

DIOCESE OF JOLIET TARGETED RESTRUCTURING PROCESS PHASE 3



KEY PARISH LEADER MEETING #1
– August 20 & 21, 2024

Today's Agenda

DIOCESE OF JOLIET



Prayer

Introductions

Pastoral Accompaniment

Overview of the Targeted Restructuring process

National and Diocesan Landscape

Preparation for Parish Session #1

Questions

Closing Prayer



Eye has not seen, ear has not heard



Welcome & Introductions

PPOCs:

Please introduce
your parish team.



Catholic Leadership Institute



Our Purpose

Catholic Leadership Institute provides bishops, priests, religious, deacons, and lay persons in the Roman Catholic Church with world-class, pastoral leadership formation and consulting services that strengthen their confidence and competence in ministry, enabling them to articulate a vision for their local church, to call forth the gifts of those they lead, and to create more vibrant faith communities rooted in Jesus Christ.



Who We Serve



Your CLI Team



Rosemarie Banich, Project Lead
Gigi Escoe, Leadership Consultant
Heather Eichen, Client Service Coordinator

Parish Session Leadership Consultants

Peggy Pandaleon
Scott Staelgraeve
Maria Luby
Carla Molina
John Malloy

Pastoral Accompaniment

“Pruning” means ... change is coming. Change is difficult for people.



“At the end of the day, I do not want us to be viewed as a diocese that buried its head in the sand or kicked the can down the road. Instead, with deep faith in God, we need to prune some of the structural branches, so that our Church can continue to produce great fruit.”

Bishop Ron Hicks



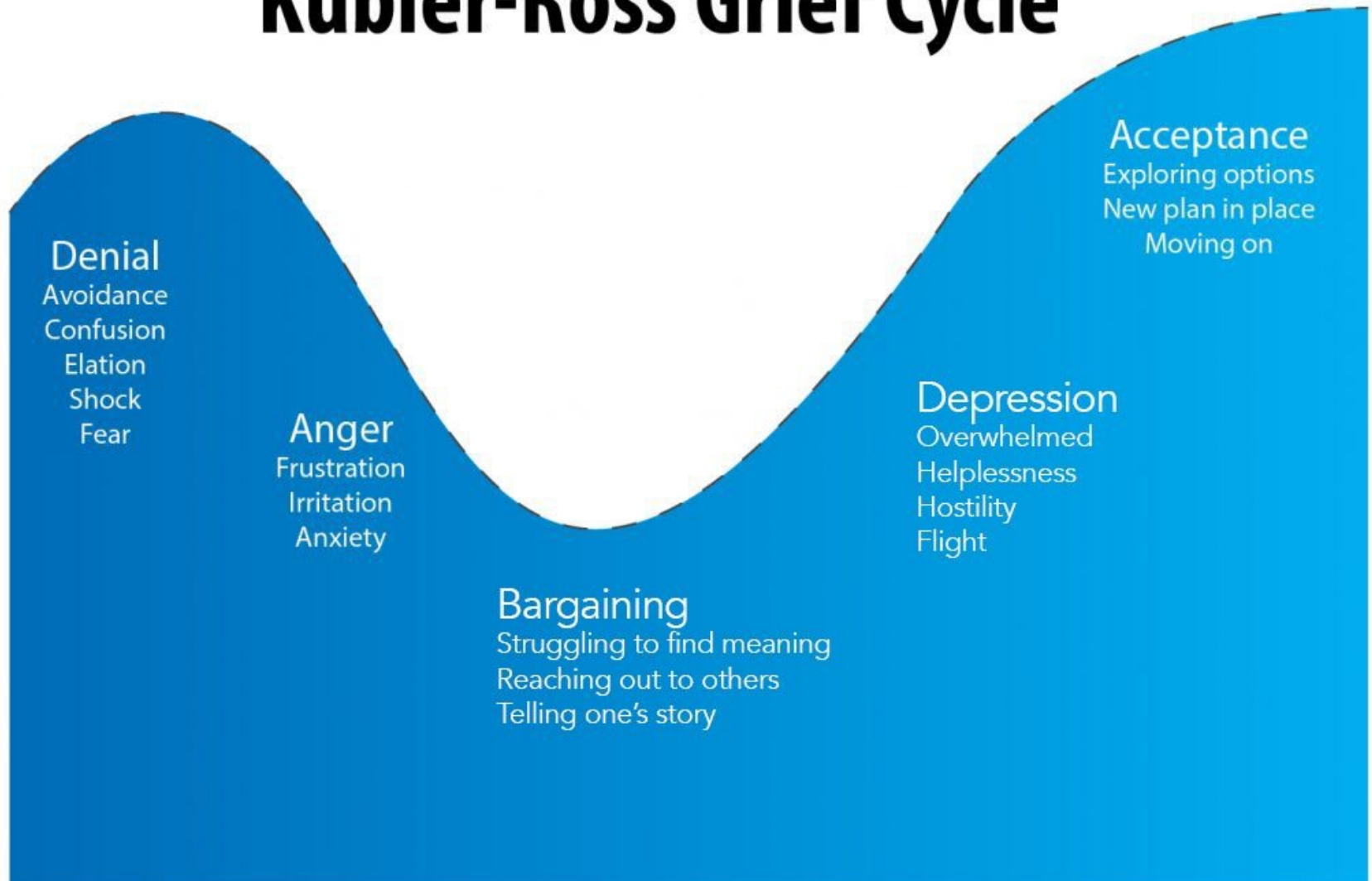
Coping with Grief and Loss



The Five Stages of Grief

Learning about emotions after loss can help us heal

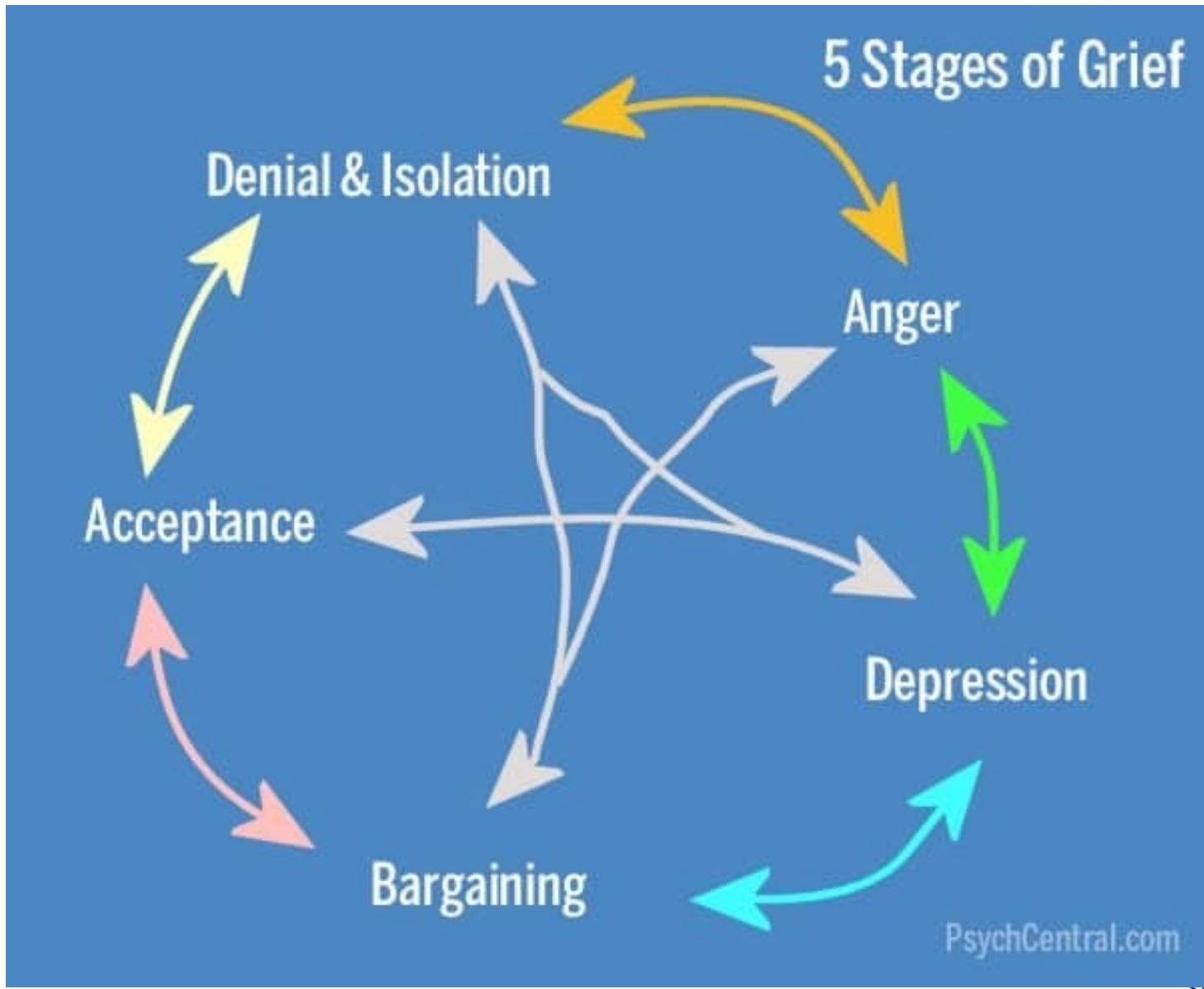
Kübler-Ross Grief Cycle



....stages of Grief

- Your journey might feel like you're all over the place, and that's okay
- The Five Stages of Grief aren't directions
- They're just a starting point to help you understand what you might be feeling as you go through a period of serious change in your life..





Stages of Grief



What questions or concerns are we hearing, or might we hear in our parishes as they anticipate change?



The Spirituality of Pastoral Accompaniment



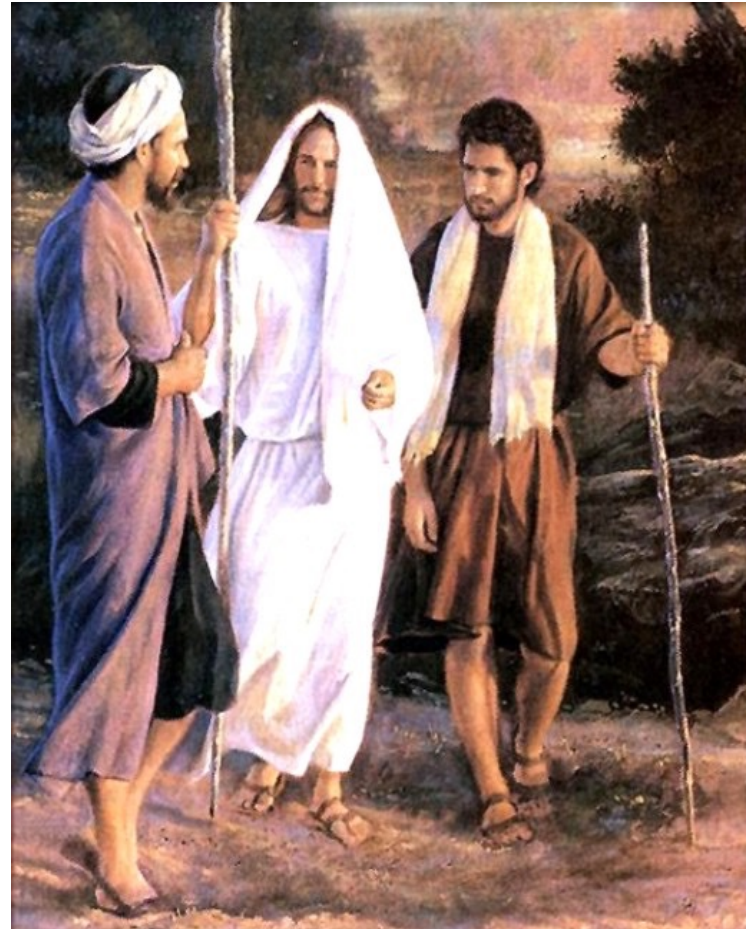
The Road to Emmaus
(Luke 24:13-35)



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"The pace of this accompaniment must be steady and reassuring, reflecting our closeness and our compassionate gaze which also heals, liberates and encourages growth in the Christian life."

-Evangelii Gaudium, 169.



Loving attentiveness and true concern for others are requirements of the Gospel and of our human condition.



“Someone good at such accompaniment does **not give in to frustrations or fears.**

He or she invites others to let themselves be healed, to take up their mat, embrace the cross, leave all behind and go forth ever anew to proclaim the Gospel.”

(Evangelii Gaudium, 172)





“We need to practice the art of listening, which is more than simply hearing. Listening, in communication, is an openness of heart which makes possible that closeness without which genuine spiritual encounter cannot occur.”

Evangelii Gaudium, 134



Listening with Empathy – Brene' Brown



Empathy is Feeling with People

Four Qualities of Empathy

1. Perspective taking
2. Staying out of Judgement
3. Recognizing emotion in other people...
4. And then communicating that.

Empathy is a choice- a vulnerable choice.



DO NOT

Minimize or Judge Someone's Emotions



Barriers to Empathy



Barriers to Empathy

“I am devastated about the closing of so many churches. A church holds so many memories. It is the place where people were baptized, where they got married and where they hoped their children would be married. This is awful.”

- ❖ **Interrogating** – “When did this begin?”
- ❖ **Advice Giving** – “Why don't you talk to him about it?”
- ❖ **Quick Fixing** – “Try looking online for another job.”
- ❖ **Consoling, Comforting, Reassuring** – “You'll do well.”
- ❖ **Agreeing** – “You're right. He's so arrogant!”
- ❖ **Disagreeing** – “I don't think he's arrogant. He's just under pressure.”
- ❖ **Philosophizing** – “She's now in a better place.”
- ❖ **Analyzing** – “Do you think you might be jealous?”
- ❖ **Sympathy** – “I know how you feel. I lost a sister, too.”
- ❖ **Minimizing** – “At least you didn't get hurt in the accident.”
- ❖ **"Awfulizing"** – “Oh, dear, that's terrible!”
- ❖ **Story Telling** – “This reminds me of a time when...”
- ❖ **One Upping** – “Wait till you hear what happened to me!”
- ❖ **Stealing the Lime Light** – “Yes. I'm going through the same. Last week...”
- ❖ **Judging** – “You shouldn't have done that.”
- ❖ **Shutting Down or Reassuring** – “Don't worry. Get a good night's sleep.”
- ❖ **Explaining** – “I wasn't feeling well. That's why I didn't make it.”

What people are feeling and saying.

“I am devastated about the closing of so many churches.

A church holds so many memories. It is the place where people were baptized, where they got married and where they hoped their children would be married. This is awful.”

Empathy and Barriers to Empathy

Validation and Hope

Toxic Positivity

This is hard. You've done hard things before and I believe in you.

You'll get over it!

I know there is a lot that could go wrong. What could go right?

Just be positive!

All feelings are welcome here. This is an emotional time for all of us.

Don't bring others down with your sad feelings.

It's normal to feel some negativity in this situation. Change is difficult.

Stop being so negative!

It's probably hard to be positive right now. I am praying for you and for all of us.

Just think happy thoughts.

Empathy and Barriers to Empathy

Validation and Hope

It's never fun to feel like that. Is there something we can do that might make this easier for you?

It may be hard to see any good in this situation. This is a process. We need to give it time.

Sometimes giving up or walking away seems like the only option. Take a break. Give yourself some time. See how you feel later.

Toxic Positivity

It's up to you to make yourself happy.

See the good in everything.

Never give up!

Methods of Active Listening

- REPEAT
- REPHRASE
- REFLECT ON THE FEELINGS
- NON-VERBAL RESPONSE
- VERBAL RESPONSES: VALIDATION AND HOPE

Active Listening Responses:

- **Repeat**
- **Rephrase**
- **Reflect on feelings**
- **Non-verbal response**
- **Verbal responses:
validation and hope**

*I am feeling so lost and confused.
I am a senior citizen who has difficulty
walking.
I am comfortable in my church. I know
how to get around there. I'm not sure
how I will do if I need to go to another
church.*



Active Listening Responses:

I am stressed out about the possible changes of involving my church. Many people in my ministry say that they will not continue participating if we must go to another church.

- **Repeat**
- **Rephrase**
- **Reflect on feelings**
- **Non-verbal response**
- **Verbal responses: validation and hope**



I haven't slept well during the last two weeks. I feel helpless. I worked hard to raise money for the church over the last few years. Despite all my efforts, I could not save the church. Life is not fair.

Active Listening Responses:

- **Repeat**
- **Rephrase**
- **Reflect on feelings**
- **Non-verbal response**
- **Verbal responses: validation and hope**



*I feel so sad.
I am afraid the changes I
am hearing about for our
churches will destroy
communities rather than
build up our faith
communities.*

Active Listening Responses:

- **Repeat**
- **Rephrase**
- **Reflect on feelings**
- **Non-verbal response**
- **Verbal responses:
validation and hope**



I feel so unhappy about plans for my beautiful church. My family has been coming here for 3 generations! It is very painful that my church must close -while other churches will remain open.

Active Listening Responses:

- **Repeat**
- **Rephrase**
- **Reflect on feelings**
- **Non-verbal response**
- **Verbal responses: validation and hope**



Break Time

Targeted Restructuring Process



From Bishop Hicks

- When I was installed as the bishop of the Diocese of Joliet two years ago, I was immediately inundated with statistics of too few pastors to cover too many parishes, especially as we project the numbers into the near future. I was also confronted with declining Mass attendance and budgetary issues, all exacerbated by the pandemic.
- Why, then, am I leading us into this targeted restructuring? It is because most of us want to see a Church that is focused on the mission of Jesus Christ and not on the preservation of our buildings. As missionary disciples, we should all desire a Church that is thriving, growing and following the Gospel. In other words, everything we do as a Church needs to be about the salvation of souls.



From Bishop Hicks, continued

- The phases of the restructuring are 1) Urgent; 2) in the next year; and 3) in two to three years.
- Once specific parishes and schools are informed they will be engaged in targeted restructuring, they will begin a process of preparation, assessment and discernment before final decisions are made or changes implemented. Please know we are committed to actively listening to the voices of the pastors, principals, parishioners, parish employees and volunteers.
- At the end of the day, I do not want us to be viewed as a diocese that buried its head in the sand or kicked the can down the road. Instead, with deep faith in God, we need to prune some of the structural branches, so that our Church can continue to produce great fruit.

The Mission of the Church

Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age. (Matt 28:19-20)



The Church's Mission is to Evangelize

To fulfill this mission, we need:

1. Holy, healthy and happy priests
2. Competent and committed pastoral and administrative staff
3. Lay people who are empowered and equipped to share the Good News
4. People of God actively worshiping, partaking of the sacraments, and participating in the life of their parish.



Targeted Restructuring Support Process: Desired Outcome

- To facilitate a process whereby the details of the Targeted Restructuring Process are shared with the people of the Joliet Diocese in a reflective, prayer-based and honorable way.
- To solicit and pass on feedback from the people of God to the Targeted Restructuring Committee.



Roles: Targeted Restructuring Committee

Clergy

- Most Rev. Ronald Hicks, Bishop
- Very Rev. Richard Smith, Vicar General
- Rev. Dennis Spies, Vicar for Clergy
- Very Rev. Greg Podwysocki, Judicial Vicar
- Very Rev. Dan Bachner
- Very Rev. Gregor Gorsic
- Very Rev. Chris Groh
- Very Rev. Doug Hauber
- Very Rev. Jason Stone
- Very Rev. Tom Paul
- Very Rev. Bill Dewan
- Very Rev. Matthew Pratscher
- Very Rev. John Sponder

Lay Members

- David Salvato, Chancellor
- Maureen Harton, Former Director of Implementation
- Mark Janus, Former Director of Parish Finances
- Mary Ann McLean, General Counsel
- Christopher Nye, Director of Buildings & Properties
- Dr. Jim Quaid, Superintendent of Schools
- Nikki Kanzia, Associate Superintendent of Schools
- Justin Reyes, Director of Catechesis & Evangelization
- Brian Schroeder, Chief Financial Officer



Phase 3 Parishes

Primary

Christ the King
Ascension of Our Lord
St. Alexander
St. John the Apostle
Christ the Servant
St. Boniface
St. Mary
St. Paul the Apostle
St. Liborius
St. Patrick
St. Mary Mission
St. Rose
Sacred Heart
St. Lawrence
Assumption
Immaculate Conception
St. Luke
St. Mark

Support

Our Lady of Peace
St. Scholastica
St. Pius X
Corpus Christi
Resurrection
St. Isidore
St. Michael
St. Daniel
Sacred Heart

Parish roles within restructuring

- Primary: these are parishes whose potential scenarios may include merging with other parishes to form a new parish, amalgamation of several parishes into one, or creation of a mission or chapel.
- Support: these are parishes that are geographically close to a primary parish and because they are serving neighboring or even overlapping communities, are in the position to offer spiritual and other support to the people of the primary parishes.



Roles: Pastors and Key Parish Leaders

1. Publicize and support the targeted restructuring process in your interactions so that as many people as possible can receive the invitation to participate in the process at your parish;
2. Participate in training sessions and key leader sessions;
3. Work with CLI Leadership Consultants to offer two (2) consultation sessions at the parish in order to inform parishioners about the planning initiative and engage them in providing feedback on future models of parish life;
4. Work with CLI Leadership Consultants to finalize draft scenarios for parishioner feedback, summarize feedback from the parish sessions, and prioritize scenarios, and/or discuss new alternatives that have emerged; and
5. Work with the CLI Leadership Consultants to draft recommendations for the Targeted Restructuring Committee based on feedback from parishioners.

Roles: Catholic Leadership Institute



FACILITATE
CONVERSATION



GATHER AND
SUMMARIZE
FEEDBACK



SEEK/PROVIDE
CLARITY FROM
DIOCESE



PROVIDE
PERSPECTIVE FROM
THE LARGER CHURCH



Timeline

Key Leader Meeting #1	August 20 and 21
Key Leader Meeting #2	September 17 and 18
Parish Session #1	September 28-October 12
Key Leader Meeting #3	October 22 and 23
Parish Session #2	November 2-9
Key Leader Meeting #4	November 13-14
Targeted Restructuring Committee Meetings and recommendations submitted to Bishop Hicks	November 25-December 9
Bishop Hicks announces restructuring plans	Winter 2025

Break Time

Key data considerations of the Restructuring Committee

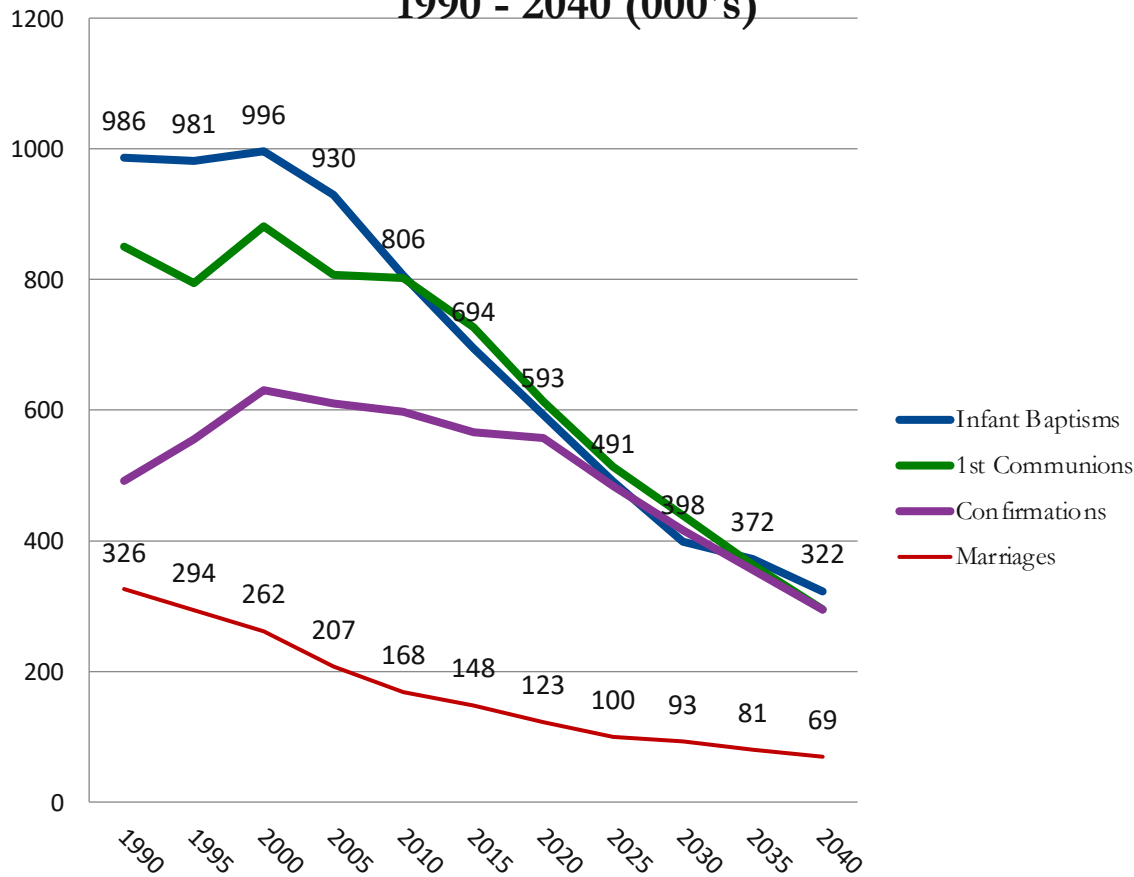
Multiple factors including but not limited to

- Data points on priests and seminarians
 - Sacramental numbers
 - Mass counts
- Average number of seats occupied at weekend masses
 - Demographic data and trends
 - Parish finances
 - Parish facilities' assessments.



The people shortage is greater than the priest shortage

**U.S. Catholic Church Sacramental Forecast
1990 - 2040 (000's)**

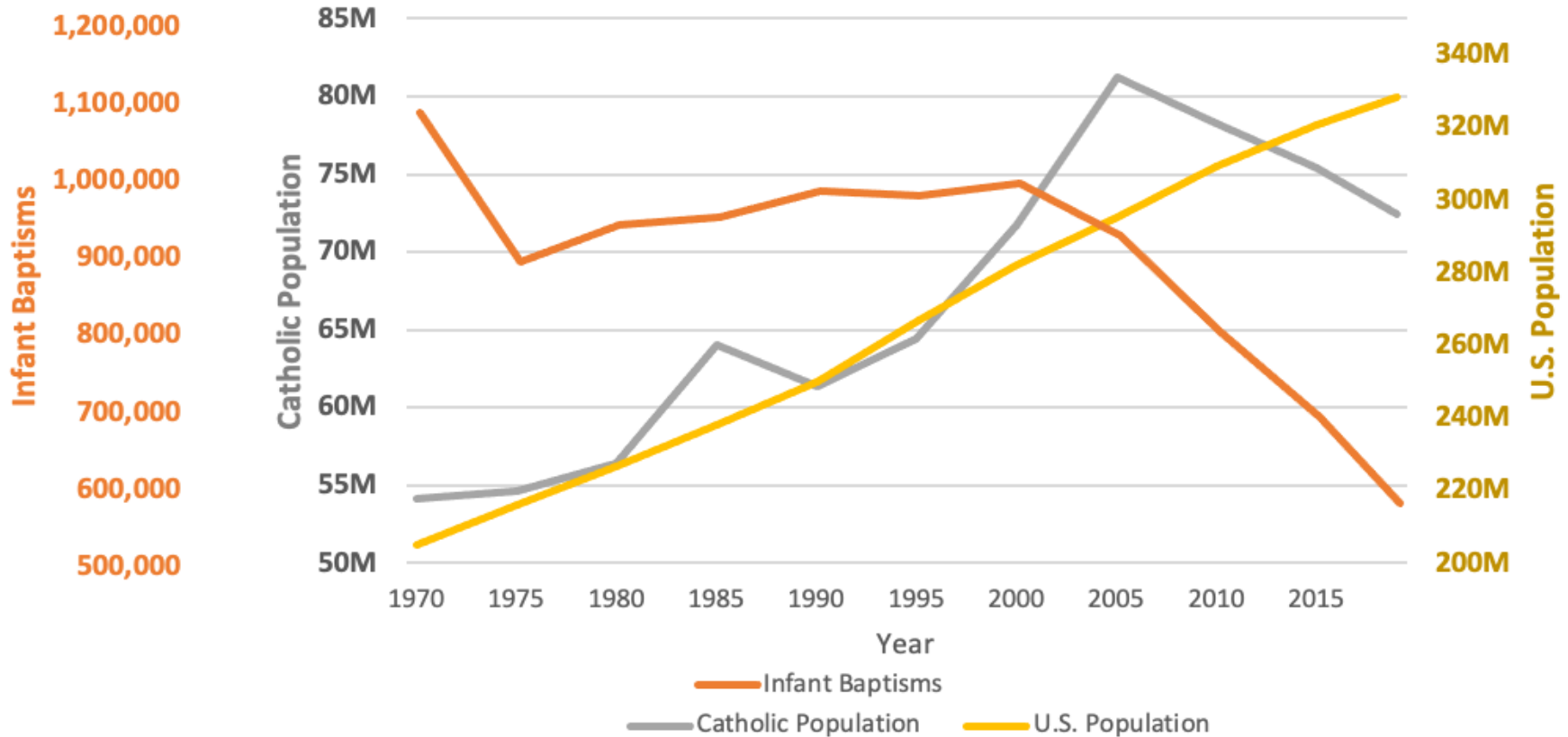


- Catholic marriages are down 55% since 1990
- 1 in 5 children baptized do not receive 1st Holy Communion.
- 2 in 5 children baptized do not receive Confirmation.
- 85% of children confirmed stop practicing their faith by age 21.



Baptisms are down sharply

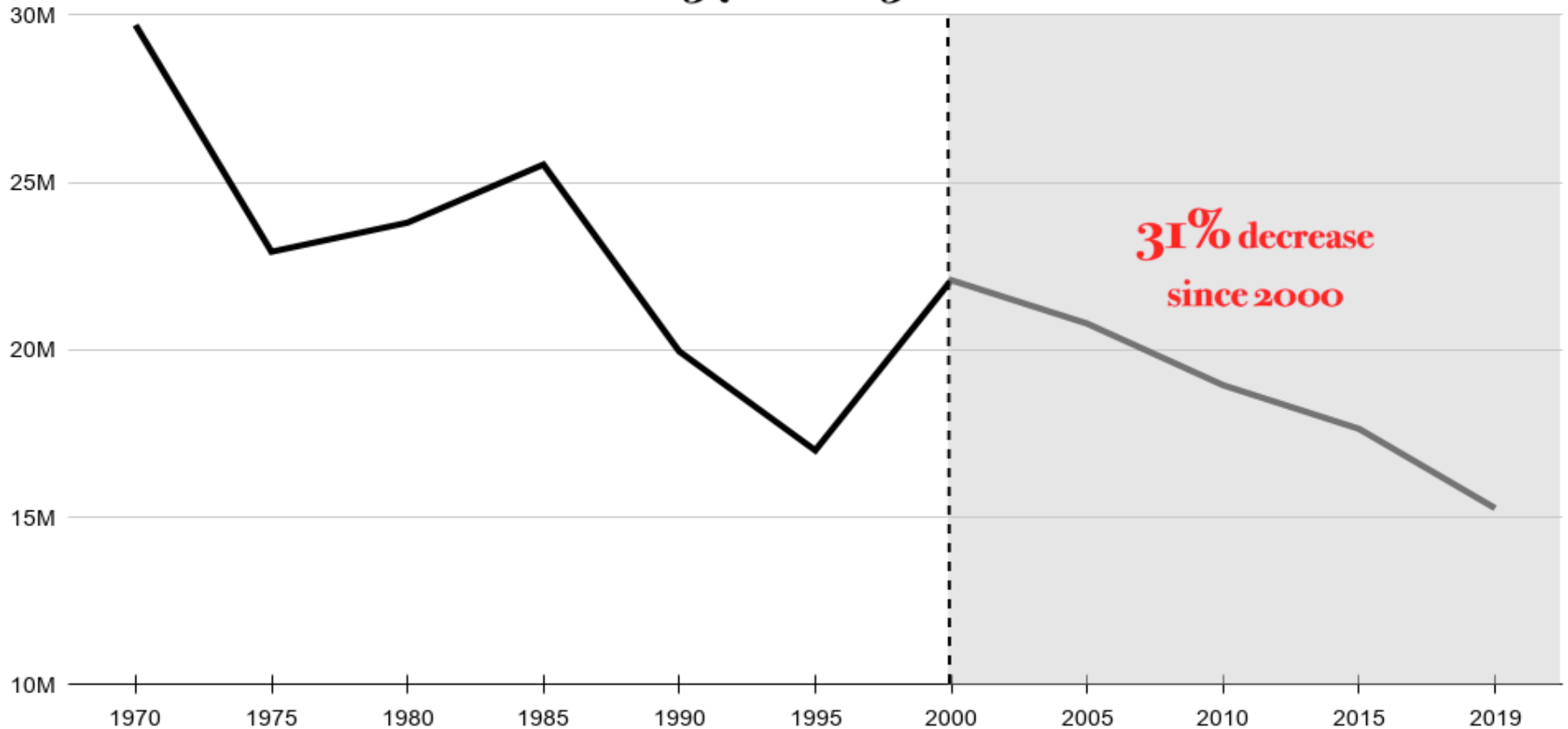
U.S./Catholic Population Compared to Infant Baptisms 1970-2019



Source: Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate

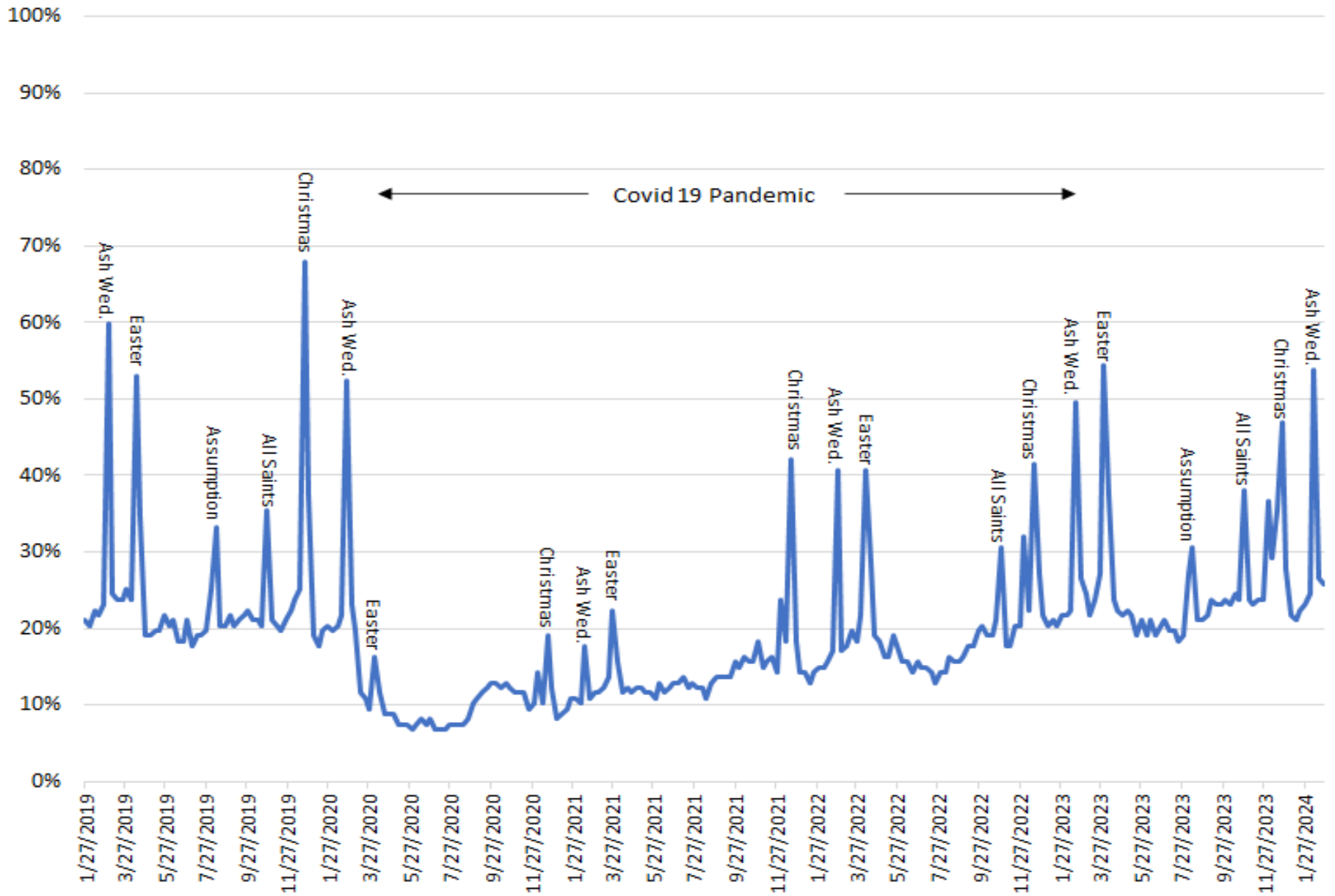
Weekly Mass Attendance Down

Catholics Attending Mass Every Week - U.S. Catholic Church 1970-2019



Source: Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate

Estimated % of Catholics Attending Mass in the U.S., per Week, 2019-2024 (pre-Easter)



Sources: CARA Catholic Polls, Google Trends

Compared with pre-pandemic levels, religious attendance rates reported by Americans have declined slightly

% of U.S. adults who say they attend religious services monthly or more

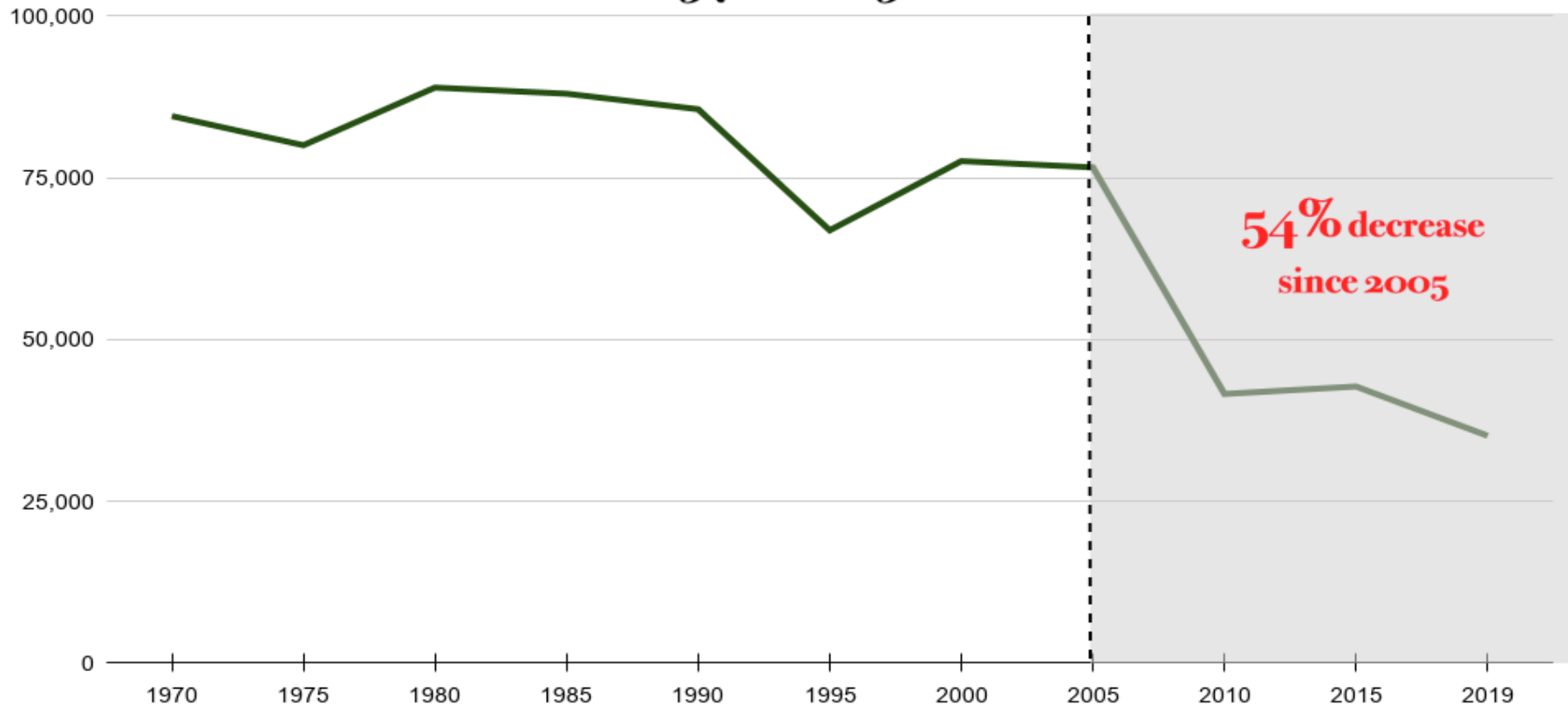
	2019	2022
	%	%
All U.S. adults	33	30
Christian	49	43
Protestant	53	46
<i>White evangelical Protestant</i>	63	58
<i>White Protestant, not evangelical</i>	31	28
<i>Black Protestant</i>	61	46
Catholic	37	34
Jewish*	26	23
Religiously unaffiliated	3	4
Republican/lean Rep.	40	37
Democrat/lean Dem.	27	22
Ages 18-29	24	20
30-49	32	28
50-64	35	32
65+	44	41

* These surveys included 133 interviews with Jewish respondents, with an effective sample size of 78 and a 95% confidence level margin of error of plus or minus 11.1 percentage points. This margin



Adult Baptisms Down

Adult Baptisms - U. S. Catholic Church 1970-2019

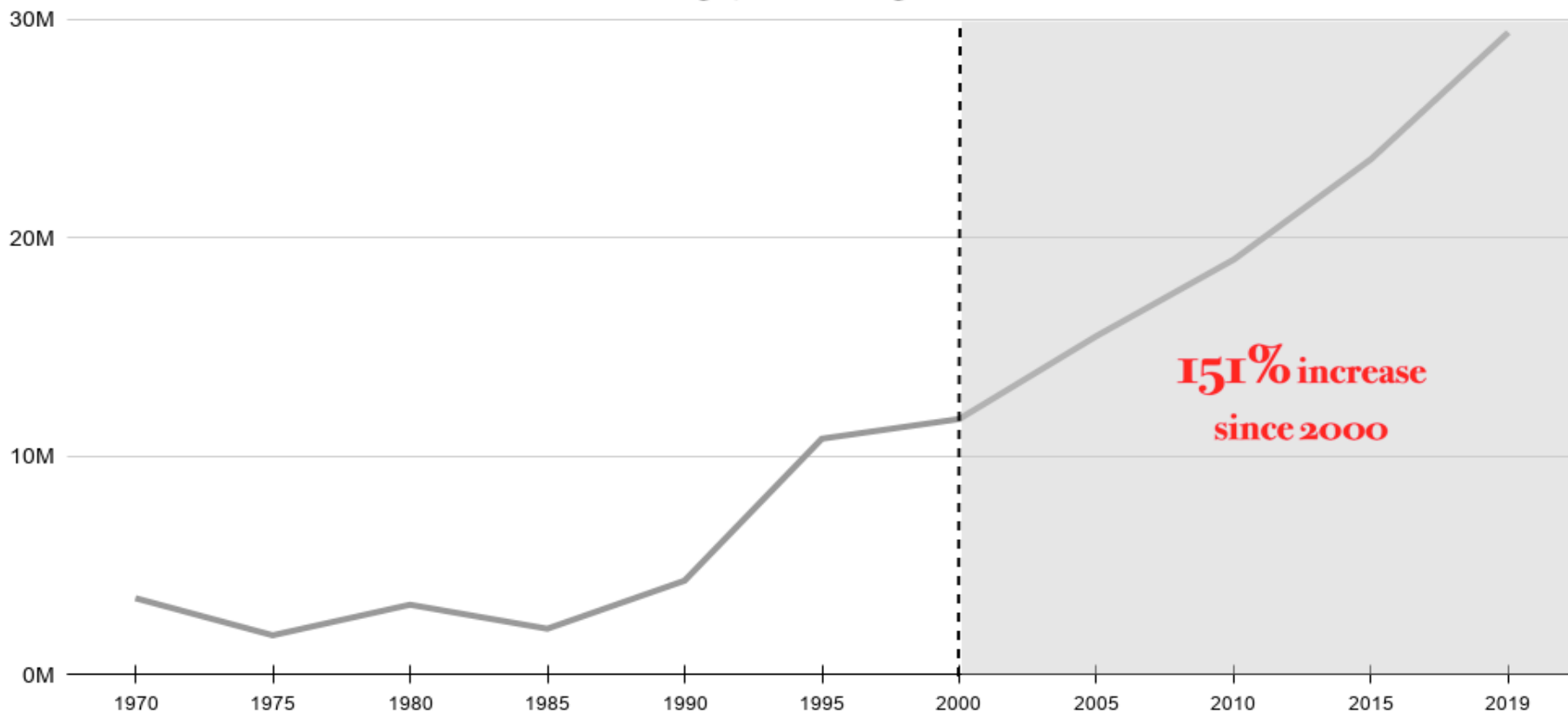


Source: Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate

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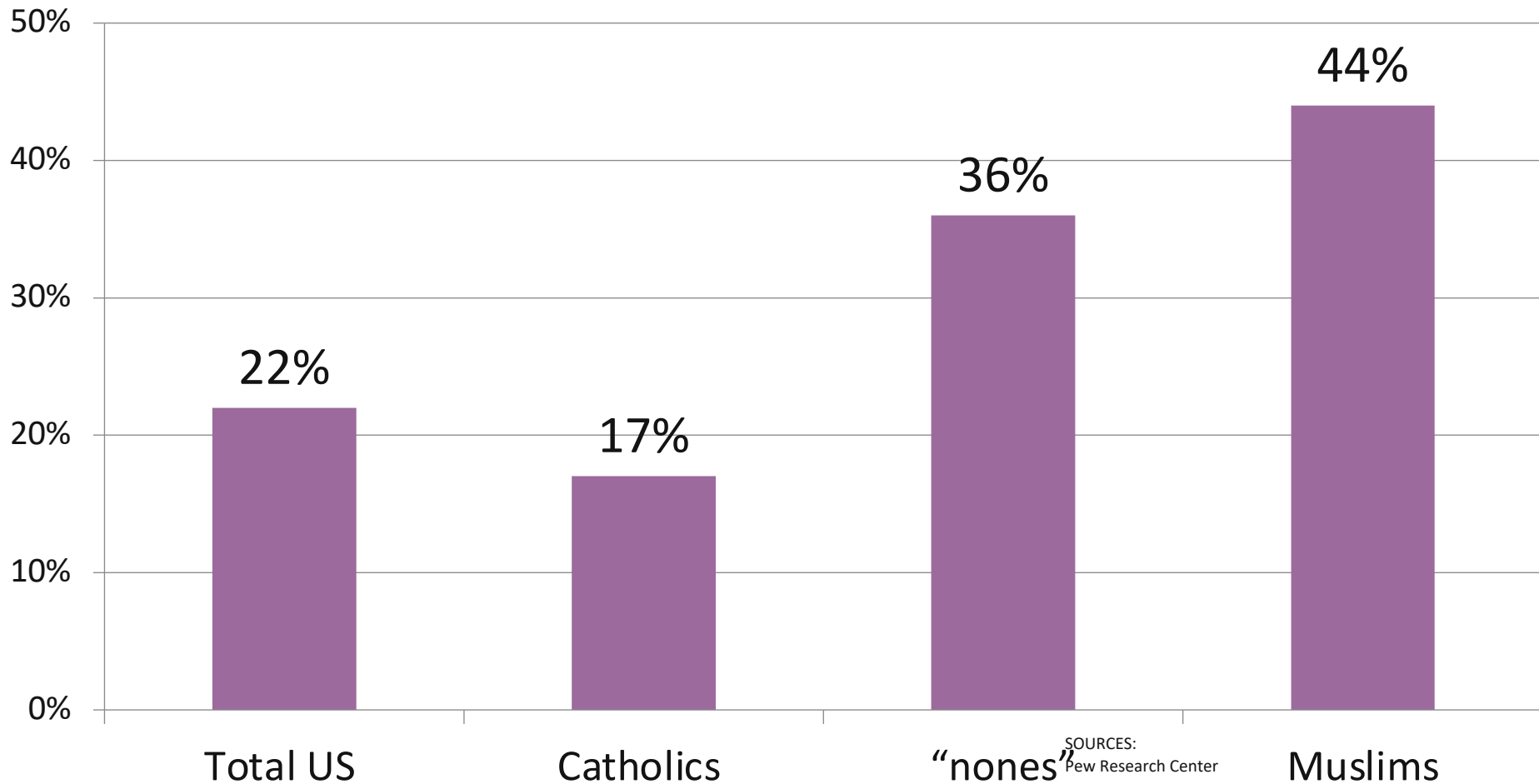
Former Catholics Up

Number of Former Catholics in the United States 1970-2019



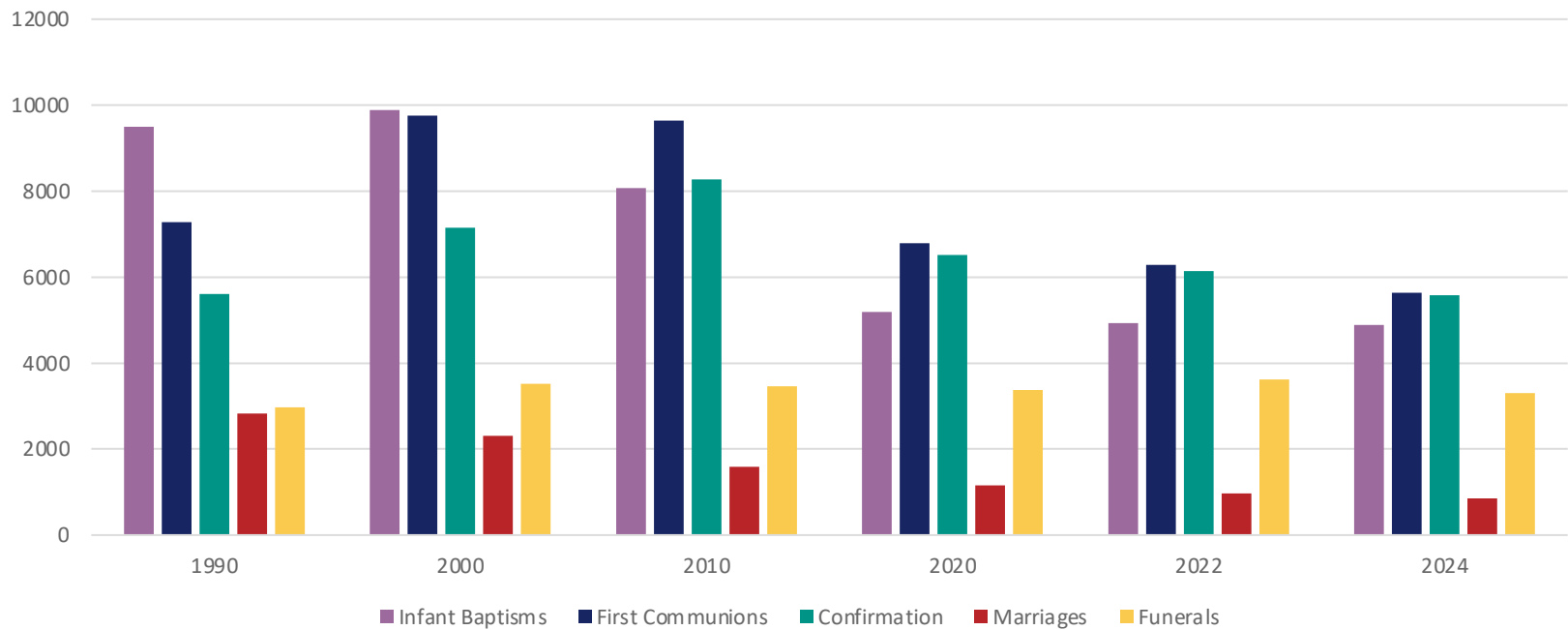
Source: Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate

% of Population Under Age 30

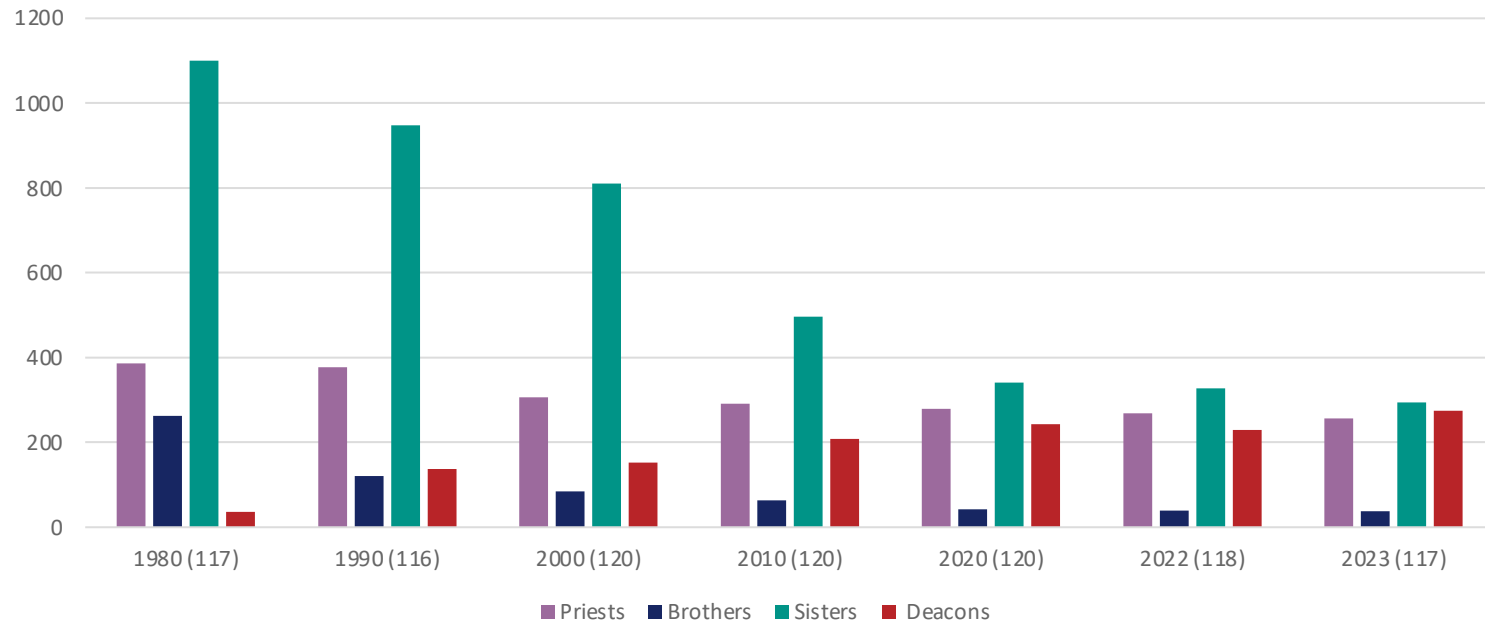


Diocesan Data and Trends, Part 1

Sacraments in the Diocese (reported for 1990-2024)



Religious in the Diocese (1980-2023)



Numbers in parentheses indicate the number of parishes included in the diocese for a given year.



PRIESTS AND SEMINARIANS-2024 DATA

Current Data

- Total number of diocesan priests: **155**
- Total number of active diocesan priests ages 65-69: **14**
- Total number of active diocesan priests ages 70+: **7**
- Since 2021, **18** diocesan priests have died.
- There are currently **27** men in seminary formation.
 - Expecting 2 ordinations in 2025; perhaps 4-5 in 2026.

Trends

- Between 2022 and 2024 we experienced a loss of **12.4%** in the number of active diocesan priests (22 priests)
- **24%** fewer active diocesan priests today than in 1970
- **66.3%** fewer order priests today than in 1970

Parish Mass Attendance Data (Refer to Handout)

The range of weekend Mass attendance (registered parishioners/Mass count) is from

79.30 % to 9.40 %

The average percentage attendance is 27.4%.



Range of Experiences in Phase 3 Parishes

- Number of Parishioners in your parishes range from 238 to 3002
- Number of Weekend mass attendees range from 65 to 760

We will continue to share data with you throughout this process

- Key Parish Leader Session 2 will include more parish level data, including sacramental data, population trends and financial data.
- Today we have provided you with a handout with a bit more detail on the data shared at this meeting.



Parish Session #1

DIOCESE OF JOLIET



- Prayer and reflection as a parish.
- Framing the restructuring process in the context of the Church's mission to evangelize.
- Understanding the current parish landscape and parish situation.
- Allow for small group conversation about the data presented and capture their reactions and questions.



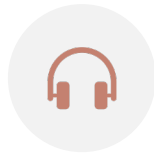
Preparing for Parish Session #1



2 hours



Location



Audio Visual
Needs



Handouts



Hospitality



Questions?



Closing Prayer

O God, you called Saint Bernard to work tirelessly for your glory in his own community and in the Church at large. Fill us with his zeal, that we may serve you faithfully in all the works to which you have called us, but especially in the work of living holy lives according to the Gospel, through our Lord Jesus Christ, you Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. Amen.

