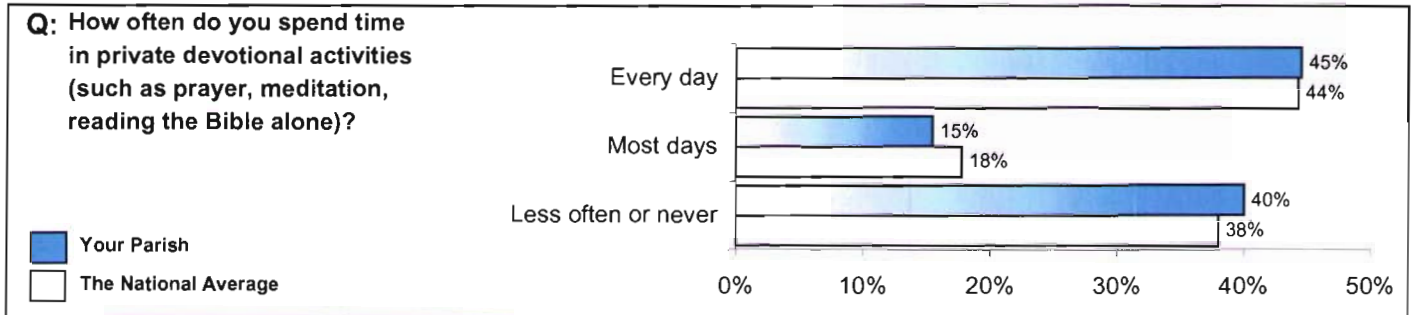




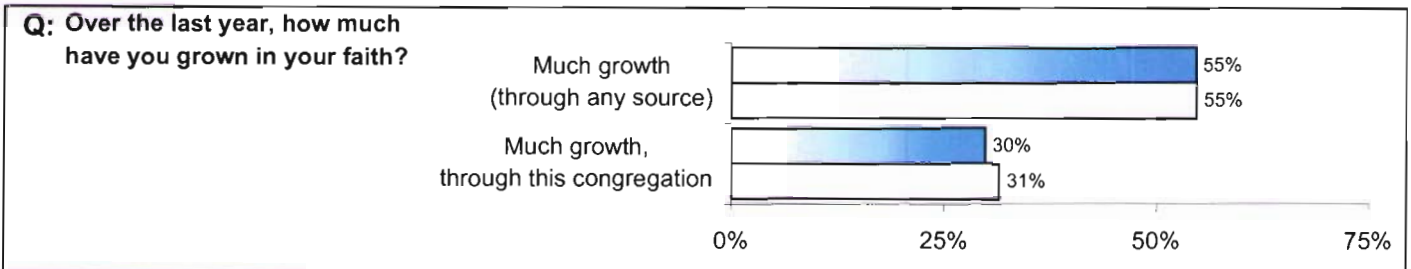
## Building Spiritual Connections

Spiritual connections are made through worshipers' private devotional activities and their participation in parish activities such as worship.

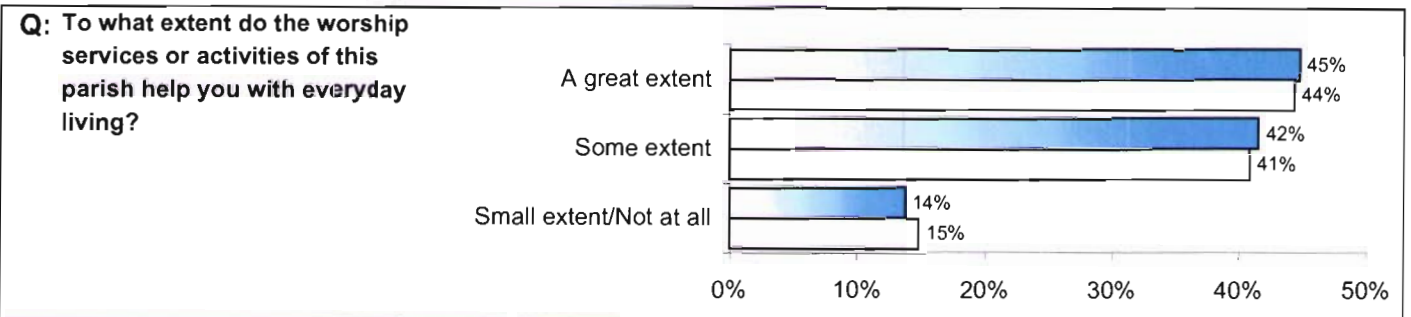
- 1 Private Devotions.** About 45% of the people in your parish spend time *every day* in private devotional activities (such as prayer, meditation, or reading the Bible alone). Your worshipers are about as likely to spend time in these activities when compared to worshipers across the country (the national average is 44% who spend time every day in private devotional activities).



- 2 Growing in Faith.** About half of the people in America's congregations (55%) and 55% in your parish report they have experienced much growth in their faith over the last year, through any source. Worshipers in your parish (30%) are about as likely to say their spiritual growth comes from involvement in your parish. Some of your worshipers reported growing in their faith through other groups (7%) or through their own activities (18%).



- 3 Help with Everyday Living.** To what extent do the worship services or activities of your parish help worshipers with everyday living? 45% of your worshipers reported that they are helped "to a great extent" by worship or congregational activities. This compares to the national average of 44% who report finding worship services or activities helpful with everyday living.





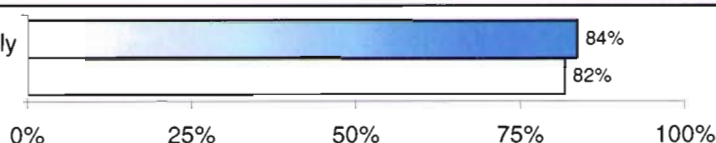
## Building Spiritual Connections

4

**Meeting Spiritual Needs.** Like the majority of worshipers in the U.S., 84% of your worshipers feel that your parish meets their spiritual needs. Across the U.S., 82% of worshipers feel this way.

**Q: My spiritual needs are being met in this parish.**  
 (% who "agree" or "strongly agree")

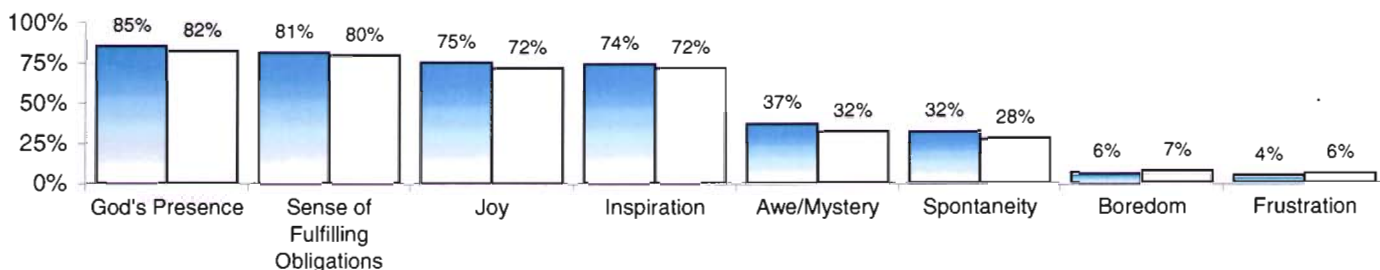
Agree/Strongly Agree



5

**Worship Experiences.** Meaningful worship experiences are central for most congregations and their members. In your parish, the largest number of worshipers "usually" or "always" experience God's presence during worship. Fortunately, the smallest percentage of worshipers "usually" or "always" experience frustration.

**Q: How often do you experience the following during worship services at this parish?**  
 (% who say "always" or "usually")



6

**Making Music.** Worshipers in your parish prefer the following styles of music in congregational worship: traditional hymns (53%), contemporary hymns (28%), and choruses (26%). Across the country, worshipers reported the following preferences most often: traditional hymns (58%), contemporary hymns (26%), and choruses (24%).

**Q: While you may value many different styles of music, which of the following do you prefer in worship? (Mark up to two.) Responses for your parish:**

Traditional hymns . . . . .	53%	Other contemporary music . . . . .	13%
Contemporary hymns . . . . .	28%	Classical music . . . . .	6%
Choruses . . . . .	26%	No music . . . . .	3%
Sung responsorial psalms . . . . .	14%	African-American gospel music . . . . .	3%
Music from a variety of cultures . . . . .	14%	Contemplative chants . . . . .	2%

## Making the Connections

Review the six spiritual connections in your parish and consider these discovery questions for group discussion:

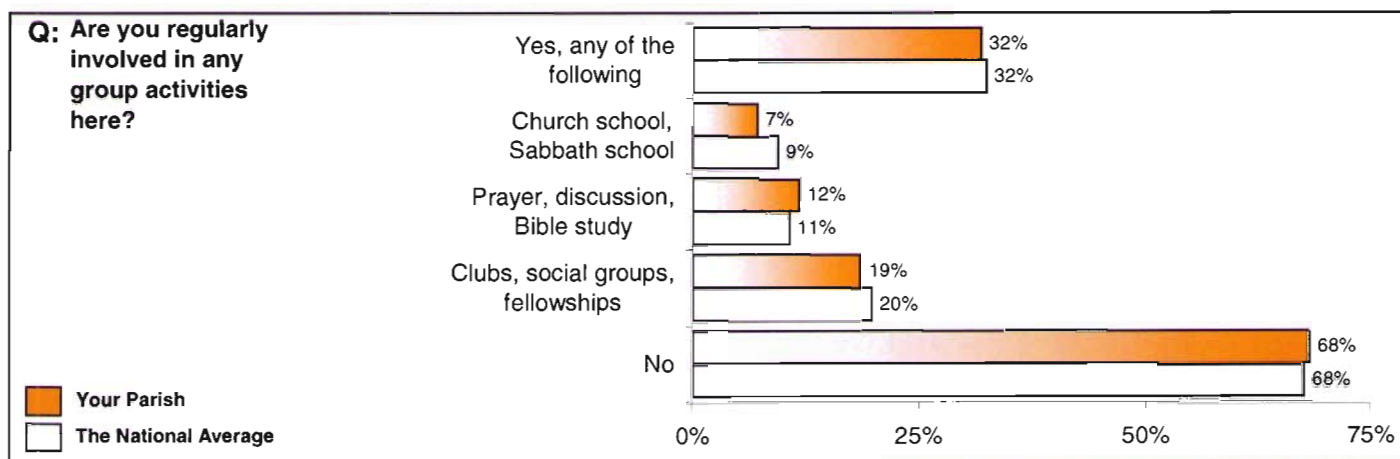
- ✓ What are your parish's strengths in nurturing the spiritual lives of those who attend here?
- ✓ What faith connections require new wiring?
- ✓ What can your parish offer to meet the spiritual needs of those who are not attending worship anywhere?
- ✓ How can your parish build on its spiritual strengths?



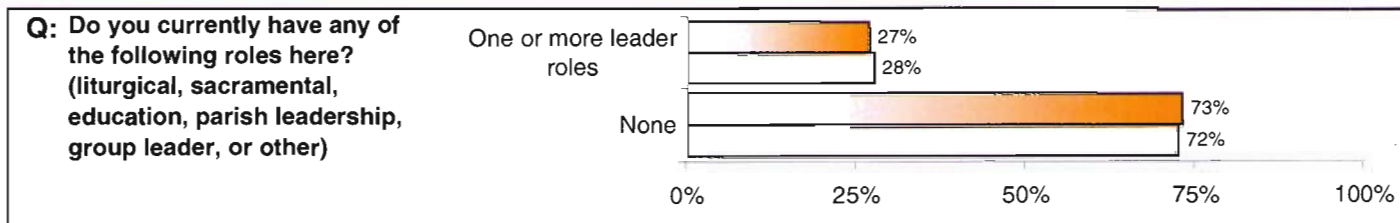
## Building Inside Connections

Worshipers connect with others in the parish through group activities (such as church school, prayer and study groups, and fellowships or clubs), serving in leadership roles, and financial support.

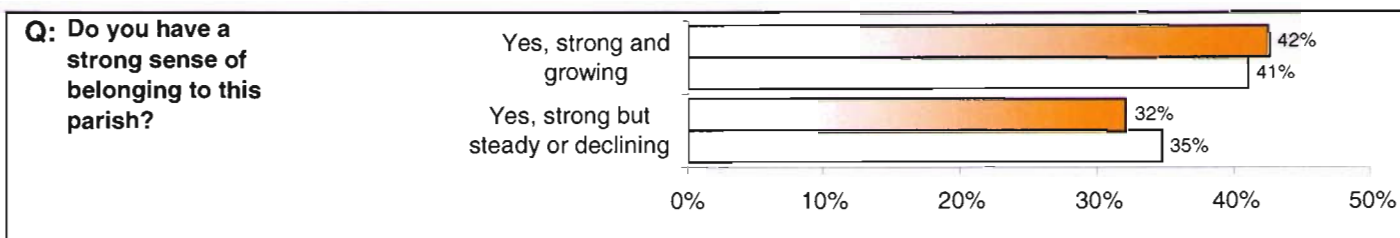
- 1 Involving Worshipers.** How are worshipers involved in your parish? Overall, 32% of your worshipers join in small group activities. Some take part in group activities like Sunday school, church school, or Sabbath school (7%); prayer, discussion, or Bible study groups (12%); or fellowships, clubs, or other social groups (19%). Your parish's percentage is about the same as the national average where 32% engage in some small group activity.



- 2 Involving Leaders.** How many worshipers serve in leadership roles in your parish? 27% hold at least one leadership position in your congregation (such as liturgical, education, parish leadership, group leader, etc.). About 28% of worshipers across the U.S. serve as leaders.



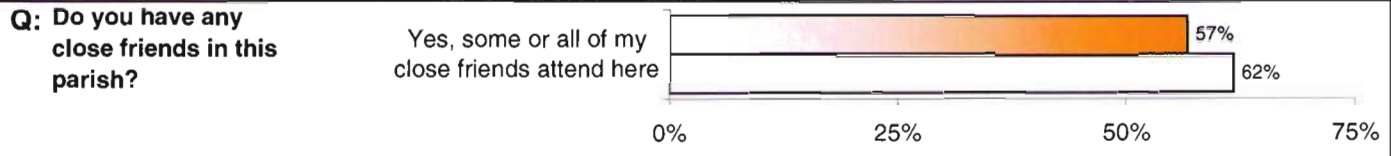
- 3 Belonging Here.** Do worshipers in your parish feel like they belong? 74% report a strong sense of belonging to your parish, which is about the same as in the typical congregation. 42% in your parish said this sense of belonging has been growing, and 32% said it was steady or declining.



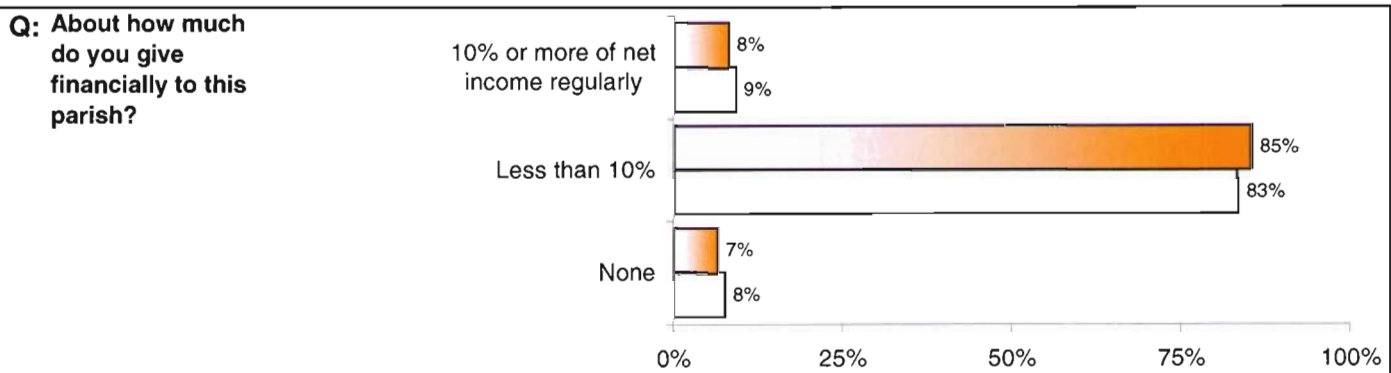


## Building Inside Connections

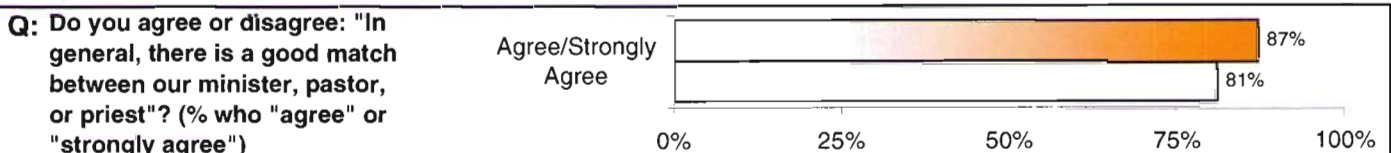
- 4 Making Friends.** Are worshippers developing friendships with others in your parish? About 57% of your worshippers say some or all of their close friends attend there. This is not typical of the national picture where 62% of worshippers say they have some close friends in their congregation.



- 5 Giving.** Financial support connects people to the parish and its mission. In your parish, 93% make financial contributions including 8% who regularly give 10% or more of their net income to your parish. Nationally, 92% of worshippers make financial contributions, and 9% give 10% or more of their net income.



- 6 Being a Team.** Do worshippers feel there is a connection between leaders and worshippers in your parish? Nearly all worshippers in your parish (87%) agree with the statement "In general, there is a good match between our congregation and our minister, pastor, or priest." Across all worshippers in the U.S., about 81% agree with this statement.



## Making the Connections

Review the six inside connections in your parish and consider these discovery questions for group discussion:

- ✓ What are your parish's strengths in this area?
- ✓ What connections inside your walls need attention and maintenance?
- ✓ How can your parish build on its relationship strengths?





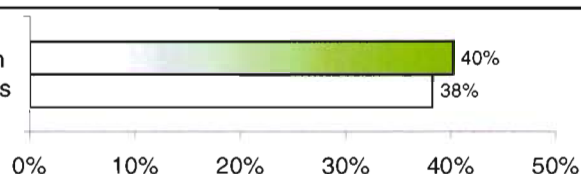
## Building Outside Connections

How does your parish connect to the community and non-members? Outside Connections consist of inviting others to attend, caring for neighbors, and welcoming new people.

- 1 Inviting Others.** Do your worshipers invite others to attend Mass? In the past 12 months, 40% invited a friend or relative who does not attend a congregation to your worship services. This is about the same as the average congregation where 38% asked someone to attend worship services.

**Q: Would you be prepared to invite to a Mass here any of your friends and relatives who do not now go to church?**

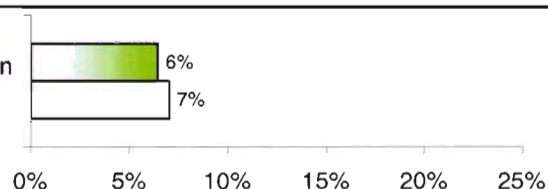
Yes, and did so in the past 12 months



- 2 Reaching Out.** How many worshipers contribute to your parish's outreach or evangelization efforts? In your parish, 6% join in these types of activities to reach out to the wider community. This percentage is similar to the national picture where 7% report being involved in evangelism or outreach activities.

**Q: Do you regularly take part in any activities of this parish that reach out to the wider community?**

Yes, in evangelization or outreach activities



- 3 Your Parish's Inviting Activities.** From a list of 14 possible activities, a typical congregation reports using 6 strategies to reach out to non-members in the previous year. The most common strategies are encouraging people in the congregation to invite someone new, mailing a letter to visitors, and mailing newsletters or flyers. Your parish listed 8 outreach strategies: placing an ad in the phone book, mailing newsletters, keeping a web site for the congregation, encouraging members to invite new people, trying to contact people new to the area, holding a neighborhood activity, placing a paper ad, and having a committee to recruit new members.

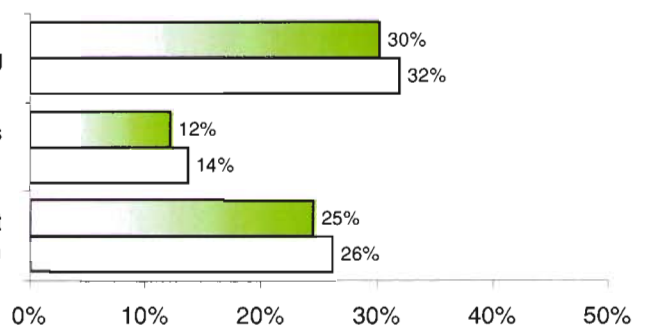
- 4 Serving the Community.** Are your worshipers involved in any community service, social justice, or advocacy activities? 30% of your worshipers take part in service or advocacy activities. Some join in community service activities organized through your congregation (12% in your parish take part in such groups). Some of your worshipers (25%) participate in social service or advocacy groups not connected to your parish. This is about the same as the national average for all U.S. worshipers where 14% overall get involved in service or advocacy through their parish, and 26% serve their communities through groups not connected to their parish.

**Q: Are you involved in any community service, social service, or advocacy groups?**

Yes, any of the following

Yes, through activities of this parish

Yes, through groups not connected to this parish

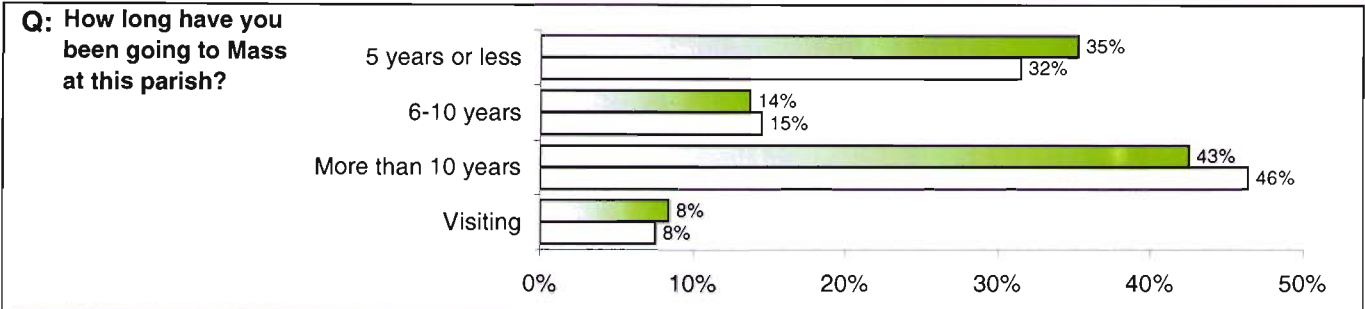




## Building Outside Connections

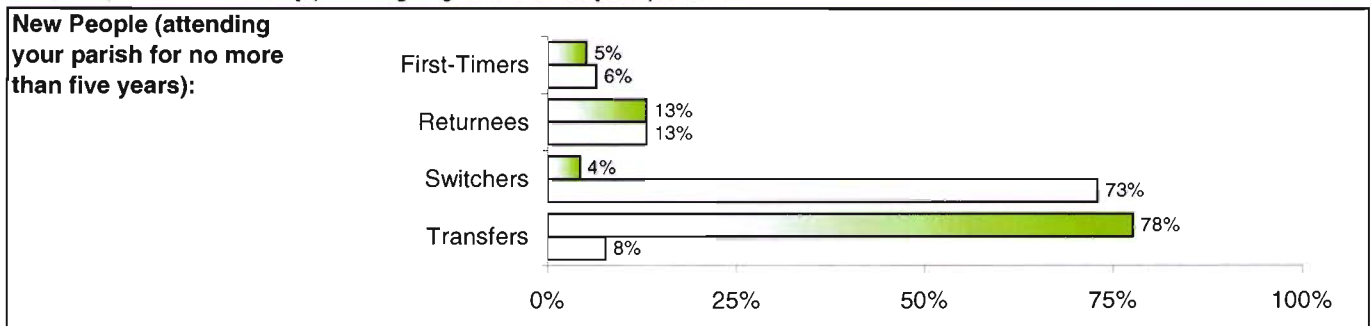
5

**Welcoming New People.** How many new people attend Mass in your parish? About 35% of those attending your parish's Masses have been coming for 5 years or less. Nationally, about 32% of all worshipers report attending 5 years or less. Visitors make up 8% of your worshipers. This compares to a national average of 8% of worshipers who are visitors.



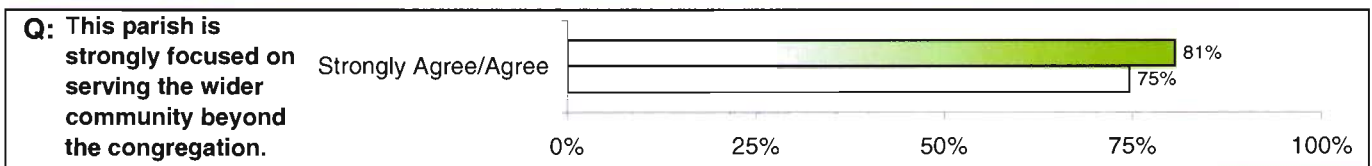
6

**Knowing New People.** What type of faith background is typical of the new people in your parish? New people (those attending five years or less) come from 4 different faith backgrounds: *first-timers* (5% in your parish), those who have never regularly attended anywhere; *returnees* (13%), those who are coming back after not attending anywhere for several years; *switchers* (4%), those who participated in another congregation with a different faith tradition; and *transfers* (78%), those who were participating in another Catholic parish immediately prior to going to church at your parish.



7

**Serving Others.** Do worshipers feel the parish is focused on serving others in the community? Nearly all worshipers describe the parish as strongly focused on serving the wider community beyond the congregation.



## Making the Connections

Review the seven connections with people and the community outside your parish and consider these discovery questions for group discussion:

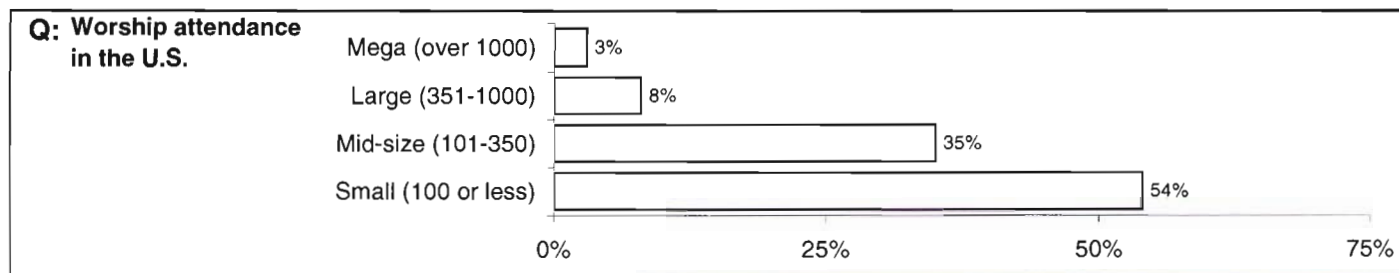
- ✓ What are your parish's strengths in the areas of social care, evangelization, and advocacy?
- ✓ Is your focus what you expected it to be?
- ✓ Are there gaps in your community connections? What walls do you need to break down or open up?



## Building Identity Connections

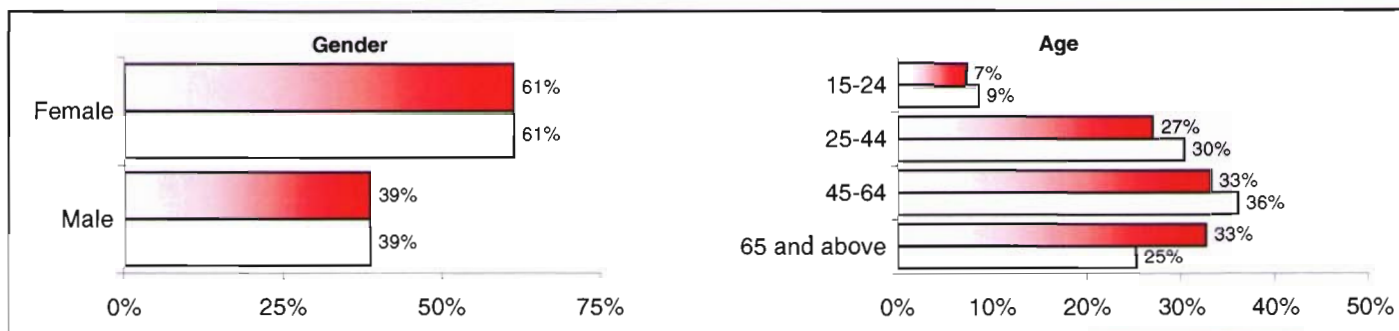
Worshipers have an individual identity based on their age, education, and other factors. Worshipers also have a congregational identity that includes what they value and their dreams for the congregation's future.

- 1 Your Size.** Small congregations dot the landscape, but most worshipers find themselves in large congregations. Your parish is mega with an average of 3250 attendees. The chart below shows where your congregation fits in the size picture of all congregations.



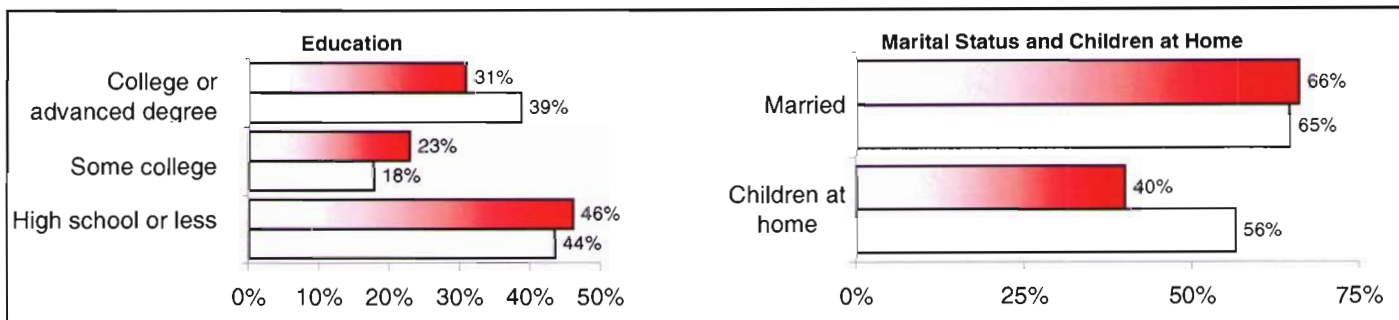
- 2 Your Gender Profile.** Who makes up your parish? There are fewer men (39%) than women (61%) in most congregations. Women outnumber men in your parish (61% are women).

- 3 Your Age Profile.** In most congregations, those aged 45-64 make up the largest group (36%). The average age of worshipers in your parish is 53. This is older than the national average of 51. People in the age range of 45-64 comprise the largest age group in your parish.



- 4 Your Educational Background.** Worshipers in the U.S. tend to be well-educated. The U.S. Census shows that about 23% of people across the country hold at least a college degree. Among worshipers, the figure is 39%. In your parish, 31% report a college or graduate degree.

- 5 Your Household Types.** Most worshipers in America are married, and this is true in your parish as well. Overall, 56% of worshipers have children living at home, more than the results in your parish (40%). Again, worshipers differ from typical Americans. The U.S. Census indicates that only 52% of the population in this country are currently married, and about 33% have children living at home.







## Building Identity Connections

6

**What You Value.** What does your parish value? Your worshipers most value Holy Communion, preaching and homilies, traditional worship or music, contemporary worship or music, and reaching the unchurched.

**Q: Which of the following aspects of this parish do you personally most value?**

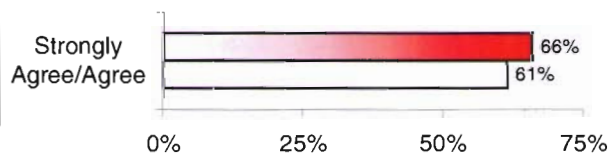
(Mark up to three responses.) Responses for your congregation:

Holy Communion . . . . .	63%	Openness to diversity . . . . .	13%
Preaching and homilies . . . . .	29%	Care for one another . . . . .	13%
Traditional worship or music . . . . .	27%	Ministry for children or youth . . . . .	12%
Contemporary worship or music . . . . .	21%	Bible study groups . . . . .	11%
Reaching the unchurched . . . . .	18%	Social activities . . . . .	9%
Congregation's school/pre-school . . . . .	17%	Adult education . . . . .	7%
Wider community care . . . . .	14%	Prayer ministry . . . . .	6%

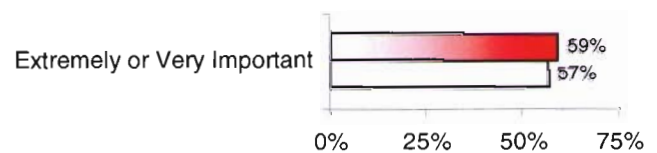
7

**Seeing Possibilities.** How strong is the sense of community in your parish? Most worshipers (66%) feel the parish has grown in unity and strength in the past year. Another sign of community is the number of people who see the parish as important in their life. Many worshipers in your parish (59%) describe the parish community as extremely or very important in their life.

**In the past year, we have grown in unity and strength as a parish community.**



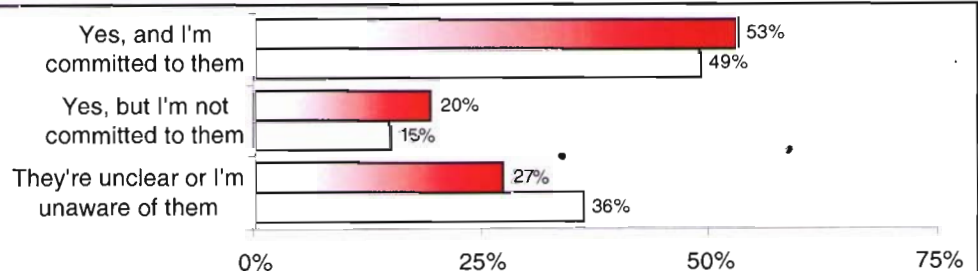
**How important is this parish in your life?**



8

**Committing to the Future.** Does your parish claim a clear vision, goals, or direction for its ministry and mission? Most worshipers in your parish believe there is a clear vision or direction for the future (73% say yes). However, several are not sure that the vision is clear or that it exists (27%). The national average shows that most worshipers believe their congregation has a clear vision for the future (64%).

**Q: Does this parish have a clear vision, goals, or direction for its ministry and mission?**



## Making the Connections

Review the eight identity connections in your congregation and consider these discovery questions for group discussion:

- ✓ Who are you as a parish? Who can you become?
- ✓ How do these pictures compare to how you like to think of your parish?
- ✓ Are you having an identity crisis?
- ✓ How can you build on the strengths of your identity?