qualitative Data

The greatest challenge facing the parish in the next three to five years, according to some respondents, is the continued programming in faith formation and St. Mary’s School. Faith formation responses are for both children and adults in the parish. Those responses concerned

with St. Mary's School are generally voicing concerns about the cost of attendance (tuition), supporting and being involved in the school, and the financial health of the school.

Some respondents mentioned faith formation as a challenge facing the parish. Said one, the challenge lies in "educating the children and youth in our parish to help and encourage them to become active in the church as adults." Another mentioned the challenge of "form[ing] the faith of our children to be strong in Christ Jesus so they can handle the world as it is today and be good Christians." Some respondents mentioned that the parish needs more adult faith formation. One called for "creating adult foundation education opportunities" for adults in the parish. Said another, leaders need to "catechize the parish" since parishioners "do not know what the Church believe[s]." Still, another mentioned the challenge of "offering classes in cooperation of the Holy Spirit" because "education of the faithful is key" since "it enables them to spread the Gospel of Life in [their] daily lives...thus reaching the most people possible."

A few respondents mentioned the greatest challenge facing the parish in the near future is the rising cost of attending St. Mary's School. Said one the challenge lies in "finding a way to finance all aspects of Catholic education without making it unaffordable. We do not want to make our school and faith formation accessible only to the 'rich families.'" Others said the parish should focus on "lowering or controlling cost of yearly tuition" and "making it possible that every child who desires it can afford to attend St. Mary's school." Still, one respondent pointed out that the challenge lies in "teaching parents of school children to pay their fair share of school expenses."

Another group of respondents are concerned with the support and involvement of parishioners at St. Mary's School. Said one, the challenge is "whole parish involvement in making sure the school and church remain as one and support both equally." Another mentioned that the school "keeps all of us involved." Still another pointed out that the "parish needs to commit more of the parish resources to our school or we are in danger of losing families and the invaluable guidance the school provides those families."

A final group of respondents mentioned the financial future of the school as the greatest challenge facing the parish. Several simply said that the challenge is "keeping the school," "to keep the school open," and "the school." One mentioned "the need for more money for Catholic education," while another pointed to the challenge of "funding the school to maintain the quality of education." One asked with the current expense of the school, "Can we continue to keep our school open?"

Community

Nine in ten respondents agree “somewhat” or “strongly” that their parish community is important in their life and that they are comfortable with the increasing racial or ethnic diversity in the parish, with about six in ten agreeing “strongly.”

| <i>Please respond to the following statements about parish life.</i> | | |
|--|---|--------------------------------------|
| <i>Percentage responding</i> | | |
| | “Somewhat” or “Strongly Agree” | “Strongly Agree” Only |
| My parish community is important in my life | 92% | 59% |
| I am comfortable with the increasing racial or ethnic diversity of this parish | 90 | 61 |
| I feel included in parish life | 87 | 42 |
| I feel well informed about what goes on in this parish | 85 | 42 |

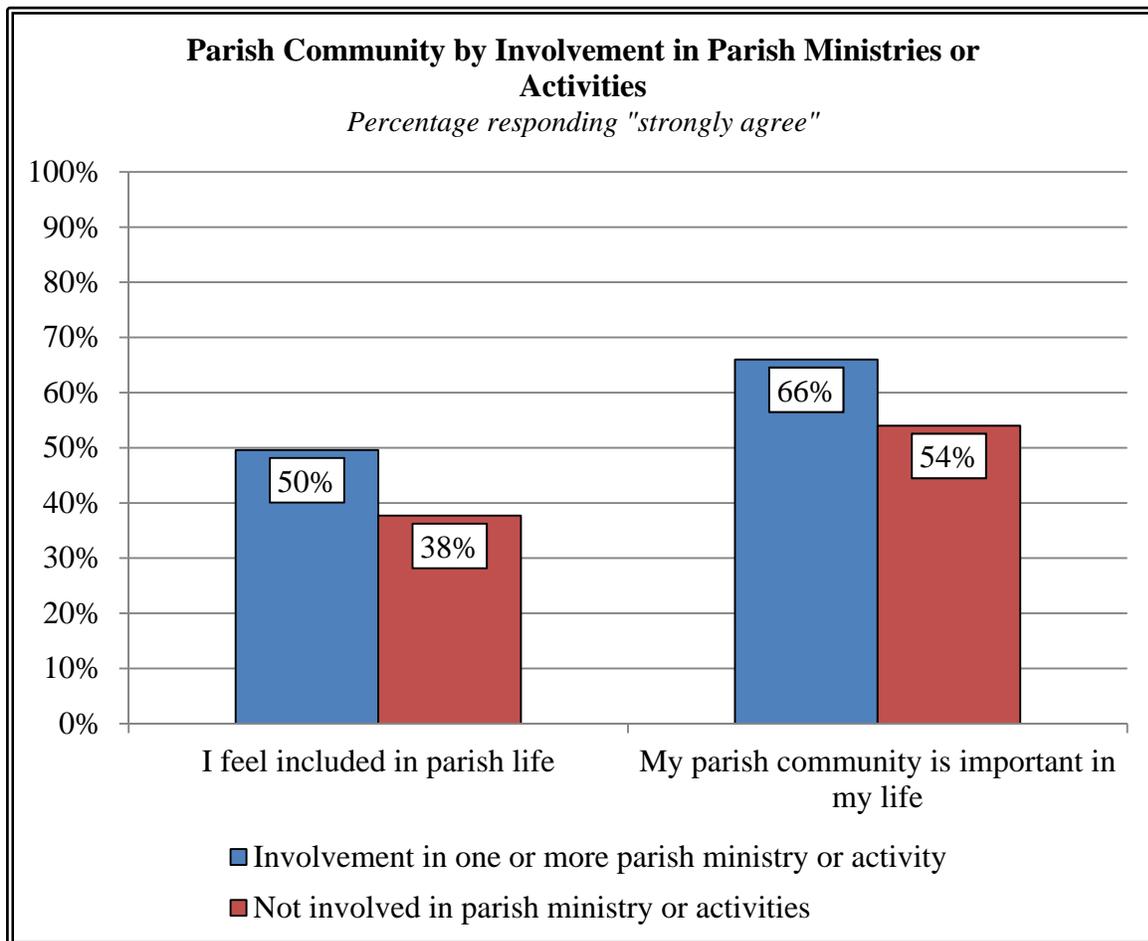
- Almost nine in ten respondents (87 percent) agree “somewhat” or “strongly” that they feel included in parish life, with two in five agreeing “strongly.”
- Four in five agree “strongly” or “somewhat” that they feel informed about what goes on in this parish, and two in five agree “strongly.”

Differences by Generation

Respondents in the Pre-Vatican II Generation are more likely than those in other generations to agree “strongly” that they feel well informed about what goes on in the parish. While half of those in the Pre-Vatican II Generation responded this way (52 percent), two in five Vatican II Generation respondents (40 percent) and 38 percent of the Post-Vatican II/Millennial Generation respondents agree “strongly” that they feel well informed about what goes on in the parish. Respondents in the Pre-Vatican II Generation are less likely than those in other generations to agree “strongly” that they feel comfortable about the increasing diversity in the parish. While almost two in three respondents in the Vatican II and Post-Vatican II/Millennial Generations agree “strongly,” that figure drops to just over half of those in the Pre-Vatican II Generation agreeing “strongly” that they feel comfortable with the increasing diversity in the parish.

Differences by Involvement

Those who are involved in one or more parish ministries or activities are more likely than those not involved in parish activities or ministries to “strongly agree” that they feel included in parish life and that the parish community is important in their life.



Parish Efforts and Priorities for Community

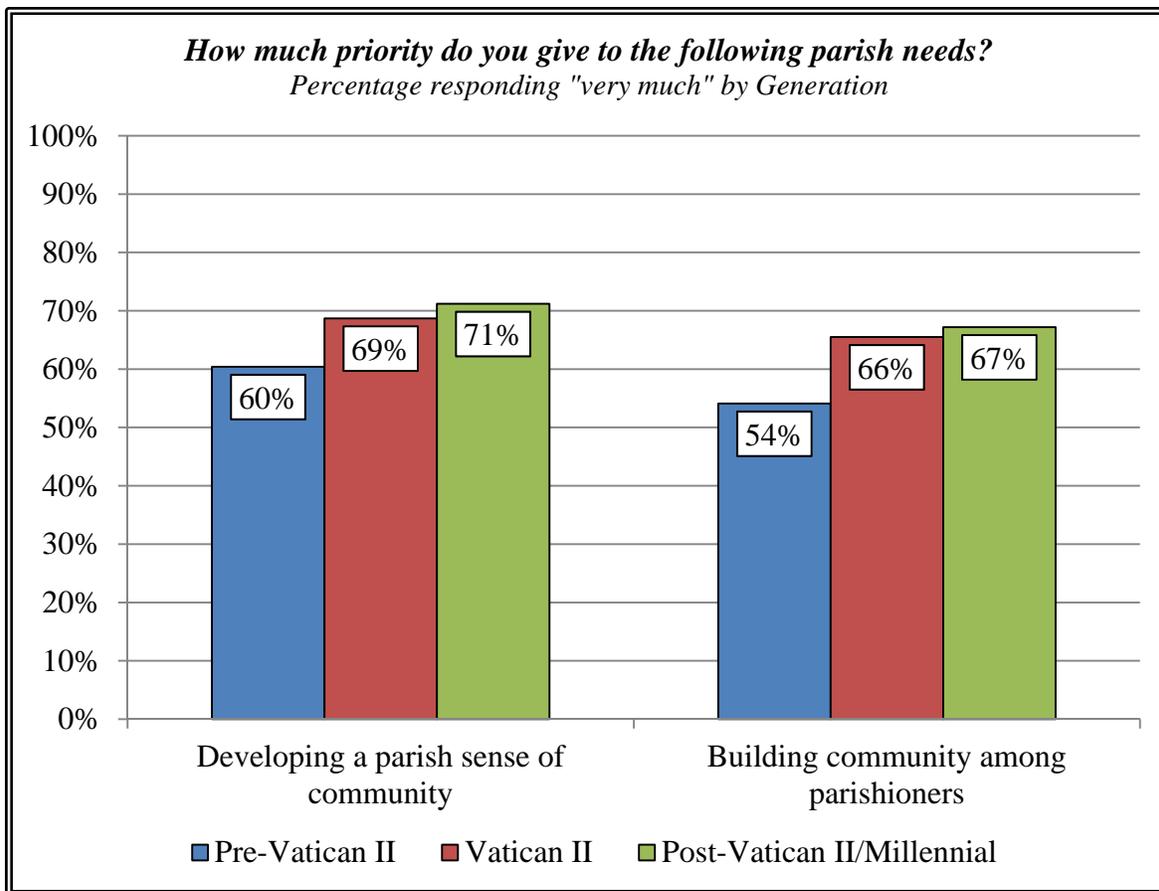
More than nine in ten respondents want developing a parish sense of community and building community among parishioners as “somewhat” or “very much” a priority.

| Parish Efforts and Priorities for Community | | |
|--|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <i>Percentage responding</i> | | |
| | “Good” or “Excellent” | “Excellent” Only |
| <i>Please evaluate parish efforts to...</i> | | |
| Invite you to participate in parish life | 87% | 52% |
| Communicate with parishioners | 84 | 46 |
| <i>How much priority should the parish give to the following needs</i> | | |
| | “Some” or “Very much” | “Very much” Only |
| Developing a parish sense of community | 95% | 67% |
| Building community among parishioners | 94 | 63 |
| More opportunities for devotions | 87 | 37 |

- Two in three respondents want the parish to make developing a parish sense of community and building community among parishioners “very much” a priority. About one in three respondents want more opportunities for devotions to be “very much” a priority for the parish.
- About half of respondents evaluate parish efforts to invite them to participate in parish life and communicate with parishioners as “excellent.”

Differences by Generation

Respondents in the Post-Vatican II/Millennial Generations are more likely than those in the Pre-Vatican II and Vatican II Generations to say that developing a sense of community and building community among parishioners should “very much” be a priority for the parish. These younger respondents are also significantly more likely than those in older generations to evaluate efforts to invite them to participate in parish life as “excellent” (not shown in the graph).



Qualitative data

When asked about the greatest challenge facing the parish, many respondents mentioned the need for continuing to build the community of the parish. Said one, the challenge is “building a sense of community made up of a diverse and comprehensive group who can reach out to our local community in a spirit of apostolic action.” Said another, a challenge is getting “people to meet each other socially,” while another mentioned the need to maintain “the vibrant community we have in place while accepting new groups and ideas.” Finally, one mentioned that a goal could be to “mak[e] each parishioner feel welcomed.”

Section IV: Opportunities for Improvement

This section of the report describes some areas of parish life that may be opportunities for improvement. While the evaluations of all aspects of parish life are generally positive overall and most parishioners report that they are satisfied, this section explores some areas of parish life in which at least some respondents are less satisfied. For reference, all four points on the response scale for each item is included. Readers are also encouraged to look at the response frequencies for these items in the context of the rest of the survey found in Appendix I, including non-response rates for these particular questions. This section of the report will examine two particular areas of response:

- Outreach and Evangelization
- Parish Involvement

Outreach and Evangelization

Parish Outreach

Respondents are less positive about outreach to certain groups than they are about other aspects of parish life included in this survey. Note that the non-response rate for questions in this section is very high, suggesting that respondents might not be aware of outreach to these groups happening in the parish.

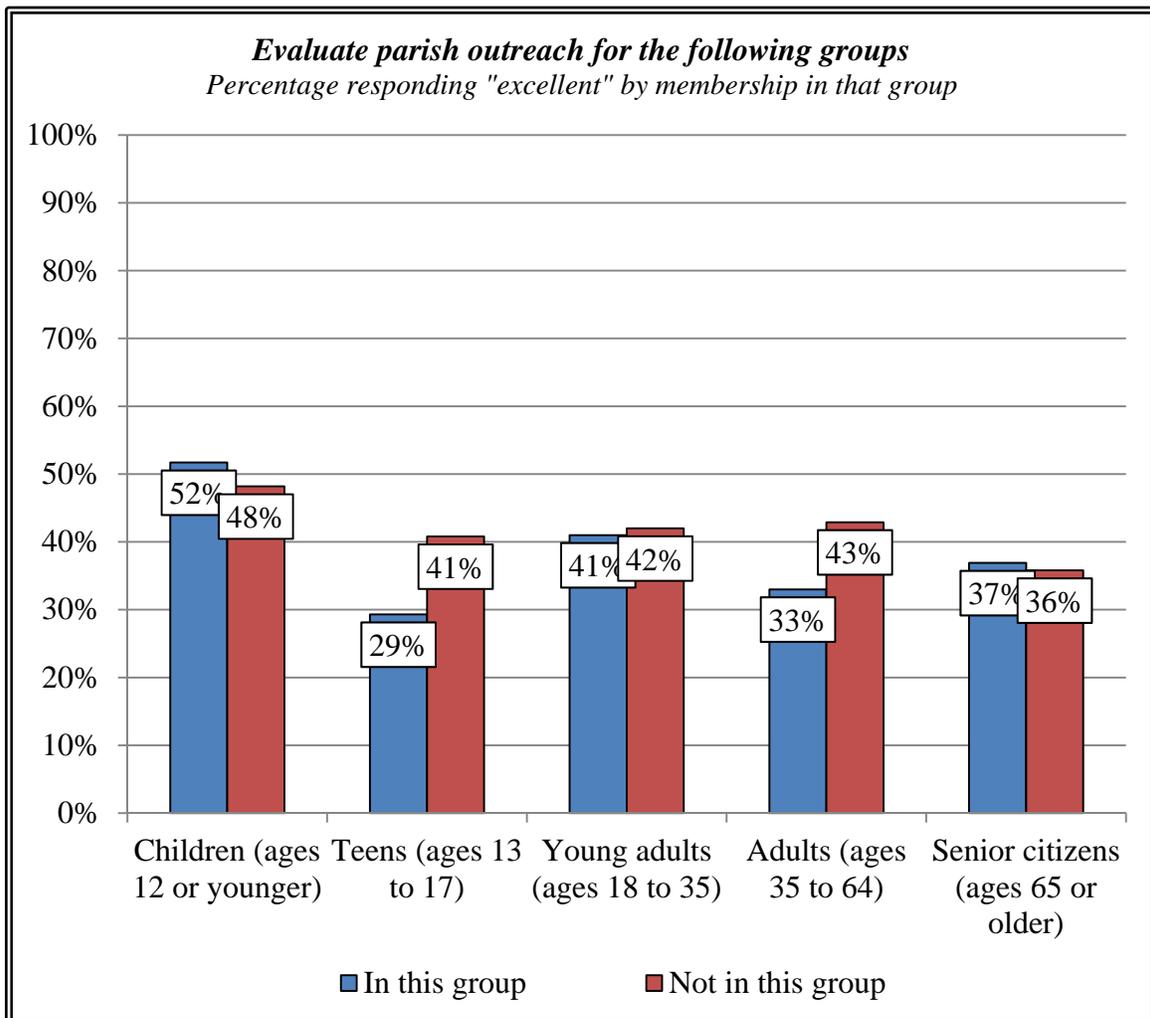
| <i>Please evaluate parish outreach to the following groups*</i> | | | | |
|---|--------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| <i>Percentage responding</i> | | | | |
| | “Excellent” | “Good” | “Fair” | “Poor” |
| Children (12 and younger) | 49% | 37 | 11 | 3 |
| Teens (ages 13 to 17) | 37 | 35 | 22 | 6 |
| Young adults (18 to 35) | 42 | 41 | 14 | 3 |
| Adults (ages 36 to 64) | 37 | 42 | 17 | 4 |
| Senior citizens (age 65 and older) | 36 | 36 | 19 | 9 |
| *Non-response greater than 40 percent. | | | | |

- Almost one in three respondents (28 percent) evaluate parish outreach to senior citizens as “fair” or “poor,” with one in ten (9 percent) saying “poor.”
- Of those who responded, one in five (21 percent) evaluate parish outreach to adults as “fair” or “poor.”
- Among all these groups, respondents are most like to evaluate positively (“excellent” or “good”) outreach to children (86 percent) and young adults (83 percent).

Differences by Membership in the Group

This section of the report looks at the outreach to specific groups within the parish according to respondents' membership within that group. Using data collected from other parts of the survey, respondents belonging to each group were compared to those not belonging to each group:

- *Children (ages 12 or younger)*: Consists of those respondents indicating they have children in the household who are elementary school aged or younger.
- *Teens (ages 13 to 17)*: Consists of those respondents indicating they have children in the household who are in middle or high school.
- *Young adults (ages 18 to 35)*: Respondents who were born between 1977 and 1994.
- *Adults (ages 36 to 64)*: Respondents who were born between 1948 and 1976.
- *Senior citizens (ages 65 or older)*: Respondents who were born before 1948.



- Those with teenagers in the household are less likely than those without teenagers to evaluate parish outreach to teens as “excellent” (29 percent to 41 percent, respectively).
- Adults ages 35 to 64 are less likely than those younger or older to evaluate the outreach to those ages 35 to 64 as “excellent” (33 percent to 43 percent).
- There are no statistically significant differences between those in the group and those not in the group in their evaluation of outreach to these three groups: children (ages 12 or younger), senior citizens (those ages 65 and older), and adults (ages 35 to 64).

Differences by Parish Involvement

Those who are involved in one or more parish activities are significantly more likely than those not involved in a parish ministry or activity to evaluate outreach to teens and outreach to adults as “fair” or “poor.”

| <i>Evaluate parish outreach for the following groups</i> | | | | |
|--|--|--------------------|--|--------------------|
| <i>Percentage responding by involvement in parish ministries or activities</i> | | | | |
| | Involved in one or more parish ministry or activity | | Not involved in parish ministry or activity | |
| | “Fair” or “Poor” | “Poor” only | “Fair” or “Poor” | “Poor” Only |
| Outreach to teens | 37% | 9% | 21% | 4% |
| Adults (age 36 to 64) | 27 | 5 | 17 | 4 |

Evaluation of Parish Efforts at Evangelization

More than one in three respondents evaluate parish efforts to reach out to area Catholics who do not come to Mass regularly as “fair” or “poor.”

| <i>Please evaluate parish efforts to:</i> | | | | |
|--|--------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| <i>Percentage responding</i> | | | | |
| | “Excellent” | “Good” | “Fair” | “Poor” |
| Respond to parish community concerns* | 41% | 43% | 14% | 2% |
| Respond to local community concerns | 40 | 42 | 15 | 2 |
| Offer a Catholic view on current issues | 34 | 40 | 21 | 4 |
| Reach out to those who do not belong to a faith community* | 29 | 35 | 29 | 7 |
| Reach out to area Catholics who do not come to Mass regularly* | 28 | 35 | 30 | 7 |
| *Non-response rate greater than 25%. | | | | |

- Of those who responded, 36 percent evaluate parish efforts at outreach to those who do not belong to a faith community as “fair” or “poor.”
- Almost one in five evaluate parish efforts to respond to local community concerns (17 percent) and to respond to parish community concerns (16 percent) as “fair” or “poor.”
- One in four respondents (25 percent) evaluate parish efforts to offer a Catholic view on current issues as “fair” or “poor.”

Differences by Involvement

Those who are involved in one or more parish ministries or activities are more likely than those not involved in parish ministries or activities to evaluate parish efforts to reach out to area Catholics who do not come to Mass regularly and to those who do not belong to a faith community as “fair” or “poor.”

| <i>Please evaluate parish efforts to</i> | | | | |
|--|--|------------------------|--|------------------------|
| <i>Percentage responding by involvement in parish ministries or activities</i> | | | | |
| | Involved in one or more parish ministries or activities | | Not involved in parish ministries or activities | |
| | “Fair” or “Poor” | “Poor” Only | “Fair” or “Poor” | “Poor” Only |
| Reach out to area Catholics who do not come to Mass regularly | 47% | 9% | 31% | 6% |
| Reach out to those who do not belong to a faith community | 45 | 9 | 29 | 6 |

Priority for Evangelization and Outreach

Two in five respondents (44 percent) think that the parish should give “only a little” or “not at all” priority to developing a ministry for gays and lesbians.

| <i>How much priority should the parish give to the following needs?</i> | | | | |
|---|--------------------|---------------|------------------------|----------------------|
| <i>Percentage responding</i> | | | | |
| | “Very much” | “Some” | “Only a little” | “None at all” |
| Providing opportunities to help the needy and individuals in crisis | 74% | 23% | 3% | 1% |
| Those who are grieving | 73 | 23 | 3 | 1 |
| New parishioners | 61 | 32 | 5 | 1 |
| Those with disabilities | 60 | 33 | 6 | 1 |
| Married couples | 53 | 39 | 7 | 1 |
| Providing ministries to people with special needs | 52 | 39 | 7 | 1 |
| Those who are divorced | 50 | 39 | 9 | 2 |
| Developing a ministry for those with addiction | 44 | 39 | 13 | 4 |
| Outreach to inactive Catholics | 42 | 45 | 11 | 1 |
| Outreach to the unchurched in the area | 36 | 47 | 15 | 3 |
| Developing a ministry for immigrants | 28 | 38 | 23 | 12 |
| Adopting a mission in a developing country | 26 | 42 | 23 | 8 |
| Developing a ministry for gays and lesbians | 25 | 31 | 23 | 21 |

- Three in ten want the parish to give “only a little” or “none at all” priority to adopting a mission in a developing country, with almost one in ten (8 percent) saying it should get no priority “at all.”
- While more than nine in ten respondents think the parish should “very much” or “somewhat” prioritize new parishioners, the specific outreach to new parishioners varies. Almost nine in ten (87 percent) would “very much” or “somewhat” prioritize outreach to inactive Catholics, 83 percent to the unchurched in the area, and 66 percent to a ministry immigrants.
- Almost all respondents (97 percent) think that the parish should “very much” or “somewhat” prioritize opportunities to help the needy and individuals in crisis.

Two in five respondents (44 percent) place St. Mary’s School as the first priority for the parish. An additional one in ten place St. Mary’s School as a second or third priority for the parish.

To which three [parish needs] do you think the parish should give the first, second, and third most priority?
*Percentage responding for each priority**

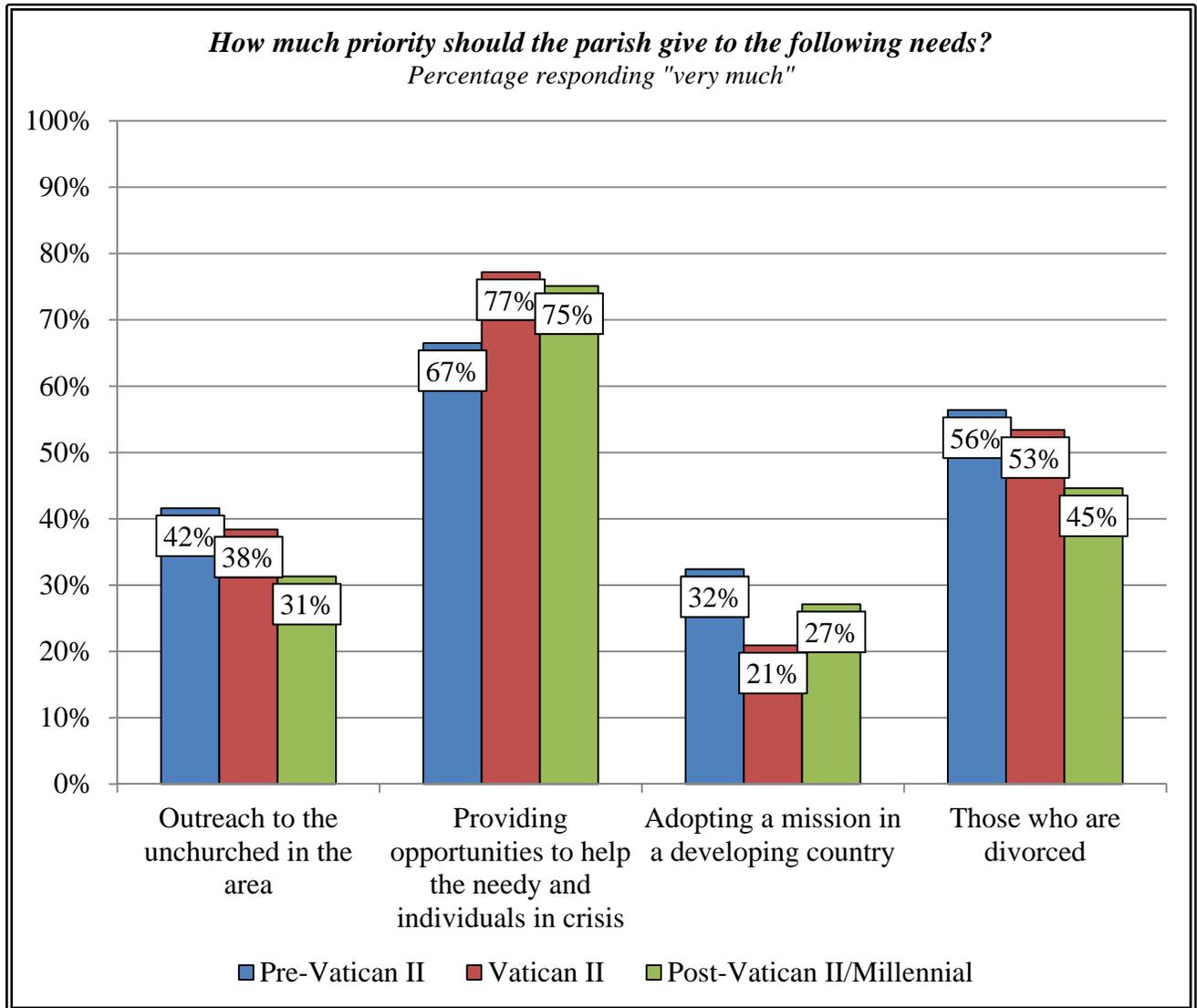
| | First Priority | Second Priority | Third Priority | Top Three Priority |
|---|-----------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| St. Mary’s School | 44% | 8% | 7% | 45% |
| Children’s faith formation | 9 | 18 | 5 | 24 |
| Providing opportunities to help the needy and individuals in crisis | 8 | 10 | 10 | 22 |
| Developing a parish sense of community | 7 | 9 | 6 | 17 |
| Building community among parishioners | 5 | 7 | 8 | 15 |

*Note: responses do not sum to 100%. Only the top five by frequency are shown.

- While one in ten respondents say that children’s faith formation should be the first priority of the parish, almost two in ten (18 percent) say it should be the second priority, and five percent say it should be the third priority. About one quarter of respondents named children’s faith formation as either a first, second, or third priority for the parish.
- While only eight percent of respondents say that providing opportunities to help the needy and those in crisis should be the first priority of the parish, one in ten say it should be either the second or third priority of the parish, and one in five respondents overall say it should be either the first, second, or third priority of the parish.
- Community is a priority for respondents: 17 percent say that developing a parish sense of community should be the first, second, or third priority for the parish and 15 percent say that building community among parishioners should be the first, second, or third priority for the parish.

Differences by Generation

There are some differences in what the parish priorities should be by generation.



- Pre-Vatican II Generation respondents are more likely than others to want outreach to the unchurched in the area and adopting a mission in a developing country to be “very much” a priority of the parish.
- Pre-Vatican II and Vatican II Generation respondents are more likely than Post-Vatican II/Millennial Generation respondents to want those who are divorced to be “very much” a priority for the parish.

- Vatican II and Post-Vatican II/Millennial Generation respondents are more likely than Pre-Vatican II Generation respondents to want providing opportunities to help the needy and individuals in crisis to be “very much” a parish priority.

Qualitative data

Many respondents, when asked to name the greatest challenge facing the parish, mentioned outreach to specific groups within the parish, including youth and young adults. Some talked about diversity issues in the church, while others mentioned outreach to the larger community.

Outreach to the youth of the parish is a challenge facing the parish in the next three to five years. A few respondents simply said “the youth,” “youth,” and “young people.” Said one respondent, the challenge lies in “retaining teen involvement in attendance at church [and] within the community,” while another mentioned the challenge of “keeping our children involved and active in the church and bringing back those that are no longer actively involved.” A few respondents mentioned possible solutions to outreach to youth, including “a strong youth group” that includes a “special needs Mass” and a “children's Mass.” Another mentioned the need for “active youth ministry in our parish and diocese,” with particular outreach to “sixth through twelfth grade” because “we are losing our youth!!”

Others mentioned the need to increase outreach to young adults. Some said “keeping young adults involved” and “reaching the young adults.” One asked, “As our parish ages, have we included the young adults/youth enough to take up the stewardship of running the parish [and] meeting its needs?” Another mentioned the challenge of “keeping the young people interested. They are the future of our parish. I have noticed the lack of attendance at Mass in the age group of 20-30 year olds.” Echoing this sentiment, another respondent mentioned “the 20-39 year old adults who have no connection to their faith [and] no urgency to be part of their Catholic parish.”

Finally, other groups that need additional attention from the parish were mentioned as challenges facing the parish in the near future. In particular, these groups include: unchurched Catholics, the poor, and the larger community. Below are representative comments for all three groups:

Unchurched Catholics

- Bringing back Catholics who have not been going to church
- Get Catholics to reunite with Church
- Maintaining the Catholics within the community and trying to get back fallen away Catholics
- Reaching out to those who are not currently attending Mass and having room for all

- To bring Catholics who left Church back. To keep young from leaving Church as they get older

The Poor

- Ability to raise funds and resources for community outreach and support for less fortunate
- Aiding less fortunate
- Attending the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of those who have very little
- Help the poor
- The needs of the poor
- To provide for the hungry and homeless.

The Larger Community

- Bringing in more services to meet the changing needs of our community
- Do a better job offering a Catholic view to the larger CP Community
- Have a greater presence in Crown Point and northwest Indiana
- The town of Crown Point is changing. As it changes it will influence St. Mary's Parish. Crown Point needs to stay safe and to be a good home for people.
- We need a larger presence in Crown Point. Volunteer for ecumenical activities. Have school/CCD kids involved [with the] elderly [and] sick. Make available opportunities to volunteer [in the] community

Parish Involvement

Impediments to Volunteering

Half of respondents “strongly agree” that their busy schedule or lack of time prevents them from volunteering more for the parish.

How much do the following prevent you from volunteering more for the parish?*
Percentage responding

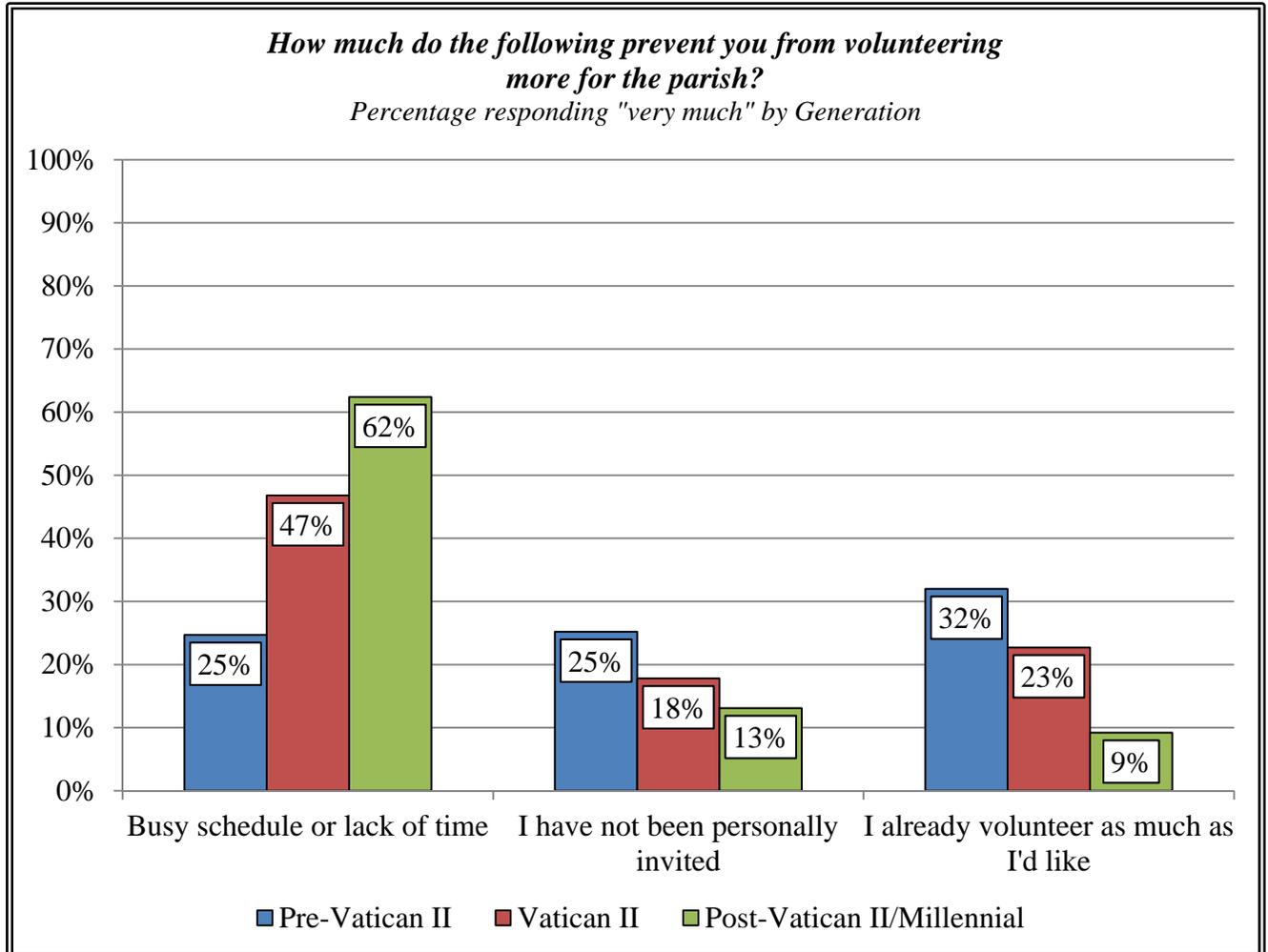
| | “Strongly Agree” | “Somewhat Agree” | “Somewhat Disagree” | “Strongly Disagree” |
|---|-------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Busy schedule or lack of time | 51% | 30% | 12% | 7% |
| I already volunteer as much as I’d like | 19 | 23 | 17 | 41 |
| I am not aware of the parish needs | 17 | 32 | 22 | 28 |
| I am not sure who to contact | 17 | 23 | 19 | 41 |
| I have not been personally invited | 17 | 19 | 18 | 46 |
| Lack of childcare | 14 | 12 | 11 | 63 |
| Problems with transportation | 5 | 6 | 6 | 83 |

*Non-response rate is 20 percent or greater.

- Four in ten respondents (42 percent) agree “somewhat” or “strongly” that they are already volunteering as much as they’d like. However, about the same proportion “strongly” disagrees that they are already volunteering as much as they’d like (41 percent).
- Similarly, while four in ten respondents agree “somewhat” or “strongly” that not being sure who to contact prevents them from volunteering more at the parish, the same proportion (41 percent) “strongly” disagrees that this prevents them from volunteering more at the parish.
- Two in three “strongly disagree” that lack of childcare is an impediment to volunteering more at the parish; likewise, four in five “strongly disagree” that problems with transportation are an impediment to volunteering more at the parish.
- Seven in ten respondents (71 percent) agree “somewhat” or “strongly” that they want to volunteer more for the parish, with about one in four (23 percent) agreeing “strongly” (not shown in the table).

Differences by Generation

Six in ten Post-Vatican II/Millennial Generation respondents say that their busy schedule or lack of time prevents them “very much” from volunteering more for the parish. However, only one in ten Post-Vatican II/Millennial Generation respondents says since that they are already volunteering as much as they would like this “very much” prevents them from volunteering more. One quarter of respondents in the Pre-Vatican II Generation agree “very much” that they are prevented from volunteering more at the parish because they have not been personally invited.



Differences by Involvement

Those respondents who are not involved in any parish ministries or activities are most likely to agree “somewhat” or “very much” that their busy schedule or lack of time prevents them from volunteering more for the parish.⁶

| | “Somewhat” or “Very much” | “Very much” Only |
|---|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <i>How much do the following prevent you from volunteering more for the parish?</i> | | |
| <i>Percentage of those not involved in any parish ministry or activity responding</i> | | |
| Busy schedule or lack of time | 80% | 53% |
| I am not aware of parish needs | 53 | 18 |
| I am not sure who to contact | 44 | 19 |
| I have not been personally invited | 39 | 17 |
| I already volunteer as much as I’d like | 27 | 11 |
| Lack of childcare | 24 | 14 |
| Problems with transportation | 10 | 5 |

- Half of those who are not involved in parish ministries or activities are “somewhat” or “very much” prevented from volunteering more at the parish because they are not aware of the parish needs, with almost one in five saying this “very much” prevents them.
- About two in five respondents who are not involved in parish ministries or activities are “somewhat” or “very much” prevented from volunteering more for the parish because they are not sure who to contact or they have not been personally invited.
- About one in four respondents who is not involved in a parish activity or ministry is “somewhat” or “very much” prevented from volunteering more for the parish because of lack of childcare or because they already volunteer as much as they would like.
- Only about one in ten respondents who is not involved in a parish activity or ministry is “somewhat” or “very much” prevented from volunteering more for the parish because of problems with transportation.

⁶ Note: This table shows only those respondents who are not involved in any parish ministries or activities. There are no statistically significant differences between the reasons that those who are involved and those who are not involved give as barriers to volunteering at the parish.

Differences by Children in the Household

Those with children in the household are more likely than those without children in the household to say they are “very much” prevented from volunteering more for the parish by their busy schedule or lack of time (61 percent to 43 percent) and lack of childcare (24 percent to 6 percent). However, those without children are more likely than those with children to say that they are “very much” prevented from volunteering more at the parish because they already volunteer as much as they would like (23 percent to 13 percent).

Likelihood of Involvement

Respondents are most likely to say that it is “very” likely that they will attend a parish activity or function besides weekend Mass, contribute generously in support of the parish, and encourage someone to return to the practice of their Catholic faith in the next year.

| <i>How likely are you to do the following in the next year?*</i> | | | | |
|---|---------------|-------------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| <i>Percentage responding</i> | | | | |
| | “Very” | “Somewhat” | “Only a little” | “Not at all” |
| Attend a parish activity or function besides weekend Mass | 40% | 31% | 19% | 10% |
| Contribute generously in support of the parish | 33 | 41 | 20 | 6 |
| Encourage someone to return to the practice of their Catholic faith | 32 | 32 | 21 | 14 |
| Give service on behalf of the poor | 28 | 35 | 22 | 15 |
| Invite someone to attend one of our parish series or activities | 25 | 28 | 26 | 21 |
| Invite someone to join our parish | 24 | 29 | 26 | 20 |
| Sponsor someone who wants to become Catholic | 19 | 24 | 27 | 31 |
| Participate in community efforts to create a more just society | 17 | 30 | 28 | 25 |
| Volunteer for a parish ministry | 16 | 18 | 29 | 37 |
| Participate in a small faith-sharing group | 13 | 15 | 30 | 42 |

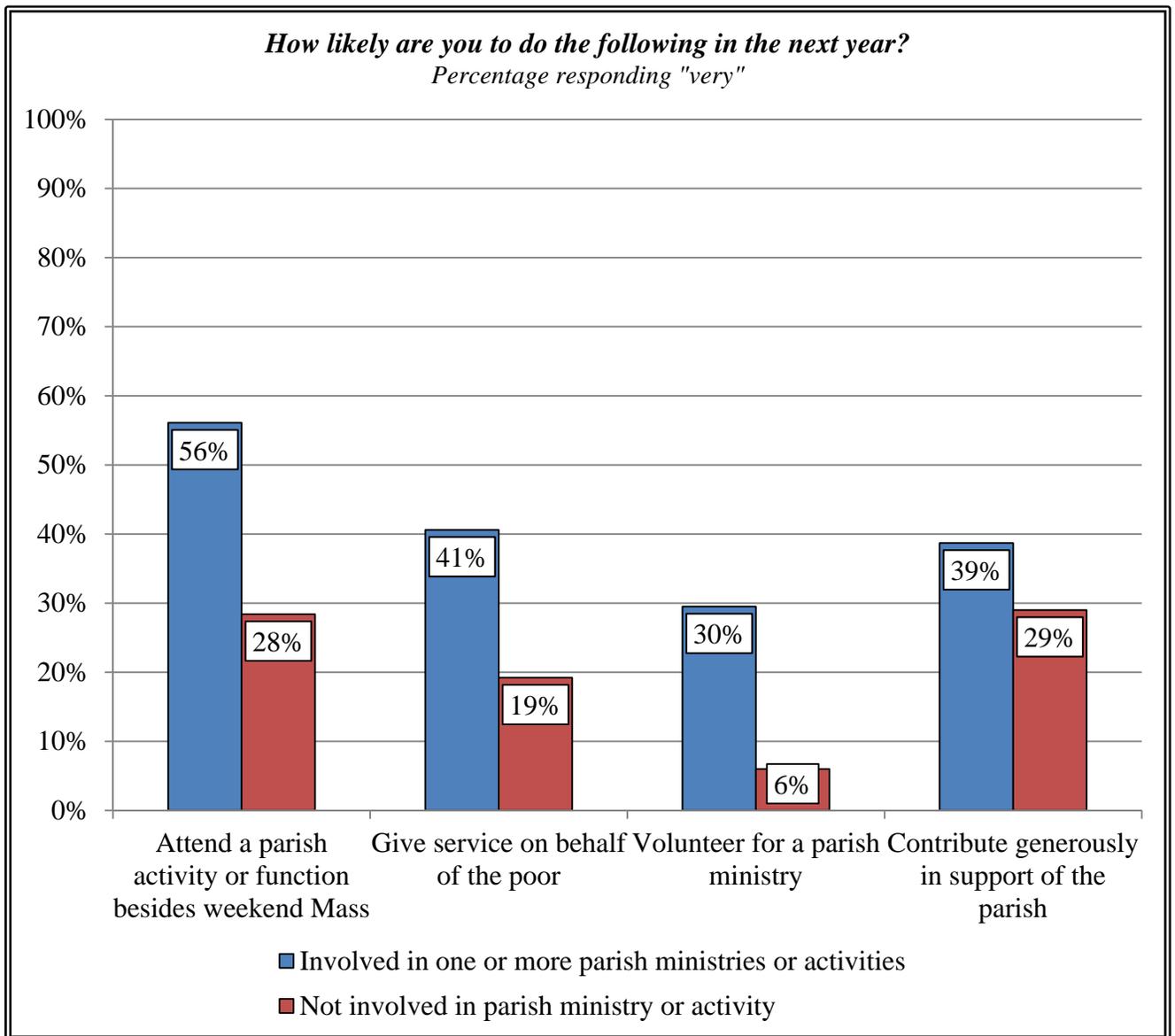
*Non-response rate is 10 percent or greater.

- Respondents are about evenly split on being “somewhat” or “very” likely and “only a little” or “not at all” likely to invite someone to attend one of the parish’s series or activities, invite someone to join the parish, and sponsor someone who wants to become Catholic in the next year.
- About half of respondents say that they are “only a little” or “not at all” likely to participate in community efforts to create a more just society in the next year.
- More than one in three respondents (37 percent) says that they are “not at all” likely to volunteer for a parish ministry in the next year. Two in five (42 percent) are “not at all” likely to participate in a small faith-sharing group in the next year.

- Almost nine in ten respondents (88 percent) evaluate parish efforts to encourage them to do charitable works as “good” or “excellent,” with almost half (48 percent) saying “excellent” (not shown in the table).

Differences by Involvement

Those who are involved in one or more ministry or activity at the parish are more likely than those who are not involved to say that they are “very” likely to do each of the following in the next year: attend a parish activity or function besides weekend Mass, give service on behalf of the poor, volunteer for a parish ministry, and contribute generously in support of the parish.



Qualitative data

Asked about the greatest challenge facing the parish, many respondents mentioned some aspect of getting parishioners more involved in outreach and ministries. These ranged from simple statements of trying to “get people actively involved” and the challenge of “parish involvement in activities with work schedules and responsibilities” to calls for more support from parishioners. A few noted the issue of parishioners who attend Mass but are not otherwise engaged in the parish. Said one, “I believe more people need to become involved in the parish and helping others. Coming to Mass isn't enough. We need to reach out to those in need.” Another echoed this sentiment, mentioning the challenge of “reaching out to all parishioners. There are people who would volunteer but don't know how to go about it and others who need them.” Still a third mentioned the challenge of “getting more people involved” because “it is always the same people involved” in parish activities.

Greatest Challenge Facing the Parish

In addition to the qualitative data included above, when asked to name the most significant challenge facing the parish in the next three to five years, respondents mention the church plant and facilities, growth of the parish community, spirituality, and the influence of secular culture and issues within the Church. Please refer to Appendix II for a complete transcription of all responses to this question.

Parish Plant and Facilities

Several respondents mentioned the challenge of the parish facilities. For the most part, these comments are concerned with the parish not being large enough to accommodate the number of people attending Mass on a given weekend. A few mentioned the parking lot and still others are concerned about general upkeep of the parish facilities. Below is a representative sampling of comments related to the parish plant and facilities.

- Might be too small for the growing community
- Do not tear church down
- Having the church torn down and replaced by new building
- Better flow of traffic between Masses
- Maintaining the structural soundness and interior and exterior beauty of our church building. We should not look to building a new church
- To collect money to rebuild St. Mary's when our beautiful church needs to be remodeled

Growth of the Parish

Some respondents name parish growth as the greatest challenge facing the parish in the next three to five years. These responses include those who are concerned about the size of the parish, those that want the parish to expand, and those that are concerned about retaining the parishioners who already attend St. Mary Parish. A representative sampling of comments are below:

- Addressing the needs of our growing parish community and finding the space, perhaps building a new space, to continue the gathering and sending
- Expanding community and space to fit everyone
- More space; the parish family is growing here. Need larger church

- Size: the church can't hold large Masses [and there are] many standees; children's room is filled to capacity most times
- Rapid growth and increasing racial diversity
- The growth of the church. We are growing so FAST.
- To retain parishioners!

Spiritual Challenges

A few respondents mentioned spiritual challenges facing the parish in the near future. Some comments are generally calls to be more spiritually active, while other suggest specific devotional practices to which respondents want more access. Below is a sampling of these responses:

- Blessed Sacrament devotion
- Gathering us all together closer to Jesus - St. Mary's doing a great job.
- Increasing ministries geared toward opportunities for consecration to Mary and tertiary membership in Franciscan/Carmelite etc.
- To increase true spiritual guidance in our parish by instituting monthly scheduled Eucharistic devotion and a greater emphasis on our parish's Friday devotion.
- To restore and bring God's Word to the people!
- Trust in the Catholic faith

Cultural Challenges

Finally, some respondents mentioned that the greatest challenges facing St. Mary Parish in the next three to five years are cultural. These ranged in response from general social norms (like commercialization) to specific social institutions (like the government). A sampling of these responses is below:

- Bringing people out of this "me first" attitude to care about others
- Combatting the secular culture in society
- Government regulations
- Liberalism and the lack of parental guidance towards traditional Catholic values

Appendix I: Questionnaire With Response Frequencies



Parish Life Survey for St. Mary Parish Crown Point, IN

Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate

The survey below was distributed in-pew to Mass attendees in December, 2011. In all, there were 1,270 valid respondents. Below are the percentage responses for each item, calculated out of 100 percent, as well as the percentage of all respondents that did not respond to that question, separately calculated out of 100 percent for clarity of comparison (marked NR for non-response).

Please use the responses below for questions 1-36

1=Poor 3=Good
2=Fair 4=Excellent

Please evaluate these aspects of parish life.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | NR | |
|----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|---|
| 1 | 2 | 34 | 64 | 3 | 1. St. Mary's Parish overall |
| 2 | 10 | 38 | 51 | 5 | 2. Sense of community within the parish |
| 1 | 4 | 36 | 60 | 2 | 3. Masses and liturgies in general |
| 1 | 9 | 41 | 48 | 11 | 4. Vision provided by parish leaders |
| 2 | 11 | 44 | 44 | 18 | 5. Promotion of responsible stewardship |
| 2 | 9 | 36 | 52 | 9 | 6. Efforts to educate parishioners in the faith |
| 2 | 16 | 41 | 42 | 19 | 7. Efforts to promote social justice |
| 1 | 5 | 35 | 60 | 22 | 8. Ministry of the professional ministry staff |
| 2 | 10 | 39 | 49 | 28 | 9. Leadership of the Parish Pastoral Council |
| 2 | 9 | 22 | 67 | 3 | 10. Hospitality or sense of welcome |

Please evaluate the following areas of faith formation.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | NR | |
|----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|--|
| 1 | 3 | 34 | 62 | 42 | 11. Sacramental preparation for Baptism |
| 1 | 3 | 32 | 64 | 40 | 12. Sacramental preparation for First Reconciliation |
| <1 | 3 | 30 | 66 | 41 | 13. Sacramental preparation for First Holy Communion |
| 1 | 4 | 32 | 63 | 45 | 14. Sacramental preparation for Confirmation |
| 1 | 6 | 34 | 59 | 56 | 15. Marriage preparation |
| 1 | 9 | 31 | 59 | 47 | 16. Children's faith formation programs |
| 4 | 13 | 38 | 45 | 58 | 17. Youth ministry |
| 3 | 11 | 40 | 46 | 54 | 18. Faith formation for adults |
| 3 | 11 | 36 | 50 | 60 | 19. Faith formation for young adults |
| 1 | 4 | 38 | 56 | 61 | 20. RCIA – Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults |

Please evaluate parish efforts to:

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | NR | |
|----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|---|
| 2 | 10 | 35 | 52 | 8 | 21. Invite you to participate in parish life |
| 2 | 14 | 38 | 46 | 9 | 22. Communicate with parishioners |
| 1 | 7 | 37 | 55 | 8 | 23. Nurture your relationship with Jesus Christ |
| 4 | 21 | 40 | 34 | 11 | 24. Offer a Catholic view on current issues |
| 1 | 12 | 44 | 42 | 10 | 25. Help you practice Gospel values in your daily life |
| 7 | 30 | 35 | 28 | 28 | 26. Reach out to area Catholics who do not come to Mass regularly |
| 7 | 29 | 35 | 29 | 32 | 27. Reach out to those who do not belong to a faith community |
| 2 | 14 | 43 | 41 | 23 | 28. Respond to parish community concerns |
| 1 | 8 | 41 | 49 | 15 | 29. Meet people's spiritual needs |
| 1 | 11 | 40 | 48 | 10 | 30. Encourage you to do charitable works |
| 2 | 15 | 42 | 40 | 18 | 31. Respond to local community concerns |

Evaluate parish outreach for the following groups.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | NR | |
|----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|--|
| 3 | 11 | 37 | 49 | 47 | 32. Children (age 12 or younger) |
| 6 | 22 | 35 | 37 | 52 | 33. Teens (ages 13 to 17) |
| 3 | 14 | 41 | 42 | 47 | 34. Young adults (ages 18 to 35) |
| 4 | 17 | 42 | 37 | 40 | 35. Adults (ages 36 to 64) |
| 9 | 19 | 36 | 36 | 44 | 36. Senior citizens (age 65 and older) |

Please use the responses below for questions 37-59
1=None or Not at All **3=Some or Somewhat**
2=Only a Little **4=Very or Very Much**

Please use the responses below for questions 63-79
1=None or Not at All **3=Some or Somewhat**
2=Only a Little **4=Very or Very Much**

How much priority should the parish give to the following needs?

- | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | NR | |
|----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|---|
| 1 | 1 | 12 | 86 | 7 | 37. St. Mary's School |
| 1 | 1 | 14 | 84 | 11 | 38. Children's faith formation |
| 1 | 2 | 25 | 73 | 14 | 39. Youth Ministry |
| <1 | 3 | 39 | 57 | 15 | 40. Adult faith formation |
| 1 | 11 | 50 | 37 | 18 | 41. More opportunities for devotions |
| 1 | 11 | 45 | 42 | 14 | 42. Outreach to inactive Catholics |
| 3 | 15 | 47 | 36 | 18 | 43. Outreach to the unchurched in the area |
| 1 | 5 | 38 | 55 | 19 | 44. Young adult ministry |
| 2 | 13 | 43 | 42 | 17 | 45. Help parishioners discern their gifts and talents |
| 2 | 7 | 35 | 56 | 12 | 46. Senior citizen programs |
| 1 | 4 | 28 | 67 | 14 | 47. Developing a parish sense of community |
| 1 | 3 | 23 | 74 | 10 | 48. Providing opportunities to help the needy and individuals in crisis |
| 8 | 23 | 42 | 26 | 12 | 49. Adopting a mission in a developing country |
| 1 | 7 | 39 | 52 | 13 | 50. Providing ministries to people with special needs |
| 1 | 6 | 31 | 63 | 13 | 51. Building community among parishioners |
| 1 | 6 | 33 | 60 | 13 | 52. Those with disabilities |
| 1 | 5 | 32 | 61 | 12 | 53. New Parishioners |
| 2 | 9 | 39 | 50 | 15 | 54. Those who are divorced |
| 1 | 7 | 39 | 53 | 13 | 55. Married couples |
| 1 | 3 | 23 | 73 | 11 | 56. Those who are grieving |
| 4 | 13 | 39 | 44 | 16 | 57. Developing a ministry for those with addiction |
| 21 | 23 | 31 | 25 | 21 | 58. Developing a ministry for Gay and Lesbians |
| 12 | 23 | 38 | 28 | 18 | 59. Developing a ministry for Immigrants |

How much do the following prevent you from volunteering more for the parish?

- | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | NR | |
|----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|---|
| 7 | 12 | 30 | 51 | 21 | 63. Busy schedule or lack of time |
| 63 | 11 | 12 | 14 | 36 | 64. Lack of child care |
| 83 | 6 | 6 | 5 | 34 | 65. Problems with transportation |
| 28 | 22 | 32 | 17 | 31 | 66. I am not aware of parish needs |
| 46 | 18 | 19 | 17 | 34 | 67. I have not been personally invited |
| 41 | 19 | 23 | 17 | 34 | 68. I am not sure who to contact |
| 41 | 17 | 23 | 19 | 36 | 69. I already volunteer as much as I'd like |

How likely are you to do the following in the next year?

- | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | NR | |
|----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|---|
| 10 | 19 | 31 | 40 | 11 | 70. Attend a parish activity or function besides weekend Mass |
| 42 | 30 | 15 | 13 | 17 | 71. Participate in a small faith-sharing group |
| 15 | 22 | 35 | 28 | 16 | 72. Give service on behalf of the poor |
| 25 | 28 | 30 | 17 | 21 | 73. Participate in community efforts to create a more just society |
| 37 | 29 | 18 | 16 | 19 | 74. Volunteer for a parish ministry |
| 6 | 20 | 41 | 33 | 14 | 75. Contribute generously in support of the parish |
| 14 | 21 | 32 | 32 | 15 | 76. Encourage someone to return to the practice of their Catholic faith |
| 21 | 26 | 28 | 25 | 17 | 77. Invite someone to attend one of our parish series or activities |
| 20 | 26 | 29 | 24 | 18 | 78. Invite someone to join our parish |
| 31 | 27 | 24 | 19 | 21 | 79. Sponsor someone who wants to become Catholic |

Using the numbers for items 37-59 above, to which three do you think the parish should give the first, second, and third most priority?

1st priority: _____ 2nd priority: _____ 3rd priority: _____

Please use the responses below for questions 80-92
1=Strongly Disagree **3=Somewhat Agree**
2=Somewhat Disagree **4=Strongly Agree**

Please respond to these statements about parish life.

- 1 2 3 4 NR**
2 10 45 42 10 80. I feel included in parish life.
2 6 33 59 9 81. My parish community is important in my life.
3 13 43 42 9 82. I feel well informed about what goes on in this parish.
4 13 43 41 20 83. There is sufficient qualified parish staff (paid and volunteer) to meet the parish's needs.
9 19 39 34 28 84. Parish pastoral council members are accessible to me.
8 13 38 42 19 85. I understand the concept of stewardship.
5 15 40 40 25 86. Stewardship is important to me.
9 19 48 23 22 87. I want to volunteer more for the parish.
11 22 40 27 18 88. I feel adequately informed about parish finances.
20 35 27 18 31 89. We need more space for parish meetings, activities, and other functions.
19 26 37 18 25 90. I would help support a building campaign
3 12 42 43 21 91. The parish helps me to understand my baptismal responsibilities.
3 7 29 61 15 92. I am comfortable with the increasing racial or ethnic diversity of this parish.

93. What best describes you? **Select only one.**

- NR = 4**
73 1. Active Catholic since birth 3 4. Inactive Catholic
11 2. Returned Catholic 3 5. Non-Catholic
10 3. Catholic convert

94. How many activities or ministries are you involved with in the parish? **Select only one.**

- NR = 7**
59 1. None 17 3. Two to four
23 2. One 1 4. Five or more

95. Years you have attended this parish.

Mean = 19 years
NR = 20

Please answer Yes or No to the following questions.

- | Yes | No | NR | |
|-----|----|----|---|
| 85 | 15 | 4 | 96. Are you registered in this parish? |
| 91 | 9 | 5 | 97. Is this parish your primary place of worship? |
| 66 | 34 | 5 | 98. Do/did you attend Catholic school? |
| 11 | 89 | 13 | 99. In the next five years, do you plan to enroll any children at the parish school for the first time? |
| 22 | 78 | 13 | 100. Have any of your children attended St. Mary's School in the past five years? |
| 26 | 74 | 16 | 101. Have any of your children attended the faith formation program here in the past five years? |
| 77 | 23 | 77 | 102. If your spouse is not Catholic, does he or she feel welcome at the parish? |
| 85 | 15 | 8 | 103. Do you have Internet access? |
| 74 | 26 | 8 | 104. Do you regularly use e-mail? |

105. Year you were born:

Mean = 1955
NR = 6

106. Gender: 42 1. Male 58 2. Female

NR = 5

107. What best describes your current marital status?

- NR = 5**
10 1. Single, never married 6 3 Divorced or separated
76 2. Married or remarried 8 4 Widowed

Number of children or step children living with you who are:

Mean:

108. Preschool or younger
1 **NR = 81**
109. Elementary school
1 **NR = 76**
110. Middle school
1 **NR = 81**
111. High school
1 **NR = 78**
112. College
1 **NR = 81**

113. What is the greatest challenge facing the parish in the next three to five years?

Please see Appendix II.

Thank you for completing this survey!
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Appendix II: Transcription of Responses to Open-Ended Question

Parishioner Responses about the Parish's Greatest Strength

A total of 830 responses were given to the question, "What is the greatest challenge facing the parish in the next three to five years?" Below is the complete transcription of these responses (lightly edited).

A great deal of older active parishioners - not as many young, active members, those that are young and active are not put in top position roles at the church to help with decision making.

A need for more religious including deacons

A strong and active youth ministry.

Ability to raise funds and resources for community outreach and support for less fortunate

Accept divorced people to Sacraments.

Accommodating the growing number of church members.

Active children in Catholic Faith

Actively involving parishioners in Mass and other parish initiatives

Addressing needs of those in nursing homes. This I do now. Very important to me.

Addressing the needs of a growing parish in the face of a great city- wide population growth and the decreased numbers of priests.

Addressing the needs of our growing parish community and finding the space, perhaps building a new space, to continue the gathering and sending.

Adequate supporting the school finding someone to help Father Pat creating more space for parish meetings activities and other functions

Adult formation, attract those who do not attend Mass, youth involvement. I am not aware of any family development programs in this parish.

Affordable tuition costs

Ageing beloved priest with shortages of wonderful priests such as Father Pat

Aiding less fortunate.

All come to see and be with the Lord, worship and praise the Lord.

All Masses are always full. Maybe outgrowing our space/human resources.

Allowing a better representation to voice concerns or share ideas in committee work

Allowing priests to worry- giving more input by parishioners.

Apathy - people not participating in Mass. Racing out as the priest walks down aisle. 1 hr a week too much time for most.

Apathy. Paying for a new church. Youth interested in becoming clergy. Keeping young marriages together.

Are there enough priests? Population growth.

As a religion teacher and father of a fairly large family, I feel the biggest challenge is instilling the faith with our youth. I teach confirmation. Most are here because of grandparents. What happens when the next generation of grandparents don't care?

As always finances, never ending finances

As our parish ages, have we included the young adults/youth enough to take up the stewardship of running the parish/meeting its needs.

Assault of the Catholic faith by non-believers

Assisting growing number of folks joining parish and getting them involved

Attracting new parishioners and younger groups.

Attacks on our religion.

Attendance and participation. Priests.

Attendance

Attending the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of those who have very little.

Attending to needs of aging society and keeping current members engaged in active participation

Attracting and maintaining the youth in OUR parish. In order for this parish to continue to grow.

Attracting new members and retaining existing parishioners.

Available priests, abortion and marriage issues

Barack Obama

Barack Obama

Being able to afford the rising costs for the school parish

Being able to survive financially and keep all the programs going

Being relevant in people's lives today. Addressing real issues not word choices and lip service

Being reluctant

Better flow of traffic between Masses

Blessed sacrament devotion

Bridge generational divider to include whole parish in some activities and organizations

Bring Jesus to the hearts of our children and keeping the adults.

Bring more young people into the church

Bring people to God. A sense of community among all the parish

Bring people who are Catholic back to church. Relate Mass to our daily lives. Make church "user friendly".

Bring young people into the parish

Bringing and keeping more people to Christ and the church.

Bringing back Catholics who have not been going to church

Bringing fallen away Catholics back

Bringing in more services to meet the changing needs of our community.

Bringing in new members. I think sometimes the music is so somber the Joy we should take out to the world is lessened when we leave.

Bringing people out of this "me first" attitude to care about others

Bringing young people back to church. They speak a different language.

Bringing in and retaining young adults.

Budget issues with the struggling economy

Building a high school for our children keeping people involved.

Building a new church. Keeping our Pastor. Improve the church music program.

Building a sense of community make up of a diverse and comprehensive group who can reach out to our local community in a spirit of apostolic action

Building community communication education in over faith academy all

Building new parishioners.

Building our community and maintaining improving the structure of the church

Capturing the hearts of young adults and community involvement.

Catechize the parish- We do not know what the church believe. Promote male leadership. Advise congregation on the churches position on political issues.

Catholic education

Catholic schools budget dropping every year. We need our money to stay in our parish Catholic schools are life blood of the church to turn will take its toll on our school. Also, we need a bigger church especially in this growing community. We must support ourselves first.

Catholic schools.

Change

Change in general

Change.

Changing apathy with action

Changing Mass order prayers continued growth on cp community

Changing neighborhood

Changing people's overall view lack of moral issues helping out your neighbor in time of need

Charging of the parish as racial and ethnic diversity.

Catechesis of parents/adults. Need more programs for learning about our faith. All families should have the CCC

Children forming their faith.

Children. Faith.

Church is filling up. Need expansion.

Church space

Combating moral decline. I would like to formal Bible studies and teach the Bible.

Combatting the secular culture in society

Commitment to Gods goals

Communication

Communion for the disabled who can't make it to the alter

Community development

Community growth- control impact on parish

Competing with the public schools in the area academically much superior more tax money better educators resources

Complacency

Congregations declining income.

Continuation of children's programs lost interest in church hurts our young children's ability to learn about God.

Continue to have a strong/healthy enrollment/school.

Continue to meet the needs of the parish and community at large with fewer resources

Continued elementary enrollment

Continued parish support

Continued support of school more involvement by parishioners not currently involved more participation in CSA

Continued, faithful leadership from Father Pat.

Continuing to grow, remain viable monetary relating to the parish community in a meaningful way.

Continuing to help others (food pantry) and the economic aspect of each family (Nipsco). Voice out to our parish members - welcoming and groups we have to join, to get them and keep them informed on what they can do and what organization can do for each other.

Continuing to keep parishioners involved in church activities and continuing to get new parishioners

Continuing to meet the needs of a diverse parish and maintaining unity among the parish while helping each person to grow closer to Christ

Controlling the parish locally

Convincing people God is there for us in time of need. Have faith - the greatest virtue.

Cost, people out of jobs

Creating adult foundation education opportunities. Creating social society outside those attached to the school or fundraising activities.

Creeping influence of progressives in hijacking Catholicism for their own ends

Crown Point people growth. Cultural, race diversity. People needing a strong Catholic faith.

Dealing with a money hungry bishop who like a 6 figure salary

Decline of religious order. Celibacy among priests (child abuse).

Decreasing members

Decreasing young adult parish and activities for adult parish. I would love to help build a web site for the parish.

Democratic/liberal leadership in government

Democrats and Muslims. Our values are deteriorating.

Develop more at a community to get people more involved. Lack of gathering space after Mass. Spread out Sunday Masses - 2 hrs. Instead of 1 hour apart. It would be less rushed.

Developing a source of community especially for them with no connection to the school- Ask for volunteers publically let people come forward. Trust God that he will lead people- do not do things in secret. Open parish council like other Catholic churches.

Developing a strategic plan for church to identify their ministries and facility needs of the future.

Developing sense of community that will provide value and grow parish.

Dividing support in the larger society for people of faith.

Divorce. Not enough priests.

Do a better job offering a Catholic view to the larger CP Community.

Do not tear church down.

Doctrinal formation

Doing god s work while maintaining a vision of god s gift of free will and human liberty

Don't get wrapped up in Political correctness and keep this sense of the spirit being here with us as we worship very much alive- as it is now- wonderful

Economic conditions, lack of ability to give.

Economic hardships and its effect on families (both Catholic and non-Catholic families).

Economic hardships of the parish community parish members out of work and financially struggling

Economy

Economy - Need to have more food drives. Also, weekly bingo.

Economy affecting parish school enrollment. Need fund raisers like BINGO

Economy.

Educating our youth.

Educating the children and youth in our parish to help and encourage them to become active in the church as adults.

Encouraging more members to participate in the sacraments

Encouraging our youth to continue their faith as they get older. Need more involved youth group 15-20 year olds.

Encouraging parishioners to give as the economy struggles.

Encouraging people to join and remain in the church, and encouraging women to participate more despite no being allowed to be priests (although they should be)

Encouraging young men to enter the priesthood. Avoid homing ground for pedophiles or homosexuals. Bringing back Catholics who had left because of bad experiences.

Engaging teens for later life.

Enough to support the less fortunate surrounding community

Enough priests.

Enough seats!

Enrolling new parishioners.

Expansion

Expand the church building

Expanding community and space to fit everyone. Also, trying to encourage those not currently activity into returning to the church community.

Expanding the church building not enough room for such a large parish

Expansion and growth of size of Parish.

Expansion. Replacing Father Pat when he retires.

Expenses: Can we continue to keep our school open.

Facing changes in the church's role in the community and retaining parishioners in regularly attending Mass

Faith formation teach the children more make it more fun no so many rules

Faith.

Finance

Finance

Finance many people are afraid of losing their job or have taken a lower paying job to survive makes it hard to donate money for extra expansions

Finance - youth

Finance, young adulthood losing interest

Finance, young adulthood losing interest

Finances

Finances

Finances

Finances

Finances

Finances

Finances

Finances

Finances shortage of priests

Finances parish involvement

Finances and keeping the interest of the young to continue to go to church.

Finances and fact that only about 10% support the parish per posted information

Finances due to economic issues and lack of volunteers

Finances to maintain and continue their ministry

Finances, faith issues, pressure from outsiders to do what they do or impose onto the church.

Finances, secularism, other outside worldly issues that either criticize the church or put Catholics in back light (priest abuse, etc.). I want to be more involved in my Catholic faith, but feel there are no Bible study/groups for general parish.

Finances.

Finances. People volunteering to help out when needed.

Finances. Meeting the needs of the school financially.

Finances: Most people (Org. Government clubs) are cutting back on spending and luxury, except the church and the diocese. Everybody needs to do their part. There are too many extra collections and fund raising going on in this poor economy. People have cut back on vacations, eating out, new clothes, food and medicine, also insurance. The church needs to do their part also. P.S. the school too.

Financial

Financial

Financial

Financial

Financial

Financial

Financial

Financial

Financial

Financial and getting young adults to (20-38) attend Mass and encourage vocations

Financial and getting more parishioners to Sunday services and involve them more

Financial and number of inactive Catholics

Financial concerns

Financial contributions as the economy worsens people tend to cut corners. Young leadership. Young Priests are hard to come by.

Financial issues due to economy and last of priests

Financial issues. Don't think people will be able to give like they truly want to.

Financial money should be spent locally or stay in the parish no in Guatemala

Financial problem

Financial stability

Financial stability in bad economic times

Financial stability of the school

Financial support supporting continued Catholic education at the high school level investing hourly in young adult consistent direct involvement in ministry

Financial support by parishioners

Financial support for parish has older generation to take care of too expensive for elderly to meet need since fixed income is all they have

Financial support.

Financial support. Need to have more registered members attend church/school.

Financial support. Finding a way to get people coming back to church.

Financial survival

Financial wellbeing parishioners unable to contribute as much due to the economy and keeping our children in Catholic schools this is critical; financially thank god for Mr. Donahue who defends the Catholic Church Father needs to promote good Catholic politicians

Financial. Burn-out of volunteers and staff.

Financially in debt due to law suit pay on child molestation by priests

Financing charity for the needy.

Finding a way to finance all aspects of Catholic education without making it unaffordable. We do not want to make our school and FF accessible only to the "rich families".

Finding a way to involve the young generation. With the change in the way they communicate we have to evolve.

Finding enough people to help

Finding more ways to bring young adults to church.

Fine the way it is! Crucifix in gym.

Fiscal concerns?

Focus on church and social issues.

For everyone to understand what it is to be a practicing Catholic and what a great gift we have in the Sacraments. Adoration- Holy hours would be a great start.

For the parish not to become involved and support the parish

Forming the parish - esp. The young - to now, love and live the faith of the church so that they can know, love and sense our Lord and bring the "Springtime of the Church" envisioned by Pope John Paul II to fruition. They cannot love or live what they do not know.

Fostering youth to become a priest or nun

Found this ironic that I could fill this survey out, but can't even usher here because I am not "virtues trained". Used to help, not anymore. Nobody stood up for Fr. Grass even though he made our parish and school so great.

Fr Pat, You have a special gift as a priest. I believe whatever you ask us as parishioners to do will be followed. If you feel St. Mary's could do more, please just ask. St. Mary's may become less popular in the short term in order to be better.

Funding the school

Funding the school to maintain the quality of education. Maintaining the number of parishioners to keep the parish financially solvent.

Funding to keep St. Mary's solvent and keep our school active.

Gaining new parishioners

Gathering us all together closer to Jesus. St. Mary's doing a great job.

Gay or lesbian rights

Generation jobs, economy, faith

Get Catholics to reunite with church

Get more help for Fr Pat. Another Priest or deacon.

Get people actively involved.

Get people to meet each other socially, esp. Sr. Citizens

Get young people within the Parish and other Parishes together.

Getting an associate to help Fr Pat with the size of the parish we should have more than one priest

Getting and keeping the youth of the parish engaged and to impress upon them the need to give back to the "community".

Getting enough younger volunteers active in the church community

Getting more people involved it's always the same people involved we need to outreach to people in our own community not foreign countries we need to outreach to all to come back to faith to show everyone the Christian way

Getting parents to attend Mass bringing their children many children do not attend Mass

Getting parishioners to volunteer more.

Getting parishioners to financially support the church

Getting parishioners to volunteer and meeting the needs of our changing society

Getting people to attend church regularly.

Getting people too church staying an acting Catholic

Getting programs for the young and old to come together in all parish activities.

Getting teenagers more involved getting young parents involved so that their children are guided our direction

Getting the members to not only show up but participate

Getting the new members of the church to come to Mass. We get 3 or 4 new families each week but the church is not full on Sunday.

Getting the younger 18 25 years to come to church

Getting the younger people to stay with their faith in hip school and college

Getting younger people back to church

Getting young adults active in the church

Getting young people to be part of the church

Getting younger people back to church. 18-30 year olds

Going off to college.

Going out into the community and meeting people to join St Mary's growing the church meeting needs of children 14 24 if they fall away they may not come back

Government

Government regulations

Grow in this difficult time of employment

Growing

Growing the parish. I see large churches in the area and I think the 1st focus should be growth and outreach.

Growth

Growth

Growth

Growth

Growth

Growth and finances.

Growth and finding volunteers to do all we plan

Growth of parishioners, church too small to accommodate.

Growth, Available space to attend Mass.

Handle the growth - Finance. Status of pastor/priests. Take active role in practical daily advice.

Have a greater presence in Crown Point and NW Indiana. Ministering to the leaders. Needs of poor people instead of out of the country. Building community among parishioners and stewardship.

Have parishioners actively involved in parish life to be able to live out their Baptismal promises.

Having all parish members feel comfortable and getting all involved

Having Catholics return to our faith. Getting young families to bring their families back to church.

Having enough money to provide

Having enough priests and finance

Having enough priests and getting good teachers for the school

Having enough priests to lead parishes and social visits in this area

Having enough resources to keep St. Mary's functioning as a school/parish

Having leadership to help Fr. Pat minister to our large growing parish. Keeping us actively involved with opportunities to do God's work on earth.

Having our young adults remain involved.

Having people help out with the church

Having the church torn down and replaced by new building- also Fr. Pat's retirement

Having the means to contribute financially

Having the younger generation take more interest in the Mass, responding including altar servers

Help and support of the people.

Help and guide the children

Help for Father Pat

Help other parishes not as educated in offering classes in cooperation of the holy spirit education of the faithful is key it enables them to spread the gospel of life in daily lives the winters of their lives to others thus reaching most people possible

Help the poor.

Help with parish staff. Involvement of parishioners with church activities. Attendance and support

Helping families keep God/Faith center of life.

Helping families to practice their faith.

Helping members of our Parish and community during this difficult economic period.

Helping others

Helping parishioners to understand how involvement with the church can help and improve their daily life.

Helping people adapt to changes and still feel they are practicing their faith helping respect where practicing faith bring more community based outreach casual friendly more people

Helping people grow in faith

Helping people know God

Helping people not only know and understand their faith, but also to live it and develop their relationship with Christ.

Helping people to realize accept their baptismal commitment and develop their spiritual lives amid the commercialization of our culture

Helping people understand what an important role God and faith plays in our lives; there are far too many distractions in life and people are letting some take precedent over the importance of God, faith, church and community.

Helping the less fortunate.

Helping the teenagers.

Helping young teens with the faith

Hire parish liturgist. Change music issue to Breaking Bread Plan for new church.

How divorced people are treated, turns people away and go elsewhere. New generation does not go to church much. Only seniors and baby boomers generation what I observe at most churches. Need more things for seniors or activities for them to do. Help people more in our community, poor, sick, homeless.

How to be more Christ-like and less Catholic

How to pay for our own needs and what to do about programs like CSA that seem cockeyed i would rather support our own parish needs first not everyone else's the school should be accessible to all who what to not just the rich

How will I feel more like a part of St. Mary?

I am new but I would envision the school being a challenge as finances are very difficult to keep up with for the school. Also build computer tools to better process information and outreach to younger parishioners.

I am overall pleased with the current status and direction of my parish St. Mary of Crown Point.

I attend this church with my widowed mother but would assume the biggest challenge would be attracting and keeping those 18-35 years old.

I believe as the elderly Catholics pass away, there will be less people (practicing Catholics) in the upcoming generations. My college kids don't practice. My husband is not Catholic. I love St. Mary's and it fully supports my needs. This is a great parish. Don't overlook the wonderful direction St. Mary church already has when planning for the future. It's a gem!

I believe more people need to become involved in the parish and helping others. Coming to Mass isn't enough. We need to reach out to those in need.

I believe the biggest thing will be financial due to the economy going down and cost of living going up. This will make it financially harder for the church.

I believe the greatest challenge would be providing the youth today with strong faith to carry them forward in a world that is changing way too fast. I have heard many young people that are former Catholics and non-Catholics say that there are too many rules. The Mass is beautiful and should be for everyone to enjoy. I don't believe that God would want so many rules to keep his flock from participating in the sacraments.

I believe the Parish is healthy. Keeping it that way is the challenge.

I believe the parish will have difficulty keeping young people and families to continue to attend Mass

I don't believe there will be any huge challenges. But I do believe we will continue to build on what we are already doing.

I feel the greatest challenge is growing our parish to meet the social needs of our parishioners. We are limited financially and have special restraints.

I feel we need to do more for our youth. Faith based teen organizations, etc. Youth is our future. Also 18 and over groups.

I think getting people more involved with community needs will be most challenging.

I think it is people who are suffering from the economy that are going to find themselves to be too busy to attend Mass even if they want to also the parish needs to become more aware if social justice

I think money but i wish there would be more spiritual devotions to our lady and of course to Jesus

I think money will always be a concern. Outside of that, I think keeping the youth practicing in their faith.

I think priest should marry.

I think the biggest issue is the lack of people entering the priesthood.

I think the parish's greatest challenge is getting our young adults more involved.

I think you need to talk more on everyday problems. This would keep young and old attention.

I would like to become more aware of the programs within the church so that I can volunteer or participate. I would also like to see some changes within the school; counseling available to troubled students, tutoring for students in need and a strong effort put towards making ALL children feel a sense of belonging and self-worth not only in school but church as well. Too much emphasis is put on those who already succeed and not on those who need help.

I would like to suggest a resale shop. I would offer to volunteer.

I would like us to become more Christ-like, individually and socially.

I would probably say maintaining the parishioners we have now. I like toe programs we have in place now, but I would like to see St. Mary's Church more active within the community. We love St. Mary school

I would think finances

If the economy does pick up and unemployment doesn't go down the parish will lose financial support.

Improve communication with parishioners. Expose finance status of parish often.

In these difficult times all Catholic communities must get to the basic truths of Christ a love for him and all men no man is an island entering of himself

Inactive Catholics

Inclusion; staying current/keeping up with technology.

Income related to recession relates to needs of parishioners - food, housing, clothing healthcare

Increasing the membership encourage financial support of its endeavor

Increasing s

Increase family values to decrease divorces

Increase Mass participation

Increase more parishioners

Increase parish participation from 17% to at least 50%

Increasing ministries geared toward opportunities for consecration to Mary and tertiary membership in Franciscan/Carmelite etc.

Increasing monetary demands in a depressed economy

Increasing population for church and school. Old parishioners lack warmth for new parishioners.
Priest is very good - excellent.

Increasing the faith in the adult who can help to increase the faith in the young adult and youth

Individuals deny the Catholic faith

Influence of media on our parish youth.

Instructing worshipers to properly behave during Mass.

Interactive Catholic people within our community

Inviting parishes to be involved in new ministries seems as if same people are involved in all the min

Involvement of parishioners in attending fellow parishioners in view of the shortage of priests

Involvement of young adults in church ministries

Involving adults in the parish. There is a disconnect when you don't have children in the school.

Is their going to be a permanent priest here work on the youth

Job preparation than skill development in schools especially math skills at St. Mary's

Just to belong thanks

Keep Fr. Kalick here at St. Mary's for many yrs. To come. He does know what this Parish needs and does it well.

Keep getting better

Keep our parish school financially solvent growing always focusing on those in need

Keep religion relevant and unique as each person is unique. Identifying each person's gifts/talents and using them to further develop parish community.

Keep school open get more than 20 of the parish to participate

Keep the members active

Keep the school open keep the number of young people coming to church need to focus on young

Keep young people involved, and committed Mass attendance

Keeping 25-45 year olds in the parish and interested

Keeping a school going.

Keeping Catholic education

Keeping Catholic education affordable. Keeping youth involved in parish and community

Keeping Catholicism alive in the hearts of people. Must compete against main stream culture.

Keeping Catholics active, engaged and practicing.

Keeping Catholics coming to church and serving

Keeping Catholics coming to church on a regular basis and keeping them enthusiastic about parish life. Society dissuades from keeping 2nd practicing Catholic beliefs and practices openly.

Keeping children active.

Keeping children from leaving the church once they grow up.

Keeping children who do not attend SMCCS in the faith.

Keeping everyone involved providing special needs changing as the church does

Keeping faith and Catholic morality and propagating them.

Keeping families involved. This will be difficult due to the large number of registered families.

Keeping Fr. Pat build needs buildings keep St Mary strong

Keeping Fr. Pat as pastor.

Keeping me interested in God

Keeping members make sure people attend Sunday Mass and Holy Days more cognizant of our faith

Keeping members or increasing membership.

Keeping my faith strong with all that's going on in the world.

Keeping newly confirmed members to continue and participate in the parish community through volunteering and ministries.

Keeping or getting youth involved in church.

Keeping our Catholic schools and encouraging Catholic parents to send their children to a Catholic school.

Keeping our children interested in faith and their knowledge about god and how important he is needed in our everyday life and not just Mass on Sundays thank you

Keeping our children involved and active in the church and bringing back those that are no longer actively involved.

Keeping our parish going with our school and church

Keeping our school and church going forward.

Keeping our youth close to their parish.

Keeping our young adults involved in our faith.

Keeping our young people in the church

Keeping parishioners active and helping new parishioners find a ministry to take part in.

Keeping parishioners in the Catholic faith

Keeping parishioners. Bring in new ones.

Keeping people attending Mass with busy schedules and the attitude that they pray at home.

Keeping people engaged in the faith. Financial challenges for school/parish needs.

Keeping people in church.

Keeping people in the Catholic faith and attending Mass, especially young adults.

Keeping people in the parish and always looking for new.

Keeping people involved in parish activities and communicating how they can stay involved. Also being more active in community events (more local work).

Keeping people together and worshipping in the face of economic crisis and financial devastation. We must be willing to help each other and rely on each other. Our priest will need to be a more forceful and rallying leader.

Keeping sacraments going. Too many rules and meeting to come to for little info that could have been done in 1 meeting.

Keeping school active

Keeping St. Mary's traditions in tact

Keeping strong numbers for the school and continuing to provide a strong, personal, meaningful Catholic education.

Keeping teens and young adults active in the church.

Keeping teens and young people connected so they stay with the church and do not turn to drugs or other negative elements.

Keeping the 10 Commandments and maintaining the faith of young children and teenagers.

Keeping the buildings in good shape.

Keeping the Catholic faith alive in our youth and young adults. And of course finances.

Keeping the community growing

Keeping the creative ideas of our Parish fresh and inviting so that we may continue to provide a sense of community at St Mary's in our local community and worldwide.

Keeping the high standards morals in our children

Keeping the school full and by that building the parish with family tradition and faith.

Keeping the school going

Keeping the school open and keeping enrollment up.

Keeping the school open.

Keeping the school open. We need to keep our doors open for the betterment of all and society!

Keeping the school thriving and enrollment up also finding a way to increase participation at least attending Mass

Keeping the young adults interested in their faith.

Keeping the young people

Keeping the young people after they make sacrament of confirmation. Besides Mass there isn't anything to interest them and draw them here!

Keeping the young people from leaving the church.

Keeping the young people interested. They are the future of our parish. I have noticed the lack of attendance at Mass in the age group of 20-30 year olds.

Keeping the younger generation coming to Mass and participating

Keeping the younger generation in the church.

Keeping the younger generation involved in the church so they continue to be involved for years to come

Keeping the youth involved.

Keeping traditional approach

Keeping up with all the new members. Keeping the school going strong.

Keeping up with change in diversity, people who want to be Catholic but worry about their personal values concerning gay/lesbian/suicide, etc. Decide to feel open to discuss.

Keeping up with education new computer initiative appealing to the youth to sustain our future welcoming new members

Keeping up with the ever changing world and falling behind on the times.

Keeping up with the rapidly changing times keeping the young people engaged in the Catholic way of life

Keeping young adults and teenagers active in their faith for life.

Keeping young adults interested and active in the Catholic faith.

Keeping young adults interested in church and parish

Keeping young adults interested in the Mass

Keeping young adults involved in Parish.

Keeping young people active and involved in parish life

Keeping young people active and willing to attend church finding the importance of god in their lives

Keeping young people involved in the church

Keeping young people involved in their faith

Keeping young people involved. Encouraging ministry.

Keeping young people leaving the church (confession)

Keeping youth and young adults active and promoting the Catholic faith.

Keeping youth in church.

Keeping youth interested in their faith

Keeping our youth actively involved in their faith.

Lack of direction of faith too much emphasis on donating money to church and foreign countries we need to help the poor of our community first and focus on Jesus message

Lack of participation in Mass service and singing, praying, etc. And lack of feeling welcomed by other members of the parish. Children were not educated well in RE program

Lack of Priest. Starting a Latin Mass.

Lack of priests

Lack of priests

Lack of priests getting children involved in Catholic faith

Lack of priests and more people to work with and for. Isolation of parish and not involved with local parishes in neighborhood.

Lack of priests and nuns.

Lack of Priests.

Lack of Priests. Lack of young adults/ parents. More Catholics are falling away from the church. Moo many scandals. Moo many man made changes to Mass. Holy Days of Obligation. Catholic religion is not allowing divorced people to receive Sacraments. Bit turn off!! Hence, leaving religion.

Lack of religious priests and nuns to be spiritual leaders

Lack of religious priest, nuns, etc. Keeping everyone together.

Lack of reverend priests- Maybe a LATIN Mass by the Society of St. Peter priest would be good.
Lack of reverence by Eucharist Ministers.

Lack of support the needs at the prayers

Lack of youth programs for ages 18-20!

Lasting almost 150 years is a testament to St. Mary's Parish that it has met its challenges on the journey of life. Where are we going doesn't matter as much as do we get on the train. The challenge is to get more of us aboard. Lord we have no idea where we are going. We do not see the road ahead of us. So be it. Come Lord Jesus (Blue Book)

Leadership

Liberalism and the lack of parental guidance towards traditional Catholic values.

Living life with God first. Being kind and loving to everyone. People shouldn't pick or choose.

Loosing or few volunteering

Losing members to other religions

Loss of faith due to worldly issues.

Loss of members.

Love the feeling of home and love here

Love-mercy

Lowering or controlling cost of yearly tuition

Lowering tuition for schools. My grandchildren may have to quit soon. I hope they can continue.

Maintain all ministries. Church affordance. Financial concerns.

Maintain interest of parishioners in Catholic faith, especially 20-40 years of age.

Maintain school support. Stay in touch and advocate and support your adults.

Maintaining retaining St Mary school do not wish to lose our school

Maintaining active parishioners

Maintaining diversity

Maintaining high quality school

Maintaining parishioners

Maintaining school and supporting poor and needy here.

Maintaining school service affordably to enrollers. Addressing space issues to service an increase in parish/community activities.

Maintaining the Catholics within the community and trying to get back fallen away Catholics.

Maintaining the high standard it has

Maintaining the midlife families those straight out of college young adults

Maintaining the school, creating a strong faith formation and youth ministry which is relevant and interesting. Helping senior citizens be active and involved.

Maintaining the stronger of the parish

Maintaining the structural soundness and interior and exterior beauty of our church building. We should not look to building a new church.

Maintaining the vibrant community we have in place while place while accepting new groups and ideas

Maintaining tradition, ministry in U.S.

Maintaining our parish school. It keeps all of us involved.

Making church members feel welcomed and encouraging them to participate in faith activities.

Making each parishioner feel welcomed. Faith formation is lacking.

Making it possible that every child who desires it can afford to attend St. Mary's school

Making Mass relevant and current to people.

Making school costs reasonable and affordable to all families. Guidance

Making sure this is a welcoming place to all people no matter how much \$ they have. Hard times need God more than ever.

Making sure we have consistent priests who can call S. Mary's their permanent home.

Making the Catholic religion meaningful in today's world.

Making the church more of a community. Finances.

Many people leaving the church - work to improve problems with leadership

Mass 5:30 possible moved to 4 pm due to many attend 4pm at St Peter for Mass of the Holy Spirit.
Dark at night, weather conditions, cold, icy, snow.

Maybe will have to get more Masses.

Meeting financial responsibilities.

Meeting societal needs while keeping the church financial viable. Being able to do more with less.

Meeting the needs of all parishioners

Meeting the needs of members in tough economic times and the maintenance of the priests itself.

Meeting the needs of our constant changing society. Making the church a safe haven and pertinent everyday life.

Meeting the needs of the parish community as it continues to grow, such as by accepting/asking for an associate pastor and/or a deacon

Membership

Membership

Membership support

Membership and money

Might be too small for the growing community

Ministry

Money

Money

Money

Money

Money space

Money and Obama

Money and school

Money.

Money.

Money.

Moral standards

More community services finances

More help for Fr. Pat. Church crowding, new church

More modern programs worship music for young families

More outreach to members diverse programs and groups for people of all ages

More participation from the 50% of members who do not attend

More people turning away from the church. Need to encourage people more to attend. More uplifting music.

More priest to help Father Pat

More priest and nuns

More space, parish family is growing here. Need larger church

Most likely money, but I don't know that. Economy

Motivation, instruction, youth involvement.

Much better than let's say St John sorry but true my problems are with Catholicism is general St Mary's is a great church for me to like coming even though my beliefs in Catholicism is wavering thanks for caring enough to ask

My belief is that we need to reach out to the younger generations. 20-40 year olds. These will be the faces that will soon lead this parish. I attend Mass almost every Sat. Night. Baby boomers make up the vast majority of the parish. We need to bring in more young people/families.

My husband and I attended this parish between 2003-2005; we gave cash each week in the offering, the other parishioners began to know us and the users even asked us to user because they saw us here each week. We became engaged in 2005 and wanted to get married in what we thought was "our church" however the secretary told us we couldn't because we had to "pay" for 6-12 months before we could even talk to the priest. We then called St. Matthias who we had never even attended church there and they scheduled our wedding. Now we go there every Sunday and have since 2005. We now have two children who will be raised in St Mathias. Now today is the 1st time we have been here since this upsetting event and how fitting there is a survey today. We ran late to make St Mathis's.

Need a full time assistant priest or at least a deacon. Church this size and school are too much for Father Pat. Recently he had a funeral every day for six days and there's always Baptisms and weddings, etc.

Need a new Bishop.

Need associate pastor and/or deacons to assist pastor.

Need more parishioners

Need to get young people more involved in parish life.

Needs help, assistant or deacon.

Needs to include all the talented people in the church, not just a select few. Also needs to use all those who volunteer to get called upon. Need more devotions to Mary and Jesus. Feel like always looking thru the window but never allowed inside here. Need to help more people in the local area besides food pantry. Many are suffering. Need to give a light to tabernacle as Jesus is the most important person.

Needy families

New additional priests

New church. Keeping our pastor.

New larger church asst. Pastor

New parish

None I pray. Can only get better.

Not enough priests or those willing to enter the ministry.

Not having people feel like they matter even if they are from faith formation.

Not letting today's world influence our Catholic beliefs and faith and teaching our young to stay true to God and faith.

Not losing our small town identity. Lack of reverence for the Blessed Sacrament

Not really sure. Maybe lack of young parishioner involvement.

Not to hide the devil. He is working against the world and God.

Number of increasing parishioners.

Number of priests dedicated to this parish.

Other faiths offering more compassion and understanding in general.

Our ability to welcome and make our parish relevant to the young.

Our parish needs to commit more of the parish resources to our school or we are in danger of losing families and the invaluable guidance the school provides those families.

Our youth- too many are falling away from our Catholic faith- not so much instruction but motivation to give.

Overcome the challenges that have occurred in the Catholic church with priest including Father grass
this survey should not be done during church

Overcoming all the wrongs in a poor nation full of mishap.

Parish finances economy

Parish involvement in activities with work schedules and responsibilities.

Parishioners making correct decisions due to lack of knowledge in their own faith. Lack of prayer life
to open our hearts to the will of God in our daily life. Parishioner's apathy to the need of others in
general and interest in worldly things.

Parking Space. Students' enrollment.

People becoming senior citizens

People being able to afford to give generously to the church

People believing and practicing the religion. Trusting in the religion.

People caring about church.

People contributing financially to support all efforts of the church and school

People falling away from the church. Abuse charges.

People keeping their faith and practicing it.

People leaving for non-Catholic churches for social/entertainment versions.

People leaving.

People under the age of 30 not following the church.

Planning for a new church

Population growing #'s of people in Mass, hard to get a seat.

Poverty

Prepare a committee to investigate when the new church will be built. Size, location and cost
estimates need to be developed. Do not become ultra-modern in design but return the charm and
décor of the present church.

Priest needs to be more accessible and visible around school

Priest shortage.

Priest/nuns

Priests

Priests

Probably finances and having all parishioners feel a part of parish.

Probably finances.

Probably financial issues and volunteerism

Probably financial problems

Probably financial.

Promoting vocations to the Priesthood and religious life for our little girls.

Provide continued religious services with fewer priests and other religions

Providing the communication and location to deal with whatever the future brings. We need much more open, frank communication of all parish matters, from finances to budget to staff to the school, building and grounds, diocesan requirements, everything. Move all nursery, pre-k, kindergarten to the school. Remodel and add on to St. Agnes center to make a 24/7 community center as a magnet location for most activities.

Question 45 was an excellent question. There are many people with excellent talents at St. Mary's. They are being underutilized. I feel that I am in that group despite asking for more opportunity to participate. More attention needs to be focused on the "empty-nesters". They want to show their talents and experiences. We transferred to Crown Pointe 3 years ago. Perhaps it is a matter of more time.

Raising money for bishop relief

Rapid growth and increasing racial diversity. Need more pastoral help.

Reaching needs of diversified family situations.

Reaching out to all parishioners. There are people who would volunteer but don't know how to go about it and others who need them.

Reaching out to all parishioners. Having a later daily Mass. Have meeting of seniors.

Reaching out to encourage people to stay with the church. Too much negativity about the press abuse. Throw people off.

Reaching out to everyone with activities that encourage everyone to participate in church life keep people informed

Reaching out to members of the church who don't participate in activities other than attending Mass.

Reaching out to others who need help finding God also I think reaching out to those with disabilities is a good idea because I witnessed those with disabilities first hand and many of them need people to just talk to them and show that people care about them

Reaching out to those who are not currently attending Mass and having room for all

Reaching out to young people to pursue the Catholic ministry.

Reaching the community (young people especially) with welcome arms and helping them understand the importance of religion in their lives.

Reaching young adults so the faith can continue

Recession. St. Mary makes it difficult for sacraments like marriage. Too many classes and meetings.

Recruiting more parish members

Reduce by 90% the SMC member who use SMC to advantage their own socio-economic status! Especially the "NEW" members make \$ from their SMC membership. The Benedictiones dislike such "HOT DOGS"

Regaining the trust of the younger generations and increased evangelization and teaching the Catholic faith to all.

Registered members should contribute more in time attendance and finance, to their ability. 2/3 do not. Everyone should be able to do some.

Rebuilding the Catholic church's reputation and trust after child molestation issues which were sometimes covered up. Also school costs difficult for us to keep our children there.

Relating to parishioners ever changing needs more involved electronically keeping true to values just so many new ways to interact put it in peoples hand who wants to be true to faith

Religious education w apologies for children adults best time for this for adults is in homely as so many will not attend special programs

Remaining pertinent to our society this is a start

Repairs to church. A new building with hall and kitchen. Encourage people to support parish. More outreach to our seniors and children not to foreign orphans. More priests needed to cover growing parish. More confession needed during week. Sat Mass at 4:30-5:30 too late.

Respect amongst parishioners. The way people show skin and act in church anymore is more like a night club. We have forgotten this is God's house.

Retaining active parishioners.

Retaining current members teens young adults awaking new members clergy

Retaining members

Retaining teen involvement in attendance at church within the community

Retaining worshipers.

Retaining young adults' participation in church activities. Need a contemporary Mass/Activities.

Return young people to the church by making it more interesting

Revenue- would be wise to develop a passive source of income quarterly to ensure financial stability of the parish and the ability to grow and protect St. Mary's during economic downsides.

Rising tuition costs at the school and no parish programs available. Rely on Gov't now is not good. Lack of conservative finances.

Running out of church space

Saving souls. Pleasing/making God the center of life. Faith and morals passed on to the younger gen.

School (St. Mary)

School attendance

School enrollment due to economy. Also the number of families seems to increase, but weekly contributions seem lower.

School finances and technology

Seems to me that we should have 2 priests with such a large community and growing too much for one person to minister. Father Pat is a saint.

Serving God's plan.

Serving its own communities needs in a bad economy

Shortage of clergy. Financial. Diminishing number of active parishioners.

Shortage of priests

Shortage of Priests and Nuns

Shortage of priests.

Shortage of priests we need to promote the priesthood as a life choice

Size children ***** school or faith f***** mission

Size the church can't hold large Masses many standees children s room filled to capacity most times

Size of parish

Some items are too rigid in rules or regulations. Example: Baptism planning; marriage prep/planning.

Space

Space/facilities

Speaking truth about our crooked Catholic politicians speak strong statements talk about hell what bishops cardinals are they even being pay for they are useless make the women put veils back on their heads and install communion railings

Spiritual wellbeing of our children

Staffing and leadership with the dwindling priest situation and being open to diversity when it involves gays and lesbians. Today's Catholics need a lot of emotional support.

Stating in the parish that does not practice what it preaches

Staying afloat financially

Staying Catholic in a very un-Catholic world. Faithful and open in an election year and being pro-life, pro-traditional marriage.

Staying Catholic.

Staying involved.

Staying relevant

Staying strong and united. Continue to do good works and share our talents. Educate on violence and bullying! Inform where help is needed in ministries.

Staying the same.

Staying true to its traditions and rules and not being influenced by modern social ways.

Students of Catholic schools who do not support their school or church when they become adults and marry outside the faith.

Subsidizing the school and deciding whether or not to continue

Support of the school financial

Support to school needs to be the same or increased

Supporting our parish and school finances and more for senior citizens activities.

Supporting the new needy in these increasingly challenging economic times

Survival of the Catholic church.

Sustaining Fr. Pat's health, appreciating the gift he is to the parish and the enormous responsibilities that he has as our pastor. Focusing on the aging population, ministry to assist them more.

Taking care of your own- so many down and out in our own country. Keep ego out-

Teaching parents of school children to pay their fair share of school expenses.

Teens

That every member comes to a living relationship with Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

That our parish is still here

The 20-39 yr. Adults who have no connection to their faith- no urgency to be part of their Catholic parish

The ability to reach out and maintain traditional worship and ethics in an increasing technological world. To bring the old ways and new ways together.

The absence at Mass of Catholics, particularly those in the age group of 19 to 30 yrs.

The acceptance of the change the church's pushing onto the elder parishioners. I am one of them.

The acceptance of too many things that are clear in the bible

The biggest challenge right now is implementing the changes in the Mass and rebuilding a sense of comfort and unity during Mass.

The breakdown of marriages. We need to support our married couples better.

The Catholic education and involvement of our youth from preschool and continuing to reach our children thru high school years. I feel like we are losing the teenaged members of the church.

The challenges Catholics face.

The changes in Mass we recently adopted change is not always good or very easy

The church building

The church supporting the school if not the private schools will start to close of be unaffordable for families

The community

The declining number of priests entering the priesthood.

The decreasing economy

The economy

The economy. We need the economy to grow so we in turn can help St. Mary to grow. Finances are the greatest challenges facing us all.

The fact that it is getting to small

The fast pace of the population god will always win we just need to work enjoy the ride

The federal government.

The future of the Parish when Father Pat decides to retire. Hope at that time the parish will continue to be as great as it has been for me when my children and family come here for years to come. I wish we could keep Father Pat forever!

The greatest challenge is our family not working enough or not working at all.

The growing amount of religious apathy in our youth and the growing influence and amount of atheists and agnostics.

The growth and size of church and that we have only 1 regular priest.

The growth of the church. We are growing so FAST.

The impending global economic collapse.

The increase in the population of the "casual" Catholic and society's acceptance of this status. Are young families losing their religion?

The increasing amount of poverty.

The lack of "God" in the daily lives our society.

The lack of new priest to help Fr Pat. He does a fabulous job.

The loss of faith and morals lack of respect among the young

The need for help from people who are affected by this economic crisis

The need for more money for Catholic education.

The need to involve more parishioners in church life

The needs of the poor

The number of priests at times has decreased. Finding is also a concern given recent events.

The parishioners to attend Mass on Sunday regularly

The possibility of losing Father Pat. I seem to remember that when Father Pat took over as pastor after Father Grass departed, Father Pat made a time-limited commitment to stay here, and as I recall it was something like six or eight years. I think that time period has either passed or is quickly approaching, and we know that Father Pat has many interests elsewhere, especially Campagna Academy, and possibly the principals's chair at Andrean. (Rumor had it last year that you weren't coming back to us from your sabbatical.) St. Mary's has done very well under Father Pat's leadership, our finances are sound, we have involved many good people in leadership rolls, and the school remains strong. But it's a cloud hanging over us, that if Father Pat were to leave, whether by his choice or by reassignment by the bishop, we could get an unknown leader, a who-knows-who from who-knows-where, and we may not fare so well. Acknowledging that tomorrow is promised to no one, we are worried about this possibility. An imminent Big Building Project within the next perhaps ten years, which is also hanging over our heads. At the last church remodeling and paint job, which Father Grass oversaw, the bishop said we would get no more paint jobs, and the next time we would have to build a new church building. I do not know how serious the bishop is about this, especially since the economy has taken a nose-dive in the meantime, but I think this is something we need to do some long-term planning for. This will require Massive fund-raising, as well as the process of designing and siting a new building, and all the attendant disruption involved. Ever-increasing Catholic Services Appeal tax imposed on the parish by the diocese. We already contribute to the parish, to the school, to the food pantry, to the Guatemalan orphan project, to all the activities connected to our school, student athletics, Andrean HS, etc., and every year the bishop wants his hand deeper and deeper into our collective pockets. The economy is in recession mode, and yet we are asked for more and more. We do not want to cut back on parish support, but there is resentment about seeing such a large amount of money siphoned off and heading out of our parish. I think the bishop perceives St. Mary's as a cash cow that can be milked to support all kinds of crap all over the diocese. Maybe it's the perception that we are being asked to pay to provide for stuff for other parishes that they can't or will not pay for, but it's beginning to feel like we are being taken for a ride here. Too much of our contributions are going elsewhere, where it does not benefit us and we have no say-so in what the money is spent on. Present challenge is parking lot issues, which may end up with us paving over an ever-increasing portion of our property. This eventually ties in with the new church building issue, as in what kind of facility are we going to be left with, and what will we be passing on to the future. Currently, we are strapped for parking for the most popular Masses and for large church or school events, and we don't have enough handicapped parking spaces. Clearing the lot between Sunday Masses is a real problem, with cars leaving while the next batch is coming in, and this becomes exponentially worse when a Mass runs overtime. People do not need to leave church and end up angry and cursing in the parking lot, and sooner or later someone is going to end up with dented fenders or someone is going to get run over out there. I do not know what the solution is to this one. Something I know we can't do anything about, but the changes to the Mass wording really suck. While the changes to the people's parts are minor but annoying (like why are they putting us through this for very little?), the rewordings to the priest's prayers are awful. They changed straight-forward easily spoken English into convoluted, twisted-phrase conglomerations that no one speaks in real life. Just because Latin grammar and sentence construction are not the same as in English does not justify the mess they have made of it. I have heard of a parish in open rebellion, and I would join such a rebellion if it came our direction. This is just doggone stupid for nothing, and emblematic of the dreck and drivel that issues forth from the offices of the Vatican functionaries. I do not know where you intend to go with this Mission 150 thing. Yes, I am one of your suspicious skeptics. If this turns out to have a hidden agenda of some sort, or becomes some politicized kumbaya thing, I will not go there. You may lead wherever you want to go, but I get to choose whether or not I will follow. Thank you for giving us the opportunity to think about this question for a week, and the chance to blow off some steam on these issues. Believe it or not, this is a deeply thought out response.

The same challenges as you've already faced the past 150 years. The more things change.... The more they stay the same. Keep up the great work.

The secularization of faithful Catholics retaining increasing church attendance and developing strong Catholic understanding of faith adherence return devotional practices rosary adoration first Saturdays First Fridays

The size of school we need more room to educate children

The size of the church and the spaces available. Would like to see a children's liturgy added to Mass.

The strength of our parish is our superb pastor, Fr. Pat. Fr. Pat is wonderful beyond description. What will happen to us and our culture if Fr. Pat leaves in next 3-5 years is biggest challenge.

The thought or possibility of losing Father Pat. The new changes to our faith and religion Mass that makes it difficult trying to keep people at church and making it a priority to bring people in. Engage.

The town of c point is changing as it changes it will influence St Mary's parish if Crown Point ends up like Merrieville St Mary s will be at risk Crown Point needs to stay safe and to be a good home for people

The young people keeping the faith, with all the bad press the church is getting

The youth 18-20

There is no particular group for people who are too old for a teen group but too young for a young adult group. A group would greatly influence that particular age group.

There will be more of a need to help those who don't have enough money for rent/mortgage/food/clothing in our own community

These tough economic times will continue to impact many parish activities, I feel.

This is an older aged church goes so possibly death. Other issues, unemployment, depression

Time and money from volunteers because of their present situations

To accommodate people who cannot kneel the pews and kneelers are too close together a special section should be provided for non kneelers therefore to attend St Matthews where kneelers can go up there is room to less found on next pew Communion should be distributed to people who cannot go up for Communion I know they go up but I can't make that either

To be able to continue to not be weary in the works of God and to expand the knowledge of practical living in holiness and dynamic Christian faith.

To be more Holy.

To bring Catholics who left church back. To keep young from leaving church as they get older.

To bring more priests into the church community.

To collect money to rebuild St. Mary's when our beautiful church needs to be remodeled.

To continually expand those areas that people are reluctant to participate in.

To continue to stay relevant to young people in an ever-changing world

To develop ability to use modern technology to connect with our young and older people

To form the faith of our children to be strong in Christ Jesus so they can handle the world as it is today and be good Christians. I don't like the changes to the Mass. I prefer the old traditional version.

To get more people involved in their spiritual faith journey, its more than just going to Mass

To get parishioners more involved.

To get people to come to Mass

To get young people involved.

To grow larger and increase membership

To grow within the community and divorce within the church.

To help economically challenged members of St Mary's

To help the needy and depressed people of Crown Point, especially children.

To include more people in programs. Wealthy run the place and act like they own it. No or next to none programs for seniors. Just blue army or similar. You have very little alert of what's going on and too much show for foreign ministries instead of our own.

To increase true spiritual guidance in our parish by instituting monthly scheduled Eucharistic devotion and a greater emphasis on our parish's Friday devotion.

To keep a good Priest

To keep our beautiful church renovated as a like long contractor we can always renovate this old building

To keep our school open. Finances.

To keep people returning to church, their faith and upholding the 10 Commandments.

To keep St Mary a place of worship. Remain/retain silence in our church. Don't make it a den of thieves.

To keep the interest in church for your young people.

To keep the word of God spoken and received in our community and country.

To keep the youth as strong Catholics knowing their faith and history.

To maintain the community and to serve the community- fewer men entering seminary, loss of Catholics - I have several friends that are Catholic, say they are Catholic, but attend Protestant church on regular basis.

To make the Gospel relevant to the everyday lives of the people! Change homily Father Pat, not always the same please.

To meet needs of parish through strong youth group. Special needs Mass, children's Mass. Regular everything, you need to know as Catholics classes. Relevant radio has great speakers. Explain why believe what believe. Many adults, it has been a long time since school. Thanks for asking. God bless you.

To promote the faith as well as you do now.

To provide for the hungry and homeless.

To restore and bring God's Word to the people!

To retain those who are of Catholic faith.

To retain Fr. Pat as our leader and guiding light to look to for advice, counsel and programs for the good of the general welfare of the parish and community.

To retain parishioners!

To separate church politics from Christ's Gospels and actions.

To truly follow Gods path and not our own path and thinking. Regular Eucharistic devotion may help.
So we can know God and hear His voice

To work as one pitching in some way

Too much for one man to handle. Could use an associate pastor or deacon for the growing parish.

Trust in the Catholic faith

Trying to become an avenue for Catholics not to just attend Mass, but to broaden their spiritual lives.
To foster the concept of looking beyond ourselves and to come together to work as Jesus would want us to work.

Trying to incorporate faith into a busy family life making it for for every age group

Trying to keep families with young children involved with the church. We need to come into the 21st century with the use of birth control, marriage of priests, etc.

Trying to obtain enough new volunteers and too much world on parish staff

Tuition at the school is too high for my child to attend and there is no assistance available when you don't qualify for government assistance.

Tuition needs to be reasonable for children to attend. Please offer guidance for volunteer activities- not just church sponsored

Understanding the youth is the future of our church. Handling the growth of our parish.

Unfortunately, even our spiritual life competes for our time and talent. The church needs to find ways to make participation in church activities and spiritual life "more competitive".

Updating curriculum and having more advanced classes to better compete with public school systems.

Upgrades for the school

Very important. Teach us what it means to be Catholic. Don't be afraid to preach and teach about abortion, same sex marriage. Confession - Free of serious sin if you receive communion. Dress appropriately. I firmly believe most priests are afraid to talk about the above.

Vocations- priest nuns

Vocations to religious life.

Vocations to the priesthood. Involving the youth and young adults to become active members of the church. To make church matter to people.

Vocations.

We enjoy the traditional values offered and know these are often challenged

We must engage our young children and keep them close to the heart of Jesus

We need a larger presence in Crown Point. Volunteer for ecumenical activities. Have school/CCD kids involved and elderly sick. Make available opportunities to volunteer - community. Invite new parishioners to join parish activities from the start.

We need an active youth ministry in our parish and diocese!! 6th-12th grade - we are losing our youth!!

We need another priest or a deacon to help Fr. Pat and Sr. Joan Maria.

We need more help for Father. We need a deacon at least. We need to have something for our senior citizens.

We need more priests

We need to build young adult community. They are our future, but child care is a problem for them.

We need to make everyone feel they belong at St. Mary's school, not just the financially blessed.

When in the children's room they don't come with communion to go upstairs. If they come to the rear they by-pass people who want to receive downstairs.

While adhering to a sound financial goal increase or grow the parish and increase community services

Who will be the next pastor?

Whole parish involvement in making sure the school and church remain as one and support both equally

Will there be priest to staff the parish

Will we have a full time priest in 5yrs with lack of vacations

With our economy, I feel it is financial (being able to keep our parish going) tied with the decrease in clergy.

With the economy situation more families parishioners are in need to provide for the wellbeing of themselves will the parish be able to help as they too have challenges with this budget

With the economy the way it is, making sure finances will be in order will be the biggest challenge.

Working with the church in general to be more accepting of gays and lesbians. Need to welcome them to church and accept them for who they are.

Working with the community to keep the Catholic faith strong. Need help keeping the Catholic school.

Young people

Young people getting involved 18-mid 20's

Young people wanting to be Catholic. Most not interested.

Young.

Younger generation not attending Mass or being interested in the Catholic religion.

Younger people not stepping forward to become more involved in the parish, financially and spiritually.