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SAN JOSE

## Using Parish Catechetical Program Statistics

I got the Statistics for Catechetical Ministry...

**So** now **What** do I do with it?

This guide will give you a few ideas on how to compare some numbers, give you models for how to look at them, and generate some questions for you as you plan and evaluate your programs and processes for faith formation.

The charts on the catechetical statistics report are numbered, so follow along and reflect on what each of these figures mean for catechetical planning in your parishes.

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### Figure 1—Numbers Served in Parishes and Schools

Of those children and youth receiving catechesis in the diocese, 51% in grades K-12 receive religious education in parish catechetical programs and 49% are educated in Catholic schools. This validates the importance of both school and parish programs and what you do for them as catechetical leaders. This chart does not take into account all that you do for adults, families and those in the sacramental programs in your parish.



#### **Crucial Questions for Your Parish**

Since both Catholic school and parish catechetical programs are central to the mission of the Church, ask the questions:

- Do we allocate enough resources to meet the needs of the *parents, families, youth and children* in both the parish and school?
- Do we allocate enough resources to meet the needs of the ongoing education and development of the *catechetical professionals* we hire to work in both the parish and school?
- Do the leaders in both the school and the parish *dialogue* about their common vision for evangelization and catechesis of families?

## Figures 2 & 3 Grade by Grade Participation

It is clear that participation peaks when children and youth receive sacraments and drops dramatically after confirmation. It is important to reflect on what this means for the overall life of the parish community.



### Crucial Questions for Your parish

Consider the following:

- At what age levels do we see fall off in our catechetical programs? (Keep in mind who is moving in and out of your local area.)
- How well do we communicate lifelong formation in our parish? Are parents and guardians seeing our entire parish life especially the Sunday Eucharist as integral to sacramental formation; that sacramental formation is more than just a one-time program?
- How might we connect young adults to the parish? Are there other ways to deliver catechesis to those with busy schedules?
- How might we connect with and engage the baptized in evangelizing, inculturated catechesis “womb to tomb”—lifelong faith formation.
- How do we resource the home to grow family faith practices?

## Figure 4 Sacramental Preparation

Sacramental preparation is not only important to form the participants, but also represents a great opportunity to evangelize parents and friends as well. As you scan through this chart, consider the number of different ways the parish can utilize sacramental preparation to reach out to others and draw them in a closer relationship with Jesus.

### Crucial Questions for Your Parish

In addition, you may want to think about:

- How might we use sacramental preparation to evangelize and foster conversion in parents, guardians, godparents, and sponsors?
- If you could wave a magic wand and create the perfect sacramental preparation, what would it look like? What are you willing to change?
- Do our sacramental preparation programs connect learners to the life and mission of the church? What follow-up ministry for families do you provide?
- What is your priority to build and form team for sacramental preparation?
- How does the baptismal catechumenate inspire sacramental preparation?

## Faith Formation Processes

### Crucial Questions for Your Parish

*“Parents are the most influential agents of catechesis for their children.” (NDC 234)*

Questions for discussion:

- How are you partnering with parents and families in supporting a lifelong journey of faith that is modeled throughout all generations and milestones within the family?
- What philosophies and considerations underline faith formation? Do they align with the values and mission of our parish as a whole?
- Who is invited and/or excluded? Is this intentional or accidental?

- How does faith formation develop individuals with a mature, fully-formed faith life within a larger community?
- Does faith formation integrate a variety of ways to deepen knowledge and practice of faith in Jesus Christ—beyond just a cognitive understanding of the faith? How does it form intentional disciples?

## **Figure 5 Catechesis for those with Disabilities**

The U.S. Census reports, that approximately 20% of the population--one person in five--has some disability. One family in three has a member with a disability.

- Are you aware of parishioners with disabilities? How are they offered access and a welcoming atmosphere?
- Is your parish accessible to persons with disabilities? [The Parish Accessibility Survey](#) can assist your efforts.
- Are people with disabilities included in your parish school and catechetical programs as participants and catechists? Click [here](#) for guidelines and resources for catechesis for those with disabilities.

## **Figure 6 Adult Faith Formation**

*“The catechesis of adults...is the principal form of catechesis because it is addressed to persons who have the greatest responsibilities and the capacity to live the Christian message in its fully developed form.” “The Catechesis of adults must have high priority at all levels of the Church.”* National Directory for Catechesis #48

The list indicates that spiritual prayer groups, scripture study and retreat for teens are the most common forms of adult faith formation in the parish.

- Which Adult Faith Formation offering listed in Figure 6 would you like to focus on at your parish? How are you putting adults at the center of faith formation?
- How have you established, trained and supported an adult faith formation team?
- How have you helped adults identify what it is that they want or need to learn and grow in their faith.
- How are small faith groups and retreats used to foster spiritual growth of adults?

## **Back Panel—Listing of Catechetical Programs Serving Languages**

Each Parish has the responsibility of ensuring that all individuals in their community have the opportunity to learn and grow in their faith. The back panel of the statistics report gives the names of parishes that have catechetical programs to meet the needs of different ethnic groups.



## **Share the Fruits of Your Conversations With Us...**

If any of the information in the *statistics for Catechetical Ministry* or any of the questions in this document have sparked interesting conversations, share them with us. Let us know what you found helpful, where challenged and/or what action your parish has taken on any of the issues or information presented. E-mail any ideas or comments to [robert.rodriguez@dsj.org](mailto:robert.rodriguez@dsj.org) mail them to the chancery, Attn: Robert Rodrigues, CSP, 1150 N. First Street, San Jose CA 95112 or call (408) 983-0182.