



Holy Spirit Catholic Church

Stewardship Survey Results and Findings

December 28, 2009

Summary Report:

This report summarizes the data provided by Holy Spirit parishioners in the Stewardship Survey that was conducted in November and December of 2009. Key findings are listed along with select responses that were representative of the feedback given. Raw data will also be made available upon request. One hundred five (105) individuals took at least a part of the survey. As a result, each question may have a different number of responders.

All respondents remain confidential and survey was tabulated by Church Development. If you have any questions about the survey or the findings, please contact Matt Schoenfeld, of Church Development at 913-710-5012 or Matt Jonas, Committee Chair 816-392-3546.

Key Findings:

1. The vast majority of parishioners feel prayer is the foundation of the church. Most people want to engage in prayer to support the campaign.
2. Based on the responses, there is not a good understanding of the spiritual and biblical basis for giving (e.g., several said, "I'll give if I get a tax refund").
3. Twenty-six percent (26%) of the respondents feel the financial condition of the church is strong. There is a high level of concern regarding the church's debt and how it affects its finances.
4. Email and bulletin announcements are the preferred source to receive information on volunteering. The ministry fair was well received; however, more follow-up is needed.
5. The majority of parishioners (57%) were supportive of the idea to ask for a gift of 2% of annual income.
6. Holy Spirit parishioners want more information about how church funds are spent, the overall financial condition of the church, and the biblical basis for giving. There was also a good deal of interest in being able to designate gifts to certain ministries.
7. Interest in serving on a stewardship drive committee was (11%).
8. Ten percent (10%) of the families who responded have remembered the church in their estate plan. Another 24% may have interest in this form of giving.
9. Forty-seven percent (47%) of respondents had interest in the church's online giving arrangement.

Summary of Survey Answers:

1. How should the role of prayer be included in this year's annual stewardship campaign?

(Parishioner's comments)

- The role of prayer should be included by compiling a prayer that the parish can recite at all masses helping every parishioner discern their contribution
- Develop a Stewardship prayer to say at the end of mass.
- There is a passage from the bible that talks about giving and how when we give to God, he will fill our house with blessings or something. I think a reflection on some passages in the bible would be a great way to bring in prayer.
- Include a moment at mass to allow each family to pray for guidance on what to do - perhaps at the Prayers of the Faithful. Many times, once you leave church, it's out of sight, out of mind.
- Prayer cards could be sent home to be used at home with individuals or families.

2. How can we best encourage our parishioners who are not giving or pledging to begin their journey of faithful stewardship?

(Parishioner's comments)

- Let them know somehow that even a little--under the proposed 2%--is better than NOTHING.
- Be open with the financial situation.
- Toughest challenge. Perhaps showing them exactly all the benefits provided to them as parishioners and the associated costs of those benefits.
- By reaching out to them spiritually. If they feel like they are being spiritually filled and become involved in the community they naturally will want to give.
- Possibly by inquiring first about the parishioner themselves, not their lack of tithing...I had a horribly hard year and not a soul at church inquired how I was doing. There are a lot of "programs" to join, but there seems to be a huge lack of compassion at Holy Spirit.
- Plenty of information about our needs, expenses, different ways to give
- Through mailings or e--mails which highlight the personal benefits of stewardship, along with reminders at mass.
- Soliciting and encouraging the input of ALL parishioners in suggestions for fund use, will hopefully give those parishioners ownership and encourage their participation in tithing. This solicitation and encouragement could be as simple and inclusive as a statement in bulletins and

- o emails that parishioners are "welcomed and encouraged to drop a note to the parish of ideas for fundraising and budget use, anytime."

3. The financial condition of Holy Spirit Catholic Church is strong.

Answer Options	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	I don't know	Rating Average	Response Count
Response	1	21	21	29	13	12	2.62	85
Percentage	1.18%	24.71%	24.71%	34.12%	15.29%			
% Positive	25.88%		24.71%		49.41%			

(Parishioner's comments)

- o I think the parish is handling their money as responsibly as they can, but it's always disturbing to know that we are incurring more debt. I think we're going OK in this economy, but to say our financial condition is strong is probably overstating it.
- o The church's plans for the new church did not occur as plan. We have a larger debt and we did not sell the old church.
- o I believe that we are financially surviving, but just as much of the population is challenged to juggle their bills, the church is no different. We, the church, took on a large amount of debt just as the economy was sinking. This is, however, the immediate situation, and with careful budgeting we will financially survive as we serve the parish and community
- o We have a large debt and only about 500 families out of 1300 to 1500 families are tithing.
- o I don't know exactly where we stand financially but with two buildings and all that goes on in the church I can't imagine finances not being a major concern.
- o I think everyone needs to see what the church's debt really is.
- o I am not sure; we are pretty new to the parish. With the state of the economy, I am thinking that we are in line, but no sure.
- o Due to the fact that our parish is strong in numbers and faith, the finances will stabilize (it just may take a little time)

4. What should Holy Spirit Catholic Church communicate to help you be more aware of the volunteer opportunities at the church?

(Parishioner's comments)

- o Email volunteer opportunities.
- o The Ministry Fair was a wonderful idea....yearly Fairs should be held. The bulletin is read by a good percentage of the parish - why not post these opportunities in a "Volunteer Opportunities" page....WINGS could be used as well....

- o volunteer board or calendar. Maybe a monthly newsletter The Ministry fair was wonderful with a lot of response.
- o NOW we need to follow through. The worst thing about volunteering, is to never be contacted or kept in the loop of what is going on. We can always add to the bulletin spot (like the upcoming event spot) to say something like "We are needed volunteers for"
- o I think the church does a nice job of letting people know how they can participate. You just can't MAKE people do it. The better way to reach people is to make a one-on-one invitation. If we developed a team of outgoing (not pushy) people willing to talk to folks they don't know (either before or after mass), making them feel welcome, and then offer suggestions on what they might be able to do to help, that would probably be more effective than another flyer, etc. The volunteer fair was a great start.
- o I have belonged to different committees...some very worthwhile, some I didn't even get a call to participate in any planning-- Encourage the heads of committee's to include everyone interested in the planning, not just call for physical workers when work needs to be done.
- o Create job descriptions for volunteer positions.

5. On average Catholics donate less than 1.5% of their annual income to church. As a way to encourage stewardship and to establish some basic giving guidelines, would you support an annual stewardship campaign that encourages parishioners of Holy Spirit to pledge 2% of their annual income to support the ministries of the church?

Answer Options	Very Supportive	Supportive	Neutral	Unsupportive	Not at all Supportive	I don't know	Rating Ave	Response Count
Response	22	31	21	10	9	3	3.51	93
Percentage	23.66%	33.33%	22.58%	10.75%	9.68%			
% Positive	56.99%		22.58%		20.43%			

(Parishioner's comments)

- o Questions like that, in comparison to what we give..makes me feel like I can't afford to go to church. I feel guilty for not giving more. I volunteer to try and offset what I can't give.
- o All should be encouraged to give 5% or more of there income . I guess I'm surprised at the low rate of giving that you say we Catholics donate
- o We are in times of financial hardship, job loss and a new pastor. This doesn't seem to fit at this time.
- o Yes; I think that sometimes we as Catholics aren't sure HOW MUCH we are "supposed" to be giving because it is rarely defined for us. You hear about tithing in other faiths and hear 10% as a figure, but that is frankly not a realistic percentage for most people I do not believe. I am going to assume this would be 2% of net income? I was surprised to do the math and learn this is very close to what we currently give and honestly I have always felt guilt in not giving more, but that is what we can swing. If every family gave 2% I am going to assume that we would be better off

than we are now? I believe it would be empowering to hear from the church that a realistic % like "2%" is "good enough" to be meeting your obligation.

- o Once again I don't think it is right for the Church to tell Catholics what to donate. Catholics should give from their heart and their own financial needs. Pledges, sound like buying religion and it should not be. Religion is Faith in the Church and Jesus, and each person in that Church should give from their heart based on the needs of the Church.

6. What information would be most valuable to you to determine the level of financial commitment you will make to support the ministry of Holy Spirit Catholic Church? (Please rank from 1 to 6, one being highest)

Answer Options	1	2	3	4	5	6	Percent of 1 & 2	Percent of 1 & 2 & 3
How the church will use the funds	20	12	10	2	6	13	34.04%	44.68%
Levels of support among other parishioners	5	13	11	11	14	17	19.15%	30.85%
Ministry plans and annual budget amount (e.g., approx. \$1.3 million)	4	16	19	14	8	2	21.28%	41.49%
Biblical basis for generous giving	14	10	12	15	16	9	25.53%	38.30%
Financial health of the church	9	18	14	21	15	4	28.72%	43.62%
Other:	7	0	2	1	5	10	7.45%	9.57%

(Parishioner's comments)

- o Growing up, our church(es) seemed more family oriented. While Holy Spirit is friendly, we don't personally find that it offers families much. Also, there are so many organizations to donate to where you can directly see the results of your giving. People may think they are doing "good" by giving even though they may not be giving to Holy Spirit... so the biblical basis may not be as effective as accountability (how the church will use the funds) to sway those who have the ability to give generously to the church.
- o Being able to allocate a portion of my funds to specific ministries within the church.
- o Whether people want to admit or not the Church is a large business with bills to pay and we should all be aware of the income and where the expenses goes. A credible committee could help sell this program to the parish.
- o I have worked in 2 churches and know that like any business, some handle money better than others. Having that unique experience, my observation of the level of commitment to the parishioners and the budget gives me faith in the handling of the funds of this parish and my funds contributed to this parish.
- o I would like to see a complete detailed breakdown of where the money is spent, not just an overview.

8. Planned giving is generally characterized by an individual’s intention to give a gift from some source other than regular income. A planned gift can take the form of a bequest, a gift of property, or a more complex giving arrangement such as a charitable gift annuity or charitable remainder trust. Planned gifts can be set up to occur in the near or not so near future. Often planned giving enables a donor to simultaneously support the church and receive significant tax benefits. Would you consider contributing to the church through planned giving in the future? If so, would you allow Church Development to share your name with the church? ONE RESPONSE PER HOUSEHOLD.

Answer Options	Yes	No	Maybe	Already do	Rating Average	Response Count
Response	1	49	18	8	2.43	76
Percentage	1.32%	64.47%	23.68%	10.53%		

Note: respondent information sent to church administration

9. I would be interested in using the church’s online giving and pledging service.

Answer Options	Yes	No	Maybe	Rating Average	Response Count
Response	19	39	16	1.96	74
Percentage	25.68%	52.70%	21.62%		

Note: respondent information sent to church administration

Survey Summary Conclusion:

On behalf of Holy Spirit Catholic Church (Holy Spirit), Church Development would like to thank all those who took the time to provide us their written feedback and responses. The information gathered will greatly assist Holy Spirit with their assessment and planning as they move forward in addressing the issues and concerns raised. Church Development will be offering guidance and recommendations to Holy Spirit specific to this survey.

Once again, all respondents remain confidential. And we thank all those dedicated to the pursuit and purpose of making Holy Spirit a premier home of faith and worship.