



Secretariat for Family, Laity, Women, and Youth

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September 6, 2002

Dear Brother Bishops:

This past year the Committee on the Laity conducted a survey on the internet asking lay Catholics in the US how parishes could better help them integrate their faith with their daily lives. Over 59,000 lay people responded to the survey. Enclosed you will find a copy of our final report, *Lay Perspectives on Parish Life*.

Throughout this process, our Committee has come to reaffirm the value of consulting with the lay faithful in addressing issues that are at the core of our lives as a church community. We received many helpful suggestions and constructive feedback from the laity which I would like to share with you through this report.

Of special interest is the high priority that lay people gave to the topic of adult faith formation and education. We bishops have been convinced of the importance of formation and education for adult Catholics for a long time, as is evidenced by our official statements. This survey shows that quite a large number of lay Catholics also see this as a vital need.

To make the final report most helpful, our Committee has included not only a summary of the responses, but also a theological/pastoral reflection on the results. In addition, for each of the 32 topic areas, we have listed the "top-ten" most helpful suggestions received from the laity. A copy of the report will be posted in the near future on the internet at: www.usccb.org/laity/laysurvey/summary.htm

To assist you in utilizing the information in this report, I would like to offer a few suggestions. The report could be used as background for pastoral visits to individual parishes. It could be used as material for a clergy convocation and also for diocesan ministry days. Parts of it could be utilized for talks and articles you may wish to prepare. The report could be shared with your diocesan pastoral council, with deanery councils, and with the diocesan staff in each of the relevant areas. The survey could also be utilized by parish staff and pastoral councils who may wish to conduct the survey within their own parish and use it for future planning and discussion. In addition, the report could be used for discussion at provincial or regional meetings.

We are very grateful indeed to have such energetic, faithful and dedicated laity who want to work together with us in fulfilling our common mission as church. I hope you find this report useful as you continue to dialogue with the lay faithful in your dioceses.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend John J. McRaith
Chairman, Committee on the Laity

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Committee on Women in Society & in the Church •
Subcommittee on Lay Ministry • Subcommittee on Youth & Young Adults
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Committee on the Laity

UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS



Lay Perspectives on Parish Life

Report of the Internet-Based Lay Survey

conducted by the Bishops' Committee on the Laity

on the Question:

***How can your parish
better help you integrate your faith
with your daily life?***

September 6, 2002

**Committee on the Laity
United States Conference
of Catholic Bishops**

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Words from the Chair

The Second Vatican Council clearly and vigorously encouraged the participation of the laity in the life of the Church. Subsequent documents from the Holy See and our own Bishops' Conference have continued to encourage the rights and responsibilities of the laity. As Vatican II noted, we as bishops need to



Recognize and promote the dignity as well as the responsibility of the laity in the Church; [to] willingly employ their prudent advice; [to] confidently assign duties to them in the service of the Church, allowing them freedom and room for action; [to] encourage lay people so that they may undertake tasks on their own initiative; . . . [and to consider] the projects, suggestions and desires proposed by the laity." (*Lumen Gentium*, 37)

I believe that the broad response to our recent Lay Survey demonstrates how this teaching is being realized.

At the end of the recent Jubilee Year, Pope John Paul II issued an apostolic letter, *Novo Millennio ineunte*, in which he urged Catholics to develop a spirituality of communion. In this letter, he writes,

The theology and spirituality of communion encourage a fruitful dialogue between Pastors and faithful: on the one hand uniting them "a priori" in all that is essential, and on the other leading them to pondered agreement in matters open to discussion.

To this end, we need to make our own the ancient pastoral wisdom which, without prejudice to their authority, encouraged Pastors to listen more widely to the entire People of God. . . Saint Paulinus of Nola urges: 'Let us listen to what all the faithful say, because in every one of them the Spirit of God breathes.' (*Novo Millennio ineunte*, 45)

I am grateful that we have had such an experience of listening through the Lay Survey and I pray that this experience and its results will be part of the ongoing conversation and collaboration between clergy and laity for many years to come, in the spirit of communion.

Bishop John J. McRaith
Diocese of Owensboro
Chair, Committee on the Laity

Introduction

From Ash Wednesday, February 28, till May 13, 2001, the Committee on the Laity conducted an online survey in English and Spanish. Catholic lay people were invited to fill out a questionnaire addressing how their parishes could better help them integrate their faith with their daily lives.



The parish is the community where lay Catholics participate together as church. As Pope John Paul II said in his Apostolic Exhortation, *Christifideles Laici*, "The parish is not principally a structure, a territory, or a building, but rather 'the family of God', 'a fellowship afire with a unifying spirit', 'a familial and welcoming home', [and] the 'community of the faithful' (26)." It is this community of faith which is key in helping Catholics respond to their baptismal call. For this reason, the survey focused on parish life.

The survey was not intended to serve as an evaluation of individual parishes or of U.S. parish life in general. Rather, the purpose of the survey was to help the Committee understand national trends and solicit suggestions on how parish life and ministries can better help lay Catholics in fulfilling their mission in the world. The Committee received many, many responses from the laity and is very grateful for all of the feedback.

Some respondents have asked for permission to use this survey within their parish for discussion. If you would like to utilize the survey for your own use within your parish, a copy is available on the Bishops' Conference website at www.usccb.org/laity/laysurvey/summary.htm and also in Chapter VII.

Many people asked for Catholic resources on the internet, especially for resources to help with adult faith formation. In response, the Bishops Conference website has added a list of accredited Catholic colleges, universities, seminaries, and theologates which currently offer classes or programs in theology, ministry or religion via distance learning. Distance learning can include classes offered utilizing the internet, e-mail, correspondence, or offered at remote locations. The list can be found at www.usccb.org/laity/laysurvey/schools.htm.

We invite you to visit the Bishops' Conference website, www.usccb.org, and its many resources. Some of the statements you may want to read are: *Called and Gifted for the Third Millennium*, *Everyday Christianity: To Hunger and Thirst for Justice* and *Our Hearts Were Burning Within Us: A Pastoral Plan for Adult Faith Formation in the United States* which identifies the categories used in this survey. You also may be interested in the daily readings available at www.usccb.org/nab.



OVERVIEW - SURVEY DESCRIPTION

The lay survey invited the laity to identify those items which were *important* for their parish to *improve* as they seek to integrate their faith with their daily lives. By design, the survey took the approach of soliciting as much input from the laity as was possible. Since all laity were invited to participate, rather than just a random sampling, statistically representative data was not an expected outcome. The goal was to seek qualitative data, rather than quantitative data. In addition, breaking with the normal pattern of surveys of large populations which ask closed-ended questions, this survey specifically invited an open-ended response to each question. Although this made the analysis of the results much more time-consuming, the richness of the responses made this approach well worth the time investment.



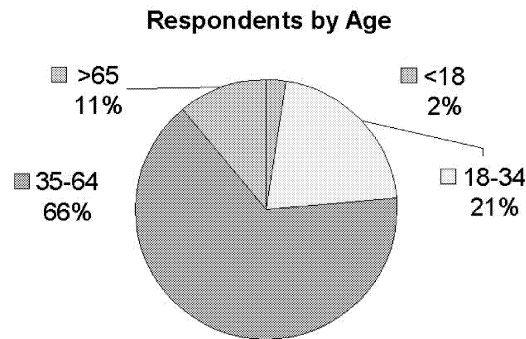
One feature of the survey is that it did not seek to do a comprehensive evaluation of parish life. Instead, the survey asked the respondents to focus only on what was important to them in helping them integrate their faith with their daily lives. Even more specifically, the survey asked the respondents to indicate only those important items which needed improvement. Thus, an important item that is doing well and needs no improvement would not necessarily show up in the survey. Similarly, an aspect of parish life that is not important for the respondent would also not show up, regardless of whether that item was being treated well or not at all. This approach was purposely planned by the Bishops' Committee on the Laity. It enabled the laity to identify to the bishops those areas needing most attention at that time in the life of the Church in the U.S.

In addition to gathering demographic data, the survey sought suggestions in 32 areas of parish life which were grouped into six categories: 1) Knowledge of the Faith, 2) Liturgical Life, 3) Moral Formation, 4) Prayer, 5) Communal Life, and 6) Missionary Spirit. These six categories were taken from the Bishops' statement, "*Our Hearts Were Burning Within Us: A Pastoral Plan for Adult Faith Formation in the United States.*" For each question which a respondent identified as being important and needing improvement, the respondent was invited to offer suggestions as to how to improve this area within their parish.

WHO RESPONDED

A total of 59,208 people responded to the Lay Survey. In general, the respondents were very active in their parishes. 89% of the individual respondents attend mass at least once a week, with 24% attending more than once a week. Weekly mass attendance for respondents is clearly much higher than the general Catholic population in the U.S. where estimates are usually in the 35 to 40% range. In addition, 32% of the respondents participate in parish leadership. A very large percentage of the respondents, 83%, volunteer at their parish in some form. In addition, 64% indicated that they frequently attend parish programs. Generally, it can be said that the respondents were motivated to complete the survey and to share their opinions. Many expressed gratitude at being asked for their opinions. It was obvious that the questions were taken seriously and many thoughtful answers and helpful suggestions were provided.

Two-thirds of respondents were in the 35 to 64 year-old age bracket. See Figure 1.

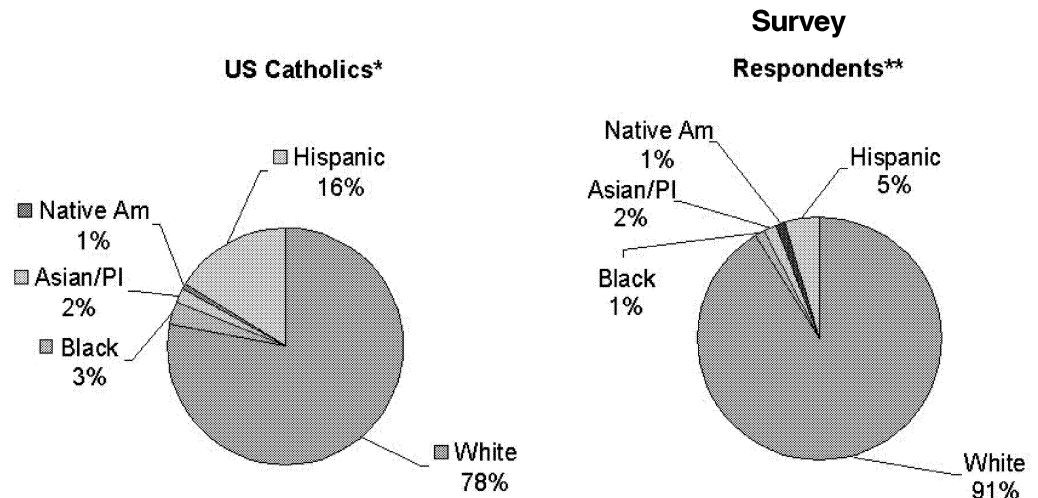


Approximately 21% were young adults (18 to 34) and 11% were seniors (65 and older). Two percent of the respondents were under 18.

With respect to gender, 59% were female and 41% were male.

FIGURE 1

Of the respondents identifying their ethnic/racial background, 91% were White, 5% were Hispanic, 2% were Asian/Pacific Islander, 1% was Black and 1% was American Indian, Eskimo or Aleut. See Figure 2.



*US Catholic data from CARA's Catholic Poll 2000, as quoted in Catholicism USA (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2000).
 **Calculations for Respondents include only those individuals who selected one or more categories.

FIGURE 2
 Ethnic / Racial Background

When these percentages are compared to statistical data culled by CARA, it is apparent that those self-identified as White are over-representative of the Catholic population in the U.S.; while those self-identified as Black or Hispanic are under-represented.

Of individuals responding to the survey, 34% had attended Catholic grade school, 25% had attended Catholic high school, almost 20% had attended a Catholic college and 22% had attended CCD / religious education classes. Only individual respondents, and not group respondents, were asked this question, so actual results are expected to be higher. See Figure 3.

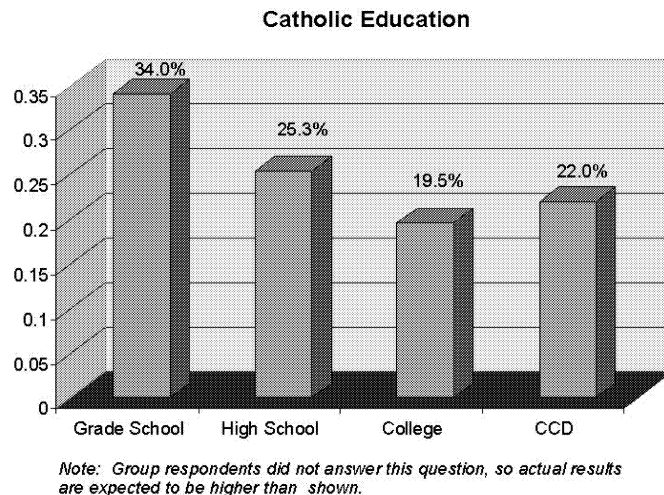


FIGURE 3

Of the 59,208 respondents, 53% filled out the survey as individuals; whereas, 47% completed the survey within groups. Those who did work on the survey in groups transmitted one survey representing the group consensus. See Figure 4.

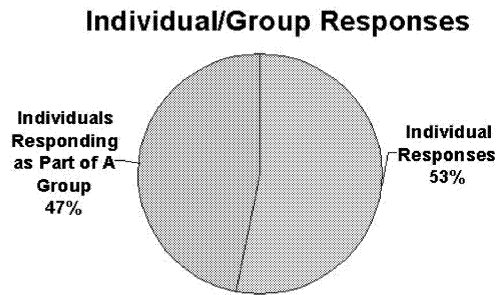


FIGURE 4

Completing the survey in a group had the benefit of providing a forum for discussion of the questions before finalizing an answer. In addition, this enabled many people who did not have ready-access to the internet to also participate in the survey. Groups varied in size. Many groups had 2 or 3 people. Others had a slightly larger number of respondents, usually 6 through 10. A few groups were much larger, including groups of 20, 50, 100, 220, and over 500 participants. Some pastors indicated that they utilized the survey within the parish and then the results were submitted as a group. In fact, even after the survey period ended, additional parishes continue to use the survey as a tool for self-knowledge within the parish community.

Lay Catholics responded from every single state in the U.S., as well as from the U.S. Virgin Islands. Nearly 500 US Catholics who live abroad also responded. Figure 5 gives a breakdown of the number of respondents from each state. The second column indicates the percentage (and number) of respondents from that state. The third column takes into account the Catholic population of the state based on data from the *2000 Kenedy Directory* and identifies what percentage of Catholics from that state responded. The states having the highest number of respondents were Texas (with 7,446 respondents), Pennsylvania, California, New York, New Jersey, Florida, and Michigan. States having the highest percentage of Catholics within the state responding were Maryland, Alabama, Tennessee, Virginia, Montana, North Dakota, South Carolina, and Iowa.

FIGURE 5: Survey Respondents by State

State	% (#) of Respondents from State	% of Catholics in State who responded
TX	12.87% (7446)	0.16%
PA	11.14% (6445)	0.19%
CA	7.57% (4379)	0.05%
NY	7.27% (4207)	0.06%
NJ	6.89% (3988)	0.12%
FL	5.41% (3132)	0.15%
MI	4.02% (2326)	0.10%
MD	3.93% (2273)	0.47%
IL	3.62% (2094)	0.05%
OH	3.33% (1928)	0.09%
VA	2.80% (1619)	0.30%
AZ	2.37% (1372)	0.19%
IA	2.36% (1363)	0.25%
WI	2.24% (1298)	0.08%
IN	1.69% (976)	0.13%
MN	1.65% (956)	0.08%
MO	1.41% (816)	0.11%
LA	1.30% (754)	0.06%
MA	1.29% (746)	0.03%
GA	1.27% (735)	0.19%
WA	1.11% (641)	0.10%
TN	0.97% (563)	0.32%
CT	0.91% (526)	0.04%
NC	0.88% (510)	0.19%
ND	0.87% (503)	0.29%
Outside US	0.81% (468)	N/A
OR	0.78% (452)	0.14%
CO	0.74% (428)	0.08%
KS	0.69% (401)	0.10%
MT	0.62% (361)	0.29%
NH	0.58% (335)	0.10%
SC	0.56% (324)	0.26%
ID	0.42% (244)	0.19%
AL	0.41% (235)	0.31%
ME	0.38% (218)	0.10%
OK	0.34% (196)	0.13%
RI	0.33% (193)	0.03%
DC	0.33% (191)	0.04%
NM	0.30% (176)	0.04%
DE	0.29% (169)	0.09%
VT	0.27% (157)	0.11%
SD	0.22% (126)	0.08%
WV	0.22% (125)	0.12%
AR	0.21% (124)	0.14%

MS	0.20%	(118)	0.10%
AK	0.18%	(102)	0.19%
NV	0.16%	(90)	0.02%
WY	0.12%	(71)	0.15%
HI	0.12%	(71)	0.03%
UT	0.08%	(47)	0.05%
Virgin Is	0.01%	(8)	-

WHAT THE LAITY SAID

The 32 survey topics have been ranked by the laity who responded to the survey. The responses are listed below in priority order. The top ten suggestions for each of these topics are included in Chapter V. A copy of the survey is included in Chapter VII.

By far, the top four topics selected most by respondents as needing improvement involved Knowledge of the Faith.

1) 41,177 respondents (69.5%) indicated
"It is important to me that my parish improve its adult faith formation/adult education."

2) 39,297 respondents (66.4%) indicated
"It is important to me that my parish improve how it supports parents in passing on their faith to their children."

3) 39,006 respondents (65.9%) indicated
"It is important to me that my parish improve how it helps me to understand more about Catholic teaching, including teaching about social justice."

4) 36,569 respondents (61.8%) indicated
"It is important to me that my parish improve how it helps me to deepen my understanding of the Bible."

The next three topics identified in priority order involved the Liturgical Life of the parish.

5) 33,148 respondents (56%) indicated
"It is important to me that my parish improve how it celebrates Sunday liturgy."

6) 32,201 respondents (54.4%) indicated
"It is important to me that my parish improve its preaching at Mass and other liturgies."

7) 31,384 respondents (53%) indicated

"It is important to me that my parish improve opportunities for active participation of the community in worship."

The next topic selected involved Communal Life.

8) 30,049 respondents (50.8%) indicated
"It is important to me that my parish improve how it builds community within the parish by providing ways for people to get to know others who share their beliefs and values."

The next six topics alternated between Prayer and Moral Formation.

9) 29,383 respondents (49.6%) indicated
"It is important to me that my parish improve how it helps me deepen my relationship with God."

10) 29,206 respondents (49.3%) indicated
"It is important to me that my parish improve how it helps me discern my vocation or profession in life."

11) 27,927 respondents (47.2%) indicated
"It is important to me that my parish improve how it helps me to pray as an individual."

12) 27,776 respondents (46.9%) indicated
"It is important to me that my parish improve how it helps me connect my faith with my daily life."

13) 26,962 respondents (45.5%) indicated
"It is important to me that my parish improve how it promotes learning various ways of praying."

14) 26,845 respondents (45.3%) indicated
"It is important to me that my parish improve how it helps me to pray as part of a community."

The next topic focused on Missionary Spirit:

15) 26,529 respondents (44.8%) indicated
"It is important to me that my parish improve its outreach to inactive Catholics."

The remaining topics alternated among the various categories.

16) 25,689 respondents (43.4%) indicated
"It is important to me that my parish improve how it helps people, especially newcomers, to feel welcome."

17) 25,550 respondents (43.2%) indicated

"It is important to me that my parish improve how it celebrates sacramental reconciliation."

18) 25,150 respondents (42.5%) indicated
"It is important to me that my parish improve how it helps me make important moral decisions in my personal life at work or at home."

19) 23,407 respondents (39.5%) indicated
"It is important to me that my parish improve the way it supports and encourages lay persons to serve as members of parish staffs, school teachers, and other formal church ministry positions."

20) 22,660 respondents (38.3%) indicated
"It is important to me that my parish improve its outreach and ministry to the poor, the hungry and/or the homeless."

21) 22,621 respondents (38.2%) indicated
"It is important to me that my parish improve opportunities and training for liturgical ministers (e.g., lectors, ministers to the homebound, hospitality ministers)."

22) 22,611 respondents (38.2%) indicated
"It is important to me that my parish improve stewardship within the parish, by inviting parishioners to use their talents and gifts for the common good."

23) 21,979 respondents (37.1%) indicated
"It is important to me that my parish improve how it helps couples grow in their commitment to married life."

24) 20,855 respondents (35.2%) indicated
"It is important to me that my parish improve how it evangelizes by helping parishioners to share the Good News with others."

25) 20,103 respondents (34%) indicated
"It is important to me that my parish improve how it promotes respect for life from conception to natural death."

26) 19,535 respondents (33%) indicated
"It is important to me that my parish improve the way it supports and encourages vocations to the priesthood and religious life."

27) 19,156 respondents (32.4%) indicated
"It is important to me that my parish improve how it promotes opportunities for service."

28) 18,983 respondents (32.1%) indicated
"It is important to me that my parish improve how it encourages participation in parish planning, councils and committees."

29) 18,119 respondents (30.6%) indicated

"It is important to me that my parish improve how it affirms and promotes the cultural, racial and ethnic diversity of parishioners and parish leaders."

30) 17,321 respondents (29.3%) indicated

"It is important to me that my parish improve how it prepares for and celebrates the following sacraments: Infant Baptism, First Penance, First Eucharist, Confirmation and/or Marriage."

31) 17,196 respondents (29%) indicated

"It is important to me that my parish improve leadership of the parish (both clergy and lay).

32) 15,410 respondents (26%) indicated

"It is important to me that my parish improve its RCIA process (initiation of adults)."

It should be noted that if a topic was selected least by the laity, this is not necessarily a negative indication. This could mean that the topic area is not as important as others. Or it could mean that even though it is important, the parish is already doing an excellent job in this area. Or it could be a combination of these reasons. What should be noted, however, is that for the respondents, the topics given high priority are those needing increased attention by the parish and the bishops.

After indicating the importance of the 32 areas described above, respondents were invited to indicate "What else could your parish do to help you better live your call as a Christian in the world?" and, "What is the best thing that your parish is already doing that helps you live out your call as a Christian in the world?"

Finally, respondents were asked, "What could you do specifically to help your parish better address some of the needs which are important for you?" Many suggestions were received for this last question. One parishioner indicated that he was sorry that he had written so many suggestions for the previous questions, because now he realized that he needed to take responsibility for starting to implement some of the ideas. A sampling of the responses to this question has been grouped into the six categories and is available in Chapter VII.

A Theological / Pastoral Reflection

To help understand the many suggestions received, the Committee on the Laity prepared a theological / pastoral reflection on the survey. It offers some ideas about the theological and pastoral significance of the responses.

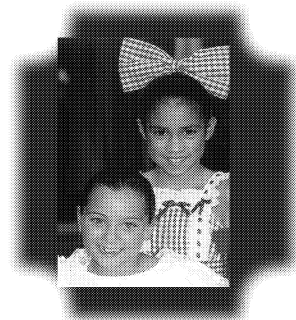
The sheer number of responses to the lay survey shows that the Church in the United States is very much alive and vibrant. The incredibly broad range of the responses shows that many Catholics do take great interest in the life and mission of the Church. It also shows how high are the expectations that Catholics have regarding the Church. Nowhere is this more clearly demonstrated than in the resounding response to the first issue, adult faith formation and education (selected by 41,177 respondents).

A reflection on the results of the survey can be focused on three themes: Church, Liturgy and Formation of Lay Ecclesial Ministers. The vast majority of concerns expressed in the responses can be gathered under these headings. It is obvious from the responses that Catholics vary considerably in their understanding of the Church and its tradition. This points again to the issue of adult faith formation. The responses also verify the centrality of liturgy, especially the Eucharist, in the lives of Catholics. And finally the responses and the needs of Catholics for adult formation and solid liturgical experience point to further development of lay ecclesial ministries.



CHURCH

A review of the responses in general reflects what anyone who has been involved in ministry on a parish and diocesan level will have heard from people or read in popular periodicals. All the positive developments of recent years, all the disappointments and criticisms, all of the hopes and recommendations that have been and continue to be voiced are to be found in the responses. The fact that all the respondents see themselves as Catholic, though their responses cover such a broad range, demonstrates the remarkable ability of the Church to hold together the variety of theological and pastoral approaches within the unity of the



essentials of the Catholic tradition.

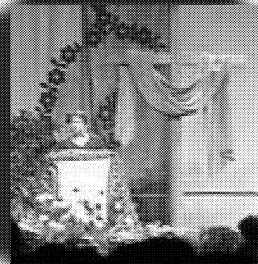
The results of such a survey as this can be an occasion for the celebration of debate within the Church as well as a call to patience and understanding in the midst of debate. More than a hundred years ago, Cardinal Newman, reflecting on the phenomenon of constant debate throughout the history of the Church, described Catholics as being “brought together as if into some moral factory, for the melting, refining, and moulding, by an incessant noisy process, of the raw material of human nature, so excellent, so dangerous, so capable of divine purposes.” (*Apologia pro Vita Sua*, 1873, Chapter V).

Not all the responses, however, have equal validity or equal urgency, because not all the participants in the debate are equally grounded in the tradition of the Church or aware of the challenges from contemporary culture that the Church faces. Here is where the issues of the knowledge of the faith and formation come into play. There is no question, however, that Catholics are looking for such knowledge and formation (cf. the responses to 1A-1D and 3A-3E). A further example would be the number of responses regarding the parish as helping people to pray as a community (26,845) and as individuals (27,927). Parishes need to continue developing programs of ongoing education and formation. They need to be schools of prayer, as Pope John Paul II has urged, developing a spirituality of communion (cf. *Novo Millennio ineunte*, nos. 33 and 43). It is within this spirituality of communion that parishioners can develop habits for constructive dialogue and collaboration through consultative structures presently envisioned by Canon Law (cf. *NMI*, no.45).

LITURGY

Since liturgy is the highest form of the Church’s prayer and its most important formative action, it is necessary to look at issues regarding liturgy that emerged from the survey.

It is obvious that people want good liturgy, especially Eucharist. Following the large number of responses regarding how the parish celebrates Sunday liturgy (33,148) comes the number of responses regarding preaching (32,201). However, preaching comes up very frequently in other responses to the survey and thus it merits particular attention, especially because it is also very closely linked to the thirst for formation and knowledge that is so often expressed in the survey and that is revealed in its urgency by the lack of familiarity on the part of some respondents regarding the Catholic tradition in its fullness. More effective preaching can also create greater harmony and consensus among Catholics on issues within the Church and outside.



The Sunday homily needs the greatest attention, since that is the time of contact with the largest number of Catholics on a regular basis. Three aspects of the homily perhaps respond most effectively to needs expressed in the survey.

- 1) Homilies should appeal to the imagination. Like the Scriptures, homilies should be rich in images. Images serve many functions, but two of them are particularly relevant in light of the survey. First of all, images can foster unity. Images have a way of rallying people and so can bring together people of varying views into a consensus on action and in thought. Therefore - and secondly - images can motivate. A striking image can move people's hearts into action. The Scriptures themselves are an infinite source of images for the homilist.
- 2) Homilies should be formative. People want formation (cf. especially the responses to 3A, 3B, 3E, 4A-D, 6A-F). Formation ultimately means ongoing conversion of mind and heart leading to a daily life in ever greater conformity to the Gospel. The goal of the homily ultimately is this ongoing conversion, fired by appeals to the imagination and based on solid knowledge.
- 3) Homilies, therefore, should also be informative. People want to know what the Scriptures mean (cf. 1C), what the Eucharist is, what is the significance of the particular liturgical season, what is the teaching of the Church (cf. 1A, 1B and 1D, but also quite extensively throughout other responses). While the homily is not catechesis in the strict sense, there is room for imparting some information.

So many of the responses indicate the high expectations that Catholics have of the leadership and teaching of bishops and priests. This places an immense responsibility on them in their role as preachers, especially through the Sunday homily. It may seem ironic that this survey of the laity points strikingly to the role of clergy. But the importance that Catholics place on the Eucharist, homily, and formation affirms the role that bishops and priests have in these and the requirement that they be competent in fulfilling that role. What becomes all the more pressing is programs of ongoing formation for clergy to continue to develop this competence.

It is also clear that many Catholics want to be able to participate more actively in the Eucharist, although a number of responses indicate that at least some Catholics prefer to be more passive. This indicates the need for further education regarding liturgy. Many also expressed a desire for a greater sense of the sacred in liturgical celebration. This points again to the cultivation of parishes as schools of prayer for all - laity and clergy - so that a community of prayer brings that prayerfulness into its liturgical celebrations.

FORMATION OF LAY ECCLESIAL MINISTERS

The many responses regarding lay ministries (cf. 3D and 5F) indicate that there is also great need for further development of the formation of lay ecclesial ministers. (Lay ecclesial ministers are lay people serving in a formal leadership role in the name of the Church. See *Lay Ecclesial Ministry: The State of the Questions* for a more comprehensive description.) The demands of adult formation in parishes requires not only the efforts of clergy but also the work of well-trained laity. The survey leads to the conclusion that what is increasingly



imperative is a holistic and professional formation of lay people for service on the diocesan, inter-parochial and parochial level. By holistic is meant a formation that is human, spiritual, intellectual and pastoral. By professional is meant a formation that also leads to an academic degree. It is doubtful whether thirty-six credits for a master's degree in theology will be sufficient for the future or to respond to the needs expressed in the survey. In collaboration with priests and in

accord with the principles of "like-to-like" ministry, lay ecclesial ministers will need to be able to work with laity not only in teaching but also in spiritual formation, for which they will become competent only through a holistic formation which takes into account their own human and spiritual development.

The number of responses asking that the parish help couples grow in their commitment to married life (21,079) points to a particularly important and appropriate focus for lay ecclesial ministers. Many respondents also look to their parishes for guidance in order to be able to live out the Gospel in the context of their profession and work. Here too is an important area of focus for lay ecclesial ministers.

CONCLUSION

There are so many hopes and expectations expressed in the responses with regard to diversity, evangelization, justice, service and stewardship. The Church lives in parish communities and its vitality is enhanced by the vitality of parishes, which is made possible by their becoming schools of prayer with a spirituality of communion, strengthened by prayerful liturgy and superior preaching, and served by well-formed clergy and lay ecclesial ministers.

Lay Survey “Top Ten” Suggestions

The following is a list of the “top ten” helpful suggestions for each survey topic. These suggestions were selected because they were frequently mentioned. In addition, they are suggestions that could provide helpful considerations for a parish in assessing how it helps lay Catholics live out their call as Christians in the world. Although the topics are listed in order of importance to the survey respondents, The “top ten” are not listed in priority order.

1. To help me live out my call as a Christian in the world, it is important to me that my parish improve its adult faith formation/adult education: (Question 1A – Knowledge of the Faith)

- ⊕ Provide support from the pulpit encouraging and challenging parishioners to grow and mature in their faith.
- ⊕ Provide good quality, spiritually nourishing classes, lectures, or discussion groups on Sundays or in the evenings on subjects such as Catholic social teaching, church history, Vatican II, church teachings, and topics from the catechism. Offer Advent and Lenten programs. Coordinate with local seminaries and theology schools to offer low-cost continuing education classes or lectures.
- ⊕ Establish position for professional Director of Adult Formation at parish or deanery level. Give adult faith formation the same priority that is allotted to children. Provide resources and regularly scheduled and structured programs.
- ⊕ Sponsor programs for young adults including “Theology on Tap.”
- ⊕ Acknowledge the importance of single adults in parish communities. Offer programs to meet their needs.
- ⊕ Promote development of small faith communities.
- ⊕ Publicize programs and events being offered by neighboring parishes/diocese.

- ⊕ Look at new models of intergenerational learning and hire Director of Family Life to oversee adult and children's programs and ministries.
- ⊕ Offer retreats including the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola.
- ⊕ Provide resources in a parish library.

*2. To help me live out my call as a Christian in the world, it is important to me that my parish **improve how it supports parents in passing on their faith to their children:** (Question 1B – Knowledge of the Faith)*

- ⊕ Schedule evening and week-end faith formation programs rather than after-school; provide resources and support to home schooling families; make Catholic education more widely available through more schools and lower tuition.
- ⊕ Offer a variety of faith formation opportunities including intergenerational family faith formation programs, lectionary-based catechesis, Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, Vacation Bible School, and programs for children with special needs.
- ⊕ Promote better communication with parents through parent participation in classes, parent orientation sessions and meetings, and handout materials so that lessons can be reinforced at home.
- ⊕ Emphasize lifelong catechesis: provide adult faith formation including adult education, enrichment, and Bible study during children's class times; promote discussion groups; provide guidance to parents on what and how to teach the faith, on the different levels of faith development, and on how to live the faith at home (domestic church).
- ⊕ Provide resources for families: lending library of books, videos, and children's music; bulletin inserts or section on parenting tips; monthly parent newsletter; speakers; take-home materials with activities, stories, traditions, rituals, explanations, and devotions.
- ⊕ Provide total youth ministry programs that encompass faith, service, and social activities; offer post-confirmation service opportunities.
- ⊕ Increase funding for faith formation: invest financially in Directors of Religious Education and Youth Ministers by providing just salaries to hire educated staff with appropriate credentials, experience, and skills; support catechists through better training, resources, and enrichment opportunities, and provide equitable distribution of funds between parish school and parish religious education program.

- ⊕ Promote community building efforts through more parent/child activities including family service opportunities; teen and family liturgies; family retreats; and family devotions, Advent/Lenten activities, and special activity nights/days.
- ⊕ Offer Children’s Liturgy of the Word and “teaching” Masses so that children hear the Word proclaimed in an age-appropriate manner and learn about the different parts of the Mass.

Include Christian parenting component in baptismal preparation programs to educate parents on importance of passing on the faith; provide “post-baptismal” ministries with support groups for new parents, parents of young children, and single parents; sponsor mentoring programs with older and more experienced parents.

*3. To help me live out my call as a Christian in the world, it is important to me that my parish improve **how it helps me to understand more about Catholic teaching, including teaching about social justice:** (Question 1D-Knowledge of the Faith)*

- ⊕ Sponsor year-round social outreach programs and activities that challenge the parish and provide opportunities for involvement. Provide programs for youth.
- ⊕ Emphasize “living the Gospel” through adopting twinning relationships with parishes in the developing world as well as in the inner city.
- ⊕ Recruit social justice minister to educate the parish and integrate Catholic social teaching into all aspects of parish life including worship, Scripture studies, and education.
- ⊕ Provide homilies that support “faith in action” and offer concrete ways to “live the Gospel.” Incorporate local and national concerns into the Prayer of the Faithful.
- ⊕ Form social justice committee to plan programs and provide forum on issues and teachings. Sponsor lecture series with guest speakers. Offer library of reading materials.
- ⊕ Address the gap between Catholic social teaching and any injustices practiced by the church at the diocesan and parish levels, particularly in employment practices. Consider collective bargaining and just wages.
- ⊕ Utilize homilies and bulletin inserts to examine systemic causes of injustice.

- ⊕ Offer adult faith formation program.
- ⊕ Sponsor “action” initiatives including letter-writing and e-mail campaigns to legislators.
- ⊕ Use parish bulletin, newsletter, and website to post excerpts of church teachings and present brief biographies of role models.

4. *To help me live out my call as a Christian in the world, it is important to me that my parish improve how it helps me deepen my understanding of the Bible: (Question 1C- Knowledge of the Faith)*

- ⊕ Offer year-round adult Scripture study including short-term classes that start at various times during the year; offer rotating times (day, evening, week-end, and during children’s faith formation classes) for non-working and working parishioners; provide child care during classes.
- ⊕ Provide fliers, bulletin columns or inserts with reflections of readings.
- ⊕ Provide well-prepared homilies that explain Scripture and connect it to everyday life.
- ⊕ Recruit knowledgeable and trained people to lead Bible studies or teach adult classes. Designate person in diocesan office to offer resources and training for parish Bible studies.
- ⊕ Support faith-sharing groups.
- ⊕ Develop lending library of resources including books, audio tapes, and videos.
- ⊕ Offer different levels of Scripture studies for beginning and advanced students; offer a variety of classes including the books of the Bible, Sunday readings, and on topical subjects such as women or peace and justice.
- ⊕ Provide on-line learning opportunities; publish relevant website links in bulletin or on parish website.
- ⊕ Offer Scripture study for teens and children; provide story-telling opportunities for the young to engage them in Scripture.
- ⊕ Sponsor lecture series addressing biblical issues or topics.

5. *To help me live out my call as a Christian in the world, it is important to me that my parish improve . . . how it celebrates Sunday liturgy: (Question 2C- Liturgical Life)*

- ⊕ Provide education about the Eucharistic liturgy, the meaning of its parts, the role of the ministers (clergy and lay, men and women), the role of the assembly, placement of liturgical implements and furniture, etc. Offer a symposium on this.
- ⊕ Explain the General Instruction of the Roman Missal to foster an understanding of the gestures, postures, and prayers of the liturgy (re: kneeling, gestures of the presider and other ministers, holding hands, sign of peace, receiving communion, use of incense and bells, history of changes in the liturgy throughout the ages, etc.).
- ⊕ Ensure that music is well prepared and appropriate to the celebration. Music is a very important issue for many people (too much, too little, not enough traditional, not enough contemporary). Hire trained music staff to work with parishioners to better understand and address needs. Teach the congregation to sing, but don't make it a show.
- ⊕ Give homilies that address contemporary issues and the Gospel response to those issues.
- ⊕ Emphasize full, active and conscious participation as outlined in the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy. Encourage people to worship God with their hearts, not just routine. Have the laity take an active part in planning the liturgies with their priests. Provide training and education to all involved.
- ⊕ Emphasize that Sunday liturgy is a community celebration, not a private prayer.
- ⊕ Include all members of the community in ministries especially young people. Ensure that language used is inclusive.
- ⊕ Address multicultural issues in a constructive, community building way.
- ⊕ Stress the importance of a community gathering once a week to celebrate the Eucharist.
- ⊕ Offer a variety of Mass times and also a variety of styles (e.g., music styles). Ensure that liturgies are life-giving; that they foster reverence, mystery, and a sense of the sacred; and that homilies are prayerful and relevant to the laity.

6. *To help me live out my call as a Christian in the world, it is important to me that my parish improve . . . its **preaching at mass and other liturgies:***

(Question 2D- Liturgical Life)

- ⊕ Encourage preaching that invites, leads, welcomes, and affirms God's love for us.
- ⊕ Provide well-prepared and well-delivered homilies.
- ⊕ Offer in-services and preaching retreats and workshops to develop skills and knowledge about Scripture, social justice issues, and contemporary cultural life.
- ⊕ Provide ongoing training and evaluation of homilies.
- ⊕ Provide short, concise and inspirational homilies that relate the readings to today's world.
- ⊕ Ensure that homilies reflect the message of the Gospel and challenge the hearer rather than scolding them about the rules of the church.
- ⊕ Seek good homilists; use persons who "have the gift of preaching." Recognize that some priests are gifted in other areas, but not in preaching.
- ⊕ Allow lay people to preach, particularly those who have been trained and possess skills for preaching. Develop a lay preaching program with a strong formation component.
- ⊕ Allow women's voices to be heard. It is important that all hear women's reflections on Scripture, and especially important for women to hear from women who share their experience of life and spirituality.
- ⊕ Improve seminary training on homiletics.

7. *To help me live out my call as a Christian in the world, it is important to me that my parish improve . . . **opportunities for active participation of the community in worship:*** *(Question 2A- Liturgical Life)*

- ⊕ Establish liturgy committees; involve parishioners in seasonal liturgical planning such as Lenten Stations of the Cross, first reconciliation, communal reconciliation services, etc.

- ⊕ Seek out new liturgical ministers; rotate ministers on a regular basis; ensure that different people bring forward the gifts each week. Extend personal invitations to ministry. Encourage more ethnic diversity and the inclusion of minorities and persons with disabilities as liturgical leaders. Provide training for all liturgical ministers.
- ⊕ Include women in more visible roles at liturgies. Allow girls and women to be altar servers, acolytes, Eucharistic ministers, lectors, and to participate in foot-washing on Holy Thursday.
- ⊕ Provide opportunities for sharing of parishioners' gifts and talents including music, dance, and art. Recognize cultural diversity of parishioners by attending to ethnic customs and traditions in liturgies.
- ⊕ Include youth and young adults. Reach out to teens, particularly after confirmation. Offer regularly scheduled youth masses.
- ⊕ Involve assembly in liturgy by providing more processions to gather the community, including their petitions in the Prayer of the Faithful, and allowing reflections by trained lay persons. Celebrate sacraments of initiation at Sunday liturgies. Allow communion under both species.
- ⊕ Offer Children's Liturgy of the Word. Provide ways to involve children such as inviting them to gather around the altar for the Eucharistic Prayer. Offer more family and children's masses.
- ⊕ Celebrate "life" events such as graduation, leaving for college, etc.
- ⊕ Ensure that music is appropriate to the liturgy and can be sung by the assembly.
- ⊕ Offer more small group celebrations, missions, and tent revivals.

8. *To help me live out my call as a Christian in the world, it is important to me that my parish improve . . . how it builds community within the parish by providing ways for people to get to know others who share their beliefs and values: (Question 5A- Communal Life)*

- ⊕ Promote activities such as picnics, dances, potluck dinners, ice cream socials, and movie nights. Sponsor seasonal meals such as Lenten dinners as well as ethnic traditions including palm weaving, egg painting, blessing of baskets.
- ⊕ Organize short trips to places of interest as well as pilgrimages to holy places.

- ⊕ Offer hospitality hour with coffee and donuts after mass.
- ⊕ Support parish wide service projects and social justice activities.
- ⊕ Support neighborhood groups and small Christian communities within the parish.
- ⊕ Highlight stories of different parishioners in parish newsletter.
- ⊕ Support ministry for young adults as well as single adults who often feel left out of family events.
- ⊕ Initiate support groups for widows/widowers, empty nesters, separated and divorced, parents of young children, the bereaved, and caring for the elderly.
- ⊕ Support parish life ministry which would provide meals for those in need such as the sick, the mourning, or for parents of new babies. Provide space in bulletin or on bulletin board to advertise need and to announce parish births, marriages, anniversaries, etc.
- ⊕ Encourage faith-sharing groups.

9. *To help me live out my call as a Christian in the world, it is important to me that my parish improve . . . how it helps me deepen my relationship with God: (Question 4C- Prayer)*

- ⊕ Sponsor workshops on prayer and spirituality. Include art, music, and drama in a variety of prayer forms.
- ⊕ Offer retreats, days of recollection, and missions.
- ⊕ Increase opportunities for adult faith formation.
- ⊕ Include the voices and experiences of women. Offer inclusive images of God.
- ⊕ Offer opportunities for prayer and outreach to others.
- ⊕ Support a variety of prayer formation opportunities.
- ⊕ Provide more opportunities for small faith sharing, Scripture study, prayer groups, and Eucharistic adoration.
- ⊕ Sponsor a parish library with up-to-date materials.

- ⊕ Teach children a variety of ways to pray.
- ⊕ Recognize importance of spiritual direction and identify and train more directors.

10. *To help me live out my call as a Christian in the world, it is important to me that my parish improve . . . how it helps me discern my vocation or profession in life: (Question 3B – Moral Formation)*

- ⊕ Help people understand that a vocation is a call to the entire person to respond to God, not just a lifestyle choice in one aspect of a person's life.
- ⊕ Communicate that vocation includes all the baptized, not just those called to holy orders or religious life.
- ⊕ Provide opportunities to learn discernment skills.
- ⊕ Offer retreats including the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola.
- ⊕ Offer retreats and days of reflection for youth.
- ⊕ Provide more opportunities for spiritual direction.
- ⊕ Support from diocese and parish for lay ecclesial ministers.
- ⊕ Encourage lay ministers, especially women, to know and live their vocations.
- ⊕ Offer more broad-based retreats and programs to help all discern God's will.
- ⊕ Sponsor "Ministry Formation" programs.

11. *To help me live out my call as a Christian, it is important to me that my parish improve . . . how it helps me to pray as an individual: (Question 4B-Prayer)*

- ⊕ Help people to understand that all of life is prayer.
- ⊕ Begin and end all parish meetings and functions with prayer.
- ⊕ Provide ways for adults to experience prayer beyond what they were taught as children.

- ⊕ Offer workshops on the spirituality of the saints such as St. John of the Cross, St. Teresa of Avila, and St. Ignatius of Loyola.
- ⊕ Promote and sponsor days of reflection, week-end retreats, marriage encounters, Cursillios, etc.
- ⊕ Offer workshops and classes on different types of prayer such as meditation, contemplation, journaling, dancing, art, and centering prayer. Use personality inventory tools such as Myers-Briggs to assist people to better understand themselves and thus to be more open to God in response to their own uniqueness.
- ⊕ Teach children how to pray; offer them a variety of ways to do so.
- ⊕ Promote small group faith-sharing as a way of strengthening a person's prayer life.
- ⊕ Provide online opportunities for prayers and retreats; identify prayer websites. Offer resources such as prayer books for purchase; sponsor a lending library.
- ⊕ Offer opportunities for Eucharistic Adoration and for praying with the rosary.

12. *To help me live out my call as a Christian in the world, it is important to me that my parish improve . . . how it helps me to connect my faith with my daily life:*

(Question 3A- Moral Formation)

- ⊕ Develop leadership teams to evangelize the parish.
- ⊕ Provide challenging homilies that connect Gospel teaching with daily life, drawing upon the community's common and contemporary experiences. Offer dialogic homilies. Provide opportunities for laity to share their reflections.
- ⊕ Establish support groups; need to support one another in bringing the Gospel to the marketplace.
- ⊕ Promote small Christian communities as a way of building the parish faith community.
- ⊕ Offer daily masses at times convenient for working people.
- ⊕ Provide opportunities for social justice and service projects for all ages.

- ⊕ Support discussion groups, Scripture studies, and retreats.
- ⊕ Offer training in conflict resolution and stress reduction.
- ⊕ Provide adult faith formation and family faith formation opportunities.
- ⊕ Provide resources including a lending library.

13. *To help me live out my call as a Christian in the world, it is important to me that my parish improve . . . how it promotes learning various ways of praying:* (Question 4D- Prayer)

- ⊕ Offer classes, seminars, and workshops on prayer with trained facilitators. Provide more teaching on what is prayer, how to pray, and different types and forms of prayer and the influence of personality types. Promote websites related to prayer.
- ⊕ Bring in guest speakers to talk about prayer.
- ⊕ Support a variety of prayer services such as vespers and Taize.
- ⊕ Offer traditional devotions such as the rosary, novenas, adoration, and Stations of the Cross.
- ⊕ Make better use of different prayer forms in all liturgies and prayer services including contemplation, meditation, and centering prayer.
- ⊕ Promote the formation of prayer groups such as Marian, contemplative, and charismatic, etc.
- ⊕ Incorporate feminine images of God in homilies and in prayer.
- ⊕ Educate on mystics, saints, and their spiritualities such as Carmelite, Franciscan, Benedictine, Ignatian, Salesian, Dominican, Augustinian, etc.
- ⊕ Offer retreats focusing on what prayer is and ways to pray. Provide family retreats as well as separate retreats for adults and children.
- ⊕ Provide books, pamphlets, and periodicals on prayer.

14. *To help me live out my call as a Christian in the world, it is important to me that my parish improve . . . how it helps me to pray as part of a community:* (Question 4A- Prayer)

- ⊕ Foster greater understanding of the Sunday liturgy as the public worship of the church and as the time when we gather together for communal prayer.
- ⊕ Create prayer opportunities other than at mass; include healing services, vespers, and prayer services at times of blessings and crises.
- ⊕ Expand opportunities for parish-wide programs such as missions, retreats, and days of recollection.
- ⊕ Encourage community participation in prayer and song.
- ⊕ Sponsor prayer groups.
- ⊕ Include opportunities for personal prayer at mass such as at the Prayer of the Faithful.
- ⊕ Provide opportunities for the laity to lead prayer.
- ⊕ Encourage and support small faith communities.
- ⊕ Offer formation in all types of prayer.
- ⊕ Create opportunities for different types of prayer such as Taize and labyrinth.

15. *To help me live out my call as a Christian in the world, it is important to me that my parish improve . . . its outreach to inactive Catholics:*
(Question 6D- Missionary Spirit)

- ⊕ Identify inactive Catholics in parish and reach out to them by personal contact by telephone, letter, or visit.
- ⊕ Develop an evangelization program.
- ⊕ Periodically offer a program for returning Catholics. Address issues raised by inactive Catholics.
- ⊕ Publicize church events and programs in religious section of secular newspapers.
- ⊕ Sponsor “Theology on Tap” and similar programs for young Catholics.
- ⊕ Offer good, solid youth programs to reach people through their children.

- ⊕ Sponsor “question and answer” nights.
- ⊕ Support small faith communities by zones or neighborhoods and identify people to contact inactive Catholics in each neighborhood.
- ⊕ Offer ministries for separated and divorced, gays and lesbians, etc.
- ⊕ Be welcoming and affirmative of all who visit.

16. *To help me live out my call as a Christian in the world, it is important to me that my parish improve . . . how it helps people, especially newcomers, to feel welcome: (Question 5b- Communal Life)*

- ⊕ Establish “Welcome Wagon” type organization to contact newly registered parishioners, set up home visits, and provide informational packets with welcoming letter from pastor, mass schedules, and list of educational opportunities and ministries. Ensure that newcomers are contacted immediately after registering.
- ⊕ Host newcomers’ gatherings such as brunches, potluck dinners, and home dinners with other parishioners.
- ⊕ Invite visitors and newcomers to introduce themselves sometime during mass.
- ⊕ Pair “new” parishioners with “old” ones to help acquaint them to parish life.
- ⊕ Support strong hospitality ministry with greeters at every mass.
- ⊕ Support neighborhood groups, particularly in large parishes or those geographically divided.
- ⊕ Post pictures of new parishioners in the bulletin, on a board, or in the back of the church; put names in bulletin.
- ⊕ Welcome new parishioners by offering them a loaf of bread or other symbolic gesture.
- ⊕ Following registration, priest or staff member should initiate personal contact through telephone call or visit.
- ⊕ Establish newcomers’ group for first-year parishioners.

17. *To help me live out my call as a Christian in the world, it is important to me that my parish improve . . . how it celebrates sacramental reconciliation: (Question 2E- Liturgical Life)*

- ⊕ Provide more encouragement for the sacrament of reconciliation.
- ⊕ Offer more communal reconciliation services.
- ⊕ Consider general absolution as well as individual confession in communal reconciliation services.
- ⊕ Make reconciliation more available, particularly before mass.
- ⊕ Provide better understanding of current teaching of reconciliation for both clergy and laity.
- ⊕ Place more emphasis on the importance of sin and provide a better understanding of sin.
- ⊕ Schedule ongoing training for priests to be better confessors.
- ⊕ Offer reconciliation services for targeted audiences such as families, engaged couples, children, teens, etc.
- ⊕ Provide more than one priest to hear confessions.
- ⊕ Create a better, more prayerful, physical environment for the sacrament of reconciliation.

18. *To help me live out my call as a Christian in the world, it is important to me that my parish improve . . . how it helps me make important moral decisions in my personal life at work or at home: (Question 3E- Moral Formation)*

- ⊕ Provide opportunities to increase awareness of conscience formation and methods of discernment in making moral decisions. Provide information on Ignatian discernment process.
- ⊕ Offer homilies that invoke real-life examples, that connect Scriptures with daily life, and that expound on church teachings on moral issues.
- ⊕ Ensure homilies are prophetic and help parishioners to understand how their personal decisions affect the well-being of other people in the world.
- ⊕ Support small group faith-sharing opportunities.

- ⊕ Encourage and provide opportunities for adult learning, including study of ethics.
- ⊕ Support discussion groups or series to focus on the moral issues of everyday life.
- ⊕ Provide guest speakers and workshops that connect church teachings and daily life.
- ⊕ Make spiritual direction more available.
- ⊕ Use parish newsletters and bulletin to provide moral instruction.
- ⊕ Provide resources that explain Catholic perspective on moral issues.

19. *To help me live out my life as a Christian in the world, it is important to me that my parish improve . . . **the way it supports and encourages lay persons to serve as members of parish staffs, Catholic school teachers, and other formal church ministry positions:** (Question 3D- Moral Formation)*

- ⊕ Support and encourage lay people through competitive salaries and benefits to attract the most qualified applicants for all church ministry and teaching positions.
- ⊕ Provide full-time positions, not part-time pay with full-time hours.
- ⊕ Offer just retirement plans. Ensure that pension and other benefits are not lost as church ministers change positions.
- ⊕ Provide a healthy and professional work environment with contemporary human resources policies. Give ministers the authority to do the job they are hired to do.
- ⊕ Appreciate and acknowledge gifts of lay persons.
- ⊕ Support social/economic justice within the church; we cannot call the world to be just if we are not.
- ⊕ Provide financial support for ongoing formation and continuing and graduate education.
- ⊕ Advertise availability of positions through pulpit and bulletin announcements and on website to encourage parishioners to apply.
- ⊕ Provide tuition discounts for children of Catholic school teachers.

- ⊕ Ensure job security for lay church ministers, particularly when a new pastor is appointed to a parish.

20. *To help me live out my call as a Christian in the world, it is important to me that my parish improve . . . **its outreach and ministry to the poor, the hungry and/or the homeless:** (Question 6C- Missionary Spirit)*

- ⊕ Provide counseling, mental health care, job training, housing, and employment in addition to food, clothing, and money.
- ⊕ Establish and promote an ongoing, year-round social outreach program rather than just at holidays.
- ⊕ Form parish social justice/concerns committee.
- ⊕ Make formal commitment to social ministry through a percentage of Sunday collections, e.g., ten percent, rather than special collections.
- ⊕ Adopt a twinning relationship with a reservation or an inner-city or rural parish as well as one in a developing country.
- ⊕ Through catechesis and preaching, promote Catholic social teaching and Christian response to social justice.
- ⊕ Educate parishioners on root systemic causes of social problems and work to address them through advocacy as well as by direct service; offer creative “learning experiences” such as a “hunger banquet.”
- ⊕ Adopt ecumenical approach: work with other faith communities to solve local problems.
- ⊕ Support the St. Vincent de Paul Society.
- ⊕ Advertise variety of social outreach opportunities; provide opportunities for families.

21. *To help me live out my call as a Christian in the world, it is important to me that my parish improve . . . **opportunities and training for liturgical ministers (e.g., lectors, ministers to the homebound, hospitality ministers):** (Question 2B- Liturgical Life)*

- ⊕ Provide both training for new ministers as well as refresher training for experienced ministers. Training should include liturgical significance and spiritual formation in addition to logistics of liturgical role. Offer

opportunities for fellowship and ongoing formation including retreats, days of recollection, and prayer services.

- ⊕ Instill sense of reverence and respect among all liturgical ministers.
- ⊕ Schedule training sessions at various times of the year and at various times of the day to meet the needs of ministers.
- ⊕ Provide small group training, particularly in larger parishes so that it is more personal and directed to the needs of the participants.
- ⊕ Include women in liturgical roles in the parish.
- ⊕ Consider the cultural needs and gifts of the ministers and of the parishioners; provide more African American, Hispanic, and other culturally sensitive types of training rather than strictly Euro-centric.
- ⊕ Actively recruit new ministers rather than just advertising in bulletin or announcing at mass.
- ⊕ Establish ministry to the sick and homebound. Initiate a “Good Samaritan” program in the parish whose mission is to identify those who are alone or sick and could benefit from a visit from someone in the parish.
- ⊕ Consider needs of parishioners with disabilities in participating in ministries; many sanctuaries are inaccessible to those in wheelchairs or on crutches.
- ⊕ Maintain high standards for all ministries.

*22. To help me live out my call as a Christian in the world, it is important to me that my parish improve . . . **stewardship within the parish, by inviting parishioners to use their talents and gifts for the common good:** (Question 5C-Communal Life)*

- ⊕ Offer annual time and talent survey and time and talent/ministry fair.
- ⊕ Continuously inform parishioners of needs and opportunities and encourage participation. Make needs known through bulletin, newsletter, pulpit announcements, and notices on bulletin board.
- ⊕ Host orientation sessions for new parishioners and match people’s talents and gifts to needs of the parish; invite representatives from parish ministries to make presentations.

- ⊕ Publish directory of parish ministries.
- ⊕ Ensure that there is a follow up process to those who do volunteer.
- ⊕ Establish and use talent database.
- ⊕ Extend one-on-one personal invitations to parishioners.
- ⊕ Recruit volunteer ministry coordinator.
- ⊕ Educate people to see stewardship as more than just giving money; help them to see that involvement and commitment are essential.
- ⊕ Provide short-term opportunities such as a one-day or one-time project.

23. *To help me live out my call as a Christian in the world, it is important to me that my parish improve . . . how it helps couples grow in their commitment to married life: (Question 6E- Missionary Spirit)*

- ⊕ Provide quality marriage preparation programs (Pre-Cana, Engaged Encounter, etc.); include a specific focus on interchurch and interfaith couples; offer mentor couples to assist the engaged couples as well as the newly-married.
- ⊕ Offer retreats for married couples (a day, an evening, a weekend) either in the parish or away from it; always provide childcare.
- ⊕ Promote Marriage Encounter, Teams of Our Lady, Christian Family Movement, Couples for Christ: these and other examples of more in-depth ministries, support groups, and communities for couples and families.
- ⊕ Offer marriage counseling in connection with the parish.
- ⊕ Celebrate wedding anniversaries, including renewal of vows, within parish liturgies at least annually.
- ⊕ Organize "Nights Out" for couples -- provide childcare in parish while couples spend time together on a "date."
- ⊕ Teach and preach about specific marriage/family questions, issues, and skills, including Natural Family Planning classes.
- ⊕ Organize peer ministries by couples, e.g., marriage support groups. Include the chance for couples to offer their own witness to the marital vocation at liturgies and other gatherings.

- ⊕ Provide pastoral care for troubled marriages (e.g., through Retrouvaille) and to those who are separated, divorced, remarried, and those seeking annulments.
- ⊕ Provide specific outreach to newly-married couples -- a mix of social, spiritual and educational opportunities.

24. *To help me live out my call as a Christian in the world, it is important to me that my parish improve . . . how it evangelizes by helping parishioners to share the Good News with others: (Question 6A- Missionary Spirit)*

- ⊕ Form and train parish outreach and evangelization teams.
- ⊕ Educate faithful on their baptismal call to evangelize; offer Sunday homilies exhorting parishioners how to evangelize by providing examples.
- ⊕ Develop neighborhood outreach programs: through advertisements and announcements invite neighbors to attend parish events; arrange visits to sick and homebound neighbors; provide transportation for elderly and non-drivers; conduct “door-to-door” survey of neighborhood; host neighborhood dinners and picnics.
- ⊕ Offer “bring a friend to church” opportunities.
- ⊕ Offer intergenerational Vacation Bible School for neighborhood children, youth, and adults.
- ⊕ Establish community ministries: develop feeding and clothing programs; form prison, hospital, nursing home, and youth ministries; identify and assist families with special needs.
- ⊕ Increase presence in community by encouraging, promoting, and participating in community activities: identify local needs and establish volunteer teams to work on community projects; encourage participation in local events; provide informational tables at community events such as fairs; develop parish website.
- ⊕ Encourage and participate in more ecumenical and interfaith opportunities such as prayer services and social justice opportunities.
- ⊕ Reach out to inactive and returning Catholics: offer inquiry classes, open houses, and question and answer sessions.

- ⊕ Offer a variety of adult faith formation opportunities such as Bible study, Disciples in Mission, and Renew, and a wider diversity of programs: parish missions, speakers, plays, concerts, and specialized classes.

25. *To help me live out my call as a Christian in the world, it is important that my parish improve . . . **how it promotes respect for life from conception to natural death:** (Question 6F- Missionary Spirit)*

- ⊕ Sponsor a “Respect for Life” committee.
- ⊕ Support consistent life ethic including abolishment of death penalty, support of anti-poverty policies, etc.
- ⊕ Promote “seamless garment” philosophy in homilies and parish activities.
- ⊕ Offer support for “crisis” pregnancies and battered women.
- ⊕ Sponsor prayer and activities to support all life issues. Include issues of abortion and euthanasia.
- ⊕ Educate and provide programs on issues pertaining to the elderly.
- ⊕ Support programs to raise consciousness of death penalty.
- ⊕ Provide materials to educate parishioners on church teachings on life issues.
- ⊕ Offer natural family planning classes.
- ⊕ Make available resources including contact persons and organizations for those in need.

26. *To help me live out my call as a Christian in the world, it is important to me that my parish improve . . . **the way it supports and encourages vocations to the priesthood and religious life:** (Question 3C- Moral Formation)*

- ⊕ Offer opportunities to introduce young people to seminary and convent life.
- ⊕ Invite priests and religious to address students in Catholic schools and parish religious education programs; support “Day of Shadowing”;

sponsor vocation fairs; invite seminarians and novices to speak and work in parishes.

- ⊕ Study and discuss celibacy requirements within the priesthood.
- ⊕ Recognize vocation of laity to church ministry so that all may live out their baptismal call.
- ⊕ Highlight stories of priests and religious in diocesan newspapers and other publications.
- ⊕ Help parents address the issue of encouraging their daughters and sons to have a vocation to church ministry when women are not allowed in ordained ministry.
- ⊕ Promote opportunities where young people can get to know priests and religious.
- ⊕ Sponsor regular prayer times for an increase in vocations.
- ⊕ Address the concerns of parishioners who believe that the Spirit is calling us to look at new models of ministry including the ordination of women.
- ⊕ Ensure that all seminaries and convents provide an environment which fosters the opportunity for the healthy development and growth of participants. This is important to both applicants and their parents.

*27. To help me live out my call as a Christian in the world, it is important to me that my parish improve . . . **how it promotes opportunities for service:** (Question 6B- Missionary Spirit)*

- ⊕ Identify parish and community needs: publicize parish needs and service opportunities in regular section of bulletin, newsletter, bulletin board, and website.
- ⊕ Acknowledge contributions of those who volunteer: recognize volunteers to thank them for their service and to encourage others to participate.
- ⊕ Offer a variety of service opportunities for all parish groups including children, youth, singles, couples, families, elderly, those with special needs, etc.

- ⊕ Support “faith in action” through a variety of short-term and long-term service opportunities within the parish such as designated parish and community service days.
- ⊕ Identify ways to involve more children and youth: offer children’s service projects in parish school and faith formation programs so that service is an integral part of religious formation rather than linked to confirmation; sponsor alternative spring break and summer outreach programs for youth.
- ⊕ Identify focal point in parish to coordinate service opportunities: establish parish “Social Concerns” or “Social Justice” committee; recruit paid or volunteer social justice/outreach minister.
- ⊕ Publicize parish ministries and needs: offer ministry fairs, ministry week-ends and newcomers’ orientation with representatives of all parish ministries.
- ⊕ Conduct annual time and talent survey.
- ⊕ Convey importance of service and social justice through homilies, catechesis, lectures, and testimonials.
- ⊕ Establish twinning relationships with an inner-city parish.

28. *To help me live out my call as a Christian in the world, it is important to me that my parish improve . . . how it encourages participation in parish planning, councils and committees: (Question 5D- Communal Life)*

- ⊕ Publicize and open all council, committee, and parish meetings to parishioners; provide agenda and minutes on a timely basis.
- ⊕ Require an elected pastoral council in all parishes; in many parishes there is no pastoral council.
- ⊕ Develop models of collaborative decision-making; provide training in collaborative leadership and ministry for parish leaders and staff.
- ⊕ Educate parishioners as to what the different committees and councils do and invite participation, even as observers.
- ⊕ Promote collaboration between parish leadership, including pastor, staff, parish council and finance council.
- ⊕ Organize parish and finance councils to be fully active and effective instead of being a rubber stamp for the pastor.

- ⊕ Encourage more participation from young adults.
- ⊕ Regularly rotate membership and leadership of councils and committees to generate new and fresh ideas.
- ⊕ Ensure that parish and finance councils have defined goals and objectives, engage in prayerful group discernment, and meet in regularly scheduled meetings.
- ⊕ Ensure diversity in all councils and committees.

29. *To help me live out my call as a Christian in the world, it is important to me that my parish improve . . . how it affirms and promotes the cultural, racial and ethnic diversity of parishioners and parish leaders: (Question 5E-Communal Life)*

- ⊕ Recruit and encourage minorities for parish leadership, committees, and liturgical ministries so that ministries reflect the cultural, racial, and ethnic groups in parish.
- ⊕ Establish a diversity committee to plan events and promote dialogue among different parish groups.
- ⊕ Enculturate liturgy by introducing various ethnic rituals and images, offering diverse music, and inviting diverse homilists/presiders. Recreate “Encuentro” experience.
- ⊕ Use liturgical celebrations such as Pentecost to promote diversity through participation of different ethnic groups and proclamation of parts of readings in different languages.
- ⊕ Hold multicultural celebrations of dance, music, food, and traditions by sponsoring international dinners, parish heritage nights, ethnic feast days, and festivals.
- ⊕ Adopt and promote cross-cultural exchanges with sister parishes: develop opportunities to work, socialize, pray, and problem-solve together in addition to offering financial support; provide transportation to enable parishioners to visit each other’s parishes; for those parishes with little diversity, support twinning arrangement with another parish.
- ⊕ Ensure diversity in religious education curriculum by promoting culturally diverse images, stories, and saints.

- ✚ Promote outreach to surrounding neighborhoods and communities: develop outreach programs to economically deprived areas/persons, offer service and advocacy opportunities, provide community picnics and block parties, and encourage evangelization of inner-city neighborhoods.
- ✚ Preach on and encourage attendance at parish and community events and functions such as Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. observances.
- ✚ Develop cultural exchanges with other parishes as well as other traditions through exchanges of clergy, choir, and parishioners.

30. *To help me live out my call as a Christian in the world, it is important to me that my parish improve . . . how it prepares for and celebrates the following sacraments: Infant Baptism, First Penance, First Eucharist, Confirmation and/or Marriage: (Question 2F- Liturgical Life)*

- ✚ Restore unity of sacraments of initiation: baptism, confirmation, Eucharist.
- ✚ Provide more opportunities for participation of parents in First Penance, Eucharist, and Confirmation preparation.
- ✚ Improve quality of marriage preparation programs: use professionals to improve formation; establish mentoring relationships between both older and younger married and engaged couples; and develop specialized programs for older engaged couples.
- ✚ Offer infant baptisms in presence of assembly at Sunday liturgies so entire community can welcome new member, but schedule them so that it does not resemble an “assembly line.”
- ✚ Plan celebrations of sacraments within liturgical life of the community, i.e., during the times when the community is gathered for Sunday worship.
- ✚ Provide sacramental preparation programs for First Penance and First Eucharist in addition to and separate from ongoing religious education programs.
- ✚ Use opportunity of infant baptism preparation to evangelize young couples since many will be returning to the church. Preparation program should include more than just ritual. Offer ongoing family formation programs for new parents after baptism. Provide older parents as mentors.

- ⊕ Provide trained catechists and facilitators for sacramental preparation; compensate them accordingly.
- ⊕ Establish a reasonable age for adolescent confirmation and a consistent program, as the current diversity is confusing to families. Separate confirmation from religious education graduation and ensure that confirmation is not presented as an act of passage. Devise way to make a connection among the sacraments of initiation even though they are separated by time.
- ⊕ Resolve confusion among parents over order of Sacraments of Penance and First Eucharist; explain rationale for diocesan and parish policies.

31. *To help me live out my call as a Christian in the world, it is important to me that my parish improve . . . leadership of the parish (both clergy and lay):*
(Question 5F- Communal Life)

- ⊕ Train, support, and empower lay leadership: provide professional educational opportunities; offer diocesan programs in areas such as communication skills, conflict resolution, collaborative ministry, and leadership development; provide canonical and financial support.
- ⊕ Expand role of women in the Church; encourage women in leadership roles; elicit their input as to how to incorporate and fully utilize their gifts and talents.
- ⊕ Encourage and devise plan to involve all parishioners in ministry and leadership in some form. Emphasize the baptismal call of all believers to serve. Ensure that leadership reflects the composition of parish. Rotate people in leadership to involve new people and generate new ideas.
- ⊕ Devise sound personnel policies and establish procedures to recruit well-trained, professional, and diverse staff; provide just wages, benefits, and support.
- ⊕ Place laity in charge of business side of parish so that pastors can provide for pastoral ministry.
- ⊕ Provide seminary and pre-pastorate training in areas including contemporary human resource management; business management; sensitivity training; group dynamics; team building; conflict resolution; diversity; and collaborative ministry, especially with women (both staff and parishioners).

- ⊕ Develop a collaborative ministry between clergy and laity pertaining to parish needs, plans, and policies that withstand changes in clergy assignments.
- ⊕ Recognize talents of laity from business or family life; give responsibility and accountability to laity. Empower lay leaders to use their gifts. Provide for occasional recognition of people for their service.
- ⊕ Establish discernment process in assignment of pastors, including providing parishioners with a voice in the decision-making. Ensure that pastors are qualified and that their gifts and talents are matched to the specific needs of the parish community.
- ⊕ Provide clear delineation of roles of pastor and parish council. Make parish council more accessible, including agendas and meeting schedules; ensure meetings are open to the parish. Provide more visibility of leaders so people know who they are.

32. *To help me live out my call as a Christian in the world, it is important to me that my parish improve . . . its RCIA process (initiation of adults):*
(Question 2G- Liturgical Life)

- ⊕ Parish community needs to take more responsibility in welcoming new members, not just the RCIA team, sponsors, and pastoral staff. Educate parishioners on the RCIA process and encourage them to become involved in inviting, welcoming, and integrating newcomers into parish life.
- ⊕ Seek knowledgeable instructors who are skilled presenters; include testimonials from seasoned Catholics. Provide trained facilitators and offer ongoing formation at parish, deanery, and diocesan level.
- ⊕ In addition to sponsors, establish a mentoring program. Mentors will enable more parishioners to become involved in some aspect of RCIA and provide personal contact with catechumens and candidates.
- ⊕ Provide continuing support and guidance for first year so that new Catholics become fully integrated into the life of the parish.
- ⊕ Develop more structured program; provide study materials, books, and resources; reference the Catechism of the Catholic Church. Include material on Catholic culture, devotions, and prayer.

- ⊕ Develop family version so that children may be integrated in the process with their parents; need specialized programs for young adults, teens, and children.
- ⊕ Open RCIA process to parishioners interested in topics presented.
- ⊕ Need year-round process so that people may enter when they are ready rather than being told to wait for several months.
- ⊕ Form RCIA teams so process is not dependent on one person.
- ⊕ Provide stronger formation of sponsors.

The following two questions are not in rank order. They were asked separately in order to invite lay people to address issues which may not have been covered in the 32 topic areas.

33. What else could your parish do to help you better live your call as a Christian in the world? (*Question 7A- General Questions*)

- ⊕ Provide more emphasis on spirituality by offering retreats, Scripture studies, days of recollection, discussion groups, and spiritual direction.
- ⊕ Offer adult faith formation. Hire a professional Director of Adult Faith Formation to promote and organize the community's efforts to provide adult education and formation.
- ⊕ Provide opportunities for better social outreach by identifying ways for direct involvement rather than just contributing money. Help create an awareness in all parishioners including the young of the social needs in the local community as well as in the larger world. Offer service projects for singles, families, and teens.
- ⊕ Support lay ecclesial ministers by providing just salaries, benefits, and retirement.
- ⊕ Seek solutions to the size of medium and large parishes which can be impersonal. Support small faith communities to strengthen communication and relationships between parishioners.
- ⊕ Offer a comprehensive youth ministry program.

- ✚ Support programs and activities to meet the needs of all parishioners such as parents of young children, young adults, middle-aged singles, and seniors. Offer more intergenerational programs and activities.
- ✚ Promote more inter-parish activities for Catholics and others as a way of sharing programs and resources and as a way of evangelizing.
- ✚ Recognize the gifts and talents of women. Provide more leadership opportunities for women.
- ✚ Support more ecumenical programs including prayer and service projects that would bring other traditions together to enrich each other.

34. What is the best thing that your parish is already doing that helps you live out your call as a Christian in the world?

- ✚ Provides a warm, friendly, and welcoming atmosphere. Its ministry of hospitality is welcoming and affirming of all. Parishioners are supportive of one another and are open to and accepting of each person's time, talent, and treasure. The parish is spirit-filled and fosters a real sense of community.
- ✚ Offers a tremendous program of community outreach thereby encouraging all parishioners to serve Christ in the community. Works with other congregations in area to provide ecumenical outreach.
- ✚ Provides healthy and effective leadership through the kindness, respect, and humility exhibited by a caring pastor who is visible, smiling, and eager to listen.
- ✚ Offers vibrant Sunday liturgies with relevant, thought-provoking, and enriching homilies and wonderful music with a good choir.
- ✚ Encourages lay leadership and participation. Promotes women's leadership.
- ✚ Celebrates the diversity of the congregation. Welcomes non-Catholic spouses.
- ✚ Provides excellent programs for children including religious education, Children's Liturgy of the Word, children's masses, Vacation Bible School, and parish school. Offers dynamic and inviting youth ministry program. Provides musical opportunities for children and youth.

Supports catechists and facilitators with excellent training. Offers family faith formation programs and activities.

- ✚ Supports ministries for young adults such as “Theology on Tap.”
- ✚ Offers wonderful programs for adults. Through full-time Director of Adult Faith Formation, new ideas and programs are formed.
- ✚ Offers numerous ministries and programs including Scripture studies, prayer groups, small faith-sharing groups, small Christian communities, RENEW, retreats, marriage enrichment programs, daily masses, twinning relationships, RCIA and RCIC, and pro-life. Provides resources through an up-to-date parish library and a great website. Is open to new suggestions and is willing to try new things.

What Could You Do ...

Recognizing that we are all Church together, the last question in the survey asked each respondent to identify what he or she could do specifically to help address the most important needs. The following is a sample of the many responses received to this question.



“What could you do specifically to help your parish better address some of the needs which are important for you?”

1. Knowledge of the Faith

A parish can help us deepen our knowledge of the Catholic faith so that we are better able to respond to how God calls us in life.

- ❖ I would be willing to become better educated in the area of Adult Faith Formation.
- ❖ Take graduate classes in order to teach RCIA or CCD.
- ❖ Attend adult education courses.
- ❖ I would take responsibility for directing a weekly adult education class.
- ❖ Lead a faith sharing group.
- ❖ I could get more involved in the extra activities and help out in the CCD program.
- ❖ Continue volunteering with youth religious education programs.
- ❖ Attempt to organize an adult Bible study.
- ❖ Volunteer to help plan adult education.
- ❖ I could teach, if the opportunity were offered.
- ❖ Start home groups such as bible studies.
- ❖ Join a small faith community.
- ❖ *Ayudar a encontrara el personal apropiado.*
- ❖ Offer to help with the development and planning of adult education.
- ❖ I would like to start a program facilitating small groups, but I don't know how to go about it.
- ❖ Participate in any faith based programs and help formulate others which are needed.
- ❖ Submit articles for newsletters.
- ❖ *Colaborar con la educacion parroquial de los mas pequeños, nuestros hijos.*

- ❖ Have a Catholic Book Club in my home.
- ❖ I would like to evangelize/catechize -- but I need training first.
- ❖ My latest thought is to put together family packets for every month of the year. I will need to work with others in making this a reality. It is my summer goal.
- ❖ I started a parish library.
- ❖ Start a theology discussion group.
- ❖ I could personally teach a class in several areas of religious studies as I have a Masters Degree in Religious studies and a JCL.
- ❖ I could help form a drama mass to help young children and teens to better understand the teachings of the bible.
- ❖ I already volunteer as a youth minister for the confirmation classes, my wife and I work in marriage enrichment ministry, and my wife volunteers in CCD.
- ❖ Write and edit articles, ads and letters for bulletin, newsletter, other media.
- ❖ I teach CCD currently.
- ❖ I'm currently helping to set up a new group for adults ages 20-40, as well as a women's Bible study group.
- ❖ I would be happy to help coordinate classes or studies, volunteer time to help with a lending library, open up my home to host a class or study as we have limited space at our rectory at this time.
- ❖ I already teach a bible study--I would like to continue my Catechist training so I can help educate in more ways (maybe parents and married couples).
- ❖ I can volunteer to have some in-home activities. I can volunteer to partner with other families for supporting the education of our children.
- ❖ Recognize the need for continual faith formation for myself, be willing to sacrifice time, effort and pride in order to bring about some of the programs mentioned, and always pray.
- ❖ Not sure, but willing to help!! Maybe be a religion teacher for kids or adults (would need some training!)
- ❖ I will be looking into becoming a C.C.D. teacher or assistant.
- ❖ Offer to facilitate a class, but I would like to further my own religious education taking university courses.
- ❖ Be available to lead study groups, participate in such groups, help in anyway I could be of service.
- ❖ Continue my master's studies for an MA in theology; continue teaching RCIA and helping with Religious Ed/Evangelization program at the parish.
- ❖ Attend bible study already offered.
- ❖ I am already publishing, updating and very active in our parish web page.
- ❖ Get a master's degree in ministry.
- ❖ We are new to the area and retired. I could get involved in religious education perhaps.
- ❖ I will be completing my Master's Degree in Pastoral Ministry next year. I could help my parish in the area of adult education.
- ❖ Work with deaf CCD students.
- ❖ Suggest a parish library.

- ❖ We are attempting to make our religious education class to 9th graders more alive, and full of service.
- ❖ I have made myself available by writing and running an adult study group which concentrates on the Bible, CCC and Church Fathers. I will continue to do this and welcome other opportunities.
- ❖ Work as a group leader to help little kids begin early in their understandings of God in their lives.
- ❖ I am helping to start an adult RE program.
- ❖ There is going to be a Family Life committee set up by the end of March. I plan to join, and also plan to bring up having literature and info in the foyer on various topics.
- ❖ Offer my home for bible study groups or become a leader in teaching about the bible.
- ❖ I will continue my efforts as a catechist.
- ❖ Read and learn more about the Catholic faith.
- ❖ Help establish an adult ed commission and reflect on "Our Hearts Were Burning Within Us."
- ❖ Organize a home school support group as an outreach of the school to share liturgy, holy days, etc.
- ❖ Lead discussions on the social teaching of the Church.
- ❖ Help start a network of "Catholic Reading Groups," which we do informally in our own home with a group of friends -- we read books, encyclicals, articles, etc and discuss them once a month.
- ❖ I would be happy to speak with potential catechists about teaching.
- ❖ Plan on going to more classes offered by the diocese to help my parish and community.
- ❖ I could volunteer to organize a lending library or help with some children's programs.
- ❖ Become more informed by reading the church fathers and current writers.
- ❖ Offer my services for scripture, I am doing that now with an "at home" class.
- ❖ I have a load of books and tapes I could donate.
- ❖ Conduct/coordinate adult Catholic Social Justice education.
- ❖ Offer my services to run, organize some of the mini teaching sessions thereby utilizing my theological degree in a different way.
- ❖ I have started a monthly group of people which studies documents of the Church, reads scripture, and studies the lives of the saints.
- ❖ Attempting to enroll in the Lay Pastoral Ministry Institute so that I can learn skills to be able to lead, teach, and help others in spiritual need.
- ❖ Attend Bible study classes, etc.
- ❖ Suggest bible study tapes for a group use to allow a bible study without over-burdening our Pastor.
- ❖ Become qualified to teach.
- ❖ Help donate books for a library.
- ❖ I would like to teach the faith to children in school. Religion class, any grade.
- ❖ Study the faith and history and issues as much as I can.
- ❖ Involvement /membership in the adult faith formation team of the parish.

- ❖ Start and support women's bible studies.
- ❖ Help lead a study group.
- ❖ Help recruit more volunteers for CCD and other programs.
- ❖ Help facilitate singles faith-sharing/fellowship group.
- ❖ Become better educated in the church's teachings and policies.
- ❖ I am a teacher and would love to put on programs to educate adults in everyday topics.
- ❖ Become a catechist.
- ❖ I could facilitate another scripture group if there were interest.....or presentations of biblical overviews or church history.
- ❖ I would like to get involved in an adult education program.
- ❖ Help organize an evening Bible study group.
- ❖ Lead a small group that would discuss Catholic teachings and traditions and their place in today's world.
- ❖ Get training beyond the parish and bring it back into the parish.
- ❖ As a certified Catechist my talents could be used in the parish.
- ❖ We could work to involve people in areas that they could be of service to the parish and the community.
- ❖ I could help the parish organize a bible study group.
- ❖ Get organized. Get more involved as a parent as my son approaches first Communion age.
- ❖ Attend adult education and prayer opportunities.
- ❖ Teach the bible, catechism, sacred scripture to those who want to know their faith so that they can live it fully.
- ❖ Participation in programs that are offered. Receive training to serve the parish in a capacity which I am not serving now.
- ❖ Continue to ask for more classes involving youth and adults in learning our faith better.
- ❖ Volunteer as an adult formation educator.
- ❖ I'm in preparation with a local University for adult catechesis. I'm already teaching leadership discernment/gifts to parish members.
- ❖ Help teach as needed.
- ❖ Organize a home school support group as an outreach of the school to share liturgy, holy days, etc.
- ❖ Help with the reading rack.
- ❖ Help with organizing/sponsoring youth programs.
- ❖ Spend more time in educating myself.
- ❖ Become usefully skilled or educated in some area of concern to the Church.
- ❖ I am taking classes towards a ministry certificate.
- ❖ Offer sessions for younger parents.

2. Liturgical Life

The liturgical life of the parish nourishes, sustains and strengthens us to live out the faith we received in baptism.

- ❖ I could speak with the Priests as to the most important Homily topics for a person my age.
- ❖ Attend meetings and make suggestions.
- ❖ Be involved in liturgical planning/education and implementation.
- ❖ I could be more involved in the programs that are already in place.
- ❖ Remember to be a foot washer.
- ❖ Continue my participation in existing lay leadership programs and put that training and experience to use.
- ❖ I am going to become a sponsor in RCIA.
- ❖ Be a committed, alert, and participating member of my parish.
- ❖ I am the chair of the worship committee which has drawn me closer to some community activities. I am participating with others in the development and activation of our pastoral plan.
- ❖ Share my experiences with returning to the faith after 30 years
- ❖ I could write or talk to our Pastor about giving some sermons on current events in the church.
- ❖ Encourage the hiring of a Director of Liturgy.
- ❖ Be more active in my parish instead of being angry and putting my head in the sand (not attending).
- ❖ I'm a shut in myself- I would like to do what I am able but there aren't any programs to address how I could serve.
- ❖ *Yo me hice ministro laico para poder ayudar mejor y estar preparado para server a mi comunidad.*
- ❖ Volunteer to do computer work & do more art work for the church - free.
- ❖ Establish a team to be responsible for opening and closing the church so that it is more accessible for extended hours.
- ❖ Direct Children's Choir/Youth Choir, train Cantors, teach music in CCD.
- ❖ Help teenagers and young adults find the area in their church where their talents can be developed and used.
- ❖ Try and be more visible as a single person.
- ❖ Since I am already extremely involved in church life, I could help identify others who have gifts to share with the church.
- ❖ Work on liturgy commission.
- ❖ Sing and pray out loud at Sunday Mass.
- ❖ I help with music ministry and some liturgical planning.
- ❖ Taking communion to the homebound & sick every week.
- ❖ I would like to get training to teach the RCIA class
- ❖ Go amongst the parish trying to get people to become more involved than just attending Mass.
- ❖ Working with music ministry.
- ❖ I am part of the Worship Commission.
- ❖ Help to organize an evening Mass for middle/high school students.
- ❖ I would like to be a Eucharistic minister.
- ❖ I volunteer my time and contribute my energy as a member of the Confirmation program for teens.
- ❖ Volunteer more time, since they are clearly under-staffed.

- ❖ Work with Catechesis for the children, conduct retreats for the children, Work in a Liturgy with Children program.
- ❖ I have been helping start up a database that will make it easier to find and use volunteers.
- ❖ Get involved in the music program by joining the choir.
- ❖ Give my full active participation!
- ❖ Live my life with deeper attention to what is already there - and become the good news myself.
- ❖ Be more supportive of the programs that we have at our parish now
- ❖ I am thinking of joining the choir.
- ❖ What I am presently doing: Coordinating the Marriage Preparation and Baptismal Preparation.
- ❖ I will remain in the RCIA program for the coming year, not only as a sponsor but also as a catechist. I will explore the expansion of the period of *mystagogia*.
- ❖ Be a team leader for sacramental preparation.
- ❖ I've joined the Adult Choir. The ministry of music has helped to deepen my faith.
- ❖ Donate money and complete building of the Church.
- ❖ Assist in the music ministry.
- ❖ Offer to organize Guitar Mass.
- ❖ Help to form a Gregorian choir.
- ❖ I may respond to the Monsignor's request for me to join the choir.
- ❖ We try "to be there" when needed. Volunteers as EM, lector.
- ❖ Coordinate RCIA.
- ❖ I know I am planning to start serving as a lector (something I have done before).
- ❖ Help with a Family Mass.
- ❖ Participate in church more than just going to mass every Sunday.
- ❖ Get on liturgy and spiritual life commission.
- ❖ I need to share my musical concerns with the pastor and the music director to others instead of complaining.
- ❖ Assist Pastoral Council with planning processes, liturgy planning,
- ❖ Become more active in ministries.
- ❖ At least show up at the things I would like to see happen.
- ❖ I am thinking about encouraging other denomination communities to participate in our services - possibly the music ministry to start with.

3. Moral Formation

Moral formation helps us to grasp the wisdom of our tradition and gives us tools to reflect upon and analyze our everyday situations in light of the Gospel.

- ❖ Suggest a forum to discuss social problems that are important to all.
- ❖ Help teach about living wills, some ethical decision making in health care.

- ❖ Offer to start a small interest group for people my age.
- ❖ Help get more people to volunteer or participate in current activities.
- ❖ I'd like to be on a "Morality in Media" committee.
- ❖ Support the programs in place by attending them.
- ❖ I could be more active in my own area of expertise.
- ❖ Pray, Hope, and be Charitable!
- ❖ Start a group to discuss issues of everyday life.
- ❖ Provide organizational skills to improve programs.
- ❖ I could organize lectures from guest speakers.
- ❖ I am involved in a committee that plans adult formation/spirituality opportunities. I'll continue working on that.
- ❖ Volunteer to lead discussion groups.
- ❖ I could train in ethics, philosophy, at the high school or college level.
- ❖ Initiate faith sharing on work issues and everyday life issues.
- ❖ I have offered suggestions for catechist mini retreat to better prepare us for teaching, to share our gifts with each other and to build community between catechists.
- ❖ Be a good model of a Christian who is working to follow Christ by actions and speech.
- ❖ Participate in open discussions on today's problems.
- ❖ Stay involved--be a part of the solution.
- ❖ Become better informed.
- ❖ I could give talks on abortion and domestic violence.
- ❖ Become a better listener.
- ❖ Be willing to serve on an ad hoc committee to research the need and what is available from the diocese.
- ❖ Go to Seminary.
- ❖ Good question...maybe offering to talk to interested families about Catholic schooling.
- ❖ Become a Natural Family instructor and teach people about the blessings of this method.
- ❖ *Yo personalmente hago lo maximo, pero estaria dispuesta a ser instrumento para asistir en la formacion de grupos juveniles y otros grupos de oracion y formacion cristiana.*
- ❖ Should make a spot on the parish council for a younger member of the church. That way, the younger member can find out everyone's ideas, and the council could get an idea of what they want.
- ❖ Promote a program a week so that people have a clear understanding of what is offered and how to become involved.
- ❖ Talk to our youth about abstinence, etc.
- ❖ Address and affirm the validity of the single adult life vocation. This is mostly ignored in most parishes.
- ❖ Start helping the priest to search out potential vocations to the priesthood and religious life, and help to sponsor them.
- ❖ *Dar clases de Planificacion Natural Familiar a hispanoablantes.*
- ❖ Get more active, alter the priorities in my life, regain the work-life balance in the proper perspective.

- ❖ Open a club for all teens where we can talk about modern problems and looking at the Catholic Church's teachings.
- ❖ I have many suggestions about improving vocations through observations I made. People interested in the priesthood are often nervous. Having a first-contact layperson would be a good idea.
- ❖ As a young adult, I can keep promoting my generation to go to Youth Group if the parish offers it so that the younger lay people stays involved within the Catholic Faith.
- ❖ Be an active voice for the 18-35 age group that seems to be left out so often in non-college campus churches.
- ❖ Find ways to involve young adults that have found their way to mass because they want to not because their parents are telling them they have to go. I have somewhat "returned" and want to revive my Catholic faith.
- ❖ In talking with many of my catholic friends, the idea of living a "holy" life seems so foreign to them. I would love to help develop and implement a program that leads people back to wanting to live a "holy" and saintly life.
- ❖ I will like to help start a group of families meeting regularly to discuss Bible readings and themes that are relevant to raising a family, etc.
- ❖ Join a discussion group. Help to organize it, lead it.
- ❖ I could participate in seminars on ethical and moral issues.
- ❖ Coordinate a discussion/study group that meets consistently at least on a monthly basis.
- ❖ It's not what they can do for us (the opportunities are there!), we need to utilize them more fully.
- ❖ Become a more active participant in the parish.
- ❖ Give 'constructive' feedback and offer to assist.
- ❖ I am already very involved, but I could encourage others to do the same. It seems that people need to be invited individually and not just given a general invitation from the altar.
- ❖ I am going to volunteer more within my community, I want to reach out to those who are not as active, and tell what I get from the experiences with my parish.
- ❖ Let them know when I see a need, and be ready to fill it when possible.
- ❖ The best thing I can do is to speak with fellow parishioners and the clergy. Perhaps they would like to see the same things and we could work together.
- ❖ Create safe climate for groups to dialogue and address hard issues.
- ❖ Give more time.
- ❖ I have been helping my Parish to address some of these needs by my participation and my encouragement to others especially the young.
- ❖ Reach out to include children and support parents raising kids in public school setting, other religions have family fun nights ie basketball, bbq, camp outs etc.

4. Prayer

Prayer deepens our relationship with God, a relationship that is at the core of every aspect of our lives.

- ❖ I could start a centering prayer group, or call on some Benedictine nuns I know to provide guidance for those of our parish who are interested in this type of contemplative experience.
- ❖ Suggest to someone in the Parish office the need for a parish sponsored retreat for couples.
- ❖ Be more faithful to prayer.
- ❖ Pray for more leaders in our church.
- ❖ At my age 80, I can do intercessory prayer.
- ❖ Pray constantly for my parish.
- ❖ Be even more involved. I currently teach 3rd grade RE, but I could become more involved with beginning some small prayer groups for people my own age.
- ❖ I teach CCD but I could help organize and/or lead retreats and spiritual programs.
- ❖ I can begin a prayer list of parish needs, publish it in the bulletin, and request that others pray with me.
- ❖ I will have to think and pray over this one, I am active in many of our programs and try to help as much as I am able , but there is always more one can do, right now I will increase my prayers for my parish and thank God more for the blessings .
- ❖ I should pray more for our parish and religious.
- ❖ Offer to lead a community retreat.
- ❖ I would be willing to be involved in starting a program relating to the "how to of prayer".
- ❖ Organize prayer groups.
- ❖ Pray hard and consistently!!
- ❖ Start a prayer group.
- ❖ Since I am almost 76 years old and still active in our parish there isn't much more I can do but would love to do more. I like to think I help by showing up for the devotions we do have.
- ❖ I would like to start a Marian prayer group.
- ❖ Share with others the aids and helps that have helped me to grow more spiritually.
- ❖ I will pray for your Bishops conference.....please pray for me.
- ❖ I could host prayer groups, bible study; offer kindness to those in need; create programs such as evangelistic activities – just invite!
- ❖ I can only pray as I am 82 years old and I am as active as I can be.
- ❖ Help to organize an adult education course on spirituality and applying it to living your life.
- ❖ Volunteer to start a prayer chain.
- ❖ Pray together and recognize that with God all things are possible. God is Love!!!

- ❖ Prayer and listening to the Holy Spirit's guidance.
- ❖ Attend missions that are provided (make it worthwhile for church to sponsor them).
- ❖ I am in training to become a Spiritual Director.
- ❖ Pray for all parish members.
- ❖ Willing to take part and advertise retreats.
- ❖ I would be happy to help organize and/or teach a workshop on prayer.
- ❖ I'd like to start a faith sharing prayer group.
- ❖ I am trying to form a women's prayer group.
- ❖ Be a part of a day of renewal team.
- ❖ Continue on the spiritual development leadership committee.
- ❖ Teach a class in spirituality emphasizing our calling to true intimacy with Christ.
- ❖ Offer spiritual direction to those who are interested and promote it
- ❖ I have volunteered and have taught a class during Lent on Spirituality in the Bible.
- ❖ What I am doing is trying to get a men's retreat organized.
- ❖ Try to get a Scripture study group started or, a favorite dream, try a discussion group for women on women's spirituality as found in contemporary literature and art.
- ❖ Help organize a men's prayer group.
- ❖ I could give classes to adults and young people and help lead retreats and days of prayer.
- ❖ Pray for the Holy Spirit to dwell in the parish and by our example
- ❖ Help implement a how to pray work shop.
- ❖ Ask more people to join our small prayer group.
- ❖ Pray for conversion of my own heart: pray for the Parish.
- ❖ Lead a group in centering prayer.
- ❖ Being a senior who lives in the country alone--not much but pray
- ❖ Yikes! Teach that prayer class, maybe!
- ❖ Suggest the possibility of morning or evening prayer.
- ❖ Research and obtain prayers for our website.
- ❖ Pray for my parish.
- ❖ Pray daily for my pastor and my parish family.
- ❖ Take a more active leadership role in spiritual e.g., prayer line, daily communal prayer (at home).
- ❖ Can participate in group prayers, Bible study and workshops.
- ❖ Probably pray more before I act.
- ❖ Facilitate a series of discussions on ways to pray.
- ❖ Pray for guidance.
- ❖ Pray for our priest, leaders and parish members including myself!!
- ❖ Pray more for my parish!
- ❖ Remember our parish needs in my prayers.
- ❖ Set time aside each week to pray for the needs of our mission parish.
- ❖ Help to get some of these groups and retreats going.
- ❖ Try to ask priest for more teachings and prayer opportunities.
- ❖ Pray for the Church.

- ❖ Several of us have started an intercessory prayer group to pray for the needs of our parish.
- ❖ Pray that my pastor & parish be lead by the Spirit.
- ❖ Facilitate lay-led faith sharing and prayer groups.

5. Communal Life

The parish is, first and foremost, a community of people called together by God and unified by the Holy Spirit. The communal life of the parish is continually fostered so that, through our personal relationships, all parishioners may evidence our identity as brothers and sisters in the Lord.

- ❖ I would love to get more involved to be part of the solution, instead of raising the issues - I can donate more time to help in general.
- ❖ Take a more active part in parish happenings.
- ❖ Become involved again.
- ❖ *Integrar parte de un comite de servicio a la comunidad.*
- ❖ Advise on matters of buildings and site; I am an engineer.
- ❖ Attend more of the events which already occur.
- ❖ Get to know new members of the community and encourage their participation.
- ❖ Volunteer as a parish nurse.
- ❖ Become involved. Lack of participation is what stops most programs.
- ❖ Join one of the committees.
- ❖ Make people aware of singles' needs and encourage families to reach out to singles and newcomers who are away from their families.
- ❖ Join with other parishioners on an active welcoming committee.
- ❖ Visiting homebound members with the Eucharist; taking them to doctors & store when needed.
- ❖ Offer my education, gifts and experience that I have received in Clinical pastoral care.
- ❖ *Participar proactivamente en el diseño de un enfoque y administracion renovados.*
- ❖ As a "new" Catholic, I have much to learn before helping others, however, my experiences so far may help others reunite with the Catholic Church. I have found a peace unexplainable in my home coming.
- ❖ *Mejorar la comunicacion entre parroco/consejo pastoral para dar las opinios a conocer. Rezar por la parroquia y darle gracias a Dios por lo que ya se ha logrado.*
- ❖ I could let them know how isolating it can be to have a disabled child and no assistance.
- ❖ Instead of going alone to make suggestions I should take the time to find people of like mind and then visit with the priest. I need to have the attitude of 'we can do this' rather than 'Father can you find someone to do this'!

- ❖ Go back to the Church. I stopped going when divorced and don't feel like I belong.
- ❖ Make websites. Evangelize online. Free architecture. Choir. Show up. Tithe.
- ❖ Volunteer and actively participate in outreach programs for gays and lesbians.
- ❖ I would like to be more involved with helping people go through the annulment process. I have been thru it myself, and its benefits are truly holy.
- ❖ Write more articles in the newsletter.
- ❖ Host the internet chat?
- ❖ Find a way to help create/promote lay leadership (but it's difficult to suggest it without volunteering to head yet another organization).
- ❖ Help reach out to the Hispanic populations, especially the youth.
- ❖ I could keep advising my mother, who is President of our Pastoral Council.
- ❖ Hang out as Jesus did. Simple presence goes a long way.
- ❖ Trying to build a union among Latino and Anglo communities.
- ❖ I need to be more faithful in tithing. Our parishioners come from the suburbs to a church in a deteriorating neighborhood in the city. They really need our financial support.
- ❖ Continue to make the parish aware of the need for support of the single again.
- ❖ Be more available to fellow parish members and their needs. More involvement in Parish projects.
- ❖ Continuing to dialogue with the pastor, parish council & other parish organizations.
- ❖ Be positive, cheerful, welcoming, and open to opportunities to assist where needed.
- ❖ Be more supportive of people with problems & who are different than myself.
- ❖ Offer our home for small groups or youth groups to meet
- ❖ Organize a class or band or social event so that I wouldn't burden someone else to do it.
- ❖ I could spend more time giving and ministering to my family.
- ❖ Meet as many parishioners as possible.
- ❖ Continue to increase my role in stewardship.
- ❖ I can show up for the various things the parish offers and show that we are receptive to what they are trying to provide.
- ❖ Voice my opinion, go to a meeting or class, and/or participate.
- ❖ Make time to participate whenever the diocese offers a workshop that can help in our parish.
- ❖ Very important is commitment to married life - Share my story
- ❖ Be more tolerant of people.
- ❖ Continue doing my part re; stewardship-as well as not publicly criticizing the good folks who are trying their best!

- ❖ I attended a stewardship conference and have requested the parish council start a stewardship committee next fall. I have offered to be a working member.
- ❖ Really listen.
- ❖ I would be willing to volunteer with the children since I have 4 children of my own.
- ❖ Volunteer to organize more babysitting for Bible study, adult religious education.
- ❖ Become more involved and truly care about the people I encounter there.
- ❖ Bring needs and ideas up at meetings, talk to leaders, members of community, and remember to pray for our church to serve God
- ❖ Let them know more - sometimes I'm shy.
- ❖ Each week, greet at least one new person I don't know.
- ❖ I could baby sit in a group nursery.
- ❖ I have served several years as a Eucharistic minister to a local nursing home. I would be happy to encourage/assist others in the same ministry.
- ❖ I would love to research and write about parish history and church architecture.
- ❖ Form a support group for singles.
- ❖ Become more involved in the parish leadership and make people more aware of Marriage Encounter.
- ❖ I am actively engaged in the parish newsletter.
- ❖ Become their Financial Advisor.
- ❖ Share ideas from other parishes.
- ❖ I would serve on a committee for any new activity planned by the parish.
- ❖ I'd use my art design talent for brochures, ads...
- ❖ Give more of my time to doing church jobs well, rather than perfunctorily.
- ❖ Build community with other Catholic families.
- ❖ Attend more meetings; maybe start a new committee to better improve our parish beginning with a survey to the entire parish family.
- ❖ Actually take time to talk with the parish priests more and not feel that I am bothering them.
- ❖ I would be willing to visit new parishioners or home bound elderly, etc.
- ❖ Give more money.
- ❖ I want to provide education & support groups for elderly caregivers
- ❖ Reach out to others in time of need.
- ❖ Lead a small group to get people to know and share their lives with each other.
- ❖ Start a support group for those of us reluctantly divorced with children.
- ❖ Volunteer to chair and form a stewardship committee.
- ❖ Be more patient, especially with those who I disagree with theologically or liturgically.

- ❖ I feel that my call to teach teens and to be active in youth ministry could be expanded to teach adults and to do service for adults.
- ❖ Take a course on one on one ministry and reach out to others in the same boat.
- ❖ Help others to feel comfortable here.
- ❖ Welcome others into the volunteer areas in which I have felt so welcomed. Support those with other gifts.
- ❖ Reaching out to other in the parish by simply greeting more people at Sunday Mass.
- ❖ Volunteer as possible during the next Time and Talent opportunity
- ❖ My dream for our parish is to start a catholic mom's home schooling support group.
- ❖ Become a better public speaker and learn how to resolve a conflict instead of just walking away or wishing it away.
- ❖ Be a more positive person.
- ❖ Take part in the Synod meetings available this year
- ❖ Organize a fellowship hour.
- ❖ Offer ideas about education desired, share ministry ideas that others in my parish might want to become involved in.
- ❖ Get to know others.
- ❖ Make an effort to get more involved and stop saying they should do this that or the other, and do it myself with the help of others.
- ❖ I can help welcome people and try to understand that everyone is different and has different needs.
- ❖ Not leave when frustrated.
- ❖ Work with a small committee on how to improve the parish.
- ❖ Lead by example in organizing some lectures and outings. It shouldn't be up to only a few people.
- ❖ Help to build a sense of community in the parish. I'm not sure how....
- ❖ Form a committee that would do things like take a food dish to family at time of illness, drive old or disabled to appointments, activate a prayer chain, maybe have list of people who could baby sit for parishioner without family around in time of emergency.
- ❖ Suggest an open forum where issues and ideas that are of concern to parish members can be discussed.
- ❖ Be more welcoming to new parishioners.
- ❖ Be less grumpy. Complain less.
- ❖ I can pray and nurture my family.
- ❖ Use my multilingual skills to encourage different races/ethnic groups to worship together.
- ❖ Try to form a small "service group" to help frail, elderly and handicapped people of parish.
- ❖ Help to make it a friendlier place...encourage socialization/fellowship
- ❖ Be willing to lead programs.
- ❖ I guess I had better volunteer to start a greeter system!
- ❖ Offer more time in the areas that tie in to my own expertise.
- ❖ Talk, communicate, listen and use Cardinal Bernadin's model of common ground.

- ❖ Contact other senior citizens.
- ❖ Need to invite the priest to dinner and talk!
- ❖ Be encouraging - help people identify their gifts - ask them to do some one thing that may lead to other things.
- ❖ Reach out in love to my fellow parishioners. I know so few people/families in my parish. It's like we are all strangers.
- ❖ I could take advantage of the requests for help in the weekly bulletin and make a greater effort to participate.
- ❖ Organize, publicize and chair a group or an activity for young professionals.
- ❖ Continue to be active in service, witness, and the social life of the parish, get to know many people.
- ❖ I would be willing to visit people and to talk to people I have not seen before.
- ❖ Become friendlier.
- ❖ As a stewardship committee member educate myself more thru books, seminars etc to find what works for our particular parish.
- ❖ Help with overall business management of the Parish.
- ❖ Participate in round-robin telephoning inviting and reminding parishioners re upcoming events.
- ❖ Start small Christian communities in our parish.
- ❖ Volunteer to promote/lead after Mass hospitality.
- ❖ Give my parish priest more feedback.
- ❖ Offer to set up/be involved in a "welcoming committee."
- ❖ Introduce myself to the parish staff and say I can help.
- ❖ I could step out of my comfort zone more, get to know more people and invite them to participate.
- ❖ Encourage disenchanting parishioners.
- ❖ My goal is to begin a ministry with those who are grieving & dying within the parish.
- ❖ I would be interested in leading marriage preparation classes, organizing events for families, and contacting new parishioners.
- ❖ Meet other people.
- ❖ Improve my Spanish.
- ❖ I would like to form a hospitality committee to welcome newcomers. I would also like to set up an "Employment Opportunity" bulletin board to help those unemployed locate employment. This area is currently experiencing many lay-offs.
- ❖ Mentor new families.
- ❖ Find other singles like me and begin to find ways to help ourselves and the parish.
- ❖ I am working with three other people to start a group for single young adults.
- ❖ Encourage better participation of parishioners in the Health Ministry; there are so many older and lonely people in our parish.
- ❖ Help form a committee to welcome new parishioners and provide opportunities for newcomers and less active members of the community to become part of the larger parish community.

- ❖ I am in a lay formation program so that I can acquire the skills to be a more effective leader.
- ❖ Donate to a lending library; be available to other young families in need of social support.
- ❖ The area most important to me now is welcoming the Newcomers. I have agreed to Chair that commission.
- ❖ I could mentor young married women/mothers. I have 7 children and home school 4 of them. With the mobile family we all need someone with wisdom to talk to, including me.
- ❖ Give to collections.
- ❖ Devote more time & get more involved in parish leadership.
- ❖ I could become the greeter at least at my mass...
- ❖ I do not feel connected to my parish-- I need to reach out and find others who have my interests.
- ❖ Spend time with the young children--playing and sharing experience and praying with them.
- ❖ I would be interested in serving on Parish Council, meeting parishioners and sharing ideas and working on committees for serving the poor, the children, etc.
- ❖ Introduce new people to some of the "old" parishioners.
- ❖ Construct a database of parishioner skills and talents.
- ❖ Get together with newcomer once a month right after Mass to let newcomer feel at home.
- ❖ I could e-mail with other parishioners or chat on-line, I am limited with children, but am available.
- ❖ I could help with social functions in the parish hall.
- ❖ Participate when church has seminars missions etc and bring a friend
- ❖ Join a particular group or program that interests me and learn how to be a bigger part of the parish.
- ❖ Continue to reach out to people who don't feel as connected as I do. Search for ways to reach these individuals.
- ❖ Overcome my fear of being rejected for my views and join in the discussion, I suppose.
- ❖ I would participate in organizing family oriented activities along with the aid of other parishioners.
- ❖ I could improve my computer skills to help the parish maintain contact with students who are away at college.
- ❖ Be more aware of the needs of individuals in the parish; be more welcoming to newcomers and strangers.
- ❖ I could let go of the judgments I place on others and love them for who they are.
- ❖ Be more open to taking more of a leadership position for the activities. that I would like to see in the parish (including not getting discouraged if/when they don't work out).
- ❖ I am currently helping to grow a group for 20-somethings in my parish.
- ❖ Become more involved socially.
- ❖ Work to start activities such as biking & hiking.

- ❖ Do more for the parish members that are in need.
- ❖ Respect opinions. Love everyone no matter what they stand for
- ❖ Deepen my own commitment to God and the Church, choose a mission in the parish, and consistently dedicate time to that.
- ❖ Send an email/letter to my priest.
- ❖ I would be willing to provide daycare/co-op for people willing to volunteer. I am trying to help with computer work at home, too.
- ❖ Participate in a group to assess where improvement is needed in our parish and encourage more people to volunteer.
- ❖ Volunteer my skills as a teacher, a computer programmer / application developer and as an organizer of small events and programs.
- ❖ I am a leader in our Health Care Committee, working toward access to health care for all.
- ❖ Get to know my fellow parishioners better.
- ❖ Participate more actively in the activities and service opportunities of my parish.
- ❖ Better stewardship of my own time & talent!
- ❖ Attend and participate, myself and my family, the programs that the parish offers. Share the opportunities that the parish offers with others. Volunteer to help as help is needed.
- ❖ encourage young adults to be more involved in our parish
- ❖ I've started a moms group.
- ❖ I could help build a web page and computerize church tasks that lend themselves to PC use.
- ❖ Continue to speak out in a positive and non-threatening manner
- ❖ Volunteer to greet people at the doors.
- ❖ Attend town meetings and; participate in ministry leadership.
- ❖ Love unconditionally; host a potluck; orchestrate a day of service or a club; create a welcoming system.
- ❖ Perhaps run for parish council.
- ❖ Ask for the programs I want to be taught at the church. Take a more active part in the areas I want to change or learn about.
- ❖ I could reach out to others who don't look as though they feel comfortable and encourage them to share their concerns with the parish, both priests and laity, who all would be happy to help.
- ❖ Start a parish nursing program.
- ❖ I could help organize events.
- ❖ Help to organize a stewardship drive and picnic.
- ❖ Talk with others I meet about parish programs; actually visit new parishioners; live as a Christian.
- ❖ I would volunteer to help with youth groups and their activities.
- ❖ Serve as Parish visitors.
- ❖ Attend parish council meetings.
- ❖ I guess I could get involved and maybe create a support group for divorced Catholics and their children.
- ❖ Introduce myself to people I don't know to make them welcome and to increase the fellowship.

- ❖ I would be grateful for the chance to serve my parish as part of Parish Council and take some of burden away from the Pastor.
- ❖ Develop a group of people in their 20s and 30s.
- ❖ Help with formation of Small faith community development
- ❖ offer to help with the planning of some events of the parish
- ❖ Outreach to visitors and new comers.
- ❖ Make phone calls, work in the office, coordinate events/classes.
- ❖ I'd like to be on committees for the sick.
- ❖ Volunteer to help in any programs that might be established.
- ❖ Be willing to head up committees or run for council.
- ❖ I someday want to help establish a program or small group or workshop whose goal is to help people live their Christian values in their daily lives, and to come to find that God is not just found in church on Sunday but is with us in our work world.
- ❖ Do personal visitations to people who have just moved to the parish and to people who have stopped coming.
- ❖ Be a participative member; emphasis the positive; be constructive in attitude and action.
- ❖ I could attempt to start a group of 21 - 35 year olds who would like to pray, learn about our faith, and have fun together.
- ❖ I am an excellent fund-raiser and am always glad to help with the monetary needs of the parish.
- ❖ I shall contact the parish to see what I can do to help with homebound seniors who are unable to get to doctors etc.
- ❖ Respond honestly and thoughtfully when opportunities for suggestions are sought. Participate in parish retreats, social events, adult education classes, and other opportunities to grow in our faith.
- ❖ Volunteer for welcoming committee visits.
- ❖ Relieve pastor of some administrative work that he performs. Am retired manager who could assist in office management, etc.
- ❖ I could encourage people of my own age in my parish to get involved in some form of ministry within the parish.
- ❖ Increase offerings.
- ❖ Support those in leadership roles through active participation whenever possible.
- ❖ I can speak directly to the pastor rather than gripe about things among a group of people; I would also talk positively among parishioners to encourage more people to get involved.
- ❖ Use my gift and talents at organization.
- ❖ Express my opinions to people working on the pastoral council, the priests, and the staff.
- ❖ Volunteer specific suggestion ideas for church bulletin revisions; be a "welcome to the parish" greeter.
- ❖ Lead the life that God has called me to as husband, father, employer.
- ❖ Participate in the monthly parish council meetings.
- ❖ Encourage bridging between our migrant population (which has its own segregated mass) and our regular parish activities.
- ❖ Assume a leadership role.

- ❖ Participate more in multi-cultural activities in the church, community we live in.
- ❖ Try to remove some of the administrative burden from the pastor
- ❖ Keep peace!
- ❖ Use our men's society in an effort to stop the gossip and backstabbing that currently divides many members in our parish.
- ❖ Be more involved and not just complain about what should or should not be done.
- ❖ Offer my professional skills and increase donations.
- ❖ I serve on the Pastoral Council, and am especially working on race relations within the parish.
- ❖ Become more loving, welcoming & accepting.
- ❖ Be more open and friendly to new faces in the church so that they feel welcome there.
- ❖ Participate in parish planning.
- ❖ I could and would participate in planning and contacting others who would help.
- ❖ Encourage others to become involved.
- ❖ Speak up, take more initiative - currently we coordinate marriage prep, but want to extend that to newly married ministry.
- ❖ Reach out-be friendly.
- ❖ Encourage members to continue to belong and to be active in our own Parish and not to give up.
- ❖ Each Sunday I try to greet everyone warmly, we have a huge parish and a lot of visitors.

6. Missionary Spirit

The parish exists not for itself, but for the mission of Christ. Each of us, both as individuals and as a parish community, is called to bear witness to the Good News in and through our daily lives.

- ❖ Provide support and advocate for social justice within the parish.
- ❖ Teach English to new immigrant parishioners.
- ❖ Join other denominations to improve life in the city.
- ❖ I would be happy to help my parish open the doors to a young peoples study.
- ❖ Be an example for others in the community so people will desire to seek out the Christian life.
- ❖ If I had the time I would love to start a committee to help inactive Catholics.
- ❖ Am very active in prison ministry.
- ❖ I hope to become more involved in the youth program, as we get a bit more settled here.
- ❖ Co-ordinate some community service projects
- ❖ Perhaps organize a parish retreat involving service to a community in need.

- ❖ Begin a youth group.
- ❖ I could volunteer to spear-head a social justice outreach group that would sponsor speakers, discussions, and service projects.
- ❖ Lead a father and husband group to support family role and responsibility.
- ❖ I would like to be trained to make sick and hospital calls.
- ❖ Help with disability awareness projects.
- ❖ Become more active in social ministry; help to develop a lay committee.
- ❖ Begin a service opportunity group on my own.
- ❖ Continue to work for women's issues such as domestic violence, pregnancy support, women as leaders in the church,
- ❖ Am already pretty active in community, but could become more proactive rather than relying on priest(s) to take initiatives.
- ❖ I could start a small church community for divorced AI-Anons, who want to learn how to deal with co-dependency issues.
- ❖ I am trying to get folks to "think outside of the box" but it is hard when you have been in the box for a while!!!!
- ❖ Research resources to help implement programs and activities to fulfill our mission in life.
- ❖ Pray to the Holy Spirit and search diligently for the truth about systems which oppress us all, and for help with the struggle in dealing with these. Educate myself. Multiplication of meetings is not a good solution.
- ❖ Make contact with the pastor and folks who are actively involved, open the door and see what that leads to.
- ❖ I being a gay male could speak to gay Catholics, and try to get them back to the church.
- ❖ I can run word processing software to send out letters, do surveys, set up databases. I can shovel snow or garden.
- ❖ I would offer to start up a single parent support group
- ❖ Participate in interdenominational events-lead and/or participate in study group on women's issues-be present to women who are thinking of leaving because of church attitude.
- ❖ *Ayudar a reclutar e invitar aquellos fieles que no participan activamente en la parroquia.*
- ❖ Start a Pro-Life Group to help educate the parish.
- ❖ Get involved with evangelization committee.
- ❖ *Estar a la disposición del párroco y sobre todo recordar que SOY Iglesia.*
- ❖ Find out more about the needs of the community and assist with efforts to achieve goals.
- ❖ Start a marriage mentorship/fellowship group.
- ❖ My wife and I already are teaching classes with PreCana.
- ❖ I want to get involved in Project Gabriel.
- ❖ Volunteer as a group leader to talk of and take action in evangelical and charity organizations.

- ❖ I serve as youth minister, and try to involve other young adults in the group.
- ❖ Be more proactive in suggesting/developing programs for married couples
- ❖ I could start a fatherhood or parenting ministry.
- ❖ my husband and I can do pulpit talks to promote Marriage Encounter
- ❖ Reach out to those not attending Mass.
- ❖ Participate in those parish programs that build a sense of community and that offer service to others.
- ❖ I have started a Catholic womens support group ... for any reason they need support.
- ❖ Stay active in social and service groups. Live out my faith and try to be a good example to others.
- ❖ Participation in the peace and Justice committee.
- ❖ I could voice some specific ideas - like reaching out to some of the outcasts in our parish; more soup kitchen coordination. Time is my biggest problem. If I voice, I may be in charge....
- ❖ I'm trying by starting a youth ministry program.
- ❖ Try to start social justice ministry.
- ❖ Spend more time with the youth of our parish to help grow in their faith in the years when it is not "cool" to be a Catholic.
- ❖ Be more welcoming to all i come in contact with.
- ❖ I would like to help with a program that meets with unmarried or newly married to counsel.
- ❖ Help out with parenting classes.
- ❖ Assist with parenting and marriage programs
- ❖ Start or assist in an outreach program for inactive Catholics.
- ❖ Help form an adult singles group.
- ❖ I would be glad to help organize a preteen or teen youth group.
- ❖ I can be the first person to evangelize through outreach to homeless, imprisoned, troubled marriages, etc.
- ❖ I have just started participating in the social action committee.
- ❖ Participate more in the volunteer missions that are encouraged.
- ❖ I would like to get our youth group to do more service projects and get more involved with helping the poor.
- ❖ Would like to help organize a Vacation Bible School for our youth.
- ❖ Volunteer more time to guide young people's activities.
- ❖ I support and volunteer in our parish...but I could assist in the helping of the less fortunate.
- ❖ I am looking into organizing a class for those not yet married or engaged, to help them explore the Catholic idea of Matrimony.
- ❖ Participate in community outreach and invite parishioners to join me
- ❖ Encourage an interest in serving people who are dealing with HIV / AIDS.
- ❖ I would be willing to organize an outreach program to imprisoned children if I could figure out how to get permission.
- ❖ Continue to speak up and speak out, in a respectful manner, if social justice issues are neglected or ignored

- ❖ Be willing to provide suggestions to the parish leadership for welcoming the strangers among us.
- ❖ Help participate in a program for people who are having a difficult time finding employment, also educate people how to budget, wisely
- ❖ I'm involved in the social ministry committee.
- ❖ Offer to work on social justice issues by presenting workshops; take a leadership role in promoting political advocacy on issues related to Catholic Social Teaching.
- ❖ Be involved in evangelizing.
- ❖ Bringing more friends with me.
- ❖ Volunteer more in the Aid to Women Center.
- ❖ Start a program for the grieving.
- ❖ We could help out around the community. We can also show leadership for the younger children that look up to us.
- ❖ Gather my fellow youth parishioners to put together food and clothe drives.
- ❖ Be more active in social justice and outreach.
- ❖ Give classes and workshops on creating healthy marriages and relationships.
- ❖ Pray for the return of inactive Catholics. Invite them to return.
- ❖ I would work with the parish to outreach to the gay and lesbian community.
- ❖ Ask some of the teenagers what they think, then try to help. Do things like food drives.
- ❖ Volunteer to start a youth group.
- ❖ I'm already pretty active in our mother's ministry & the respect life program.
- ❖ Just suggest more at youth group meetings.
- ❖ I would be willing to visit new members, or speak with lapsed Catholics.
- ❖ Volunteer to spearhead an "outreach to the poor" group. I think I will do it!
- ❖ I can get behind an initiative that helps children, (i.e. children with aids etc.)
- ❖ Be more active in activities like the soup kitchen and Outreach.
- ❖ Be a prominent example of a happy, satisfied married couple in order to promote Marriage Encounter to other couples.
- ❖ Be mentors to couples who are going to be married.
- ❖ Help teach English for those wanting to improve their language skills.
- ❖ I would make sure that I personally would spend time with the battered women at the shelter.
- ❖ Perhaps help in organizing support groups for the anxious and severely depressed.
- ❖ Recruit more of the youth to get involved.
- ❖ I would be interested in forming a ministry to divorced people.
- ❖ I would be willing to work in an outreach program to Gay & Lesbian Catholics.
- ❖ Start a community out reach and evangelization team.

- ❖ I am just beginning to get involved with my parish, organizing around calling for a moratorium on the death penalty.
- ❖ Good question. In two months, I will finish a Ph.D. program in clinical psychology. Once I am licensed (another year away), I would like to facilitate a support group for battered women.
- ❖ Help in a youth group. I would welcome the opportunity to be an example to Jr. high/H.S. aged kids.
- ❖ Be more involved in leading in single adult activities.
- ❖ Continue convalescent hospital visits on weekly basis.
- ❖ Design a parish web page.
- ❖ Form a peace and justice group.
- ❖ Help with the food program--we have a lot of people in the winter who need assistance in this.
- ❖ Be a liaison for a prison ministry, since I already work at a prison chapel.
- ❖ Supply information on prison ministry and social justice issues, suggest and support spiritual growth opportunities.
- ❖ I will continue to be involved in a regional ecumenical faith-based community organizing project aimed at strengthening the individual communities and promoting social justice in our region.
- ❖ I could offer to start a study group for married couples or help in the instruction of couples preparing for marriage.
- ❖ To reach out to those who are facing difficulties and / or not practicing faith.
- ❖ Work on a social justice and parish service program.
- ❖ Become more active in outreach to the poor and elderly.
- ❖ If asked, I could select clippings showing convergences or common statements from various ecumenical dialogues for insertion into the bulletin.
- ❖ Work closer with our small peace and justice group and stay focused on the youth of the parish.
- ❖ Encourage travel to see how other half lives.
- ❖ Form a teen leadership program.
- ❖ I would love to offer my services for a prison ministry in my parish or offering some kind of support for families of inmates
- ❖ Seek the pastor's support of events, like a mission trip to Mexico or Habitat for Humanity.
- ❖ Possibly start a home school support group.
- ❖ Organize a sister parish relationship with one from the inner city. Work toward women's ordination.
- ❖ Lead jail ministry, hospital ministry.
- ❖ Start a mothers group and listen to various tapes.
- ❖ Come back as a youth minister.
- ❖ Become involved in creating a ministry of healing.
- ❖ Build a website.
- ❖ Present talk on social teachings; host dinner dialogue/sharing for small group of parishioners; partner with newcomers to the neighborhood/parish.

- ❖ I would love to help the elderly and those who are home bound.
- ❖ I would gladly help with a Project Rachel group.
- ❖ Become an RCIA sponsor.
- ❖ Participate in visiting the sick.
- ❖ I can step out of my comfort zone and work with the homeless and the hungry.
- ❖ Help organize a social organization for new parents.
- ❖ I should probably become one of those Big Brothers!
- ❖ Volunteer as Out-Reach Minister; contact organizations/programs with the parish boundaries; select one initially, and setup a volunteer schedule with parishioners.
- ❖ Participate in service group activities.
- ❖ Visit the homebound.
- ❖ I would be willing to organize groups to do minor repair and maintenance for the elderly.
- ❖ Be a mentor couple for engaged couples.
- ❖ Would be willing to participate in outreach to those disenfranchised.
- ❖ I am working with a group to start a crisis pregnancy center.
- ❖ Organize a "Guardian Angel" organization in which an individual, family or group of families "adopt" an elderly shut-in with no local family. Activities could include visits, phone calls, taking them to doctor appointments, movies or to our homes.
- ❖ I am starting a girls club within the youth group. Pray for me...
- ❖ Tutor kids, teach skills to adults.
- ❖ Become more involved in some of the community building programs - its hard with small kids, but perhaps some type of child centered program would be good.
- ❖ Start a Men's group focusing on bringing Church teaching into practical application for the lives of Catholic Men.
- ❖ Start a Parish Nurse program.
- ❖ Aid in the youth department through suggesting activities and volunteering when they need help with youth functions.
- ❖ Run a youth social justice group; organize shelter trips in urban areas.
- ❖ Spend more time assisting with web work.
- ❖ Try to start up a group of leaders who go out and encourage youth to join the youth group.
- ❖ I would be willing to help create a volunteer coordinating service beginning with contacting the various service organizations that already established in Houston and how we can work with them.
- ❖ Visit the home bound.
- ❖ Get involved when they have social justice issues that need to be addressed.
- ❖ Provide counseling for domestic and sexual abuse.
- ❖ Do more home visiting, hospital follow-up.
- ❖ Liaison work with non-Catholic churches.
- ❖ Donate food for the homeless along with clothing also.
- ❖ Start an outplacement service for those who lost their jobs.

- ❖ I have started a study group in my home after mass on Sundays ...to help us grow in sharing our faith with others outside the church. I start taking it upon myself to search out material I need to grow ...taking classes in this area.
- ❖ Organize a group to help with those who have had abortions or divorces.
- ❖ Set up an internet web site. So many other parishes have them where not only general information is available, specific targeted information, and why not an on-line bible study?
- ❖ I would be willing to initiate a "Bereavement" group.
- ❖ Continue putting all my change + spare monies in the poor boxes.
- ❖ Get trained as a "Detention Ministry volunteer".
- ❖ Volunteer to be on an "outreach" program for inactive parishioners
- ❖ Show slides of mission work I have done
- ❖ organize visits to the lonely, elderly, and nursing home residents
- ❖ Work more closely with the Food Pantry
- ❖ I have helped start a program that assists the families of persons in our local jail
- ❖ Help create a family support group for families living with teenagers.
- ❖ Continue to work with metro wide Interfaith group.
- ❖ Support the programs offered, not only by attending, but by bringing friends.
- ❖ I could get more involved and start a community service group
- ❖ I volunteer with the nursery and at the hospital.
- ❖ I would like to see my parish have a parish nursing program and I would help.
- ❖ Recruit some parishioners to accompany me in my work with the missionaries of the Poor.
- ❖ I am going to work with RCIA, and St.Vincent de Paul society.
- ❖ I could propose some of the community service programs that I am interested in and see if we could get a group together to go out and do them.
- ❖ I will be working on the newsletter and visiting, thinking about whether I can make a commitment to Hospice.
- ❖ Participate in the programs we sponsor to assist those who are homeless or poor on a more regular basis.
- ❖ Marriage Enrichment-already involved in a yearly Celebration of Marriage mass for couples. Special anniversaries & engaged couples counseling. Would help with marriage enrichment!
- ❖ I'll join the newly formed Bible study class and continue to support its programs for the needy when called upon. I could pay more attention to the bulletin so I'm up to date on what needs the parish has.
- ❖ Talk to a priest, I would love to work more with youth but do not know where to start.
- ❖ Work at food drives and clothes drives.
- ❖ Have a clothing drive to help the people a little less fortunate than others.

- ❖ Take a more active role, especially with the Social concerns committee.
- ❖ Suggest different activities that I think would be fun for teens and they will also learn things they didn't know about their faith.
- ❖ Meet more people in my community.
- ❖ Volunteer to work with youth or young adults.
- ❖ Volunteer to be a mentor for new & inactive members.
- ❖ Participate in our city's ecumenical service group.
- ❖ I've volunteered as a hospital Eucharistic minister.
- ❖ I could ask the pastor about starting a social concerns committee.
- ❖ I offer my technical skills and experience in efforts to evangelize via the internet.
- ❖ Start a marriage enrichment program.
- ❖ I head our Confirmation Team for high school aged children. Now I hope to somehow create a youth center.
- ❖ Volunteer more with our community service projects.
- ❖ Network with others interested in participating in a Respect Life Committee.
- ❖ I could help with outreach programs, especially to the large Jewish community in our area.
- ❖ Continue to organize world marriage day, coordinate the child care room, and continue speaking about ideas we can borrow from other Christian denominations to increase our knowledge of scripture, alternative methods of prayer, and support for married couples
- ❖ Interact with the poor and needy.
- ❖ I am a volunteer with Habitat for Humanity.
- ❖ Start reaching out to Catholics who have fallen away.
- ❖ Speak to the parish priest regarding support for a foreign mission.
- ❖ Stand up for the church in a way that would show others how attractive it is.
- ❖ Facilitate marriage enrichment programs.
- ❖ Mentor engaged couples; share my experience of marriage (almost 32 years).
- ❖ Sacrifice my time to help those less fortunate than myself.
- ❖ Be more active and creative in ideas for the Social Action Committee.

7. General

Some people are willing to help address the needs within their parish, but are waiting to be invited or need some help getting started:

- ❖ I need to know where there is a need.
- ❖ I have offered to volunteer in a variety of parish capacities and am awaiting responses.
- ❖ I'm big on being involved - all I have to do is be asked!
- ❖ Work in any effort the pastor asks.
- ❖ If a meeting were called in my parish, I would be glad to attend.

- ❖ Be responsive to calls for assistance.
- ❖ I have creative ideas but do not know how to make them part of parish life.
- ❖ I will do anything.
- ❖ Still praying about this one.
- ❖ Pray, be willing and be available.
- ❖ Hmmmm. Wasn't ready for this one. I don't know.
- ❖ Willing to participate but few opportunities for working adults and those without children.
- ❖ I could come up with ideas and action for helping the poor elderly if I knew where to start, a forum? An ear? An established program?
- ❖ I don't know. I'm only 16.
- ❖ *Primero necesito ayuda a discernir que son mis ideas y cuales son las realmente necesarias de proseguir en el empeño de ayudar a los que mas necesitan de la Palabra de Dios.*
- ❖ I wish I knew, I am spiritually hungry, but I don't know where to turn or where to start.
- ❖ Go back to the Church. I stopped going when divorced & don't feel like I belong.
- ❖ I'm calling today to ask where the need is most. God bless you.
- ❖ I am a lay minister at the hospital. I would be more involved if only someone would ask.
- ❖ I'd be happy to get involved and offered to when joining, but no follow up...
- ❖ I have skills, but don't know what the parish needs. I'd like to give more of myself, not just in a spiritual sense.
- ❖ Not much; I am homebound because of illness but I would love to find ways to help; I need suggestions.
- ❖ I feel I could be of more service, but I am not asked. One hesitates to "push" oneself on others.
- ❖ I could do lots of things to help but I can't afford the gas to go places.
- ❖ I don't know, but if they asked I hope I would say "yes."
- ❖ I could help them address the needs instead of sitting back and complaining.
- ❖ I have no specific idea but if someone else were to ask me for my participation, I'd be too happy to do so.
- ❖ I want to be more active in my parish, but don't know how.
- ❖ Stay focused, be open and available to possibilities, remember: "Be still and know that I am God."
- ❖ Be available to the call to serve personally.
- ❖ Share my skills when asked, instead of waiting for others to respond.
- ❖ Continue to volunteer, say "Yes" when asked.
- ❖ I suppose I could decide to try to become more involved.
- ❖ Become more involved with my time in the areas that are important to me.
- ❖ Become involved more and recruit others to help.
- ❖ Approach the pastor and learn how to get more involved.

- ❖ Not sure specifically. Never have been asked except in bulletins. I feel guilty that I am not doing more than attend Mass on a regular basis.
- ❖ I don't know. The parish is too big.
- ❖ Investigate more of the programs my parish has and get involved where I have interest or see need.
- ❖ I need to be more involved. Only I can do this. It is up to me.
- ❖ I would like to help more but I am not sure how to do it or what to do.
- ❖ Become more involved in the church in whatever capacity. I realize that I am the church, too.
- ❖ The PARISH is really the people and we just need to get together and address the issues raised in the rest of the survey. This includes me too.
- ❖ I have time and talent that I'm willing to give but I'm not sure how.

Copy of the Lay Survey



Family, Laity, Women and Youth

UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS

(The survey is also available at www.usccb.org/laity/laysurvey/laysurvey.htm)

Lay Survey

*You are called to be "salt [for] the earth"
and "light [for] the world." -- Mt 5:13-16*

Instructions for Completing the Survey:

This survey begins with a brief section about yourself, followed by seven categories of questions. The statements within each category are not meant to be comprehensive nor all-inclusive. However, all of the topics addressed are important in helping lay Catholics live out their call as Christians in the world. **We are especially interested in your suggestions for improving areas that are important to you.**

For each section, please select each statement that you agree with and then suggest ways to improve that area by typing your suggestion in the blank box provided.

Skip the statement if you disagree with it or if you are not sure.

Gender:

Male

Female

Age range:

up to 17

18 - 35

36 - 64

65 and older

Please indicate your ethnic/racial background. Please select all that apply.

- White
- Black
- Asian/Pacific Islander
- American Indian, Eskimo, or Aleut
- Hispanic

Indicate if you have ever attended any of the following. Please select all that apply.

- Catholic grade school
- Catholic high school
- Catholic college/university
- CCD (Religious education in your parish as a child or teen)

Indicate how active you are in your parish. Please select all that apply.

- Volunteer at my parish
- Frequently attend programs in my parish
- Participate in parish leadership
- Attend mass more than once a week
- Attend mass weekly
- Attend mass less than once a week

B. Knowledge of the Faith

A parish can help us deepen our knowledge of the Catholic faith so that we are better able to respond to how God calls us in life. *Please select all of the following that apply and provide brief suggestions for improvement.*

To help me live out my call as a Christian in the world, it is *important* to me that my parish *improve* . . .

. . . its adult faith formation/adult education

Suggestions:

. . . how it supports parents in passing on their faith to their children

Suggestions:

. . . how it helps me to deepen my understanding of the Bible

Suggestions:

. . . how it helps me to understand more about Catholic teaching, including teaching about social justice

Suggestions:

C. Liturgical Life

The liturgical life of the parish nourishes, sustains and strengthens us to live out the faith we received in baptism. *Please select all of the following that apply and provide brief suggestions for improvement.*

To help me live out my call as a Christian in the world, it is *important* to me that my parish *improve* . . .

. . . opportunities for active participation of the community in worship

Suggestions:

. . . opportunities and training for liturgical ministers (e.g., lectors, ministers to the homebound, hospitality ministers)

Suggestions:

. . . how it celebrates Sunday liturgy

Suggestions:

. . . its preaching at Mass and other liturgies

Suggestions:

. . . how it celebrates sacramental reconciliation

Suggestions:

. . . how it prepares for and celebrates the following sacraments: Infant Baptism, First Penance, First Eucharist, Confirmation and/or Marriage

Suggestions:

. . . its RCIA process (initiation of adults)

Suggestions:

D. Moral Formation

Moral formation helps us to grasp the wisdom of our tradition and gives us tools to reflect upon and analyze our everyday situations in light of the Gospel. *Please select all of the following that apply and provide brief suggestions for improvement.*

To help me live out my call as a Christian in the world, it is *important* to me that my parish *improve* . . .

. . . how it helps me connect my faith with my daily life

Suggestions:

. . . how it helps me make important moral decisions in my personal life at work or at home

Suggestions:

. . . how it helps me discern my vocation or profession in life

Suggestions:

. . . the way it supports and encourages vocations to the priesthood and religious life

Suggestions:

. . . the way it supports and encourages lay persons to serve as members of parish staffs, Catholic school teachers, and other formal church ministry positions

Suggestions:

E. Prayer

Prayer deepens our relationship with God, a relationship that is at the core of every aspect of our lives. *Please select all of the following that apply and provide brief suggestions for improvement.*

To help me live out my call as a Christian in the world, it is *important* to me that my parish *improve* . . .

. . . how it helps me to pray as part of a community

Suggestions:

. . . how it helps me to pray as an individual

Suggestions:

. . . how it helps me to deepen my relationship with God

Suggestions:

. . . how it promotes learning various ways of praying

Suggestions:

F. Communal Life

The parish is, first and foremost, a community of people called together by God and unified by the Holy Spirit. The communal life of the parish is continually fostered so that, through our personal relationships, all parishioners may evidence our identity as brothers and sisters in the Lord. *Please select all of the following that apply and provide brief suggestions for improvement.*

To help me live out my call as a Christian in the world, it is *important* to me that my parish *improve* . . .

. . . how it builds community within the parish by providing ways for people to get to know others who share their beliefs and values

Suggestions:

. . . how it helps people, especially newcomers, to feel welcome

Suggestions:

. . . stewardship within the parish, by inviting parishioners to use their talents and gifts for the common good

Suggestions:

. . . how it encourages participation in parish planning, councils and committees

Suggestions:

. . . how it affirms and promotes the cultural, racial and ethnic diversity of parishioners

and parish leaders

Suggestions:



. . . leadership of the parish (both clergy and lay)

Suggestions:

G. Missionary Spirit

The parish exists not for itself, but for the mission of Christ. Each of us, both as individuals and as a parish community, is called to bear witness to the Good News in and through our daily lives. *Please select all of the following that apply and provide brief suggestions for improvement.*

To help me live out my call as a Christian in the world, it is *important* to me that my parish *improve* . . .



. . . how it evangelizes by helping parishioners to share the Good News with others

Suggestions:



. . . how it promotes opportunities for service

Suggestions:



. . . its outreach and ministry to the poor, the hungry and/or the homeless

Suggestions:



. . . its outreach to inactive Catholics

Suggestions:



. . . how it helps couples grow in their commitment to married life.

Suggestions:



. . . how it promotes respect for life from conception to natural death

Suggestions:

H. - General Questions

What else could your parish do to help you better live your call as a Christian in the world?

What is the best thing that your parish is already doing that helps you live out your call as a Christian in the world?

What could you do specifically to help your parish better address some of the needs which are important for you?

