



# The CARA Report

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## TRACING THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS OF U.S. CATHOLICS

*Ranking Faiths: Religious Stratification in America*, is a new book of religious sociology that describes the distribution and effects of power, privilege, and prestige among the various religious traditions throughout the course of U.S. history. Professor Emeritus James Davidson of Purdue University and Professor Ralph Pyle of Michigan State University assert that “stratification based on a person’s religious affiliation has been part of the American experience since colonial times” and they “want to explain how it developed, how it has persisted and changed over the years, how it has affected our society, and what Americans can and should do about it.”

The authors examine the status of the various religious groups in U.S. history: from colonial America, through the 1800s, and then from 1900 to the present. Each era and sub-era is examined according to the nation’s religious breakdown as to power relationships, laws, ideologies, customs, and the resulting religious stratification. Of particular interest, the book describes how the status of Catholics developed over time. It evolved from a minority that was legally prohibited from voting in 11 of the 13

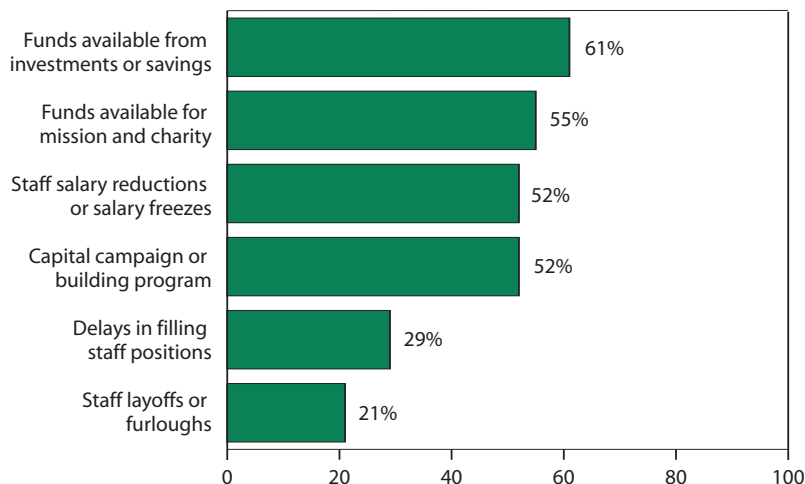
See *Tracing the Socio-Economic Status of U.S. Catholics*, p. 9

## Recession’s Impact on Catholic Parish Life

Recently, CARA surveyed a national random sample of Catholic parishes, as part of a much larger project, entitled *Faith Communities Today*, which included responses from 11,077 congregations from over 100 denominations and faith groups representing a full spectrum of America’s multi-faith diversity. The overall study was coordinated by the Cooperative Congregations Studies Partnership (CCSP), an interfaith group of religious researchers and leaders. CCSP consists of members from more than 25 different faith groups, working in conjunction with Hartford Seminary and the Hartford Institute for Religion Research.

CARA modified the CCSP survey for Protestant churches to better fit the faith and practice of Catholic parishes and added a few questions particular to Catholic parish life. Each survey was to be completed by the pastor or other person with primary responsibility for that parish. The survey was mailed to 3,500 randomly selected parishes in fall 2010, of which 11 percent responded.

The 2008–09 economic crisis had at least a "minor impact" on . . .



The survey asked about all aspects of parish life, including history and location, worship attendance and style, characteristics of those attending services, programs and ministries, mission and identity, and leadership and finances. The survey results are still being analyzed and CARA will continue to release findings from the study in future issues of *The CARA Report*.

One area of particular interest concerns the impact of the 2008–2009 recession on parish finances as well as its impact on parishioners. The preliminary findings suggest

See *Recession’s Impact on Catholic Parish Life*, p. 10



## The CARA Report

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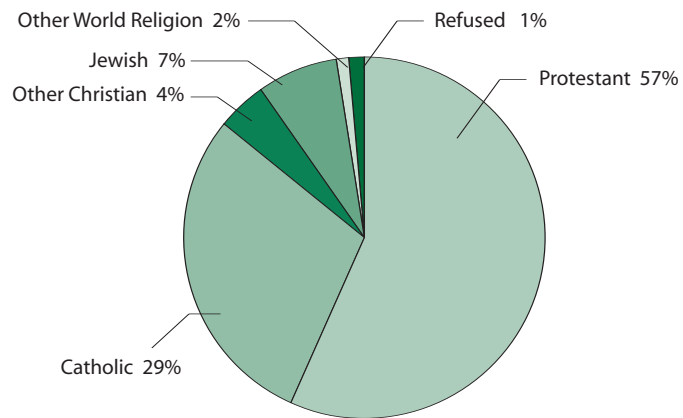
"Serving the Church's Research Needs Since 1964"

# Catholics in the 112th U.S. Congress

The overall number of Catholics has dropped from 161 in the 111th Congress to 156 members of the current 112th Congress, or from 30 percent to 29 percent of the total membership of 535. This proportion is still well ahead of the 24 percent of all Americans who are reported as Catholic. The Senate now has 24 Catholic members, or 24 percent, while the House of Representatives has 132 Catholics, or 30 percent of the total.

According to a report by The Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, last fall's election "appears to have had little effect on the religious composition of Congress, which is similar to the religious makeup of the previous Congress and of the nation."

Religious Composition of 112th Congress



Some 57 percent of members of Congress are Protestants, compared to 51 percent of all adult Americans. Baptists (13 percent) and Methodists (10 percent) are the Protestant denominations with the most members, just as in the country as a whole.

The report notes that "Perhaps the greatest disparity between the religious makeup of Congress and the people it represents, however, is in the percentage of the unaffiliated—those who describe their religion as atheist, agnostic, or 'nothing in particular.'" No member of Congress claims to be unaffiliated, while about one-sixth of U.S. adults (16 percent) are not affiliated with any particular faith.

The report also indicates that "while 69 percent of congressional Republicans are Protestant, fewer than half of Democrats (43 percent) belong to Protestant denominational families. On the other hand, Catholics make up a greater share of Democratic members (34 percent) than they do of GOP members (25 percent)." ■

"Faith on the Hill: The Religious Composition of the 112th Congress," January 5, 2011, appears on the website of *The Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life* ([www.pewforum.org](http://www.pewforum.org)).

# Women Religious Professing Perpetual Vows

CARA recently surveyed women religious who professed perpetual vows in U.S.-based religious congregations in 2010. The research was commissioned by the Secretariat of Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops to gather information about the characteristics and experiences of these women religious.

To survey these women, CARA first contacted the major superiors of all religious institutes belonging to the two leadership conferences of women religious in the United States. The USCCB Secretariat of Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations provided additional information on 152 contemplative communities of nuns.

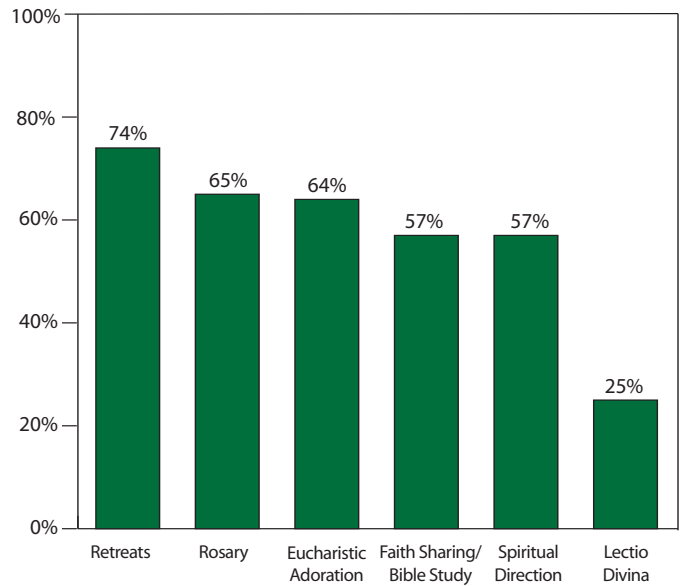
“... responding women religious have at least one sibling and the most common number is four. Two-thirds have four or more siblings. . . . a quarter are the oldest child . . .”

Each major superior was asked to provide contact information for every woman of their institute scheduled to profess perpetual vows in 2010. CARA then contacted these sisters or nuns to explain the project and ask them to complete a brief online survey. A total of 68 sisters and nuns responded, for a response rate of 86 percent. Some of the major findings include:

- A total of 311 major superiors (84 percent of those responding) reported no one professing perpetual vows in 2010, 46 (13 percent) reported one woman professing perpetual vows, and 12 (3 percent) reported two or more. The sisters and nuns who responded represent 52 religious congregations, provinces, or monasteries.
- The average age of responding women religious of the Profession Class of 2010 is 43. Four in ten (44 percent) are under age 40.
- Most of those responding (71 percent) were born in the U.S. The most common non-U.S. countries of origin are Mexico, the Philippines, and Nigeria. On average, those born outside the U.S. were 27 years old when they first came to this country and lived here for 17 years before profession.
- Almost all of the responding women religious have at least one sibling and the most common number of siblings is four. Two-thirds have four or more siblings. A quarter are the oldest child in the family and a fifth are the youngest; more than half are somewhere in between.
- The responding women religious are highly educated. A quarter earned a graduate degree before entering their religious institute.

Six in ten entered their religious institute with at least a bachelor's degree or more. One in six (16 percent) participated in a Catholic ministry formation program before they entered their religious institute.

Prayer Practices of Women Religious



- Many were active in parish life before entering their religious institute. Four in ten participated in a youth group and three in ten participated in a young adult group. One in five was active in campus ministry or a Newman Club on campus.
- On average, responding women religious report that they were 20 years old when they first considered a vocation to religious life, but half were under the age of 18.
- Nine in ten (87 percent) say they were encouraged to consider religious life by someone in their life. Of those who reported that they were encouraged to consider a vocation, more than half (52 percent) say they were encouraged by a religious sister.
- On average, respondents say they knew the members of their religious institute for six years before they entered, but half knew them for two years or less. One-third were introduced to their institute through the recommendation of a priest or advisor. ■

For the full report, *The Profession Class of 2010: Survey of Women Religious Professing Perpetual Vows*, December 2010, by Mary L. Gautier and Melissa A. Cidade, visit the USCCB website at <http://www.usccb.org/cl/profession-class-2010.shtml>.

## Catholic Church Still Largest U.S. Faith Community

According to the recently-released *2011 Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches*, the ten largest Christian faith communities and their change in membership from 2010 are:

- The Catholic Church: 68.5 million, up 0.57 percent.
- Southern Baptist Convention: 16.1 million, down .42 percent.
- The United Methodist Church: 7.8 million, down 1 percent.
- The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints: 6 million, up 1.42 percent.
- The Church of God in Christ: 5.5 million, no membership updates reported.
- National Baptist Convention, USA: 5 million, no membership updates reported.
- Evangelical Lutheran Church in America: 4.5 million, down 1.96 percent.
- National Baptist Convention of America, 3.5 million, no membership updates reported.
- Assemblies of God: 2.9 million, up .52 percent.
- Presbyterian Church (USA): 2.7 million, down 2.61 percent.

The *2011 Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches*, Rev. Eileen Lindner (ed.), was prepared and edited for the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. and published by Abingdon Press. For further information, call 212-870-2031 or e-mail [yearbook@nccusa.org](mailto:yearbook@nccusa.org).

## Something about the Name Mary?

1964, the CARA blog, notes that Pope Benedict XVI recently encouraged Catholic parents to consider a Christian name—a biblical or saint's name—for their children. According to a Social Security Administration website that lists names given to American children, the most popular boy and girl names tend to conform to the Pope's suggestion. However, there are exceptions such as Jayden for boys (8th) and Madison for girls (7th). The top name for boys in 2009 was Jacob, and for girls it was Isabella.

Where is Mary? From 1910 to 1965, Mary was either the first or second name for girls in the U.S. In 2009, this name dropped out of the top 100 for the first time (currently at 102). By comparison, Joseph has remained consistently popular—although coming in at 16th in 2009 is the lowest placement since 1910.

According to CARA researchers Paul Perl and Jon Wiggins, writing in the *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* in 2000, half the American females named Mary (or variants such as Marie, Maria, Maryann) were raised Catholic. Females least likely to have been raised Catholic were named Tamara or Tammy, Shirley or Shirlene, Bonnie, Brenda, and Joyce.

"Something about the Name Mary?" by Mark M. Gray, January 14, 2011, appears on 1964, the CARA blog ([www.nineteensixty-four.blogspot.com](http://www.nineteensixty-four.blogspot.com)).

## Americans Show Low Level of Religious Knowledge

The U.S. Religious Knowledge Survey reports low levels of religious literacy among much of the U.S. population. According to the report's executive summary, "On average, Americans correctly answer 16 of the 32 religious knowledge questions on the survey." On questions about the Bible and Christianity, Catholics overall answered an average of 5.4 of 12 questions correctly. On world religions, Catholics overall answered an average of 4.7 of 11 questions correctly. On religion in public life, Catholics overall averaged 2.1 of 4 questions correctly. Other findings highlighted include:

- More than four in ten Catholics (45 percent) do not know that the church teaches that the bread and wine used in Communion do not merely symbolize but actually become the body and blood of Christ.
- About half of Protestants (53 percent) cannot correctly identify Martin Luther as the person whose writings and actions inspired the Protestant Reformation, which made their religion a separate branch of Christianity.
- Roughly four in ten Jews (43 percent) do not recognize that Maimonides, one of the most venerated rabbis in history, was Jewish.
- Only about a quarter of all Americans (27 percent) correctly answer that most people in Indonesia—the country with the world's largest Muslim population—are Muslims.

*U.S. Religious Knowledge Survey*, September 2010, was produced by the Pew Research Center's Forum on Religion & Public Life. The report is available at [http://pewforum.org/uploadedFiles/Topics/Belief\\_and\\_Practices/religious-knowledge-full-report.pdf](http://pewforum.org/uploadedFiles/Topics/Belief_and_Practices/religious-knowledge-full-report.pdf)

# Almost One-Third of New U.S. Priests are Foreign Born

For the ninth consecutive year, CARA conducted a national survey of ordinands to the priesthood in 2011. The 329 ordinands responding constituted a response rate of about 69 percent of the 480 potential ordinands reported by theologates, houses of formation, dioceses, and religious institutes. Of these, 275 are being ordained to the diocesan priesthood, representing 128 different dioceses, and 54 to the religious priesthood. Some of this year's findings include:

- The average age of ordinands for the Class of 2011 is 34. The median age (midpoint of the distribution) is 31. More than half (56 percent) are between the ages of 25 and 34. This is slightly younger than in 2010, but follows the pattern in recent years of average age at ordination in the mid-thirties.
- On average, diocesan ordinands lived in the diocese or eparchy for which they will be ordained for 15 years before entering the seminary. Religious ordinands knew the members of their religious institute an average of six years before they entered.

## BACKGROUND AND COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

- Seven in ten respondents (69 percent) report their primary race or ethnicity as Caucasian/European/American/white. Compared to the adult Catholic population of the U.S., ordinands are more likely to be of Asian or Pacific Islander background (10 percent of responding ordinands), but less likely to be Hispanic/Latino (15 percent of responding ordinands). Religious ordinands are less likely than their diocesan counterparts to be Caucasian/European American/white.

**“More than half of ordinands of the Class of 2011 (53 percent) report having more than two siblings, while one-quarter (24 percent) report having five or more siblings. One in three (33 percent) is the oldest child or the youngest child (29 percent) in their family.”**

- Almost one-third were born in a foreign country, with the largest numbers coming from Colombia, Mexico, the Philippines, Poland, and Vietnam. On average, those born in another country have lived in the U.S. for 13 years. Between 20 and 30 percent of ordinands to diocesan priest-

hood for each of the last ten years were born outside of the United States.

- Most ordinands have been Catholic since birth, although one in ten (8 percent) became Catholic later in life. Four in five (82 percent) report that both of their parents are Catholic and a third (34 percent) have a relative who is a priest or a religious.
- More than half of ordinands of the Class of 2011 (53 percent) report having more than two siblings, while one-quarter (24 percent) report having five or more siblings. One in three (33 percent) is the oldest child or the youngest child (29 percent) in their family.

## EDUCATION, MINISTRY, AND WORK EXPERIENCE

- Before entering the seminary, three in five ordinands completed college (60 percent), among them one in five who also received a graduate degree (17 percent). Among those who completed college before entering the seminary, seven in ten entered the seminary at the pre-theology level and 19 percent entered at the theology level. One in three (34 percent) report entering the seminary while in college.
- Almost half of responding ordinands (47 percent) attended a Catholic elementary school, which is a rate slightly higher than that for all Catholic adults in the United States (42 percent). In addition, ordinands are somewhat more likely than other U.S. Catholic adults to have attended a Catholic high school and they are much more likely to have attended a Catholic college (39 percent, compared to 7 percent among U.S. Catholic adults).
- More than nine in ten (94 percent) report some type of full-time work experience prior to entering the seminary, most often in education. Fewer than one in ten has served in the U.S. Armed Forces. One in five (19 percent) reports that either one or both parents were career military.
- About seven in ten ordinands report regularly praying the Rosary (70 percent) and participating in Eucharistic Adoration (65 percent) before entering the seminary.
- On average, responding ordinands report that they were about 16 when they first considered a vocation to the priesthood. Two in three (66 percent) were encouraged to consider the priesthood by a priest. Seven in ten (71 percent) received encouragement from a friend, a parent, grandparent, or other relative, or a parishioner. ■

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The full report *The Class of 2011: Survey of Ordinands to the Priesthood*, March 2011, by Mary L. Gautier and Melissa A. Cidade, is available on the USCCB website at <http://www.usccb.org/vocations/classof2010>.

# Hispanic/Latino(a) Population by Diocese

Census 2010 has released the national data on race and ethnicity that will be used for the U.S. House of Representatives redistricting process. One of the results from these data that has drawn the most interest is the growth and distribution of the Hispanic/Latino(a) population, which now repre-

**“More than half of the growth in the total population of the United States between 2000 and 2010 was due to the increase in the Hispanic population.”**

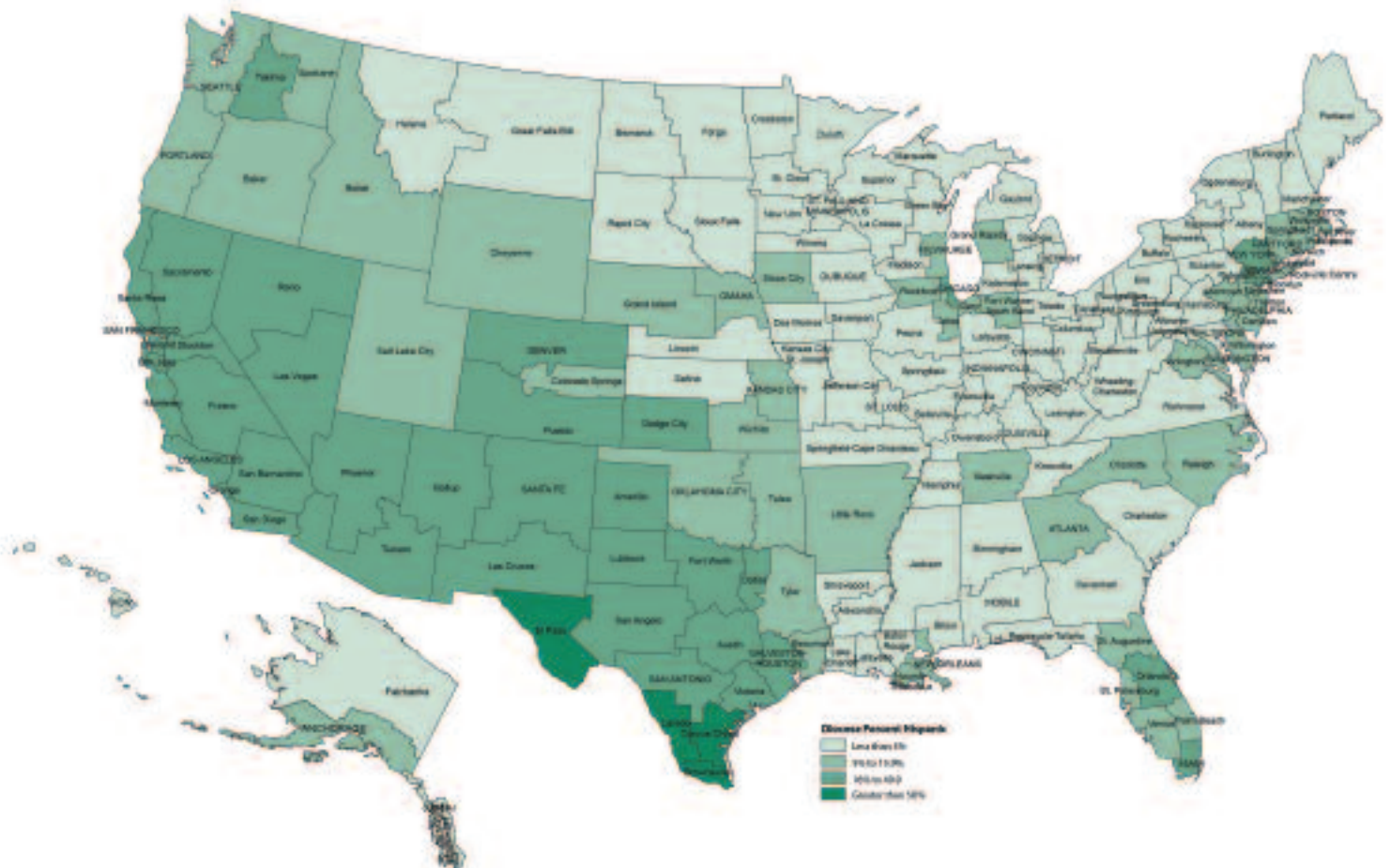
sent 16 percent of the U.S. population (up from 12.5 percent in 2000). The Census Bureau notes that “More than half of the growth in the total population of the United States between 2000 and 2010 was due to the increase in the Hispanic population.”

As reported in other CARA research, 63 percent of Hispanics self-identified their religion as Catholic in the United States in 2010. Thus, growth in the Hispanic population also represents growth in membership for the Catholic Church.

CARA takes the Census population figures for those identifying as Hispanic/Latino(a) and analyzes these within diocesan boundaries. The accompanying map, created by CARA, shows the distribution of the Hispanic population by diocese. It is important to note that these data make no distinction regarding religion (this is not a Census question). In darker green dioceses 16 percent or more of the population identifies their ethnicity as Hispanic or Latino(a). The darkest green represents areas where Hispanics are a majority of the population. ■

The original post and further information is on the CARA website in the blog “1964”: [nineteensixty-four.blogspot.com/2011/04/hispaniclatino-a-population-by-diocese.html](http://nineteensixty-four.blogspot.com/2011/04/hispaniclatino-a-population-by-diocese.html)

2010 Hispanic Population in Catholic Dioceses



# Seminary Preparation for High Quality Liturgy

**S**r. Katarina Schuth, OSF, an expert on Catholic seminaries and a faculty member at the St. Paul Seminary School of Divinity, of the University of St. Thomas, surveyed the liturgy and music professors at major U.S. seminaries and schools of theology concerning liturgical preparation at their schools. The areas of inquiry were the liturgical curricula and liturgical practices in the schools as well as the relationship of the schools to diocesan liturgical offices. Some of the key findings are summarized below with the percentage of agreement among seminary faculty:

## LITURGICAL CURRICULUM

- *Sacrosanctum Concilium* is the basis of our liturgical formation program: 96 percent agreed.
- Our curriculum provides liturgical practica that prepare our students to minister in the liturgy in an excellent way: 93 percent agreed.
- Our approach to teaching liturgical courses takes into account the needs of the local churches where our graduates will be serving: 89 percent agreed.
- Our liturgical courses reflect an understanding/theology of the Church that includes the diversity of the Catholic population, especially in its multicultural composition: 87 percent agreed.

## LITURGICAL PRACTICES

- The themes of daily homilies almost always are based on the Scriptural readings of the day: 98 percent agreed.
- An appropriate amount of time is allowed for silence and reflection during Eucharistic celebrations: 86 percent agreed.

- Seminarians participate in liturgical celebrations “fully, actively, and as befits a community” (SC#48), conscious of what they are doing and outwardly expressing their devotion and involvement: 84 percent agreed.
- The celebration of the Eucharist in our seminary is an experience of community: 81 percent agreed.
- Our liturgical practices reflect the diversity of the Catholic population, especially relative to race and ethnicity: 59 percent agreed.
- A range of musical instruments is used as accompaniment in our chapel: 58 percent agreed.

The conclusion of the presentation characterized the responses of the seminary faculty: “Their evaluation of the liturgical curriculum is decidedly positive, but they offer suggestions for improvement that include more integration of course material and better understanding of parish life. Concerning the celebration of liturgies, faculty are generally positive, but a significant number are concerned about the rigidity of students and their pious practices as they implement the liturgical norms while in the seminary and after ordination. Finally, the survey of the faculty highlighted the positive relationships they experience with diocesan liturgical offices, but a significant number would like to see more connection with the diocese.” ■

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For further information on “We Praise You with Greater Joy than Ever,” by Katarina Schuth, OSF, a presentation on October 7, 2009 at the annual meeting of the Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions, contact Sr. Katarina at [kschuth@stthomas.edu](mailto:kschuth@stthomas.edu).

# Jesuit Shift from Developed to Developing World

**T**he Jesuits are the single largest religious congregation of priests and brothers in the Catholic Church, and they work in almost every country of the world. Their primary ministry is education on both the secondary and university levels. Well-established and highly-regarded Jesuit schools have existed in Europe and the Americas for centuries. During the latter half of the 20th century an extensive network of “popular education” schools was initiated by Jesuits, particularly in Latin America and South Asia.

During the past 100 years, membership in the Society of Jesus has steadily grown and then steadily dropped. In 1910 there were 16,295 Jesuits worldwide, peaking in 1965 at 36,038, and in 2010 there are 18,266.

These figures mask some dramatic changes in membership by geographical area that have occurred in the past 30 or more years. The steep decline in Europe and the United States dwarfs

the steady growth of the order in South Asia and Africa. The Jesuits of East Asia and Latin America have also declined, but to a much lesser extent.

Over the course of 30 years, the Society of Jesus worldwide has changed in geographic composition from a two-thirds/one-third distribution between the developed and developing world to just the reverse. Added to this is a great change in age distribution across the Society, which is resulting in a rapid shift from a more European/American Vatican II perspective to a more Indian/African post-Vatican II perspective. ■

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“The Changing Jesuit Geography,” by Thomas P. Gaunt, SJ, from a paper presented at the annual meeting of the Religious Research Association/Society for the Scientific Study of Religion, October 29-31, 2010, was posted on February 1, 2011 on 1964, the CARA blog ([nineteensixty-four.blogspot.com](http://nineteensixty-four.blogspot.com)).

# Catholic Attitudes Concerning Same-Sex Marriage

A recent report from the Public Religion Research Institute explored Catholic attitudes on gay and lesbian issues. According to the report “Catholics are more supportive of legal recognitions of same-sex relationships than members of any other Christian tradition and Americans overall.” They also are more likely to support laws banning employment discrimination against gays and lesbians, support homosexuals serving openly in the military, and support same-sex couples adopting children. However, in some cases these differences are at or within the margin of error, which means they may not accurately represent true differences in the population.

**“Catholics are more supportive of legal recognitions of same-sex relationships than members of any other Christian tradition and Americans overall.”**

The study also showed that Catholics’ church attendance was a factor in their opinion on same-sex marriage. Only 26 percent of Catholics who attend church weekly or more support same-sex marriage, compared with 43 percent of those who attend once or twice a month and 59 percent of Catholics who attend a few times a year or less. Some of the other findings in the report include:

- Nearly three-quarters (73 percent) of Catholics favor laws that would protect gay and lesbian people against discrimination in the workplace; 63 percent of Catholics favor allowing

gay and lesbian people to serve openly in the military; and 60 percent of Catholics favor allowing gay and lesbian couples to adopt children.

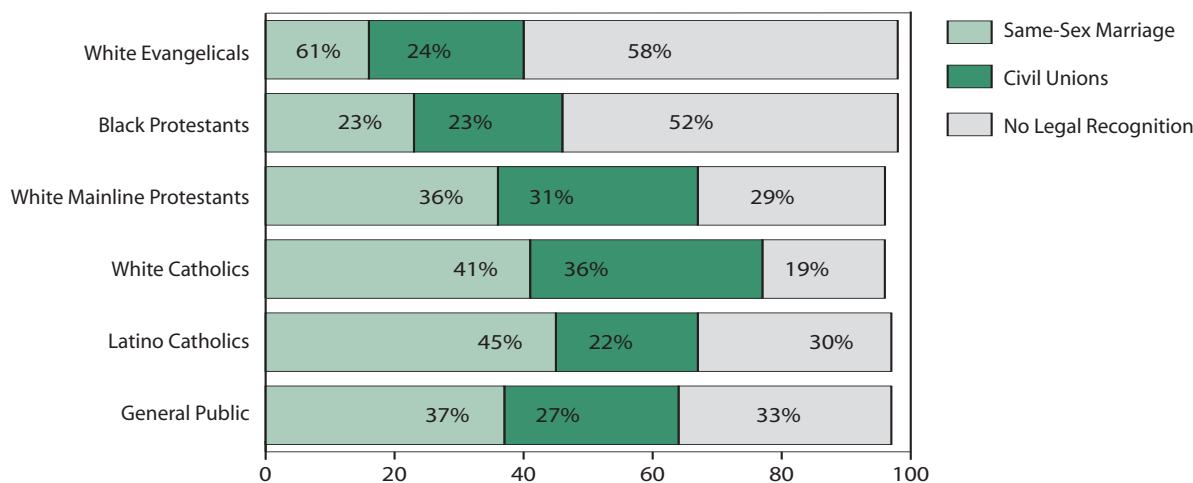
- Fewer than four in ten Catholics give their own church top marks (a grade of an A or a B) on its handling of the issue of homosexuality; majorities of members of most other religious groups give their churches high marks.
- A majority of Catholics (56 percent) believe that sexual relations between two adults of the same gender is *not* a sin.

The Catholic Church teaches that the dignity of homosexual individuals must be respected as well as their rights as people, such as the right to employment and freedom from unjust discrimination. But the Church upholds the sanctity of traditional marriage as being only between one man and one woman. The Church also teaches that any sexual activity outside of marriage is sinful.

The U.S. bishops have identified “strengthening marriage” as one of their five priority goals through 2011, with their website noting that one principal aim is “to work for laws and public policies that recognize marriage as a union of a man and a woman, strengthen family life and protect religious liberty.”

The graphic below is from *Catholic Attitudes on Gay and Lesbian Issues: A Comprehensive Portrait from Recent Research*, analysis by Robert P. Jones and Daniel Cox, released March 23, 2011 by the Public Religion Research Institute, 2027 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, 3d Floor, Washington, DC 20036 ([www.public-religion.org](http://www.public-religion.org)).

Support for Legal Recognition of Same-Sex Unions





TRACING THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS OF U.S. CATHOLICS, *from p. 1*

American colonies and only one Catholic among the 56 signers of the Declaration of Independence. Today, six of the nine justices of the U.S. Supreme Court are Catholic, three are Jewish, and none are Protestant.

The Catholic population was only about 40,000 at the end of the colonial period, 195,000 in 1820, and 650,000 in 1836. But it skyrocketed—largely through immigration—to 2.5 million in 1860, 7.4 million 1890, 12 million in 1900, 18.6 million in 1926, and 46.3 million in 1965, to over 68 million or about one-quarter of the population in 2008.

Despite this surge in numbers, Catholics represented only 5.7 percent of the listings in *Who's Who in America* in 1910, but this proportion increased to 8.41 percent in 1951-51, to 13.21 in 1970-71, to 23.12 in 1992-93—thus now approximating the

percentage of Catholics in the overall U.S. population.

The authors say they hope their approach will encourage other researchers to pay more attention to religious stratification and that they “will come to appreciate the fact that ‘religion’ is not simply a means by which elites are able to exploit and oppress women and minorities. It is much more than that. It is also a basis for group affiliation and an important component of people’s identities that needs to be addressed with the same care that is given to race, ethnicity, class, and gender.” ■

*Ranking Faiths: Religious Stratification in America*, by James D. Davidson and Ralph E. Pyle, was published in 2011 by Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 4501 Forbes Blvd., Suite 200, Lanham, MD 20706 ([www.rowmanlittlefield.com](http://www.rowmanlittlefield.com)).

Religious Stratification in 1776, 1899, and 2010			
STRATUM	1776	1899	2010
Upper	Congregationalists Anglicans Presbyterians	Congregationalists Episcopalians Presbyterians	Episcopalians Jews Presbyterians Unitarian Universalists
Upper Middle	Quakers Unitarians	Quakers Unitarians	Catholics Hindus Methodists Mormons Quakers United Church of Christ
Lower Middle	Baptists Dutch/German Reformed Lutherans Methodists	Dutch/German Reformed German Jews Irish Catholics Lutherans Methodists No Religion	Buddhists Dutch/German Reformed Lutherans No Religion
Lower	Catholics Jews No Religion	Baptists, Fundamentalists Black Protestants East European Jews Italian Catholics Mormons	Assemblies of God, Pentecostals Baptists, Fundamentalists Black Baptists, Black Methodists Muslims

Source: *Ranking Faiths: Religious Stratification in America*

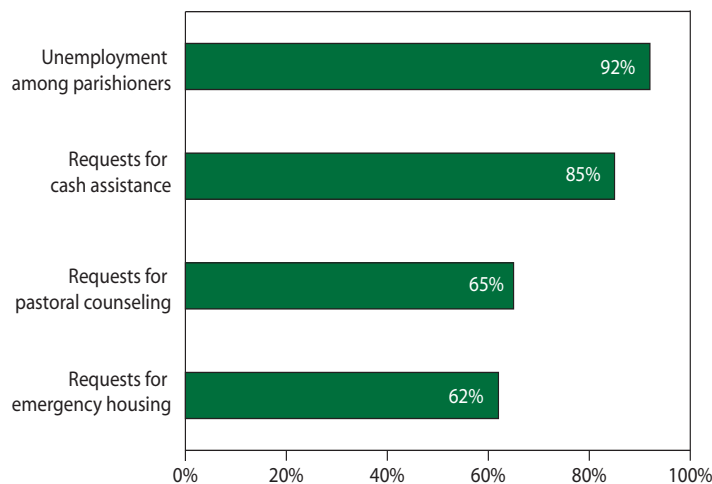
**MIXED VIEWS ON THE INFLUENCE OF RELIGION**

According to a recent Gallup Poll on the influence of organized religion in the U.S. today, 29 percent say religion should have more influence and 29 percent say it should have less influence. Thirty-nine percent would prefer that the influence of organized religion should stay as it is now. The survey included 1,018 U.S. adults and was conducted January 7-9, 2011. Attitudes toward the influence of organized religion are highly related to one’s level of religious commitment. For example, 46 percent of those who attend church weekly, 38 percent who attend nearly every week or monthly, but only 15 percent of those who seldom or never go to church say that religion should have more influence. Moreover, while 38 percent of Protestants and other non-Catholic Christians prefer to see more influence of organized religion, this was 27 percent for Catholics, 7 percent for members of non-Christian religions, and 9 percent for those of no religion.

“Americans Split on Desired Influence of Organized Religion,” by Frank Newport, February 2, 2011, appears on the website of The Gallup Organization ([www.gallup.com](http://www.gallup.com)).

## RECESSION'S IMPACT ON CATHOLIC PARISH LIFE, *from p. 1*

The 2008–09 economic crisis had at least a "minor impact" on . . .



that parishes have been affected by the recession, but not as severely as their parishioners have.

### FINANCES

- Responding parishes had a median total budget of \$350,000 in 2009. Half of them spent 40 percent or more of the total budget on staff salaries and benefits.
- Four in ten parish leaders report that the parish's current financial health is "tight, but we manage" and the same percentage say the parish is currently in "good" or "excellent" financial health. One in five report that the parish is in "some" or "serious" difficulty. By comparison, 31 percent report that five years ago the parish's financial health was "tight, but we managed" and 43 percent were in "good" or "excellent" financial health. A quarter report that five years ago the parish was in "some" or "serious" difficulty.
- Leaders in three in five parishes (57 percent) report that the parish's income declined as a result of the 2008-2009 economic crisis. One in ten (13 percent) experienced an initial decline, but has since rebounded. A fifth (20 percent) had no significant change in income and a tenth (10 percent) experienced income growth since the crisis.

### HISTORY, LOCATION, BUILDING SPACE

- The oldest responding parish was founded in 1704 and the newest in 2010. Half of the parishes are at least one hundred years old.
- Two in five parishes (41 percent) are located in a town of less than 10,000 or a rural area. One in four (24 percent) is in a town of 10,000 to 50,000 people. Another quarter (24

percent) in a large city of 50,000 or more, and one in ten (12 percent) is located in a suburb of a large city.

- The average parish church seats about 500 people and the median seating capacity among responding parishes is 425.
- Half of the parishes have enough space currently for worship, parking, and religious education. Three in five have sufficient space for meetings and social gatherings. About a third need more space for social gatherings, meetings, and religious education, and two in five need more space for parking.

### LEADERSHIP

- Six in ten parishes (61 percent) are administered by one pastor with no associate pastors. Almost a third (32 percent) are administered by a senior pastor with one or more associate pastors. About 1 percent are administered by a team of priests (Canon 517.1) and 6 percent have a deacon or a lay person who is entrusted with the pastoral care of the parish (Canon 517.2).
- The average age of the pastor (or other parish leader) is 59. Half of the responding parishes have had the same leader for five years or less.
- Four in ten parishes report that the parish leader spends "a great deal" of time in planning and leading worship (37 percent) and in administration, supervision and committee meetings (37 percent). One in four (26 percent) reports that the parish leader spends "a great deal" of time providing pastoral care and one in five (22 percent) spends "a great deal" of time in teaching people about the faith and scripture.
- In addition to the parish leader, half of all responding parishes have: one full-time and one part-time lay program professional, such as a pastoral minister or a musician; one full-time and one part-time clerical or secretarial employee; one part-time custodial or maintenance employee.
- Asked about the ability of their parish to fill volunteer leadership roles, two-thirds (64 percent) say that, although there is some rotation, a limited number of people tend to serve in leadership roles. In a quarter of parishes (24 percent), the same people tend to serve year after year. One in ten parishes (12 percent) report that they have a lot of rotation among people in volunteer leadership roles. ■

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*The Cooperative Congregations Study Program* began in 2000 with a survey of 14,300 congregations from 41 different denominations and faith groups, thanks to a generous grant from The Lilly Endowment. Further analyses of these data will feature comparisons about parish life between the 2000 and 2010 survey results. For further information on this project, contact Mary Gautier at CARA.

## Standards For Parish Excellence

The Leadership Roundtable on Church Management recently issued its eight “standards of excellence” for Catholic parishes, with guiding principles as summarized below. They encourage parishes to join with Church leaders across the country to take positive steps to promote good stewardship, accountability, and transparency in the Church. For further information visit their website ([www.theleadershiproundtable.org](http://www.theleadershiproundtable.org)).

1. **Mission Statement and Ministry Program.** Parishes should have well-defined mission statements, and their ministry programs should effectively and efficiently work toward achieving the goals in those mission statements. Parishes have an obligation to ensure ministry program effectiveness and to devote their resources to achieving its stated purpose.
2. **Governance and Advisory Bodies.** A parish finance council is required by canon law. Canon law allows the bishop to mandate the establishment of a parish pastoral council. Parish advisory bodies should further the mission of the organization, establish management policies and procedures, ensure that adequate human and financial resources, and actively monitor financial and program performance.
3. **Conflict of Interest.** Both clergy and laity who serve on parish staff, either in paid positions or as volunteers, should act in the best interest of the parish rather than in furtherance of personal interests or in the interests of third parties. Parishes should have policies in place and routinely and systematically implement these policies, to prevent actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest.
4. **Human Resources.** A parish’s relationship to its ministerial personnel, both clergy and lay, paid and volunteer, is fundamental to its ability to achieve its mission. Parishes’ human resource

policies should address both clergy and laity paid staff and volunteers, and should be fair, establish clear expectations, and provide for meaningful and effective performance evaluation.

5. **Finance and Legal.** Parishes must practice sound financial management and comply with a diverse array of legal and regulatory requirements. Financial systems should assure that accurate financial records are kept and that the organization’s financial resources are used in furtherance of its religious mission. Parishes should conduct periodic reviews to address regulatory and liability concerns.
6. **Openness.** Parishes operate in the name of the Church in service to members and the community at large with support from the faithful and the general public. As such, they should provide the faithful and the public with information about their mission, ministry program activities, and finances. They should also be accessible and responsive to members of those who express interest in their affairs.
7. **Fundraising.** All fundraising activities should be conducted on a foundation of truthfulness and responsible stewardship. Parish fundraising policies should be consistent with their mission, compatible with their organizational capacity, respectful of the interests and intentions of donors and prospective donors, and in compliance with applicable canon law.
8. **Public Life and Public Policy.** Parishes provide an important vehicle through which people may choose to organize and work together to improve their communities. They should represent Catholic social teaching and the interest of those they serve through public education and public policy advocacy, as well as by encouraging the faithful to participate in the public life of the community. ■

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## Keeping the “Catholic” in Catholic Colleges and Universities

The Catholic identity of Catholic colleges and universities continues to be a topic of concern among Church ecclesial and educational leaders. The independent Association of Student Affairs at Catholic Colleges and Universities has developed an aid to this endeavor. The list of principles of good practice for student affairs below appears with amplifying detail on the association’s website ([asaccu.org/images/principles.pdf](http://asaccu.org/images/principles.pdf)).

1. Welcomes all students into a vibrant campus community that celebrates God’s love for all.
2. Grounds policies, practices, and decisions in the teachings and living tradition of the Church. Builds and prepares the student affairs staff to make informed contributions to the Catholic mission of the institution.
3. Enriches student integration of faith and reason through the provision of co-curricular learning opportunities.

4. Creates opportunities for students to experience, reflect, and act from a commitment to justice, mercy, and compassion, and in light of Catholic social teaching to develop respect and responsibility for all, especially those most in need.
5. Challenges students to high standards of personal behavior and responsibility through the formation of character and virtues.
6. Invites and accompanies students into the life of the Church through prayer, liturgy, sacraments, and spiritual direction.
7. Seeks dialogue among religious traditions and with contemporary culture to clarify beliefs and fosters mutual understanding in the midst of tensions and ambiguities.
8. Assists students in discerning and responding to their vocations, understanding potential professional contributions, and choosing particular career directions. ■

# Ongoing Research



## Vocations and College Debt . . .

The National Religious Vocation Conference (NRVC) has received a grant from the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation to study educational debt and its impact on religious vocations. Dr. Kathleen Mahoney, a consultant with extensive experience in the Catholic philanthropic community, will serve as project director. NRVC has commissioned CARA to survey institutes of men and women religious about their policies and practices concerning student educational debt among candidates for religious life. The project will also develop resources that will help address the problem of educational debt as it relates to vocations for various constituencies, including religious congrega-

tions, philanthropic organizations, and those considering a religious vocation. For further information, contact Holy Cross Brother Paul Bednarczyk, executive director of NRVC (phone 773-363-5454 / e-mail [nrvc@nrvc.net](mailto:nrvc@nrvc.net)).

## 2011 CARA Catholic Ministry Formation Directory . . .

The newest edition of the *CARA Catholic Ministry Formation Directory* is in production now. Thoroughly revised and updated from the 2009 edition, this 400+ page book provides a complete listing of all programs that prepare priests, deacons, and laity for ecclesial ministry for the U.S. Church as well as the most up-to-date analysis available of participants in these programs. The cost is \$80 per book, plus \$6.95 shipping and handling. To order, use the order form on this page, visit CARA online at [cara.georgetown.edu](http://cara.georgetown.edu), call 202-687-8080, or e-mail [CARA@georgetown.edu](mailto:CARA@georgetown.edu).

In addition to the book, CARA has also prepared an online version of the *Directory* that allows subscribers unlimited access to a searchable database of all program information. For a subscription fee of \$30 per year, users can access the portal to search and download specific information about ministry formation programs across the United States according to type of program, location, language of instruction, degree or certificate offered, and special characteristics. For further information, visit [cara.georgetown.edu](http://cara.georgetown.edu).

## From the editors of Busted Halo . . .

*The Freshman Survival Guide: Soulful Advice for Studying, Socializing, and Everything in Between* is a new book by Nora Bradbury-Haehl and Bill McGarvey of BustedHalo.com. Geared toward older teenagers preparing for entrance to college, the book offers advice on everything from how to manage studying and socializing to reasons not to share your towel with your roommate. Written as a light-hearted set of “survival strategies” the authors carefully weave in advice for young faith-seekers, including learning more about their faith, seeking guidance from learned members of the faith, and engaging in faithful practices from pre-college life. Each chapter also directs readers to an interactive web site ([TheFreshmanSurvivalGuide.com](http://TheFreshmanSurvivalGuide.com)) with additional resources and tips. Quick and quirky, the book is recommended for young adults getting ready to go to college, their parents, and anyone who ministers to them: youth and campus ministers, pastors, and others. For further information, visit [TheFreshmanSurvivalGuide.com](http://TheFreshmanSurvivalGuide.com)

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