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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

This report presents the results of the recent *Perceptions of the Faithful* survey and provides recommendations for what individuals, parish leaders, and archdiocesan central services can do to respond to the key findings of the survey.

This survey is the most recent initiative in a forty-five year history of strategic pastoral planning in the Archdiocese of Detroit (AOD). Pastoral planning is a deliberative and prayerful process where the Church reflects on where we are now and where we want to be. This process defines a clear set of priorities and outcomes for the future of our parishes and diocese as a whole. Over time, the Archdiocese has redefined the vision of what makes a vital parish and archdiocese.

The current vision for the Archdiocese was established in 2011 when we began the Together in Faith II (TIF II) planning process. TIF II was laid out to strengthen parishes through advancing our mission to Share Christ in and through the Church. In recent years the focus shifted away from mission as many parishes undertook restructuring. As mergers and closures become less frequent, we must rededicate our efforts toward the seven mission priorities at the heart of TIF II.

These seven mission priorities represent the most pressing concerns of our local Church. As such, they are increasingly the focus of our time and resources as we plan for stronger parishes. The priorities are: Catholic Schools, Christian Service and Outreach, Evangelization and Catechesis, Lay Leadership, Stewardship and Administration, Vocations, and Youth and Young Adults.

Perceptions of the Faithful survey

The *Perceptions of the Faithful* survey marks the first time parishioners have been asked to evaluate current planning efforts related to these mission priorities. The survey allowed for the collection of large amounts of data that will inform future planning efforts in the Archdiocese, vicariates, and parishes. The survey consisted of three parts. The first section asked respondents to evaluate parish and archdiocesan efforts related to each of the mission priorities. The second section asked respondents questions about faith practice and parish life. Finally, the last section gathered basic demographic information from respondents.

The survey was distributed over two weeks in November 2013. Parishioners could take the survey online or fill out a paper copy. The survey was available in English and Spanish. 41,178 people responded to the survey, most of them parishioners (see breakdown on pg. 26). This sample represents 15% of registered Catholic households in the Archdiocese and 5% of registered Catholic individuals in the Archdiocese.

1,656 respondents (28%) filled out a paper survey, the remaining 29,522 (72%) took the survey online. All 235 parishes in the Archdiocese were represented in the survey results.

The following summarizes key findings of the survey. Individuals, parish and vicariate leaders, and archdiocesan central services staff are all called to carefully consider what the results mean for their work and lives as Catholics.

1 Based on 2013 Official Catholic Directory household and individuals data. The Archdiocese currently has 277,774 registered households and 754,304 registered individuals.
Key findings

The survey mostly attracted highly active Catholics. 94% of respondents are registered parishioners and 85% report that they attend Mass at least weekly. Nearly 50% of respondents are involved in the parish outside of attending Mass each week. The survey results generally reflect the perceptions of this subset of the archdiocesan population.

Respondents view their parish positively. Overall, respondents felt their parish is “good” (30%) or “excellent” (33%) at addressing each of the mission priority areas. So while it is possible to identify strengths and weaknesses for each mission priority, respondents were generally satisfied with their parish. This satisfaction was echoed in the comments at the end of the survey. The two things people said most in this section was that they like their pastor (599 comments) and parish (337).

Most respondents are not aware of the role of the archdiocesan central services. For each department asked about in the survey, “don’t know” received the most responses.

Of the seven mission priorities, Vocations and Youth and Young Adults were the biggest concern for the future. These received the lowest overall ratings of the seven mission priority areas. Many objectives in these areas received more “fair” or “poor” ratings than others. These were also considered the two biggest challenges facing the local Church. 82% of respondents felt that “decline in priests/vocations” was the most serious challenge, followed by “engaging youth and young adults in parish life” (64%).

Reaching out to inactive and non-Catholics was also a concern. These two objectives received the most “poor” and “fair” ratings (20% and 16% respectively for both). The low rating shows that respondents feel their parish can do more to evangelize these groups.

While only a small group of college-age adults (18-25) participated in the survey, those who did are very involved in parish life and ministries. 68% of college-age adults (385 respondents total) volunteer or serve in some other role in their parish. This group is mostly involved as volunteers (59%), liturgical ministers (26%), and in music ministry (24%). However, young people are mostly absent from parish leadership. 81% of parish council, committee, and committee members are over the age of 50.

The parish bulletin is the most used type of communication. Respondents receive most information about their parish, the Archdiocese, or the Catholic Church through the parish bulletin. 95% of respondents use this “somewhat” or “very” frequently. The next most used media, vicariate newsletters, was used by only 56% of respondents.

Use of online communications could be improved at all levels. Those who do stay connected online do so through email or the parish website, but these were used regularly by only 45% of respondents. The archdiocesan website (18% “somewhat” or “very” frequently) and social media (10%) were used the least. However, 72% of respondents took the survey online, compared to only 28% paper surveys. This suggests there may be untapped potential to improve online communications.
Respondents look for quality worship, strong Church teachings, and convenient Mass times when selecting a parish. When respondents were asked what parish characteristics attract them to a parish, these three stood out at the top of the list. 92% felt that “quality worship” was “very important,” 78% said “parish embraces Church teachings and values,” and 72% said “daily and weekend Mass schedules.”

Teens (13-17) and college-age adults (18-25) look for more programs and activities when selecting a parish. Though only three characteristics were rated highly among all respondents, teens (13-17) and college-age adults look for much more. Many items were rated as “very important,” including small group ministries, social gatherings, service activities, and devotions.

Respondents value all that pastors provide for a parish, emphasizing the importance of good pastoral leadership. When respondents were asked to rate characteristics they look for in a pastor from “very important” to “not important at all,” all characteristics received 70% or more “very important” responses. “Welcoming spirit” was the most important characteristic.
Conclusions and next steps

This survey is the first step in a comprehensive evaluation of TIF II planning in the archdiocese. As we move forward, we will continue to look for improved methods for working together to advance the mission of the Church.

Before publishing the results of the survey, various departments in the archdiocese took time to review the survey findings internally. The Presbyteral Council (a consultative body made up of clergy) also reviewed the results and provided feedback. These meetings led to a fruitful discussion of what we are doing well and where we might improve in our work to support parishes.

However, most of the work will be done at the vicariate and parish levels. Therefore, vicariate and parish reports will prove even more informative as we set our goals for future planning. The proposed next steps will look to gain additional feedback that will shape how we can improve our service to parishes and parishioners. Those next steps include: (1) distributing parish and vicariate reports, (2) consulting with vicariate representatives, parish leaders, and parishioners, (3) additional data collection from inactive and non-Catholics, other dioceses, and other US religious affiliations, and (4) an evaluation of improved communications, marketing and technology use throughout the Archdiocese.

These next steps will allow for an ongoing evaluation and discussion of how to strengthen parishes through TIF II planning and improve the services and resources available to parishes.
PASTORAL PLANNING IN THE ARCHDIOCESE OF DETROIT

Forty-five years of strategic pastoral planning

The *Perceptions of the Faithful* survey is the most recent initiative in a forty-five year history of strategic pastoral planning in the Archdiocese of Detroit. Beginning with Synod 69, pastoral planning has increasingly relied on input for lay (non clergy, religious) people to evaluate and define planning initiatives for the future. Several different phases of planning have occurred since Synod 69. Each phase brought new challenges and new ways to think about what a vital parish and archdiocese looks like.

Beginning in 2011, we entered into the Together in Faith II planning process. This process involved input from nearly 1,500 lay representatives from parishes throughout the Archdiocese. Together, they helped define a set of mission priorities that would guide visioning, programming, and budgeting at the archdiocesan, vicariate and parish levels. These mission priorities are: Catholic Schools, Christian Service and Outreach, Evangelization and Catechesis, Lay Leadership, Stewardship and Administration, Vocations, and Youth and Young Adults. TIF II was and continues to be a response to our most pressing concerns as a local Church.

1969

**Synod 69 (1969)**
Held to allow laity, clergy, and religious to participate in restructuring and implementing archdiocesan Vatican II reforms

**Key**
- Planning Initiatives
- Leadership

1981

**Cardinal Dearden (1959-1981)**

1983

**Church in the City (1983-1989)**
First strategic pastoral planning in the Archdiocese. Parish questionnaires, parishioner interviews, and town hall meetings conducted to assess parish vitality. Assessed pastoral activities, sacramental activities, geography, accessibility, finances, building conditions, history, and city planning. As a result, 25 parishes were identified as “questionably viable,” and 31 parishes closed.

1990

**Cardinal Maida (1990-2009)**

1994

Archdiocese creates new structure for parish-driven pastoral planning. Vicariate Pastoral Councils (VPCs) were established to help bridge the gap between the Parish Pastoral Councils and the Archdiocese.
Nearly 94,000 people responded to the Archdiocese’s Catholic Survey in 2000. This survey asked parishioners about 32 different pastoral priorities and served as an important foundation for Together in Faith.

At the time of TIF, the AOD had: 304 parishes, 56 of those clustered 125 elementary and middle schools 32 high schools

To assist with planning in these priority areas at the parish level, parishes and VPCs studied data from the AOD and completed parish evaluation inventories.

New Initiatives for Planning (2009-Now)
Stabilize AOD finances
Changing Lives Together
Together in Faith II
Year of Faith
Synod on the New Evangelization

Synod on the New Evangelization (2016)
Develop missionary mindset. Reawaken Catholics to encounter Jesus anew, grow as disciples, learn to give witness to others who do not know Him.
Why plan?

Simply put, planning moves us from “maintenance” to “mission.” Much of the work conducted thus far during the Together in Faith II process has been focused on maintenance. During this time we have been busy with the restructuring and closing of parishes, church building maintenance, and financial housekeeping. While this work is necessary to address the immediate challenges facing our parishes today, it does not address the challenges we will face in the future. Pastoral planning considers both. Through planning we can identify and address the immediate needs of our parishes and lay out a set of strategic priorities to strengthen our local Church in the future.

These priorities, known as the mission priorities, target specific concerns voiced by parishioners and parish leadership in light of Archdiocesan and regional trends. These trends include an aging and declining population, financial instability, fewer priests in parishes, declines in young adult Catholics, decreasing sacramental activity, aging of church infrastructure, and more. Much has already been done through TIF II to address these issues, but they will continue to play an important role in future planning efforts in the Archdiocese.

Key trends driving TIF II planning

**CATHOLIC POPULATION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Registered Catholics</th>
<th>Total Catholics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>963,904</td>
<td>1,431,565</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>785,612</td>
<td>1,413,612</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>754,304</td>
<td>1,310,915</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**DECLINING AND AGING REGIONAL POPULATION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Median HH Income</th>
<th>Median Age</th>
<th>Young Adults 18-34</th>
<th>Adults 55-64</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>4,442,873</td>
<td>$51,044</td>
<td>35.6</td>
<td>-25%</td>
<td>+43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>4,264,661</td>
<td>$53,843</td>
<td>40.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>4,260,916</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Registered Catholics and total Catholic population statistics from *The Official Catholic Directory* numbers submitted annually by the Archdiocese of Detroit.


Priest and parish data from Archdiocese of Detroit Department of Parish Life and Services.

Sacramental Data from *The Official Catholic Directory* numbers submitted annually by parishes and compiled by the Department of Parish Life and Services.
FEWER PRIESTS IN PARISHES

2001 399 PRIESTS IN PARISHES
1:2,374 PRIESTS: PEOPLE

2013 267 PRIESTS IN PARISHES
1:2,928 PRIESTS: PEOPLE

FEWER, LARGER PARISHES

2001 313 PARISHES
1,079 HH AVG. PARISH SIZE

2013 235 PARISHES
1,162 HH AVG. PARISH SIZE

DECREASE IN SACRAMENTAL ACTIVITY

-51% Overall Sacraments
-51% Infant Baptisms
-65% Adult Baptisms
-42% Full Communions (other Christians becoming Catholic)
-47% Catholic Marriages
-56% Interfaith Marriages

KEY
- TOTAL SACRAMENTS
- DEATHS/FUNERALS

PERCEPTIONS OF THE FAITHFUL SURVEY RESULTS / 11
The primary way that parishioners have been involved in the pastoral planning process (aside from serving on a parish or vicariate council) is through participating in parishioner surveys. These surveys are the easiest way for the Archdiocese to collect large amounts of data that reveal how parishioners view planning initiatives and various aspects of parish life. Survey participation by parishioners during the first Together in Faith process in 2000 helped shape the seven mission priorities.

While parish leaders have put in much time and effort working on these priority areas, it remains to be seen how much impact their efforts had on the larger parish community. Therefore, the Perceptions of the Faithful survey wanted to hear from parishioners how they felt about current planning efforts at the parish level as well as weigh in on related issues about parish life.

This survey serves as an assessment of Together in Faith II. The survey results will provide valuable feedback to parish leaders, vicariate representatives, and archdiocesan staff as we work to strengthen parishes and better advance the mission priorities.
TIF II PLANNING PROCESS

FOR APPROVAL

AV

BEFORE SENDING TO

APC, PC

THESE ARE REVIEWED BY

VICARIATE PLANS
Outline how each planning group will work on the mission priorities

TO CREATE

40 PG

WHO WORKED WITH

ACS

FORMED

PARISH REPRESENTATIVES

IMPLEMENTATION

COMMUNICATE WITH ARCHDIOCESE THROUGH

AV

RM

THEN THE PLANS GO TO

VPC

FOR IMPLEMENTATION

BRING INFORMATION BACK TO

PPC, PFC

PERCEPTIONS OF THE FAITHFUL SURVEY RESULTS / 13

KEY

AV Archdiocese of Oakland
APC Archdiocesan Pastoral Council
PC Presbyteral Council
RM Regional Moderators
PG Planning Groups (TIF II)
ACS Archdiocesan Central Services
VPC Vicariate Pastoral Council
PPC Parish Pastoral Council
PFC Parish Finance Council
Evaluating your parish and the Archdiocese

The first section asked respondents to evaluate how their parish was doing at addressing each of the mission priorities. For each mission priority, respondents evaluated a list of objectives related to that priority on a five-point scale from “poor” to “excellent.” Respondents were also asked to evaluate how well archdiocesan central services are doing at supporting parish efforts in these areas. Adding up all the responses for each priority area gives a broad sense for how parishioners rated their parish and the Archdiocese.

Overall, respondents viewed their parish very positively. 63% rated their parish “good” or “excellent” for each of the mission priorities. The positive perception reflects findings from a 2009 study by the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA). This study found that parishioners tend to have a favorable view of their own parish because most attend their parish of choice. On the other hand, most respondents were simply unfamiliar with the Archdiocese’s work in parishes. Most respondents selected “don’t know” when asked how the Archdiocesan Central Services were doing at supporting parish planning efforts.

Overall trends: high and low ratings

Since most priorities were rated highly by parishioners, the differences between strengths and weakness were relatively small. Mean scores were used to compare how respondents generally rated the mission priorities from high to low. Responses were given a score from 1 to 5, (1=poor, 5=excellent). Most priority areas had a mean score between 3 and 4, due to the high number of "good" and "excellent" responses for each.

Vocations and Youth and Young adults were rated the lowest overall. Both areas had multiple objectives that received the most “poor” responses of any items on the survey. Those were “activities for young adults,” “engaging young adults” and “forming a vocations committee.”

Individual objectives were also compared overall to identify strengths and weaknesses. “Explicitly proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ” was the highest rated objective, with 54% of respondents rating this “excellent” in their parish. The lowest rated were “reaching out to inactive Catholics,” and “reaching out to non-Catholics,” which received the most “poor” responses (16% and 17% respectively).
The following breakdown shows how respondents rated each of the objectives within a priority area. Looking at how respondents rated individual objectives shows the perceived strengths and weaknesses for each mission priority. Results were compiled and the objectives ranked from high to low based on the highest number of “excellent” responses (high rating) to the least (low rating). Typically, those objectives with less “good” and “excellent” responses received the most “fair” or “poor” responses. “Don’t know” responses are not shown in the graphs at right to more clearly illustrate the difference between high and low ratings. Therefore, the responses may not add to 100% for all columns.

For each graph, the average distribution of responses for the priority area is shaded in gray. Comparing each objective to the average distribution highlights higher and lower rated items.

**PRIORITY AREA: CATHOLIC SCHOOLS**

**Objectives**

A  Maintaining a Catholic identity
B  Ensuring academic success and Catholic formation
C  Using technology effectively
D  Ensuring a Catholic education is financially viable
E  Keeping tuition affordable to all Catholics

Affordability of Catholic education was the biggest concern with schools. 21% of respondents rated this “fair” or worse.
CHRISTIAN SERVICE AND OUTREACH

Objectives
A Christian service projects for the parish community
B Christian service projects for youth and young adults
C Collaborating with other community organizations
D Building interfaith relationships

Most respondents wished for more collaboration with community organizations and other faith groups to enhance Christian Service in their parish.

EVANGELIZATION AND CATECHESIS

Objectives
A Explicitly proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ
B Prayers for healing and spiritual reconciliation
C Providing adult faith formation and catechesis
D Strengthening religious education
E Offering ministries for spiritual growth
F Evangelization leadership
G Offering ministries to evangelize adults
H Offering programs aimed at parish renewal
I Reaching out to inactive Catholics
J Reaching out to non-Catholics

While Evangelization was one of the strongest areas overall, it contained the two weakest overall objectives—outreach to inactive and non-Catholics.
SURVEY RESULTS PART I: TIF II MISSION PRIORITIES

Rating the mission priorities

PRIORITY AREA: LAY LEADERSHIP

Objectives

A  Encouraging parishioners to volunteer
B  Increasing opportunities for lay involvement
C  Providing training opportunities for volunteers
D  Training and ministry for lay leaders
E  Training parishioners to identify their spiritual gifts

Parishes are good at encouraging parishioners to volunteer, but weakest at helping parishioners identify their talents.

STEWARDSHIP AND ADMINISTRATION

Objectives

A  Financial transparency and accountability
B  Communicating stewardship as a way of life
C  Supporting an active Finance Council
D  Forming an active Stewardship Commission

“Financial transparency and accountability” received the most “excellent” responses and the most “poor” responses. This may indicate high variability from parish to parish.
**Vocations**

**Objectives**

A. Promoting prayer for vocations  
B. Promoting vocations to priesthood/religious life  
C. Inviting young people to consider Church vocations  
D. Teaching vocation awareness  
E. Forming a vocations committee

Vocations received the lowest overall ratings for every objective, making it the lowest rated priority overall.

**Youth and Young Adults**

**Objectives**

A. Providing regular meetings for teens  
B. Providing special events for teens  
C. Engaging youth in parish life and liturgies  
D. Providing regular meetings for young adults  
E. Hosting special events for young adults  
F. Engaging young adults in parish ministries and outreaches

All youth-related items were rated higher than young adult-related items.
SURVEY RESULTS PART II: FAITH AND PARISH LIFE

Mass attendance and registration

Next, respondents were asked several questions about their faith practices and involvement in parish life, starting with Mass attendance and registration.

Most respondents attend Mass at least once a week and are registered parishioners. 85% of respondents attend Mass at least weekly and 94% of respondents are registered parishioners. Both numbers are higher than national and archdiocesan averages.

Most respondents have attended their current parish for 11 or more years. 66% of respondents have been at their parish for 11 years or more. Only 3% are new to their parish in the last year.

Mass attendance and registration is lower among younger parishioners. 31% of teens (13-17) and 30% of young adults (26-25) attend Mass a few times a month or less. Teens and college-age adults (18-25) were less likely to be registered.

Those with children are less likely to attend Mass every week. 74% of those with children attend Mass at least weekly, while 90% of those without children attend Mass at least weekly.

Parishioners who attend Mass more regularly said they sometimes miss Mass because of personal conflicts, while those that do not attend at all simply do not relate to Mass. “Demands of work, school, or sports” (58%) was the most common reason for missing Mass on the weekends, followed by “family concerns and needs” (51%). This was consistent even for those who only attend a few times a month or year. Those who reported never attending Mass said the primary reason was “Mass is boring/irrelevant to me” (73%).
Parishioner involvement

Those who took the survey tend to be very involved in the parish. Nearly 50% of respondents volunteer or serve in some role. Of that group, most are volunteers (35%), liturgical ministers (23%), or parish council, committee, or commission members (23%).

College-age adults (18-25) are some of the most involved. 68% of college-age adults said they volunteer or serve in some role in their parish. This group mostly volunteers (59%) or serves in liturgical (26%) and music ministries (24%). By contrast, 26-35 year olds were the least involved of any age group (49% responded that they serve in “none of the above” roles).

Those with children under the age of 18 in their household were less involved that those without children. Most people with children volunteer in their parish (51%), but are not as involved in other leadership roles or ministries.

81% of parish council, commission, or committee members are over the age of 50. Younger parishioners were almost absent from this important group of lay leaders.


Weekly Mass attendance numbers based on 2013 Mass counts compiled by the Department of Parish<br>Life and Services
SURVEY RESULTS PART II: FAITH AND PARISH LIFE

How are parishioners connected?

Most parishioners receive information about the Church through their parish bulletin. 95% of respondents rely on their parish bulletin “somewhat” or “very” frequently for information about their parish, the Archdiocese, or the Catholic Church. The next most read publication is the vicariate newsletter, with only 57% of respondents reading this “somewhat” or “very” frequently. This number may be higher because many vicariate newsletters are included as inserts in parish bulletins.

Archdiocesan media was the least used type of communication. Only 18% of respondents reported using the archdiocesan website “somewhat” or “very” frequently, and 10% reported using archdiocesan social media. Both were used most by college-age adults.

Overall, use of online media and communications was low. Use of websites, email, and social media were low compared to parish bulletins and vicariate newsletters. The most used forms of online communications were the parish website (45%) or email from the parish or other Catholic groups (45%).

However, most of the survey respondents heard about and accessed the survey online. 72% of respondents took the survey online, either through email, the AOD website, the direct survey URL, or social media. This may suggest there is untapped potential to use online media more effectively throughout the Archdiocese.
How often do you rely on the following for information about your parish, the Archdiocese, or the Catholic Church?

Sum of “somewhat” or “very” frequently responses.
SURVEY RESULTS PART II: FAITH AND PARISH LIFE

Parish characteristics

Three characteristics stood out as most important to all respondents when selecting a parish. Quality of worship service (92% “very important”), whether the “parish embraces Church teachings and values” (78%), and convenient Mass schedules (72%) were most important to respondents when looking for a parish.

Teens and college-age adults look for more ministries and activities when selecting a parish. Teens and college-age adults had more characteristics rated as “very important” than other groups. These groups are interested in attending parishes that provide a variety of activities, including: small group ministries, social gatherings, service activities, and devotions. These also tended to be things that other respondents rated much lower.

Children’s ministries and Catholic schools were most important to those between the ages of 26-50. Other age groups were most interested in ministries and education for children, including those without children under 18 currently in their household.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHARACTERISTIC</th>
<th>% “very important”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quality worship service</td>
<td>91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parish embraces Church teachings and values</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily and weekend Mass schedules</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children’s ministries (for all age groups)</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic school</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service activities</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parish social groups/gatherings</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Devotions (rosary, adoration, etc.)</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional music</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities for penance/confession</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small group ministries (e.g. Bible Study)</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contemporary music</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mass in language(s) other than English</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Opportunities for penance/confession
2. Service activities
3. Social groups/gatherings
4. Devotions
5. Small group ministries
Pastor characteristics

Respondents viewed all pastor characteristics as important. Most pastor characteristics received high numbers of “very important” responses. Respondents were not asked to evaluate their pastor specifically, but some may have been inclined to answer these questions with their own pastor in mind. Therefore, the responses may indicate satisfaction with qualities their own pastor displays.

Respondents primarily want a pastor with “a welcoming spirit.” This was the highest rated quality overall (93% “very important”). Other highly rated characteristics were “ability to connect scripture to present” (89%), and “inviting people into a relationship with Jesus” (85%).

Administrative tasks were seen as somewhat less important. Administrative duties such as managing parish resources, communicating priorities to parishioners, and seeking input from parishioners were not as important as other spiritual duties.

Challenges facing the Church

Respondents felt that increasing vocations and engaging young people presented the biggest challenges for the Church in the future. “Shortage of priests/decline in vocations” was perceived as the most serious challenge (82%), followed by “engaging teens and young adults in parish life” (64%). Both of these areas relate to the lowest rated overall priority areas—Vocations and Youth and Young Adults.

4 of the 5 top challenges were local issues that affect every day life in parishes. Though a variety of broader issues about the Church were asked, only “society in general is less religious” (61% “serious challenge”) was ranked in the top five challenges facing the Church. “Clustering, merging, and closing of parishes” (56%) and “Church funds/financial management” (56%) completed the list.

### PASTOR CHARACTERISTICS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PASTOR QUALITY</th>
<th>% “very important”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Welcoming spirit</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to connect scripture to the present</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Invites people into a personal relationship</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engaging preaching style</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manages parish resources effectively</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicates parish priorities</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Values input from laity</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenges people to live a life of discipleship</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SURVEY RESULTS PART III: DEMOGRAPHICS

Who took the survey?

The final section of the survey asked respondents to answer a few demographic questions about their Catholic background, age, gender, marital status, children, race, and household income. These questions were meant to gather better information about who took the survey, and who makes up the population of the Archdiocese. Though the survey was open to all, the majority of respondents were parishioners (96%) or parish staff (2%).

A few trends stood out in the demographic data. First, most respondents were raised Catholic (90%) and attended some Catholic school (53%). Next, women (64%) greatly outnumbered men (36%). The majority of respondents were married (76%), but do not have children under the age of 18 in their household (72%). Most respondents were between the ages of 36-80 (87%) and white (69%). Younger respondents were more ethnically diverse. Finally, while 21% of respondents reported an annual household income of $100,000+, most respondents fell within the $20,000-80,000 range (32%).

All demographic questions were optional and not all respondents answered every question. Therefore, while the results generally reflect the make-up of survey participants, these demographics may not reflect the archdiocesan population as a whole.

Most survey respondents....

Were raised Catholic and attended some Catholic school

90% Were raised Catholic
71% Attended some Catholic school

KEY
Raised Catholic
Converted to Catholicism
Not Catholic

KEY
Attended some Catholic school
Attended no Catholic school

Are women

64% WOMEN
36% MEN
PERCEPTIONS OF THE FAITHFUL SURVEY RESULTS

Are married, but without children in their household

- **76%** Are married
- **72%** Do not have children under 18 in their household

Are between the ages of 36-80

**KEY**
- Married or remarried
- Single, never married
- Divorced or separated
- Widowed

Are white

**RACIAL OR ETHNIC BACKGROUND**

- White: 69.2%
- Black: 1.5%
- Hispanic: 2.1%
- Asian: .9%
- Native American: .2%
- Other: .9%
- Did not respond: 25.3%
- Total: 100%

Have an annual income of $20,000-80,000

**TOTAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME**

- $19,000 or less: 4.1%
- $20,000-39,999: 10.3%
- $40,000-59,999: 11.6%
- $60,000-79,999: 10.0%
- $80,000-99,999: 8.9%
- $100,000+: 20.5%
- Did not respond: 34.6%
- Total: 100%
SURVEY RESULTS PART III: PARISH TYPES

Breakdown of responding parishes

Every parish was represented in this survey. The average response rate was about 16% of registered households. The following analysis shows how the response rate from different parish types compares to the population distribution within the Archdiocese. This gives a better sense of how accurately the responses represent the different parishes within the Archdiocese. For example, a large number of responses from suburban parishes is not necessarily skewed because 88% of registered households in the Archdiocese belong to suburban parishes.

Parishes were classified according to three different parish types: parish structure, parish location, and parish size. Overall, the responses reflect the general population of the Archdiocese by parish type. The small number of unaffiliated respondents account for the slight differences.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PARISH STRUCTURE</th>
<th>STRUCTURE</th>
<th>PARISHES</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>AOD HH</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>RESPONSES</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Traditional</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>222,835</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>31,709</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merged</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>30,365</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>5,285</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clustered</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>20,478</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>3,087</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unaffiliated</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>1,097</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>237</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>273,678</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>41,178</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PARISH LOCATION</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
<th>PARISHES</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>AOD HH</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>RESPONSES</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>241,534</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>35,969</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>20,459</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>2,943</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>11,685</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>1,169</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unaffiliated</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>1,097</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>237</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>273,678</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>41,178</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PARISH SIZE (BY REGISTERED HOUSEHOLDS)</th>
<th>SIZE</th>
<th>PARISHES</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>AOD HH</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>RESPONSES</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-199</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>3,608</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>682</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200-499</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>17,312</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>2,918</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500-1199</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>62,554</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>10,354</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1200+</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>190,204</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>26,127</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unaffiliated</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>1,097</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>237</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>273,678</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>41,178</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: All parish type data based on 2013 numbers from the Department of Parish Life and Services. Parish household data based on 2013 statistics from The Official Catholic Directory.
PERCEPTIONS OF THE FAITHFUL SURVEY RESULTS

Source: Archdiocese of Detroit Parish Life and Services, January 2014
Some respondents also provided additional comments. Most of these were entered in the comment box provided at the end of the online survey. Other comments were compiled from emails, letters, and hand-written comments on paper surveys. 5,763 comments were received total, representing 1.4% of all survey participants.

Archdiocesan staff read and categorized comments into 13 broad categories and “other.” Since many comments covered multiple topics, up to three categories could be assigned per comment. Comments that fell into the “other” category included unique responses that did not fit under an existing category, but most were simple “thank yous,” or “nos.”

To capture the specific content and tone of the comments, sub-categories were also assigned to each. Each category had 2-10 sub-category tags. In total, 79 sub-categories were used to analyze and quantify the comments.

Overall, “pastors,” “Catholic church/church leaders,” and “parish administration” were the most commented on categories. The most commented on sub-categories were respondents who have a “good pastor” (599 comments) or “like their parish” (337). To the right is the full list of categories rated from most commented on to the least. The top six categories are also shown, with the top three sub-categories listed below each.
#1  PASTORS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOTAL COMMENTS</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Good pastor, parish priests</td>
<td>599</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor pastor</td>
<td>279</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Priests should give better homilies</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#2 CATHOLIC CHURCH/LEADERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOTAL COMMENTS</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Church needs to be more inclusive</td>
<td>321</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leaders send negative message</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Like Pope Francis</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#3 PARISH ADMINISTRATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOTAL COMMENTS</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Like their parish</td>
<td>337</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cluster, merger, or closure</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parish, parish groups too exclusive</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#3 CHURCH TEACHINGS + VALUES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOTAL COMMENTS</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Need to change with the times</td>
<td>211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus more on Catholic teachings</td>
<td>158</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#5 MASS, WORSHIP, + SACRAMENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOTAL COMMENTS</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dislike worship style, music</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Mass comments</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Favors traditional Mass, music</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#6 EVANGELIZATION + CATECHESIS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOTAL COMMENTS</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increase efforts in evangelization</td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better faith formation for all ages</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus on Jesus</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ADVANCING THE MISSION

Conclusions

This survey and key findings are only the beginning of an ongoing dialogue between archdiocesan leaders and staff, vicariate leaders, parish leaders, and parishioners as we work together to advance the mission of the Church. As such, this section outlines the next steps we will take together to evaluate, reassess, and refine our goals and work as one Catholic community.

Before publishing the results of the survey, various departments in the archdiocese took time review the survey findings internally. The Presbyteral Council also reviewed the findings and provided input. These meetings led to a fruitful discussion of what we are doing well and where we might improve in our work to support parishes. Some broadly applicable conclusions were identified during this process, including:

- The desire for additional data collection to support our findings
- The need for more effective communication, marketing, and use of technology at the Archdiocese, in vicariates, and in parishes
- The importance of pastors and the impact they have on parishes
- The increase in consumer mentality among parishioners
- The continued emphasis on youth and young adult ministry
- The positive response from “active parishioners,” and the opportunities that may come from better engaging with them
Proposed next steps

Though these broad conclusions are helpful, individual vicariates and parish reports will prove even more informative as we set our goals for future planning efforts. The following framework lists what our next steps will be as we continue to reflect on how we can improve our work in the seven mission priority areas.

**Provide individual parish and vicariate reports.** Shorter reports will be created for every parish and vicariate. Each report will include a parish or vicariate profile of important statistics, including: census area demographics, Catholic population trends, sacramentals, and key financial statistics. These data put the survey results into a broader context. Reflection questions will also be included to guide vicariate and parish leaders as they consider what the results mean for visioning, planning, and budgeting.

**Consult with parish and vicariate councils about how the survey may inform their future planning.** Archdiocesan staff will be available to assist vicariates and parishes in interpreting and using the individual survey reports. This will not only help with the planning process at the vicariate and parish levels, but determine how the archdiocese might improve in providing services and resources related to this work.

**Collect additional information to supplement survey findings.** While this survey provided a good sample of what active Catholics in the archdiocese think about current planning priorities and their parishes, more data may need to be collected. Additional research during this time may include: soliciting input from inactive and non-Catholics, comparing our results and statistics to other dioceses or other U.S. religious affiliations, and precedent studies of successful diocesan and parish plans.

**Refine mission priority goals and roles as necessary to reflect the findings of the survey, feedback, and additional research.** Additional feedback and data collection will give a more complete picture of what can be done at the Archdiocese to better assist vicariates and parishes in carrying out the mission priorities. Archdiocesan departments will continue to reflect on what this feedback means for our planning goals and work.

**Evaluate use of technology, communications, and marketing at all levels.** This evaluation will look at how we can more effectively use technology and online communications in the Archdiocese, in vicariates, and in parishes. The Archdiocese is dedicated to finding better solutions for managing parish data, tracking parish planning, communicating with parishioners, and connecting to vicariate and archdiocesan resources.

These next steps will build on what has been learned from the *Perceptions of the Faithful* survey, and continue to engage with Catholics in Detroit to advance the mission of the Church.