REACHING THE NONES

June 7, 2019
By Kevin Feyen
k.feyen@dbqarch.org
563-582-0034

"Catholic Practices" Decreasing
A few common downward trends


10-Year Trends in the Archdiocese of Dubuque

Catholic Marriages Total Parishioners RE Enrollment Baptisms

Reasons...
"Generational Replacement"
Lack of faith in Institutions
Greater access to alternative religious practices/groups
Competition in "meaning making"
Disconnection of European white ethnicity with faith (universalism, enlightenment, industrialism, modernism, postmodernism, moralistic therapeutic deism)

"Catholic Livin" Holds Steady
(The number of people who identify or are associated with the Catholic Faith remains relatively stable)

OVERLY-SIMPLIFIED AND DRAMATICALLY UNSCIENTIFIC

I call myself "Catholic"

Less than 25%
BY THE TIME A PERSON IS 25...

- 80% say the Church is Poor (29%) or "okay" (52%) at sharing the Good News
- Our young people know "aspects" of God, but are not in a relationship with Him.
- "CCD... Doesn't that stand for Catholic Content Deprivation?"

OLD METHODS

- Competition for Meaning
- Moral Relativism, Diversity
- Distrust of Institutions
- Why: Church Says So

Dissipation and Drifting...

- Mere Catholicism
  - Fits in the definition of Catholicism:
    - Baptized
    - Prays at home
    - Goes to Mass
    - Puts money in the basket
    - Identifies as a Catholic
    - Lives Charitably
    - Helps others to know God's Love

- Sorta Catholicism
  - Stretches the definition of Catholicism:
    - Baptized
    - Prays at home
    - Goes to Mass
    - Puts money in the basket
    - Identifies as a Catholic
    - Lives Charitably
    - Helps others to know God's Love
**TWO PRONGED SOLUTION**

1. **Prevention... Work Upstream** – Address the way that we are engaging young families, children, and teens
   - Better Marriage Prep and Enrichment
   - Strengthening and following-up Baptismal Prep
   - Connecting parenting to Faith Formation
   - Stronger emphasis on “witnessing” in formation programs
   - Relational Ministry and Presence as focus of Youth Ministry

2. **Reacting... Reaching the “Nones”**
REACHING THE “NONES”

There is Good News
There is Bad News
And the Bad News is actually the Good News

THE SOLUTION IS NOT A PROGRAM… IT’S A PERSON

“For the sake of the many, we have to ignore the many.”
-Tyler Wheeler

If you want the “None”, you have to reach the “one”…
... that’s in front of you.

WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO MAKE A DISCIPLE OF JESUS?

1. You can’t be what you can’t imagine
2. You won’t go where you’re not invited
3. You won’t stay where you’re not inspired

REMINDER!
Young People want to be:
• Accepted/Welcomed
• Listened to
• Cared About
• Accompanied

HOW TO HAVE FAITH DISCUSSIONS

Let's play a game!

Turn to the person next to you.

How do you respond to this question:

Why does God make bad things happen to good people?
**How to Have Faith Discussions**

Some rules to live by:
1. People can’t be what they can’t imagine. Your example matters more than your words.
2. Faith Discussions are a privileged encounter.
3. Remember that you are merely a catalyst for conversion, not the cause. Trust the Spirit.
4. We only need to defend things that are weak. Don’t let questions/comments offend you.
5. Evangelization takes a life time. Don’t rush!
6. Don’t try to be right, try to be useful.
7. Always speak out of love, as God loves you.

**How to Have Faith Discussions**

A template to live by:
1. **Assess** the situation (tone, time, space, spectators)
2. **Validate** the comment/question
3. **Ask and listen** (“where is this coming from? What is behind the question?”)
4. **I-statements** (“For me…”, “In my experience…”, “I have found that…”)  
5. **Coach to More** (“I could connect you with a good book…”, “Do you want me to set up a time to talk with Father…?”), “I’m a part of a small faith sharing group…”, “I think the Catechism would be helpful.”

**How to Have Faith Discussions**

Let’s try again!

Turn to the person next to you.

How do you respond to this question:

**Why does God make bad things happen to good people?**

**Where to Reach the Nones**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Holiday Dinners</th>
<th>Funerals</th>
<th>Traffic Accident</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Work</td>
<td>Restaurants</td>
<td>Flight Delays</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>Bars</td>
<td>Musicals and Plays</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Meals</td>
<td>Coffee shops</td>
<td>Amphitheaters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sporting Events</td>
<td>Board Games</td>
<td>County Fair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Car Rides</td>
<td>Cook-outs</td>
<td>Car Show</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fishing</td>
<td>Pot-lucks</td>
<td>Museums</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concerts</td>
<td>Movie Theater</td>
<td>Beaches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church Events</td>
<td>After Mass</td>
<td>Ski Slope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Mall</td>
<td>Poker Night</td>
<td>Resorts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In line at Walgreens</td>
<td>Casino</td>
<td>Convention Centers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**The Silver Bullet**

YOU!

Questions, Comments, Complaints?