

DIOCESE OF YOUNGSTOWN

Pastoral Planning Rebuilding And Revitalizing Parishes

“The parish is a privileged place where the faithful concretely experience the church. Today in America as elsewhere in the world the parish is facing certain difficulties in fulfilling its mission. The parish needs to be constantly renewed on the basis of the principle that the parish must continue to be above all a Eucharistic community.

The institution of the parish thus renewed can be the source of great hope. It can assist family life, overcome the sense of anonymity, welcome people and help them to be involved in their neighborhood and society. In this way, every parish, and especially city parishes, can promote nowadays a more person centered evangelization and better cooperate with other social, educational and community work.”

*The Church in America (Ecclesia in America)
Pope John Paul II, January 22, 1999*

Reasons for Changes to Organizational Structures in United States Parishes

- Demographic Shifts
- Availability of Clergy
- Changing practices of Catholic people and their expectation of their parishes

Geographic Movement of Catholics

Recent national surveys report that less than 22 percent of the U.S. population is Catholic. The 2008 *Official Catholic Directory* reported over 67,117,016 American Catholics
305,248,229 Total Population
They are members of 18,890 Parishes

Catholic people are moving around in three ways:

- From concentrated areas of Catholics in cities to less concentrated and more religiously diverse areas in the suburbs.
- From historically more Catholic areas of the Northeast and upper Midwest to the sunbelt states of the Southeast and Southwest, resulting in a decreased number of Catholics in the Northeast and upper Midwest.
- From outside the United States to major U.S. urban centers and other areas in the Southeast and Southwest.

Diocese of Youngstown
 State of Ohio Population 11,466,917
 State of Ohio Catholic Population 2,068,348
 Percentage of Catholics in Ohio: 18%

Year	Residents	Registered Catholics
2008	1,217,220	215,467 (18%)
2007	1,223,958	216,151 (18%)
2006	1,220,905	233,592 (19%)
2005	1,220,477	233,999 (19%)
2004	1,227,633	235,541 (19%)
2003	1,223,313	239,960 (20%)
2002	1,227,633	245,585 (20%)
2001	1,217,333	262,020 (22%)
2000	1,219,386	256,071 (21%)

Availability of Clergy

**In the United States
today there are:**

**28,067 Active Diocesan
Priests**

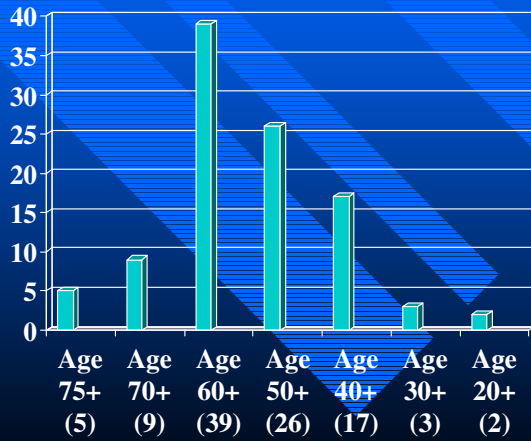
**13,339 Active Religious
Priests**

**In the Diocese of
Youngstown today
there are:**

**101 Active Diocesan
Priests**

**17 Active Religious
Priests**

Number of Diocesan Priests By Age



In the United States there are
3,248 Diocesan Seminarians

In the Diocese of
Youngstown
there are
15
Diocesan
Seminarians

Ordinations in the Diocese of Youngstown

2009 ... 1
2010 ... 5
2011 ... 1
2012 ... 2
2013 ... 2
2014 ... 3
2015 ... 1
2016 ... 0
2017 ... 0

Expectation of the Catholic People

**Taken from Cara Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate*

- A. One of the most problematic trends among young adults is the decline in the perceived importance of being Catholic.
- B. People born since 1960 who came of age after the Second Vatican Council, now comprise more than 65% of the population of the United States.
- C. Catholics born in 1960 or earlier were taught the importance of the institutional church, while post-Vatican II Catholics seem to place a higher priority on being good Christians than on being good Catholics.
- D. They make sharp distinctions between God's law and Church law.
- E. They are relatively uninformed about church teaching but are more likely than older Catholics to disagree with specific church teachings.
- F. They are more inclined to believe that the rightness and wrongness of one's actions depend on the circumstances and the effects on others.

** Conducts Social Science Studies about the Catholic Church*

In contrast to older generations who emphasized the importance of *doing* their faith by attending Mass, confession, praying the rosary, and respecting the holy days of obligation, post Vatican II Catholics have a limited commitment to the institutional church.

Many live as self defined Catholics without depending on the Church for the normative authority to do so.

A decline in Catholic identity has important behavioral consequences in the realm of **moral choices**, but also in their **expectation of their parish, including the choice of education of children and church attendance.**

Young Adult Catholics Have:

- A weaker affiliation with the institutional Church.
- See some elements of Catholic life as arbitrary and irrelevant.
- Unfamiliar with and less interested in the institutional church and its rules.
- They do not have a high participation rate in parish life or programs.
- Complain of the absence of meaningful young adult ministries and activities.
- They do not participate in small faith communities, nor do they share their faith with others.

Impact on parish Organizational Structures

- ✓ Declining number of aging priests.
- ✓ Declining or increasing attendance in some parishes.
- ✓ A shift in Catholic population within the diocese.
- ✓ An overall decline or increase in Catholic population in the diocese.
- ✓ The inability of parishes to support themselves financially.