Parish Practices Profile

2002

Joseph Kormos
Pre-Conciliar Commission Project Team
Get the facts first. You can distort them later.

-- Mark Twain
Your Presenter

• Lifelong Orthodox Christian
  - Variety of experiences
    • large, old line parish
    • Founding Member of Mission parish
    • Diocesan, Council, Pre-Conciliar etc.

• Consultant: New Product Innovation

• Author: Two survey based books
  - Similar methodology as this survey.

Experienced... not an expert
Objectives

1. Profile OCA parish life: 2002
   - Inform delegates
   - Contrast your parish with others
   - Baseline for future efforts

2. Explore characteristics of growing vs. non-growing parishes
Survey Outline

- Respondent Characteristics
- Worship & Sacraments
- Education
- Structure & Administration
- Social & Other Activities
- Inter-Orthodox Relationships
- Open Ended Inputs
Note

Unless otherwise indicated, the source of all data in this document is the 13th AAC Parish Profile Survey.
Respondent Characteristics

- Diocese
- Founding Date
- Growth
- Size
- Parishioner Age
- Immigrants
- Converts
- Number of Pastors
Respondents by Diocese

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Diocese</th>
<th># Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alaska</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albanian</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgarian</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Pa.</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midwest</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NE</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NY/NJ</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romanian</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W Pa</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Respondents: 161
Response Rate by Diocese

Response Rate by Diocese

% of Respondents

- Washington
- Midwest
- NY/NJ
- West
- South
- NE
- E. Pa.
- W Pa
- Bulgarian
- Albanian
- Canada
- Alaska
- Romanian

“Lower 48” Territorial: All > 25% Response Rate

“Non-Territorial”, Canadian, Alaskan Diocese... Lower Response Rate
Is the Survey A Representative Sample?

• No...
  - “Non-Territorial, Canadian, Alaskan Dioceses
    • 20 of 285 parishes responded (7%)

• Probably Yes...
  - “US Lower 48” Territorial
    • 141 of 348 (41%)
    • Founding dates correlate with actual
The survey population appears to accurately represent a cross section of OCA (lower 48; territorial) parishes.
Recent Growth: Last Three Years

- **25%** Good Growth
- **34%** Fair Growth
- **22%** Plateau
- **15%** Slow Decline
- **5%** Serious Decline

**Caveats**
- Opinion
- No specific definitions of categories
Parish Size

13th AAC Parish Profile

Percentage of Respondents

- **AAC Profile (including children)**
- **Actual (not including children)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parish Size</th>
<th>AAC Profile</th>
<th>Actual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-50</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51-100</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>101-200</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>201-500</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 500</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Parish Size Including Children

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parish Size</th>
<th>Growing</th>
<th>Not Growing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-50</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51-100</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>101-200</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>201-300</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>301-500</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 500</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

13th AAC Parish Profile
Growth Vs. Parish Founding Date

The graph illustrates the growth of parishes in different time periods, categorized by the number of respondents. The x-axis represents the number of respondents, while the y-axis represents the time periods:

- Before 1930
- 1930-59
- 1960-69
- 1970-79
- 1980-89
- 1990 to Present

The growth categories are:

- Good Growth
- Fair Growth
- Same
- Slow Decline
- Serious Decline

The graph shows the distribution of respondents across these categories and time periods.
Growth Vs. Parish Founding Date

- Founded Before 1930:
  - Growing: 27
  - Not Growing: 42

- 1931-1970:
  - Growing: 15
  - Not Growing: 8

- Founded After 1970:
  - Growing: 56
  - Not Growing: 17
Parishioner Age Change

- 27% Gotten Older
- 37% About the Same
- 36% Gotten Younger

% of Respondents
Parishioner Age Change Vs. Growth

- Good Growth: 65%
- Fair Growth: 54%
- Same: 6%
- Slow/Serious Decline: 7%

13th AAC Parish Profile
Recent Influx of Immigrants

Yes 34%

No 66%
Influx of Immigrants

- Good Growth: 50%
- Fair Growth: 37%
- Non Growing: 22%

13th AAC Parish Profile
Percentage of Converts

All Pre-1930 Parishes Which Are in Serious Decline also Indicate < 10% converts
Percentage of Converts Vs. Growth

Growth and Presence of Converts Strongly Related

% of Converts

- 0-10%: 35%
- 11-20%: 46%
- 21-30%: 66%
- 31-40%: 57%
- 41-50%: 71%
- Over 50%: 80%

% of Respondents Growing

- 0-10%: 0%
- 11-20%: 10%
- 21-30%: 30%
- 31-40%: 40%
- 41-50%: 60%
- Over 50%: 70%
Immigrants & Converts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>% of Respondents Growing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Immigration + &gt;40% Converts</td>
<td>(n=17) 82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Immigration + &gt;40% Converts</td>
<td>(n=30) 73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigration; &lt;40% Converts</td>
<td>(n=38) 68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Immigration; &lt; 40% Converts</td>
<td>(n=77) 40%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

13th AAC Parish Profile
Immigrants & Converts

Immigrants?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Immigrants?</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>40% or Greater Converts</td>
<td>82% Growing</td>
<td>73% Growing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;40% Converts</td>
<td>68% Growing</td>
<td>40% Growing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Number of Pastors: Last Ten Years

- One: 47%
- Two: 27%
- Three: 18%
- Four: 4%
- Over Four: 4%
Number of Pastors Vs. Growth

% With Same Priest Last Ten Years

- Good Growth: 63%
- Fair Growth: 43%
- No Growth: 39%

13th AAC Parish Profile
Number of Pastors Vs. Growth

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pastors</th>
<th>% Growing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over Four</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Worship and Sacraments

Language
Service Frequency
Participation
Communion
Confession
Music
Language of Services

- English: 78%
- English + Other: 20%
- Non-English: 2%

13th AAC Parish Profile
Language of Services

- **English**: 78%
- **English & Non English**: 20%
- **Primarily Non-English**: 2%

No difference between Growing (76% English only) & Non Growing (80% English only)
Number of Services Per Week

- One: 6%
- Two: 52%
- Three: 22%
- Over Three: 21%

% of Respondents

13th AAC Parish Profile
Number of Services Per Week

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Services Per Week</th>
<th>Good Growth</th>
<th>Fair Growth</th>
<th>Non-Growing Parishes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over Three</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Participation in Services

- Divine Liturgy: 48%
- 0-20%: 1%
- 21-40%: 1%
- 40-60%: 28%
- 61-80%: 48%
- Over 80%: 22%

% of Respondents
Participation in Services

- **Divine Liturgy on Typical Sunday**: 59%
- **Vespers or Vigil on Typical Saturday Night**: 48%

Percentage distribution:

- 0-20%: 1%
- 21-40%: 28%
- 40-60%: 9%
- 61-80%: 3%
- Over 80%: 22%
Participation in Services

% of Respondents

0-20% 21-40% 40-60% 61-80% Over 80%

Divine Liturgy
Vespers or Vigil
Non Sunday Feast day
Something other than Sunday
Participation in Services vs. Growth

Divine Liturgy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% of Respondents</th>
<th>Good Growth</th>
<th>Fair Growth</th>
<th>Non Growing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-20%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-40%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-60%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61-80%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 80%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

13th AAC Parish Profile
Participation in Services vs. Growth

Divine Liturgy & Vespers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Good Growth</th>
<th>Fair Growth</th>
<th>Plateau</th>
<th>Slight Decline</th>
<th>Serious Decline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Divine Liturgy</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vespers</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

% of Respondents
Use Caution When Interpreting Data

There are a number of charts in this document that indicate a data relationship between an attribute (e.g. # of services) and another attribute (e.g. growth).

Do not infer cause and effect.

For example...
- The previous data implies that holding more services causes parishes to grow.
- This may be true but the opposite may be true as well. (Growing parishes hold more services)
- There is a relationship but not necessarily causality. Further study would be necessary to draw clear conclusions.

“The thinker makes a great mistake when he asks after cause and effect. They both together make up the indivisible phenomena.” -- Johann Wolfgang von Goethe
Receive Communion at Each Liturgy

% of Respondents

- 0-20%: 8%
- 21-40%: 8%
- 40-60%: 23%
- 61-80%: 35%
- Over 80%: 26%

13th AAC Parish Profile
Receive Communion At Each Liturgy Vs. Growth

% of Respondents

0-20% 21-40% 40-60% 61-80% Over 80%

Growing Non-Growing
Confession More Than Once a Year

% of Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Range</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-20%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-40%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-60%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61-80%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 80%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

13th AAC Parish Profile
Confession More Than Once a Year

% of Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Range</th>
<th>Non-Growing</th>
<th>Growing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-20%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-40%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-60%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61-80%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 80%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

13th AAC Parish Profile
Liturgical Music

% of Respondents

- Choir: 90%
- Congregational: 47%
- Cantor: 26%
- Other: 1%

More than one answer allowed

13th AAC Parish Profile
Education
Participation in Adult Education

- 59% of Respondents
- 30%
- 7%
- 4%
- 1%

0-20% 21-40% 40-60% 61-80% Over 80%

13th AAC Parish Profile
Participation in Adult Education Vs. Growth

- **Good Growth** (n=40): 43% (21-40% Participate), 20% (>40% Participate)
- **Fair Growth** (n=54): 63% (21-40% Participate), 14% (>40% Participate)
- **Plateau** (n=35): 11% (21-40% Participate), 11% (>40% Participate)
- **Slight Decline** (n=24): 17% (21-40% Participate), 4% (>40% Participate)
- **Serious Decline** (n=8): 0% (21-40% Participate), 0% (>40% Participate)
Parish Practices: Education and Ministries

- Youth Church School: 80%
- Adult Ed: 78%
- Shut in Ministry: 56%
- Bible Study: 51%
- Prayer Ministry: 34%
- Adult Retreats: 30%
- Soup Kitchen: 30%
- Vacation Church School: 22%
- Adopt a Parish: 22%
- Prison Ministry: 9%
Greatest Challenges: Parish Education Program

- Committed and qualified teachers
- Facilities
- Attendance, commitment, apathy
- Motivation
- Timing/scheduling
- Competition with secular family events
Structure & Administration
Parish Council Make-Up

- **Mixture Old & New**: 59%
- **Newer People - Last Five Years**: 10%
- **Veterans > Than Ten Years**: 31%

13th AAC Parish Profile
Main Focus of Parish Council Time

- Programs, Ministries: 32%
- Fund Raising / Income: 27%
- Property Maintenance: 21%
- Parish Growth/ Members: 14%
- Strategic Planning: 6%
Main Focus of Parish Council Time

- Programs, Ministries
- Fund Raising / Income
- Property Maintenance
- Parish Growth/Members
- Strategic Planning

% of Respondents

- Non-Growers
- Fair Growth
- Good Growth
Annual Budget

- Yes: 78%
- No: 22%

13th AAC Parish Profile
Parish Practices: Stewardship

- **Pledge Form**: 49%
- **Stewardship Committee**: 35%
- **All Member Canvas**: 12%
Parish Practices:
Stewardship

% Using This Practice

- Good Growth
- Fair Growth
- Plateau
- Slow Decline
- Serious Decline

Pledge Form
Stewardship Committee
All Member Canvas

13th AAC Parish Profile
Parish Practices:

Pledge Form Vs. Founding Date

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Interval</th>
<th>Pledge Form (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1990 to Present</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980-89</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970-79</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960-69</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930-1959</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Before 1930</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

% Using This Practice

13th AAC Parish Profile
Parish Practices: Pre 1930 Founding

% Using This Practice

Growing: 33%
Not Growing: 17%

Pledge Form
Facilities:

% of Respondents Dealing with ...

- Major Renovation: 59%
- Iconography: 40%
- Planning Building: 30%
- Purchasing Property: 22%

76% Dealing with at least one of these issues.
30% Dealing with two or more.
Parish Practices: Communication

- Sunday Bulletin: 90%
- Monthly Calendar: 90%
- Press Releases: 72%
- Web Site: 62%
- Brochure: 60%
- Visitor Welcome Pack: 56%
- Newspaper Listing: 56%
- Radio Program: 5%
- TV Program: 3%

% of Respondents Using This Practice
Greatest Challenges:
Structure & Administration

- Acquiring a vision of life as a vibrant Orthodox Parish rather than a recycle of previous experiences or an amalgamation of the various backgrounds represented; Getting out of the old paradigm. Overcoming old attitudes about why they exist. Getting them into forward thinking vision.
- Fuller participation of all members in church education and other ministries.
- Leadership training.
- Getting more young people involved.
- Ridding ourselves of the "Club "mentality
- “Coming up with a vision statement”; ‘Getting everyone "on the same page.”
- Integrating a Stewardship Program
- The Assessment: How to pay it without it being perceived, by some, as being a tax on the people and by others as a drain on the parish budget
- “To stay focused on God”
Greatest Challenges: Structure & Administration

- “Instead of being a "fire department" which responds to parish needs, how to become the leadership team which both envisions the parish and helps incarnate that vision; move from an "ad hoc" approach to a more strategic approach to administration of the parish”
- “Overcoming bad habits and fears associated with growth that requires greater sacrifice of money and time.”
- “Lack of time.”
- “Merging new members into the mindset of an older community.”
- “Old "Metropolia" paradigm: priest as "employee".
- “Our parish council is restricted to maintenance of the church fabric by design. [Ministry leaders are accountable directly to priest and appointed by him.] Our typical meetings are less than one hour. Strategic planning issues are handled by a broader group. Leadership training is provided and expected of all ministry heads.”
Greatest Challenges: Structure & Administration

- Parishes in Serious Decline... *some excerpts*...
  - “Income, keeping the people in the church; most that graduate high school and college move to other parts of the country to find work and settle down.”
  - “No meetings. No interest.”
  - “Too large. It consists of twenty-five people and the "president" is in charge of everything but the Liturgy and teaching.”
  - “Finances”
  - “Dealing with the problem of declining of membership”
Social & Other Activities
Number of Family Centered Events Per Month*

* Not Including Liturgy
Inter-Orthodox Relations
Frequency of Inter-Orthodox Parish Relationships

- Regular/Active: 32%
- Occasional: 55%
- Rare: 11%
- Non-Existent: 2%
- None in Area: 7%

% of Respondents
Quality of Inter-Orthodox Parish Relationships

- Warm/Helpful: 47%
- Polite: 41%
- Distant: 6%
- Unfriendly: 0%
- None in Area: 6%

% of Respondents
Change in Inter-Orthodox Parish Relationships: Last Three Years

- Improving: 39%
- Same: 50%
- Even More Distant: 5%
- None in Area: 6%
Greatest Strengths

- Growing
  - Worship
  - Welcoming
  - Work
  - We bond well by including all generations
  - Stewardship
  - “Well catechized”

“I would say that love is our greatest asset”
Greatest Strengths

• Not Growing
  - “Surviving”
  - “Fundraising”
  - “Perogies and Easter rolls”
  - “Dinners: Cabbage Roll Dinner, BBQ Chicken Dinner” 2. Ladies Altar Society
  - “Keep the Church open and running”

“Starring in Slavonic”
Areas Needing Improvement

- General/All
  - Non-Sunday participation
  - Funds
  - Stewardship
  - Visibility
  - Facilities
  - Outreach
  - Program centric
  - Family activities; Youth group
  - Being friendly to guests
  - Visibility
  - Choir
Areas Needing Improvement

- Not Growing
  - Education
  - No concept of reaching out
  - Apathy
  - Being labeled “Russian”
  - “Clicky”
  - Accepting new members from different backgrounds
  - Parochialism & Congregationalism
  - Vision... looking in same direction
  - Family feuds
Recent Changes

- New Building (11)
- Other facilities related (10)
- Parish council related (8)
- New priest (6)
- Choir or choir director (6)
- More social/family activities (3)
- Additional services (3)
- Youth related (3)
- Stewardship actions (2)
- Sisterhood (2)
- Missionary support (2)

- Photo directory
- Newcomer orientation package
- Office assistant
- Monthly whole parish activities
- Lay Ministry team Growth team
- Long term plan
- Outreach budget
- Advertising
- More English
- Regular communion
- Newsletter
Stumbling Blocks to Growth

- “Lack of a master plan for new facilities”
- “Suitable financing mechanisms for building”
- “Busyness of our society”
- “Today’s materialism.”
- “Lingering elements of personal or tribal hostility. Still a tendency to dismiss others, even unmet, as "not one of us."”
- “A cowardly fear of outsiders which could be overcome only by a return to fear and love of God.”
- “No concept of anything happening outside of their little world.”
- “Commitment to evangelism.”
- “Our lack of effective "bridge people" who act evangelistically for our congregation”
- “Tensions from a past split within the parish”
- “They're satisfied with things as they are.”
- “(Community) Awareness of our presence”
What Changes Needed...

- “Clarify, articulate & doggedly pursue a God-given mission.”
- “Apostolic awareness, the zeal to go out and "preach the good news" of Orthodoxy to society. We seem to be quite comfortable with the status quo”
- “Re-activate lay ministries.”
- “This is how we've always done it".
- “Keeping a balance with the needs of the cradle Orthodox and the converts.”
- “Have the priest (me) learn more, pray more and be more pastoral”
- “Become a parish that is not just a Sunday liturgy church.”
What Changes Needed...

My favorite...

“Get parishioners to move closer to the church.”
Further Analysis
Core Practices of Growing Parishes

- > 70% of Growing parishes...
  - Adult Ed.
  - Youth Church School
  - Bulletin
  - Calendar
  - Brochure
  - Press releases
  - Web Site
Growth vs. Number of Practices

Growth vs. Number of Practices in Use

- **Good Growth**: 13.8
- **Fair Growth**: 12.9
- **Same**: 10.5
- **Slow Decline**: 9.3
- **Serious Decline**: 5.6

Growing Parishes Do/Try More Things

13th AAC Parish Profile
Practices in Greater Use
Growing vs. Non Growing

% of Respondents Using Practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practice</th>
<th>Growing</th>
<th>Non Growing</th>
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Gap > 20%
Other Characteristics of Growing Parishes

- More frequent communion
- More services per week
- More consistent participation in services
- Parish Council Focus
  - Ministries; Strategic Planning; Growth
- Stability of pastoral assignment
- Apply more practices
Facts

- Growers outnumber decliners 3:1
- Four out of five: English only
  - <2% No English
- Parishes are small
  - If your parish is > 100... you’re above average!
- 25% converts typical
- One third experiencing material influx of immigrants
- Over half changed pastors in ten years
- 76% dealing with 1 or more facilities issues
At Greatest Risk...

- Founded before 1930
- No influx of Orthodox immigrants
- Small proportion of converts
However...

- Good or Fair Growth
- Founded before 1930
- No Immigration
- < 20% Converts
Growth Model

Our Town

- Our Parish
  - Births
  - Deaths
  - Converting
  - Returning
  - Transfers

- Orthodox Immigrants
- Non-Orthodox
- Other Orthodox Parishes
- Dormant Orthodox
- Fallen Away
- Converts

Other Orthodox Parishes

- Transfers
- Grow Up
- Moved Away
Conclusions

• The data (seems) to show (to me at least) that:
  - Any parish can grow.
    • There is a parish like yours that has grown.
  - Many ingredients to choose from.
    • Almost every (positive) practice shows a relationship with growth.
  - No silver bullet
    • No clear formula... if you do these things you will grow.

• A consistent philosophy/model of what your parish wants to be is probably the most important concept.

• This is Hard
Key Points

- Growing parishes outnumber declining parishes
- Practices traditionally thought of as good demonstrate a relationship to growth.
- Growing parishes apply more practices
- There is a parish like yours that says it is growing.
- More today 2:30 PM Wedgewood
Discussion Questions
Question 1

- Describe a model of parish that is “Living a Life in Christ”.
  - Use what you’ve learned
    - in this session (or ignore it if you wish)
    - In other sessions of the Council
    - Your own experiences.

- Can you describe a different, yet equally valid model of a successful parish community? What legitimate conditions would influence the differences? (i.e. geographic, demographic, economic, educational, cultural, financial)

- In what ways is your parish different from this/these model(s)?
Question 2

- What is the most significant aspect of these data?
- What can we do with this information within our own parish? How can we use it?
Question 3

- You have been asked to visit ten Orthodox parishes to assess which seemed to be most effectively and consistently “Living a Life in Christ”.
  - What criteria would you use to make your evaluation?
  - What four or five broad qualitative questions would you ask?
  - What specific, numerically based “measure” questions would you ask - if any?
  - What observations would you make? (What would you look for in what situations.)