

Laity in Support of Retired Priests

Annual Meeting

February 26, 2014

Naples, FL

Understanding Catholics Today
and the Context of Vocational Choice

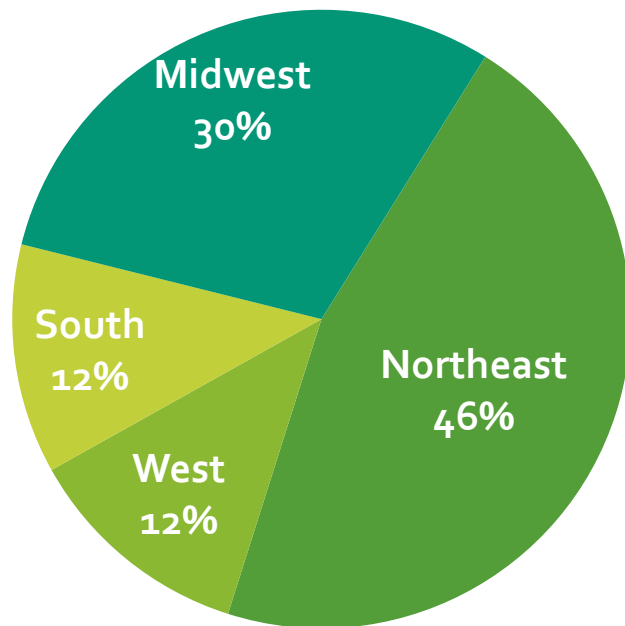
Thomas Gaunt, S.J., PhD



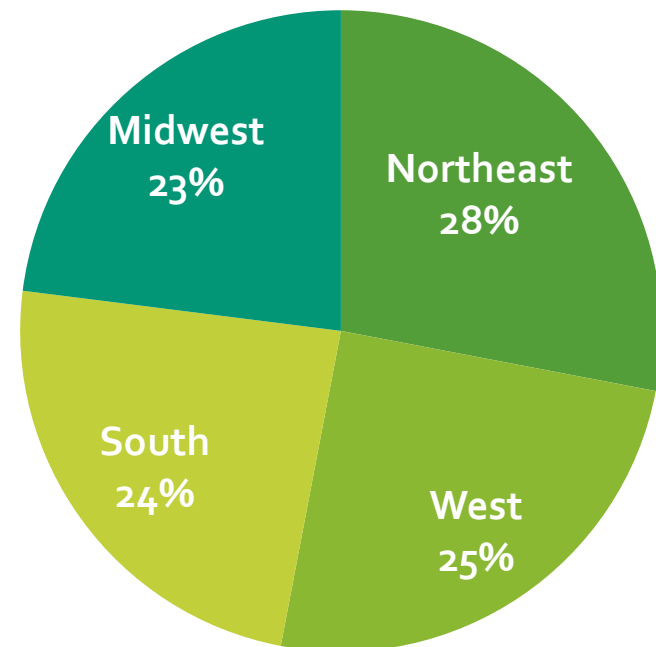
Catholic Demographic Changes



Catholic Population Distribution



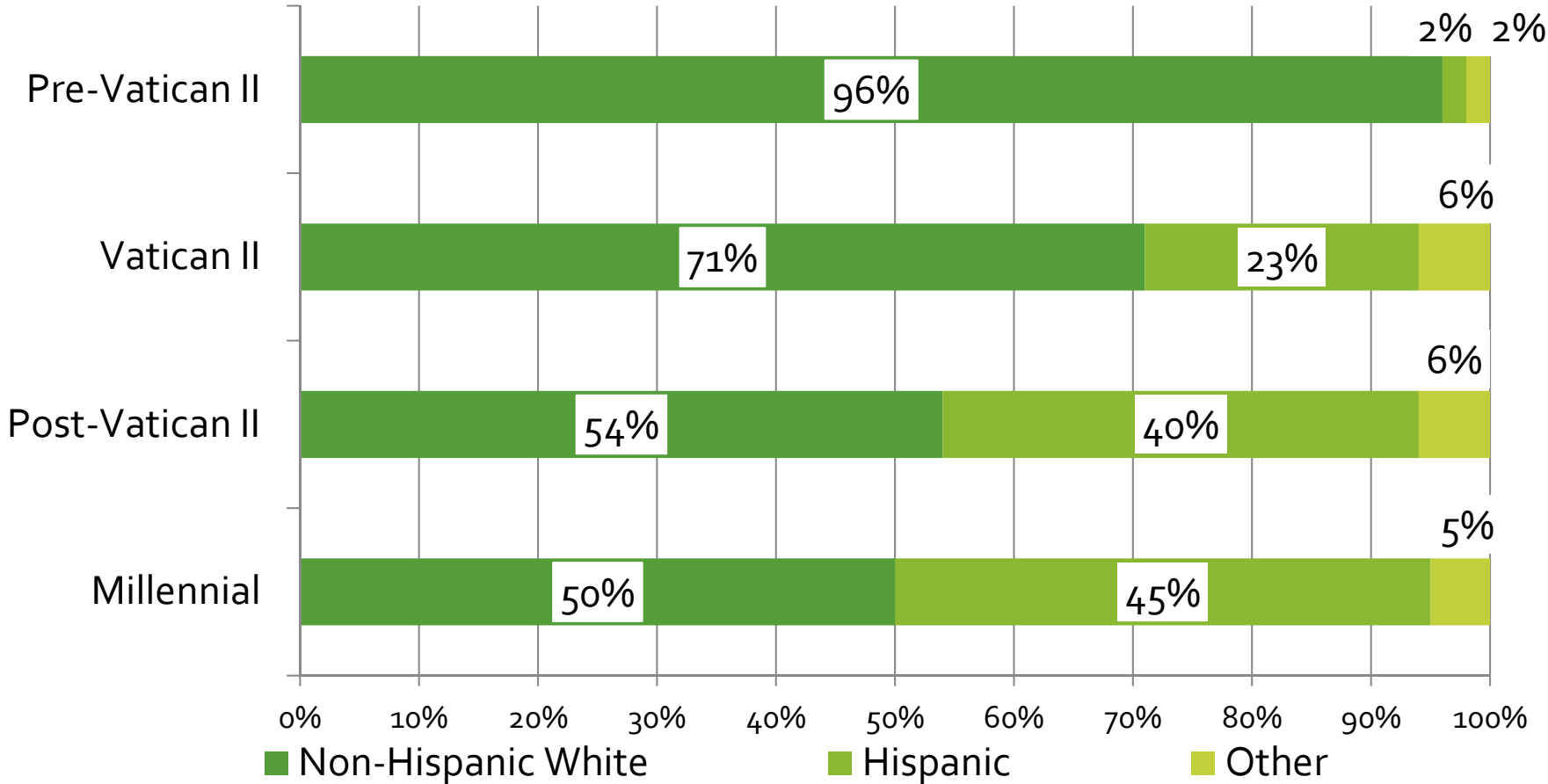
1950



2010

Increased Diversity Across Generations

2011



Source: American Catholic Laity Survey, 2011

**U.S. Catholic Population:
Race, Ethnicity, & Birthplace Group Estimates, 2010**

	Population	Catholic Population	Catholic Affiliation %
White (non-Hispanic)	196,817,552	42,512,591	21.6%
Black, African American, African, Afro-Caribbean	38,929,319	2,919,699	7.5%
Black, African American, African, Afro-Caribbean (non-Hispanic)	37,685,848	2,091,565	5.6%
Born in Africa	1,249,811	329,325	26.4%
Asian American, Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander	17,320,856	2,905,925	19.1%
Filipino	3,416,840	2,214,112	64.8%
Vietnamese	1,737,433	483,006	27.8%
Chinese	4,010,114	340,860	8.5%
Korean	1,706,822	199,698	11.7%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	540,013	147,424	27.3%
Indian	3,183,063	146,421	4.6%
Japanese	1,304,286	56,084	4.3%
Hispanic, Latino	50,477,594	29,731,302	58.9%
Native-born	29,912,486	16,033,093	53.6%
Foreign-born	20,565,108	13,696,362	66.6%
American Indian, Alaskan Native	2,932,248	536,601	18.3%

Profile of Millennials in 2011

		Hispanic	Non-Hispanic
EDUCATION			
	Less than high school graduate	29%	3%
	High school graduate	38	23
	Some college, associate degree	24	39
	College graduate and higher	9	35
CATHOLIC EDUCATION			
	Grade school	17%	39%
	High school	8	21
	College/university	1	12

Source: *American Catholic Laity Survey, 2011*

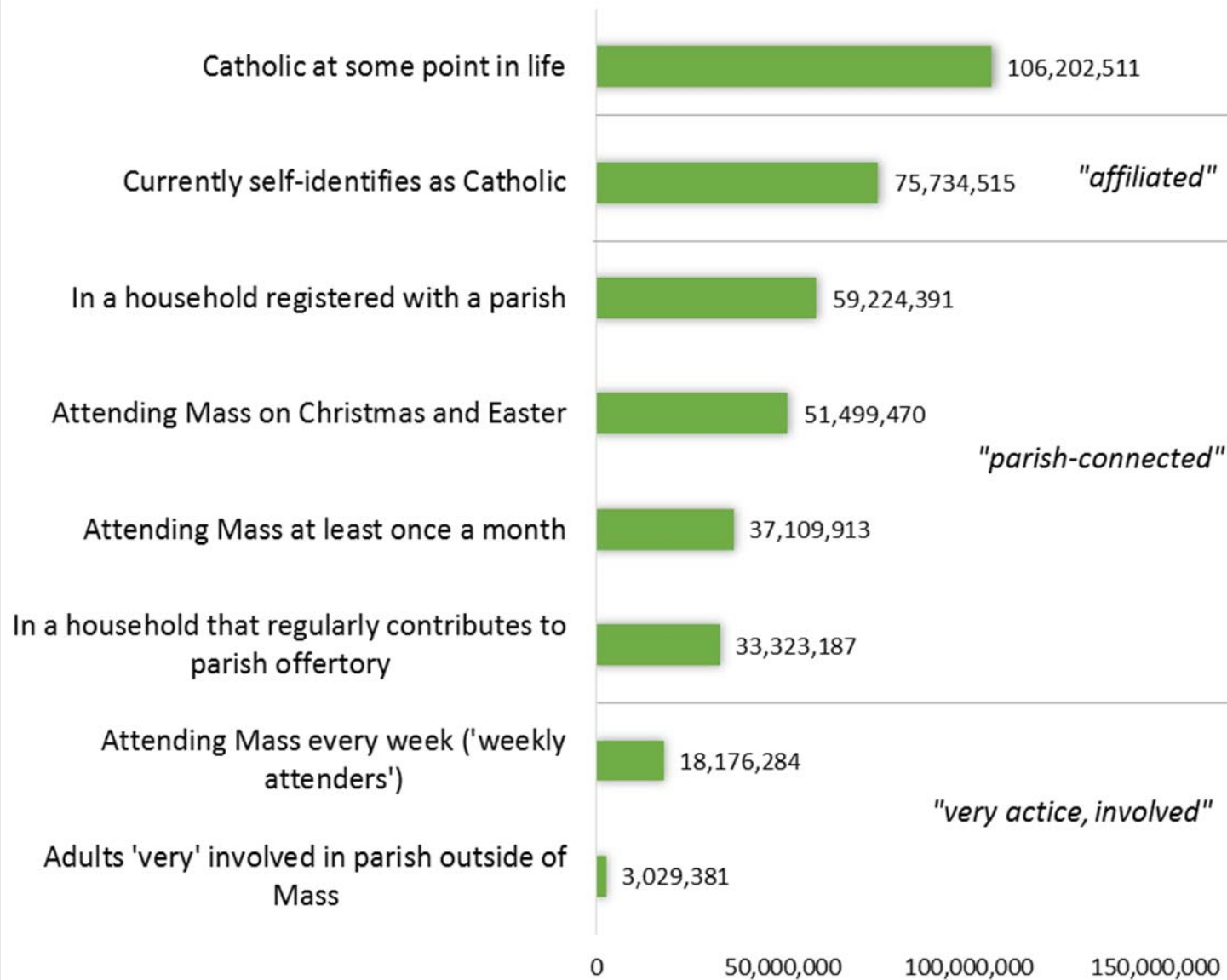
What are we learning?

- Catholics move but the physical structures of the Church do not...
- The “cultures” of Catholics are changing, evolving, and assimilating

Catholic Identity and Engagement

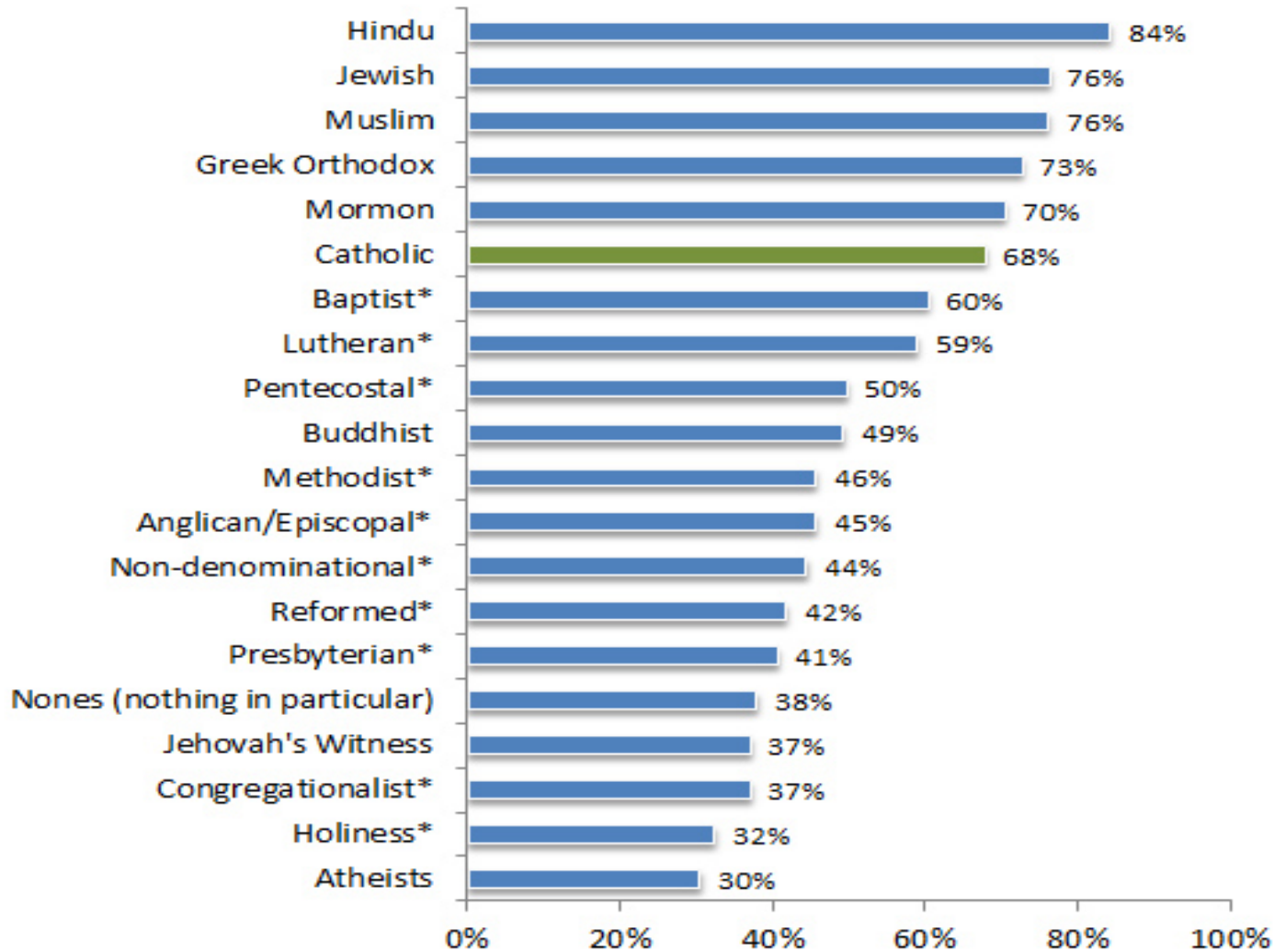


U.S. Catholic Populations, 2013



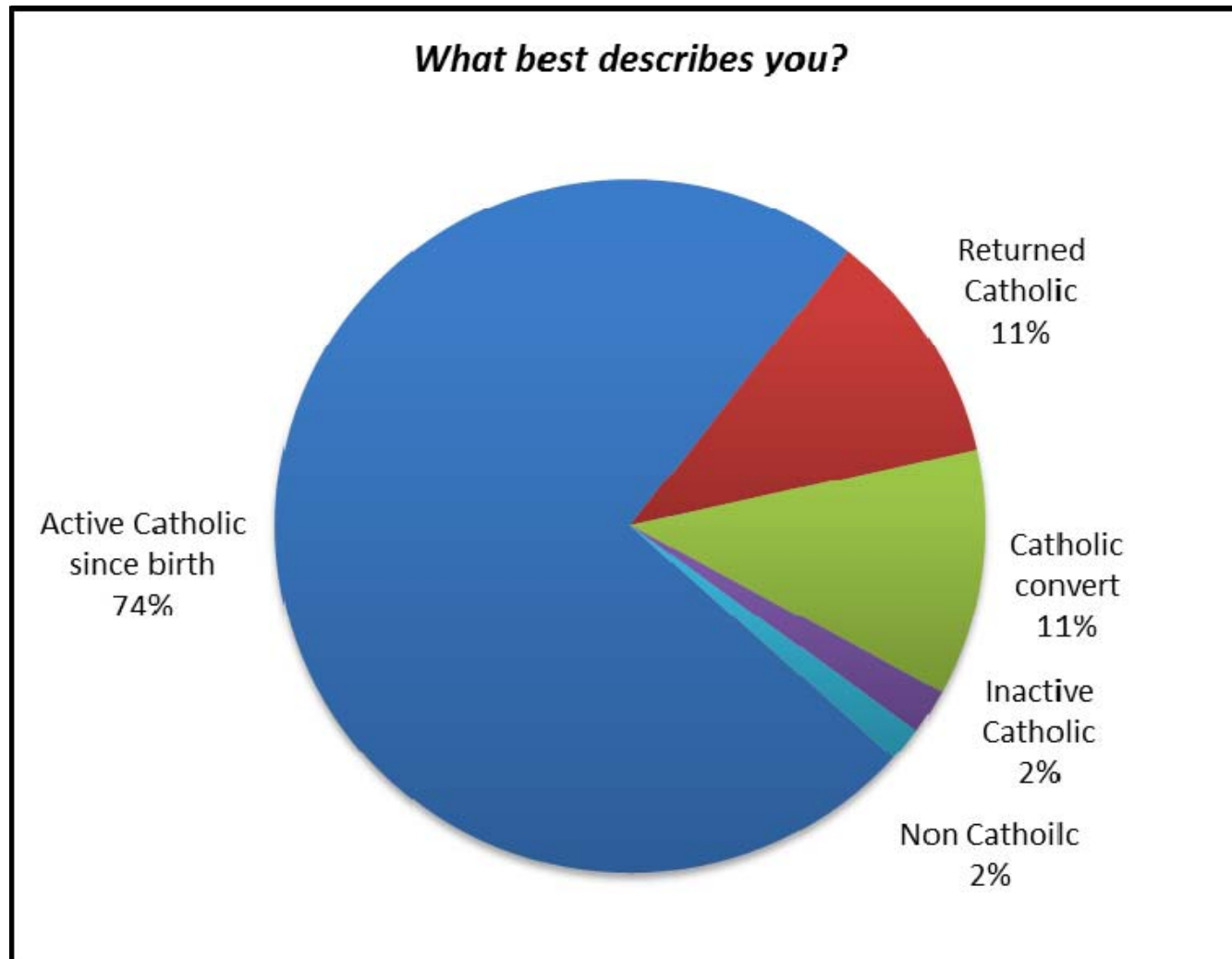
Source: Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA), Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life

U.S. Religious Retention Rates: Percentage of those raised in a faith who remain affiliated with that faith as an adult



* are Protestant denominations. Source: Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life (2008), U.S. Religious Landscape Survey, weighted data, including all respondents in continental U.S., Alaska, and Hawaii.

Catholics in the Pews



Source: CARA/Emerging Models of Pastoral Leadership in-pew surveys

Self-reported Meaningfulness of the Catholic Sacraments

How meaningful for you are each of the Catholic sacraments listed below?
 This includes celebrating, receiving, or living the sacrament yourself
 or in witnessing someone else close to you experience this sacrament.
 Percentage responding "Somewhat" or "Very" meaningful

By Mass Attendance

	Weekly or more	Less than weekly but at least once a month	A few times a year or less
Baptism	99%	96%	80%
Eucharist/Holy Communion	98	97	73
Marriage	97	97	83
Confirmation	97	96	72
Anointing of the Sick	97	88	66
Holy Orders/Ordination	93	84	57
Reconciliation/Confession	90	80	51

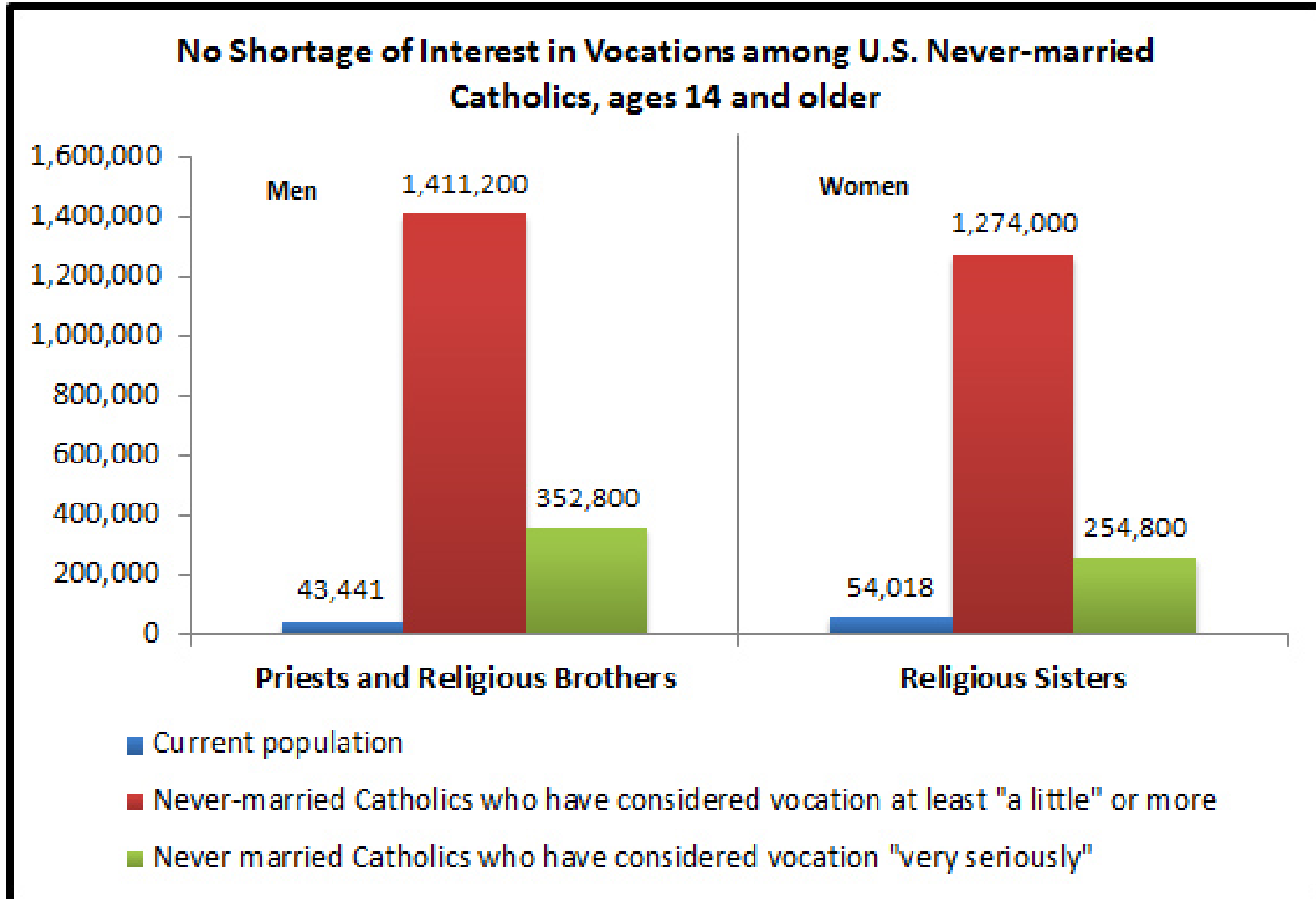
Source: *Sacraments Today: Belief and Practice among U.S. Catholics*, 2008.

What are we learning?

- We need to be attentive to “who is Catholic?”
- While many “fall away” from the Church, many also return to the Church.
- The challenge of high self-identification as Catholic, yet low participation and engagement with the Church.

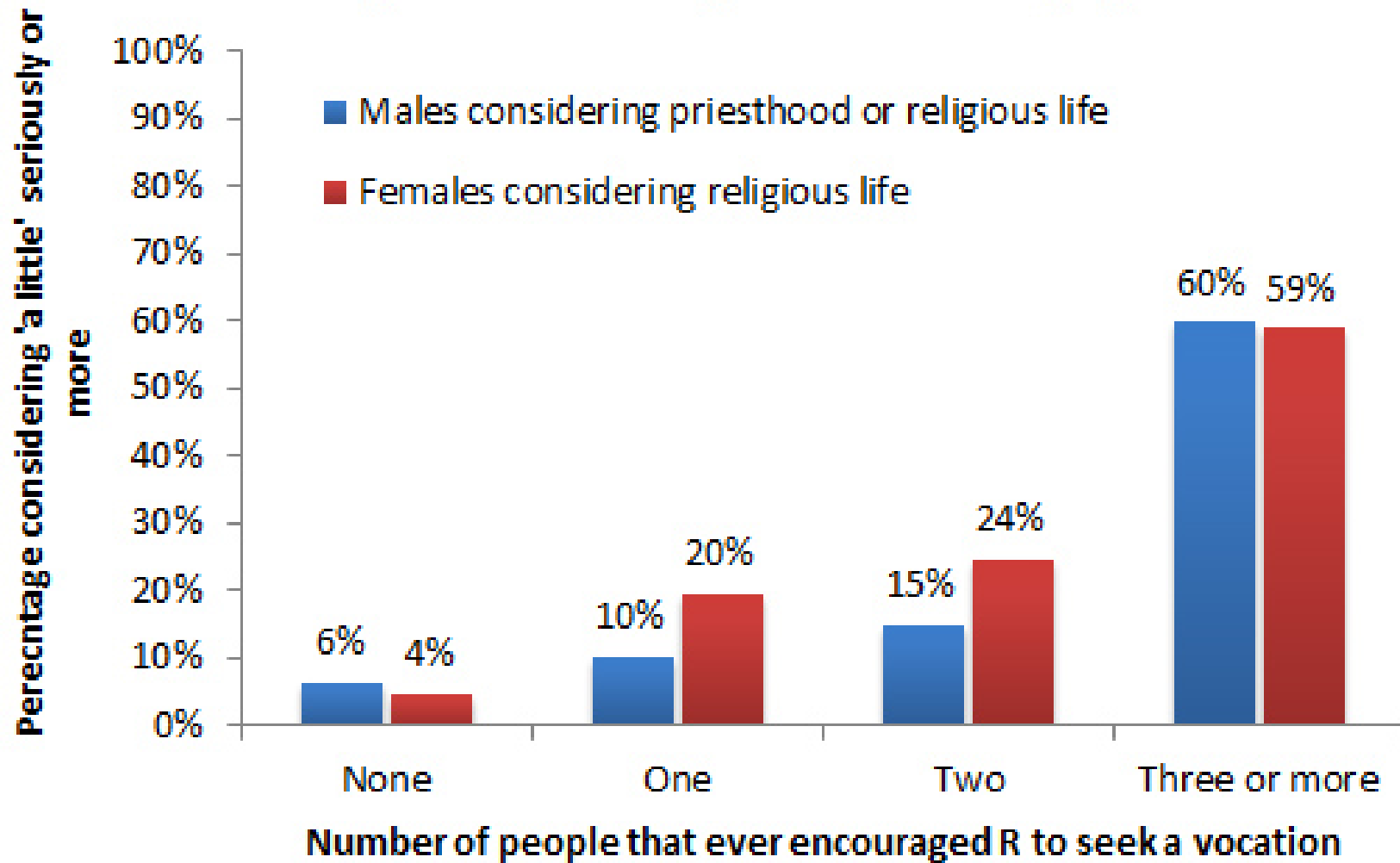
Vocational Consideration and Influences





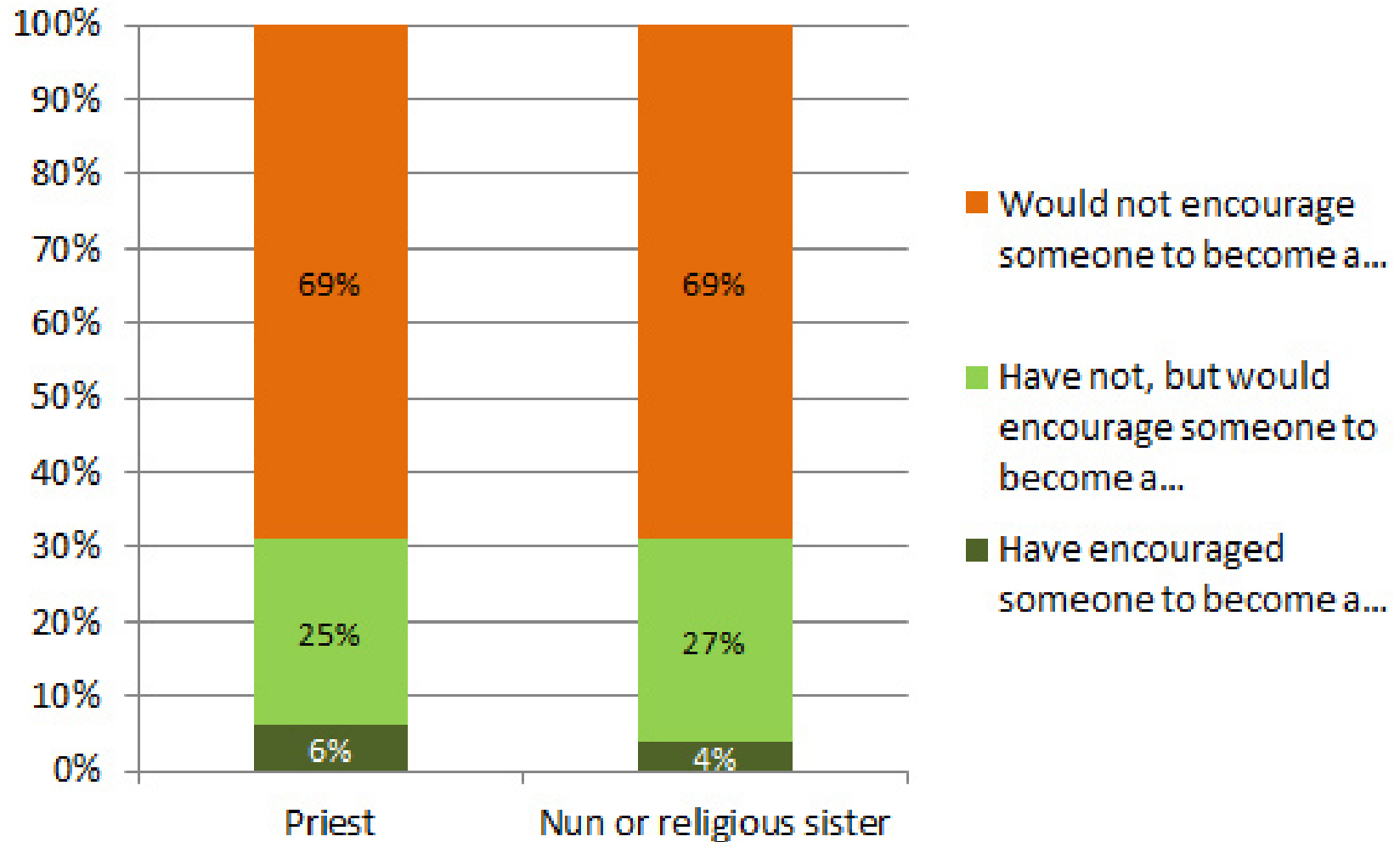
Source: *Consideration of Priesthood and Religious Life Among Never-Married U.S. Catholics, 2012.*

Consideration of a vocation among never-married U.S. Catholics ages 14 and older by number encouraging them



Source: *Consideration of Priesthood and Religious Life Among Never-Married U.S. Catholics, 2012.*

U.S. Adult Catholics' Willingness to Encourage Vocations



Source: *Sacraments Today: Belief and Practice among U.S. Catholics, 2008.*

Educational Background of Seminarians, Men in Religious Formation and Recently Ordained

Type of High School Attended Percentage in each category:	
	All
Public	53%
Catholic (religious)	22
Catholic (diocesan)	16
Catholic (independent)	8
Private (non-Catholic)	3

Type of College Attended the Longest Percentage in each category:	
	All
Public	40%
Catholic	39
Private (non-Catholic)	12
College Seminary	8

The Influence of College Experiences on Vocational Discernment to Priesthood and Religious Life (2013)

Influence of College Personnel on Vocational Discernment

Percentage in each category:			
	All	Type of College Attended the Longest:	
		Non-Catholic	Catholic
"Yes," a priest/sister/brother professor had a "significant positive influence" on vocational discernment	64%	46%	72%
"Yes," a priest/sister/brother campus minister had a "significant positive influence" on vocational discernment	56	55	57
"Yes," a campus minister encouraged vocational discernment	51	46	59
"Yes," a campus minister discouraged vocational discernment	5	3	7
"Yes," a professor encouraged vocational discernment	46	25	72
"Yes," a professor discouraged vocational discernment	12	12	13
"Yes," a college staff member encouraged vocational discernment	30	14	50
"Yes," a college staff member discouraged vocational discernment	7	7	7

The Influence of College Experiences on Vocational Discernment to Priesthood and Religious Life (2013)

Influence of College Roommates and Friends on Vocational Discernment

Percentage in each category:			
		Type of College Attended the Longest:	
		All	Non-Catholic
Roommate at college had “very much” influence on discernment	10%	6%	15%
Close friends at college had “very much” influence on discernment	28	22	37
College friends were “very” supportive of vocational choice	56	46	69
“Yes,” friends encouraged vocational discernment during college	72	63	84
“Yes,” friends discouraged vocational discernment during college	26	26	27

Vocations Among Former Volunteers

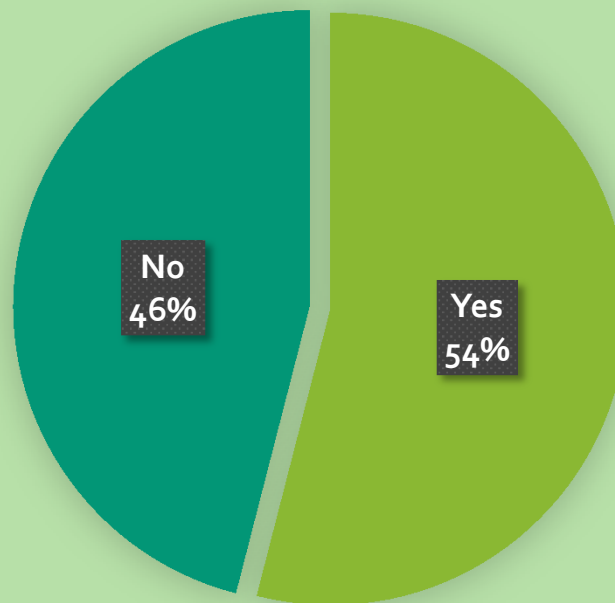
Are you...?

Percentage of Male Catholic Volunteers responding

...an ordained priest/minister in your church/religious congregation	3.9%
...an ordained deacon	1.5%
...a religious order brother	2.3%
...a seminarian/studying for ordination	3.7%

Have you considered a vocation to ordained ministry or religious life?

Percentage of Male Catholic Volunteers responding



Source: *A Survey of Former Volunteers of the Catholic Volunteer Network, 2013*

What are we learning?

- A vocation to priesthood or religious life is seriously considered by hundreds of thousands of young adults. What is often missing is the “space for discernment” and an encouraging context.
- A year of volunteer service is often a key element of a person’s vocational decision.

“Complaining never helps us find God.”



Website: CARA.Georgetown.edu

Facebook: [CARA Parish Surveys](#)

Twitter: [@CARACatholic](#) [@ParishSurveys](#)

Blog: Nineteensixty-four.blogspot.com

CARA data sources cited here:

- *Consideration of Priesthood and Religious Life Among Never-Married U.S. Catholics (September 2012)*
- *Perspectives from Parish Leaders: U.S. Parish Life and Ministry (August 2012)*
- *Same Call, Different Men: The Evolution of the Priesthood since Vatican II, 2012.*
- *American Catholic Laity Survey, 2011*
- *The Changing Face of U.S. Catholic Parishes (July 2011)*
- *Sacraments Today: Belief and Practice among U.S. Catholics (April 2008)*
- *The Influence of College Experiences on Vocational Discernment to Priesthood and Religious Life (2013)*
- *Cultural Diversity in the Catholic Church in the United States (August 2013)*
- *Official Catholic Directory*
- *A Survey of Former Volunteers of the Catholic Volunteer Network (August 2013)*



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