



InFormation

News for Pastoral Planners and Those Implementing the Plan

Primarily an electronic publication

The InFormation home page is <http://www.archphila.org/pastplan/INDEX/InFormationindex.html>

Where Are the Kids?



Its ten P.M. do you know where your kids are? A few years back, this was a public service announcement repeated frequently on the network television stations. One of the important jobs of a parish community is to know the children of the parish. Parents and god-parents of children are obliged to form their children in the faith and practice of a Christian life by word and example. By virtue of his office, the pastor is obliged to provide for the catechetical formation of adults, young people, and children. A first step to providing support for parents and education for the children is to account for the children living in the parish. (Canons 774, 776)

The 2010 U.S. Census report #1 to be delivered to pastors in July 2011 accounts for all children under 18 living in the parish at the time of the 2010 census. Between 2000 and 2010 the total number of children in the Archdiocese declined by 4% or 43,199. Hispanic children actually rose by 52% or 34,929 but this was offset by a decline in non Hispanic of 9% or 78,128. This pattern (total children down, Hispanic children up) occurred in every vicariate except Montgomery County where the increase in Hispanic offset the decline in non-Hispanic children causing the change in total children to be positive and Chester County where Hispanic and non-Hispanic children both increased.

The part of the **Annual Pastoral Report** entitled *Report on Catholic Education* asks parishes to account for all Catholic children in public schools, non-Catholic private schools, or Catholic schools other than the parish school. When these numbers are added to the parish school enrollment, they comprise all of the children that the parish knows about and is able to count.

The number of parish children in public and non Catholic private schools can be compared to the number enrolled in the parish religious education program. The difference represents an opportuni-

ty for different or better parish programs to attract the missing children and their parents to religious education programs.

This number of parish children known to be enrolled in some school can also be compared with the number of babies baptized at the time the children were born. For example, children in elementary school (K-6) in 2010 were born between 1999 and 2005. Taking into consideration the number of children who may move in and out of the parish before starting school, this can give the parish a very rough estimate of the number of children to be accounted for. In the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, we estimate that about 70% of the elementary age children are enrolled in Catholic schools or some type of Catholic religious instruction--only 33 % of the estimated number of high school children are enrolled. How does your parish compare?

Finally, by looking at the total number of children living in the parish on the 2010 U.S. Census Report, the parish can consider the share of all school age children who are known by the parish. This may provide opportunities for evangelization by addressing the needs of the children and, through them, their parents.

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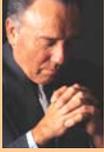
Suggestions for future articles should be directed to Ron Lill editor

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These suggestions are encouraged and welcomed

PRAYER FOR A MEETING



pened in their lives from another perspective. The two disciples' recognized Jesus when Jesus broke open the Scriptures and then took, blessed and shared the bread.

Ask yourself

- Are we on our "Road to Emmaus"
- The disciples recognized Jesus in the Word (Scripture). How will I reflect on God's Word?
- Will I recognize Jesus in our midst?
- To be open to change, the disciples had to close their mouths and open their ears. In what situation Can I close my mouth and listen to others?

Reading: Luke 24: 13 - 35 (Road to Emmaus)

(Jesus said) "What are you discussing as you walk along?" (They responded) "We were hoping that he would be the one to redeem Israel." (Jesus) "interpreted to them what referred to him in all the Scriptures . . .

Reflection:

Luke tells us that two of Jesus' disciples were walking to Emmaus; a distance of 7 miles from Jerusalem. One is Cleopas and his companion may very well have been his wife. The feast of Passover had ended-not on a joyous note with Jesus crowned King of the Jews and the Romans put out of the country, but with his ignominious death. As they traveled together they were engaged in a conversation that touched deeply into their lives and spoke of their shattered hopes. They tell the "stranger" who had joined them what had happened to Jesus, and then added, "We were hoping that he would be the one to redeem Israel...."

After laying out the "facts" to their newly-arrived traveling companion, they closed their mouths and listened to what Jesus had to say. As a result they learned to look at what hap-

Share your thoughts?

Let us pray

Father as we wander along this road you've mapped out for us. Please send your Spirit to enlighten us and guide us through. Please give us the insight to recognize Jesus among us. Please give us ears to hear him, and sensitivity to understand. Please give us a willingness to change our mind when it's needed.

We pray in Jesus name
Amen

The Philadelphia Archdiocesan Office for Research and Planning is among the 13% of online Americans on Twitter. Get all our latest research and numbers by following <http://twitter.com/PhillyCatholic>



Trivia Box

(see answer on page 4)

How Many weddings were held in Philadelphia Archdiocese parishes in 2010?



ADDITIONAL COPIES OF THE
INFORMATION ARE AVAILABLE AT:

<http://www.archphila.org/pastplan/INDEX/InFormation/index.html>



Note:

You can print as many copies as you need. But remember to save the trees!

Has your parish or pastoral planning area entered into a planning Process?

Do you need a professional Facilitator?

The office of Research and Planning maintains a list of trained and experienced Resource people.

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Computers in Parishes



In a rapidly evolving culture, people are no longer home during office hours. The parish can no longer expect moms to host parish committee meetings in their living rooms at 10:00 am every Tuesday. And if a pastor visits unannounced, he will probably be greeted on the front steps, and will remain there, standing, for the quick duration of the call. In just a few short years, pastoral visits have changed dramatically, along with all of our communication.

I remember when it started. Twenty six years ago, my oldest son was five. My wife and I decided that it might be a good idea for him to get some experience with this new toy. I soon went from not knowing what the Internet was to obtaining an email address. Now, I depend so heavily on the Internet that I could not do my daily work without it. And things are expanding even more rapidly.

Every parish needs a website, and educational resources are increasingly coming in the form of blogs, podcasts, webinars, and social networking sites. I try to stay on top of such developments, yet these changes continue to happen so quickly that I often feel I'm many miles away from the cutting edge.

Today, communication between pastors and parishioners no longer occurs chiefly through spoken word—or even through letters and newsletters. More often, it takes place as people use computers to respond to one another. The forms of communication are evolving rapidly from emails, to text messaging, to social networking sites—and we are not sure what might be on the horizon.

It would be easy for seasoned parish leaders to be irritated by these new developments. We could throw up our hands and assume all this is for the young; that it's too complicated for most of us to comprehend. I've heard pastors protest, "Are we going to be spending so much time handcuffed to our computers that it keeps us from real ministry?"

Even though it feels like an either/or proposition—as if we must choose to spend time with either our parish community or the computer—it is not. When a pastor friend of mine tells me about the carefully crafted emails about deep pastoral issues that appear in his inbox in the middle of the night, I know we cannot ignore the radical changes of the last twenty years, nor can we disregard the evolutions in the years to come. Time on the computer is real ministry.

The need to minister in our current reality is more compelling than nostalgia over personal face to face contacts of years gone by. Moreover, we need to be thankful a parishioner has a keyboard and screen to "talk" to late at night. At times the web becomes a needed lifeline for depressed or anxious friends.

As a father of recent college students and a part time instructor in universities today, I watch the amazing speed at which students text-message each other. They don't even need to look down as their nimble thumbs race over their tiny cell-phone keyboards. As I see young professionals tapping out messages on their iPhones, I'm reminded that I need to keep on top of the shifts. (perhaps more useful pews that have holders for PDAs.)

The shift—as impersonal as it sounds, and as removed as it is from our complicated and rich facial landscapes—can be strangely intimate. I'm tangled up in a tight web of people right now. I have gotten to know them through emails, blogs, and social networking sites. I know what they ate for breakfast this morning and what's going on in their lives from day to day. I could easily pick each of them out of a crowd because I have seen so many photos of them and their families—although I have never met them.

This new form of intimacy has developed as the capacity and availability of the Internet has evolved. We are in the midst of a third wave of Internet communications. The first was for military defense. The second included one-way websites, commerce, and email. The third wave (also called Web 2.0) is interactive. It allows the reader of a website to talk back, discuss, and question. Most importantly, this wave allows communities to form across continents, and even around the globe, as networks of people no longer have to be in geographic proximity to interact.

Of course, the idea of a virtual community leaves us with a lot of questions. Can we be the body of Christ without being physically present to one another? At least not all the time? Can we love one another if we've never met face to face? Can we appreciate the image of God through the Internet? Can people who listen to sermons on iPods while commuting to their various workplaces truly form a community that serves and cares for one another? Can a parish be a parish without celebrating the sacraments together?

Probably the answer to many of those questions is "No." Yet something is happening, and I believe God's Spirit is moving in these changes. We are reaching out to our city, our country, and our world in new ways.

Even though the Internet has unsavory aspects to it, the benefits far outweigh the risks. Computers are often the best way to contact new visitors, inform our groups, or send supportive messages. Facebook and Twitter have become important ways for some parish communities to stay in contact with people who spend much of their time on the road.

The possibilities in this creative and exciting time may very well be endless, and it will be important for our parishes to realize and welcome many of the shifts that occur. As parish leaders, we are venturing into an exciting new territory, with so many rewards and a few risks as well. As we begin to journey out, may we do so realizing the value of these forms of communication, not to *replace* but to *enhance* our face-to-face community.

Adapted by Bob Miller from *Reframing Hope: Vital Ministry in a New Generation* by Carol Howard Merritt, copyright © 2010 by the Alban Institute. All rights reserved.

F.Y.I.

There are 437 now following the Office for research & Planning on Twitter to also follow Philly

Catholic, [click](#)



Or on your "smart Phone" Text- **follow PhillyCatholic to 40404** and learn what's

happening in the Archdiocese

Communicating in Groups

“Communication is the basis for all human interaction and for all group functioning. Every group must take in and use information. The very existence of a group depends on communication, on exchanging information and transmitting meaning”



“Effective communication exists between two persons when the receiver interprets the sender’s message in the same way the sender intended it.” David W. Johnson and Frank P. Johnson, “Joining Together: Group Theory and Group Skills”

The three essential elements of communication are: **1** the sender (speaker), **2** the receiver (listener) and **3** the message (meaning).

Listening: Being attentive to the verbal and non-verbal messages

Pay attention to the speaker

- keep eye contact with the speaker
- avoid taking notes when one person is speaking
- listen for both the message and the meaning: what is the person telling you? What is the person saying about the situation that helps you understand their feeling as well as their ideas?
- ask questions that will clarify what you have heard (“You were saying that you felt that our parish needed to be more welcoming. Is there a specific way that you had in mind?”)
- listen for verbs since these indicate action. Most people want action.
- be aware of the non-verbal messages being sent. (Observe facial expressions and body language)
- if you are not sure about something, check it out with the speaker

Speaking: Make your message clear

Deliver accurate information

- Avoid general and sweeping statements. Limit your use of absolutes: words such as always, never, everyone, no one. Words that better define most situations are some, many, few, often, rarely, sometimes.
- Do not speak for the unnamed others (“some groups want to” or “some people feel that”)
- Be brief, no one really wants the long version of your story
- Avoid anecdotes and little shorts, people want substantive information
- Speak for yourself and no one else
- Make “I” statements, take ownership of your thoughts and suggestions (example: I think/feel/ believe...”. or “It has been my experience.....”)

Use provisional language:

This is a softer way of delivering your message. It is an important tool when collaborating with peers. It may require some practice, since in other aspects of their lives the members of the Parish Pastoral Council or other parish groups may need to give instruction, make decisions or be in charge.

Avoid normal manner of speech (Normal)

Use provisional language (Provisional)

“We should take this course of action.” (Normal)

“I wonder if we might consider... (Provisional)

“This is the way to do it” (Normal)

“It might be beneficial to try...” (Provisional)

These statements give insight into the direction in which the speaker would like the group to go but they also allow others to develop their own opinions about the recommendation. Provisional statements invite discussion. ***To read more goto:***

<http://archphila.org/pastplan/EducationResources/groups.html>

Answer Box

(see question on page 2)

Over 4000 weddings were held in Philadelphia Archdiocesan parishes in 2010

<http://archphila.org/pastplan/PDF/Arch09.pdf>



The effect of the Numbers

About two thirds of self identified Catholics are registered in a parish. About one third of self identified Catholics attend Mass weekly.

The average size of a parish is increasing from 1,881 in 1950 to 3,097 in 2000. Parishes vary in size with 25% being huge (1200+households;>3000 individual, 25% being large (500-1200 households) 25% medium size (200-499 households; 450-1199 individuals) and 25% being small (<200 households;<450 individuals). Larger parishes are experiencing more growth than smaller parishes. (a)

In Philadelphia in 2005, 156 parishes (56%) are huge; 82 (30%) are large ; 29 (11%) medium and 7 (3%) small

In national studies, of the 85% of parishes with a resident priest, 61% have just one priest, 25% have two and only 14 % have more than 2. Nationally 15% of parishes have no resident priest; this is only 8% of parishes in the Northeast. (a)

In Philadelphia, of the 89% (245) who have a resident priest 53% (129) have just one priest; 33% (81) have two; and 14% (35) have more than 2. In Philadelphia, 11% or 29 parishes have no full time resident priest; this is higher than the average for the Northeastern part of the U.S.

Nationally about one third of parishes have schools. (a) In Philadelphia, 147 parishes have their own school and 56 parishes participate in sponsoring 20 regional schools.

In the 1980's 75% of parishes had parish pastoral councils. By 2006 almost 90% do. A majority of parish council members are elected by parishioners, 31 percent are appointed and 16 percent are chosen to represent some group (such as Hispanics) (a)

Parishes average 4 liturgies per weekend. Parishes with less than 200 members have one or two weekend masses, those with more than 10000 members have 7 or more. One quarter offer Mass in a language other than English (most often Spanish) at least once a month. (a)

(a) Source: Davidson, James and Suzanne Fournier. 2006 "Recent Research on Catholic Parishes: A Research Note". *Review of Religious Research* Vol. 48 (1): 72-81

Multitaskers are bad at multitasking



WHAT'S HAPPENING

You know the guy ... the one writing a report, reading the news, checking Facebook, all while tuning in to his favorite Pandora station. We often wonder how he's capable of such productivity. His secret: inefficiency.

In a 2009 study, Stanford researchers tested two groups — regular multitaskers and non-multitaskers — in an attempt to identify cognitive differences in people capable of doing many things at once. It turns out that non-multitaskers scored higher in all three categories of the study: attention, memory and even work efficiency (Stanford.edu 8.24.09).

Some scientists believe that multitasking can not only hurt productivity, but also damage the brain. The solution is simple: Focus on one thing at a time.

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR THE PARISH

For many Millennials, multitasking is an expression of work/life balance. Therefore, any attack on these so-called distractions may backfire. On the other hand, as time becomes more of a scarcity, the right orientation can improve a person's life.

Comparison of US Catholic parishes to those in Archdiocese of Philadelphia

In just 10 years U.S. Catholic parishes have become considerably bigger and more diverse, the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate reported as part of a major new study on Catholic parish life.

In 2000, just one-quarter of the nation's parishes had more than 1,200 registered households. By 2010 that had grown to one-third. At the lower end, parishes with fewer than 200 registered households dropped from one-fourth of the nation's total in 2000 to barely more than one in seven a decade later (24 percent to 15 percent).

The overall average size of parishes grew 36 percent, from 855 households in 2000 to 1,167 in 2010.

In the Archdiocese of Philadelphia 149 of 268 parishes (56%)

have more than 1200 households and only 5 parishes(2%) have less than 200 households. One of these small parishes is also a campus parish with a large transient student population that is not normally counted in the number of registered households. The average size of parishes in Philadelphia is 1,518 households .

[CARA](#), which is based at Georgetown University in Washington, reported its findings in the winter issue of its quarterly newsletter, The CARA Report.

Mary Gautier, editor of The CARA Report, said the average size of a U.S. Catholic household is the same as the national average, 2.6 persons per household. So a parish of 1, 167 registered households would have about 3,000 registered members.

In the Archdiocese of Philadelphia the average reported registered population is 4,374 creating an average household size of 2.8, slightly larger than the national average. Registered population ranges from 18,666 to 149.