

Growing Our Engaged Church

GALLUP SURVEY RESULTS

DEAR PARISHIONERS,

OVER THE LAST TWO YEARS, Saint Clement Parish leadership has focused on growing parishioner engagement, defined as “a deep sense of belonging that impacts the way people live their faith.” These efforts are based on a book and program developed by the Gallup Corporation titled *Growing an Engaged Church: How to Stop Doing Church and Start Being the Church Again*.

Research shows that as people experience a deeper connection to their parish community they are more likely to deepen their spiritual life, increase their life satisfaction, and become more willing to share their talents and gifts in service to others. Measuring the level of parishioner engagement has proven to be a valuable tool to assist parishes in evaluating ways to fulfill their mission, as well as provide a basis for future planning.

For three weeks in May and June, Saint Clement parishioners and guests were invited to complete a *Membership Engagement Survey* (ME²⁵), developed by Gallup, to measure our current level of parish engagement. Thank you to the 994 participants who completed the survey either online or by hand.

On June 16, Susie Banta, a Gallup consultant, hosted an Impact Planning Session for the Parish Council, Stewardship Council, Engagement Committee, and parish staff. This group met for four hours to discuss the survey results and implications. Later that evening, Ms. Banta presented an overview of the survey results to approximately 35 parishioners in Fireside Hall.

The survey measured both “Member Engagement” and “Spiritual Commitment.” Saint Clement scored *slightly higher* than average Catholic parishes in the Member Engagement category, and *slightly lower* in the Spiritual Commitment category. Detailed results from the survey are included in this brochure.

Also included are our action plans for deepening your spiritual experience at Saint Clement. The parish leadership and I look forward to working with you to further grow our parish focus to *Pray.Serve.Give*.

In prayer,



Fr. Ken Simpson

September, 2011

SAINT CLEMENT MISSION STATEMENT

- **Rooted** in the richness of the Catholic tradition, Saint Clement is a welcoming, respectful, and vibrant parish community, on a common journey toward holiness.
- **Empowered** by the liturgy, we worship together and deepen our faith in Jesus Christ through Sacraments, prayer, service, spiritual formation, and education.
- **Grateful** to God for our many blessings, we have a sacred responsibility to share our gifts, serve the common good, make a meaningful difference in people's lives and respond to the challenge to live the Gospel every day.



WHAT THE ME²⁵ MEASURES

The *Membership Engagement Survey* (ME²⁵) consists of 25 items: twelve that measure parishioner engagement; nine that measure individual spiritual commitment; and four outcome items about life satisfaction, inviting, serving and giving. The “Member Engagement” items indicate how strongly one feels a sense of belonging with a parish, while “Spiritual Commitment” items are individual and personal. Members who are highly engaged are more likely to be satisfied with the conditions of their lives and more often invite others to participate in parish events and worship. The same is true of members who are more spiritually committed. They are also more likely to volunteer more hours per week to help and serve others.

Areas in which we are strong:

- Our needs are being met and opinions count
- We are provided opportunities to learn and grow
- The mission of the parish encourages participation
- Spiritual life is important and we are committed to spiritual growth
- We speak words of kindness to those in need of encouragement
- We find inner peace because of our faith

Areas in which we need to grow:

- Clarifying and clearly communicating expectations (specifically around prayer, service, and giving)
- Regularly engaging in opportunities that allow us to do what we do best (service)
- Spending time in prayer every day, and bringing faith into every aspect of our lives (prayer)
- Talking about our own spiritual growth with one another
- Forgiving those who have hurt us deeply, and being willing to take unpopular stands because of our faith
- Giving generously of both time and money

KEY FINDINGS

Overall, Saint Clement scored *higher* than other Catholic parishes in the area of “Member Engagement,” and our survey results reflect a greater number of strengths within the parish than areas in which we need to grow. We have a lot to be proud of! We scored *lower* in the area of “Spiritual Commitment,” steering our focus to clear opportunities for growth in how we Pray.Serve.Give.

Given these findings, Gallop research tells us that the two areas in which we can have the greatest immediate impact are: 1) *clarifying and communicating expectations*, and 2) *helping parishioners do what they do best*. Directing our efforts in these two areas will positively impact the other areas of growth listed as well.

The survey results additionally reflected the following breakdown for St. Clement Church:

- 25% of parishioners are “Engaged”
- 53% of parishioners are “Not Engaged”
- 22% of parishioners are “Actively Disengaged”

DEFINITIONS

Engaged. These members are loyal and have a strong psychological connection to their parish. They are more spiritually committed, more likely to invite friends, family members and coworkers to parish events, and give more both financially and in commitment of time.

Not Engaged. These members may attend regularly, but they are not psychologically connected to their parish. Their connection to the parish is more social than spiritual. They give moderately but not sacrificially, and they may do a minimal amount of volunteering in the community. They are less likely to invite others and more likely to leave.

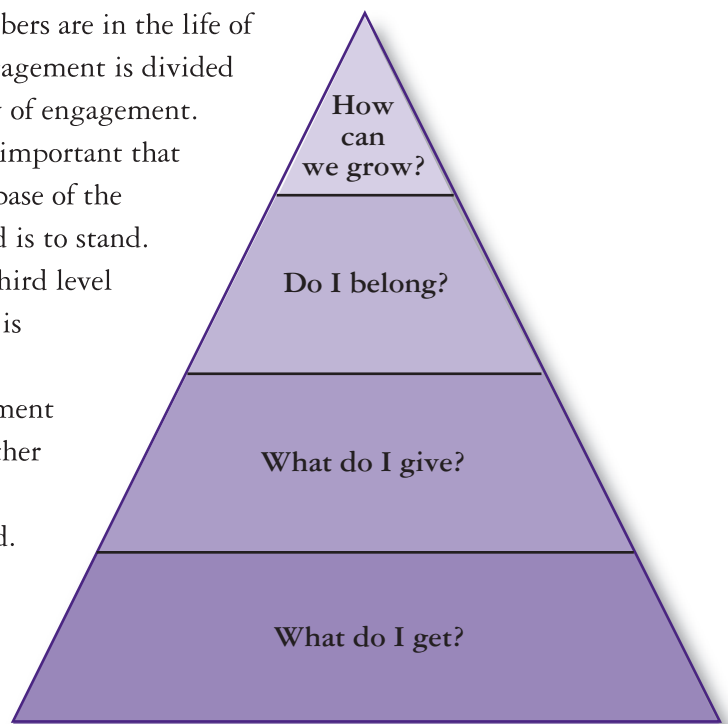
Actively Disengaged. These members usually show up only once or twice a year, if at all. They are on the membership rolls, and can tell you what parish they belong to—but may not be able to name the pastor. Others may attend church regularly and are physically present but psychologically absent. Some actively disengaged parishioners are unhappy with their parish and are very willing to share their unhappiness with others.

MEMBER ENGAGEMENT

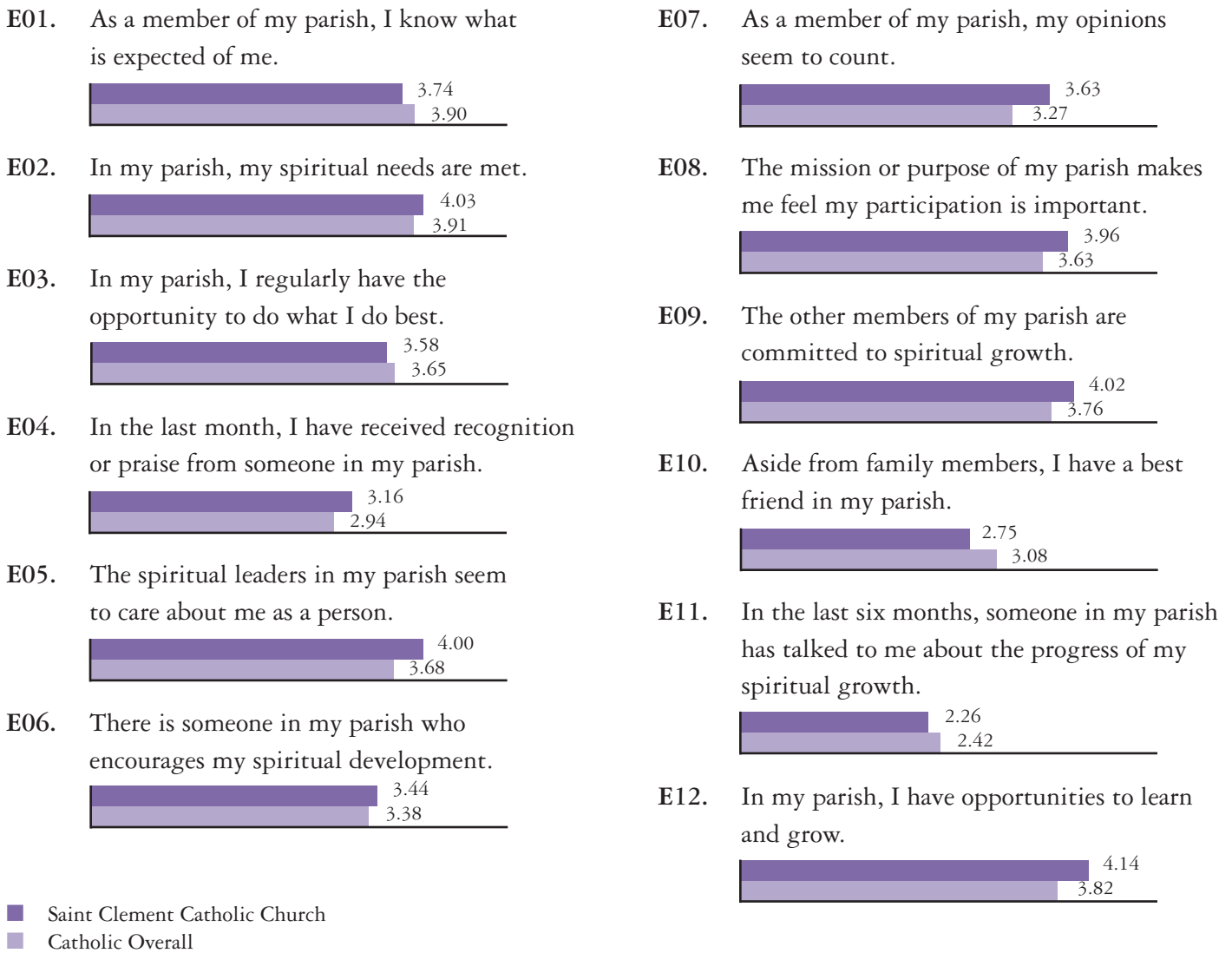
Survey items E01 through E12 measure how engaged members are in the life of the parish (see next page for list of engagement items). Engagement is divided into four areas, each building upon the other, in a hierarchy of engagement.

The first level is “What do I get?” (E01 and E02). It is important that these two items receive high scores, because they form the base of the pyramid. The base must be strong if the rest of the pyramid is to stand. The second level is “What do I give?” (E03–E06) and the third level is “Do I belong?” (E07–E10). The top level of the pyramid is “How can we grow?” (E11 and E12).

It is natural for new parishioners to fulfill their engagement needs at the base of the pyramid *before* they look to fulfill other needs. As parishioners move toward greater engagement, they will look to fulfill needs toward the top of the pyramid. Often, there is interplay between the items at various levels, and people identify and prioritize needs on different areas of the pyramid as their engagement level changes. The Engagement items are the most actionable items on the survey. Steps taken by the parish *and* the parishioner to improve scores on these items will have a positive impact on Spiritual Commitment as well.



MEMBER ENGAGEMENT ITEMS*

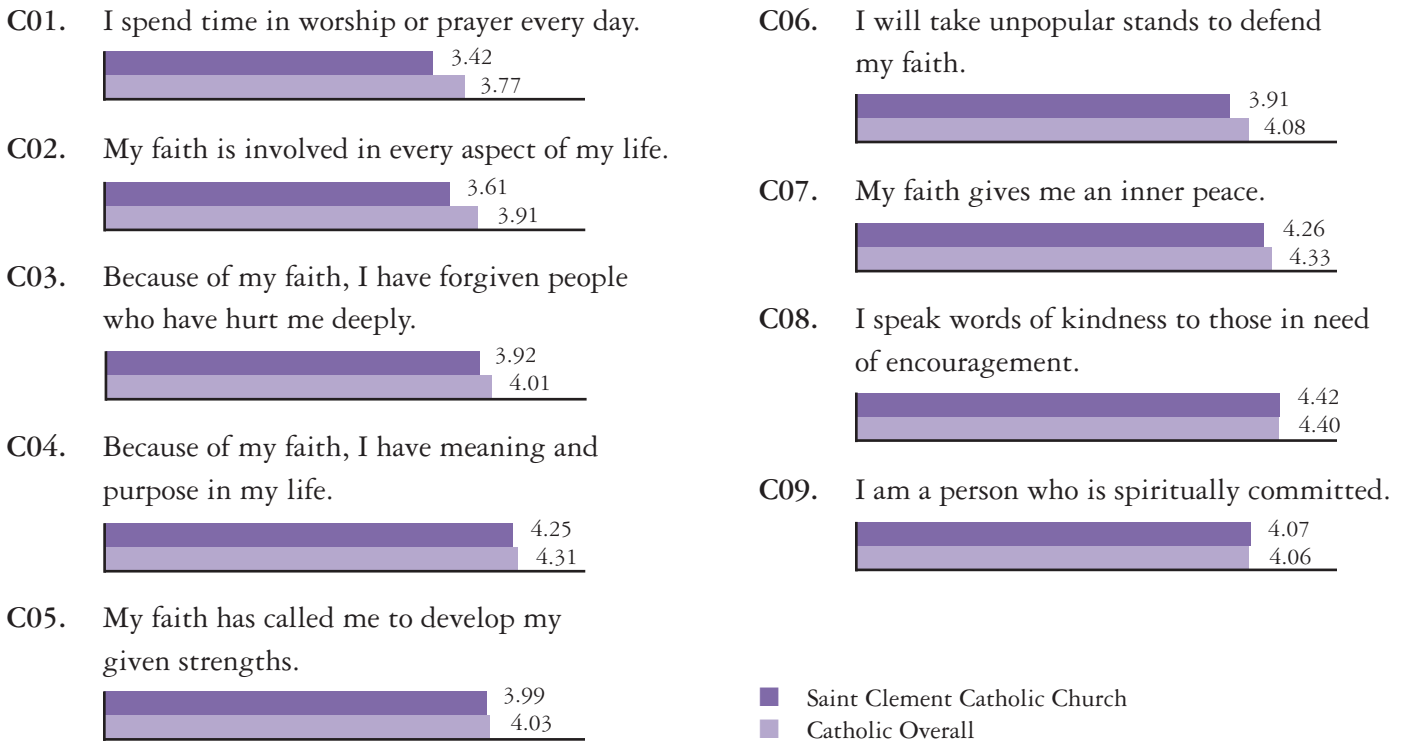


SPIRITUAL COMMITMENT

The real mission of a parish is to develop spiritually committed individuals. Items C01 through C09 measure a person’s spiritual commitment, in terms of both *attitudes* and *behaviors* (see next page for list of spiritual commitment items). Members of a parish with high scores on spiritual commitment and low scores on member engagement have limited ways to express and live out their spirituality in the midst of their parish. If the parish increases the level of engagement among these individuals, it will unleash a powerhouse of potential for fulfilling its mission. Likewise, a parish of highly engaged yet moderately committed members would do well to focus on the basics of expectations and meeting spiritual needs in order to increase the commitment level of its members, thereby dramatically increasing its potential.

*The numbers on bar graphs E01-12, C01-C9, and O1 and O2, relate how the participants responded to each statement. It is the average response on a 5-point scale, where “1” meant “strongly disagree” and “5” meant “strongly agree.” The numbers on bar graphs O3 and O4, and D1-D7, represent the percentage of respondents to each option.

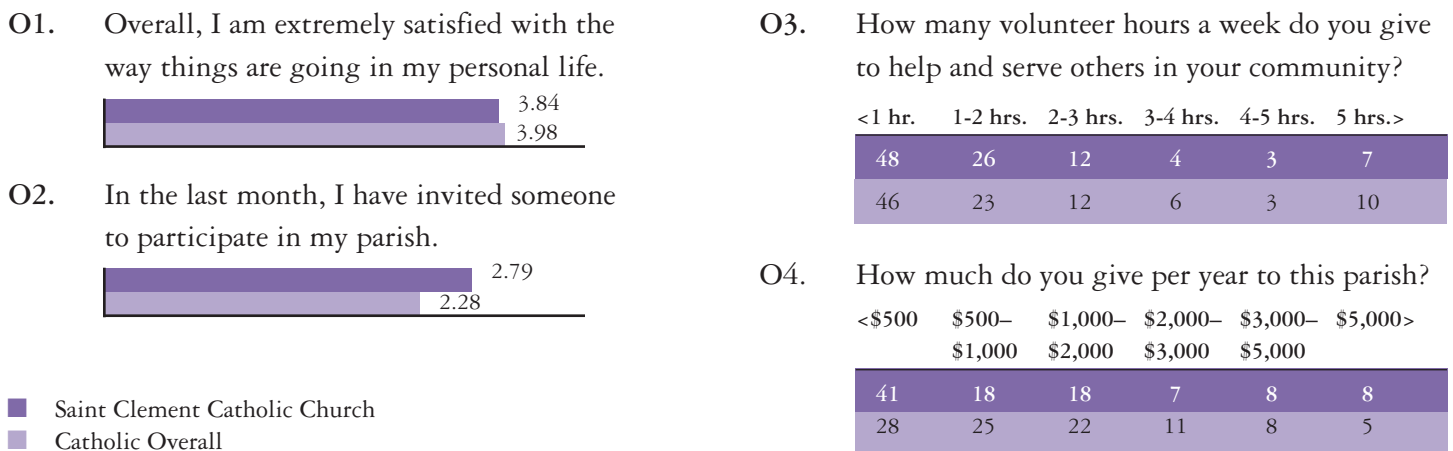
SPIRITUAL COMMITMENT ITEMS*



OUTCOMES

Questions O1 through O4 are the measurable outcomes of life satisfaction, inviting, serving, and giving. Strong engagement and commitment are more likely to lead to high scores on these four items; weaker engagement and commitment are more likely to lead to low scores.

OUTCOME ITEMS*



DEMOGRAPHIC ITEMS

D1. Did you attend Mass last week?

Yes	No
79	21
85	15

D2. How long have you been a member of this parish?

<1 yr.	1-3 yrs.	3-5 yrs.	5-10 yrs.	10 yrs.>
19	23	12	14	32
8	9	8	16	60

D3. What is your age?

18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+
8	34	22	16	10	7	3
6	8	22	24	18	22	0

D4. What is your gender?

Male	Female
42	58
40	60

D5. What is your marital status?

Single	Cohabitation	Married
41	6	47
11	1	75
Separated	Divorced	Widowed
0	4	2
1	5	7

D6. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

Less H.S. Grad	H.S. Grad.	Some College
0	1	4
4	19	20
Trade/Voc. Training	College Grad.	Post Work/Grad.
1	40	54
6	29	22

D7. What is your total annual household income, before taxes?

<\$10,000	\$10,00-20,000	\$20,000-\$30,000
6	2	4
5	6	7
\$30,000-\$40,000	\$40,000-\$60,000	\$60,000-\$75,000
6	14	9
8	15	12
\$75,000-\$100,000	\$100,000>	
10	49	
18	28	

- Saint Clement Catholic Church
- Catholic Overall

WHAT'S NEXT AFTER THE ME25 SURVEY

The Impact Planning Session held last June identified two specific areas that will lead to greater engagement and spiritual commitment. These are based on statements E01 and E03 of the survey:

E01. As a member of my parish, I know what is expected of me.

People who understand the privileges and responsibilities of membership feel more engaged, or connected, to a church community.

- What can I, as a registered member, expect to receive from Saint Clement Parish?
- What does Saint Clement Parish expect of me as a registered parishioner?
- What is expected of me as a member of my ministry?
- What can I expect to receive or experience from my role in this ministry?

Our survey reflects that many parishioners don't know what is expected of them, or what they can expect from the parish.

Action 1: The Engagement Committee and other parish leadership teams will organize focus groups and personal interviews to determine and communicate expectations for the parish as a whole, as well as for various ministries.

E03. In my parish, I regularly have the opportunity to do what I do best.

People are happier and more effective when they are doing what they do best. Often, a parishioner's comment is, "But I don't know what I can do best." Or, "I don't know if I have any talents for parish involvement."

Action 2. A pilot program will begin this fall where parishioners will have the opportunity to help them understand where their God-given talents and strengths lie, and how they can celebrate and use them effectively in their lives. This exciting program called "Guiding Parishioners' Strengths" (GPS) will be launched to the entire parish in early 2012. Parishioners will complete the Clifton StrengthsFinder® assessment and participate in discussion groups exploring their own unique God-given gifts. Participants will also develop ways to utilize their gifts to more fully become the best version of the person God created them to be.

We recognize that this information is complex and may be confusing, so if you have specific feedback, questions, or have a strong interest in furthering the momentum of this discussion, please contact the parish office at (773) 281-0371.

Now that the results are in, let the dialogue begin!



Pray.Serve.Give.

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