



# DEMOGRAPHIC STUDY OF PARISHIONERS

Spring 2003

Holy Spirit  
Catholic Church

Bowling Green, Kentucky



# Introduction

- The purpose of this research was to provide assistance to the Transforming Our Church Committee in the future needs assessment of the parish.
- Bowling Green and Warren County will continue to grow, and Holy Spirit parish will continue to grow as well. In order to provide this type of assistance, a parish survey was taken to help us better identify the demographic make-up of our parish.
- In addition to this “snapshot” of where the parish is today, US census data projections were used to estimate the size of the parish in the years to come.
- Questionnaires were mailed in mid-April of 2003, along with a letter from the pastor and a self-addressed stamped return envelope. Parishioners were then asked to anonymously send back their information to the parish.
- A very high return rate of 56% gives us both a valid and reliable sample.
- Survey data were also validated by comparison to official parish records.





# Years in Parish

- Almost 10% of parishioners are “charter members” of Holy Spirit, having been members for 33 years.
- More than half of these “charter members” are now 65 years of age or older and the majority of them tend to give more financial aid to the parish (i.e., over \$1000 per year).
- The “average” parishioner has been a member for 14 years.
- About one-quarter of all parishioners are relatively new, being members for 3 years or less. They also tend to be the youngest parishioners with the majority of them being age 45 or under. In addition, these newest members are the most likely to have children present in their households.





# The Average Holy Spirit Household

## THE FAMILY

- 2.8 family members
- In 73% of households, both male & female heads are present
- 46% of households have children
- Most parents in their 30's or 40's
- Adults are well-educated
- 21% of male heads of households are not Catholic

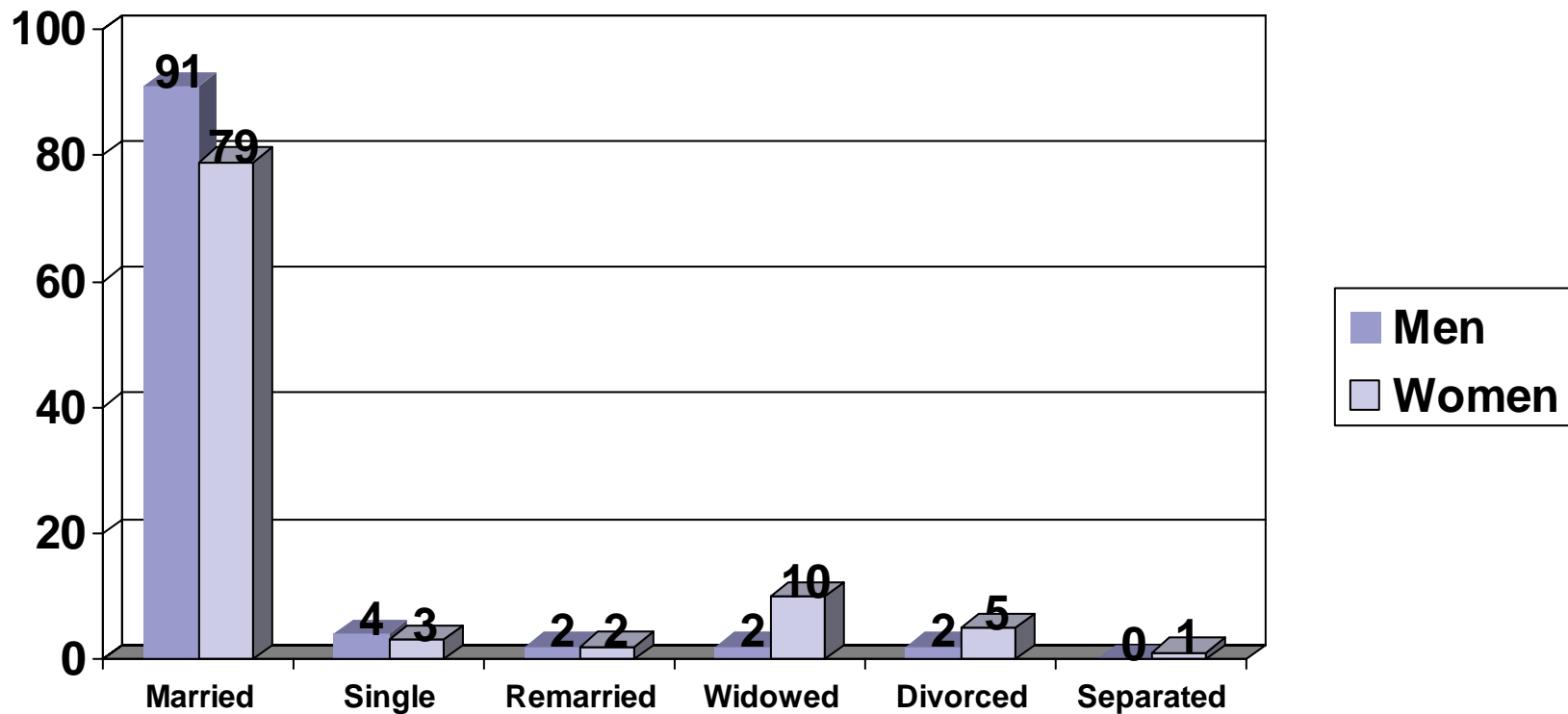
## THE CHILDREN

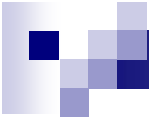
- 51% boys & 49% girls
- Average age is 9
- 56% attend public schools, 23% attend Catholic school, 19% not in school
- 97% are Catholic



# Marital Status: Men vs. Women

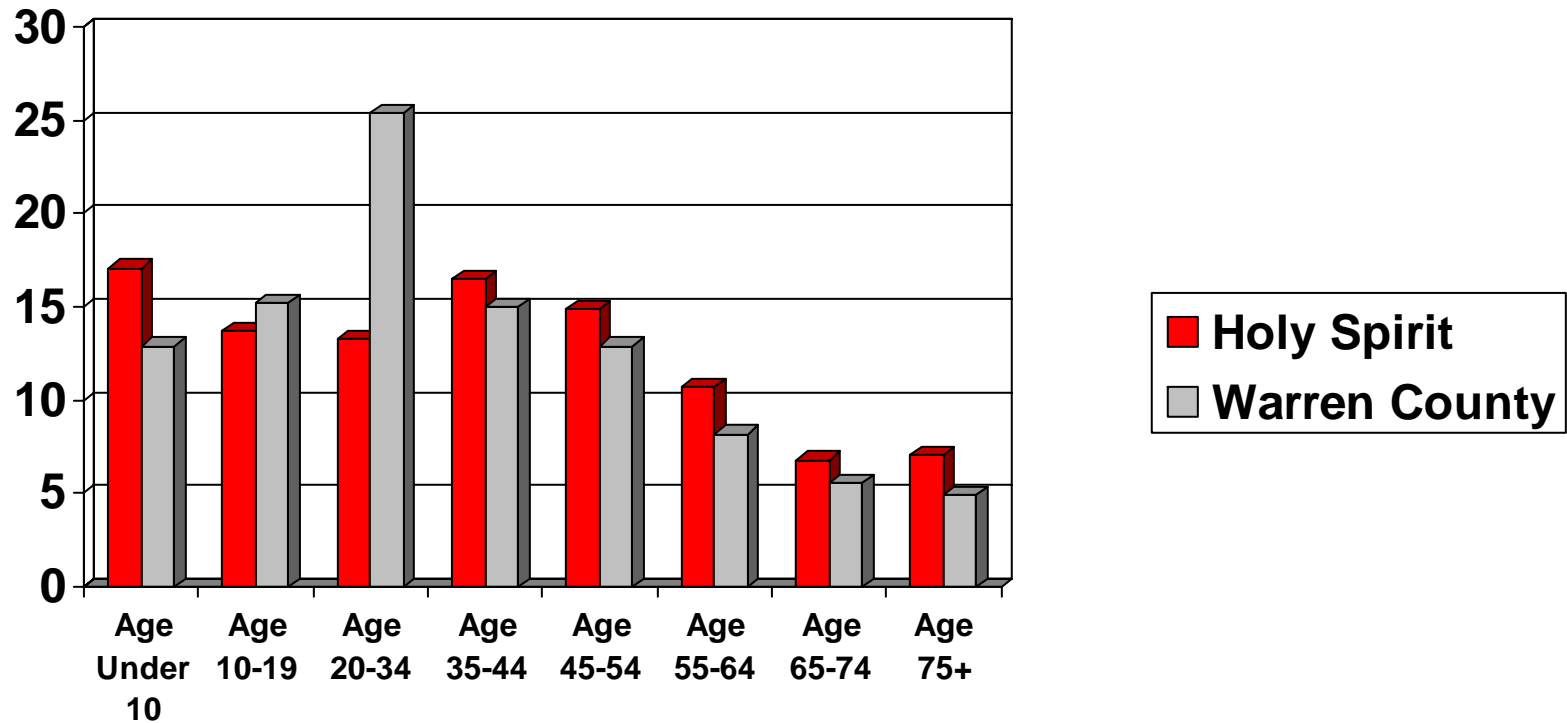
Holy Spirit is composed of mainly married/formerly married adults. Extremely few of our parishioners are single.





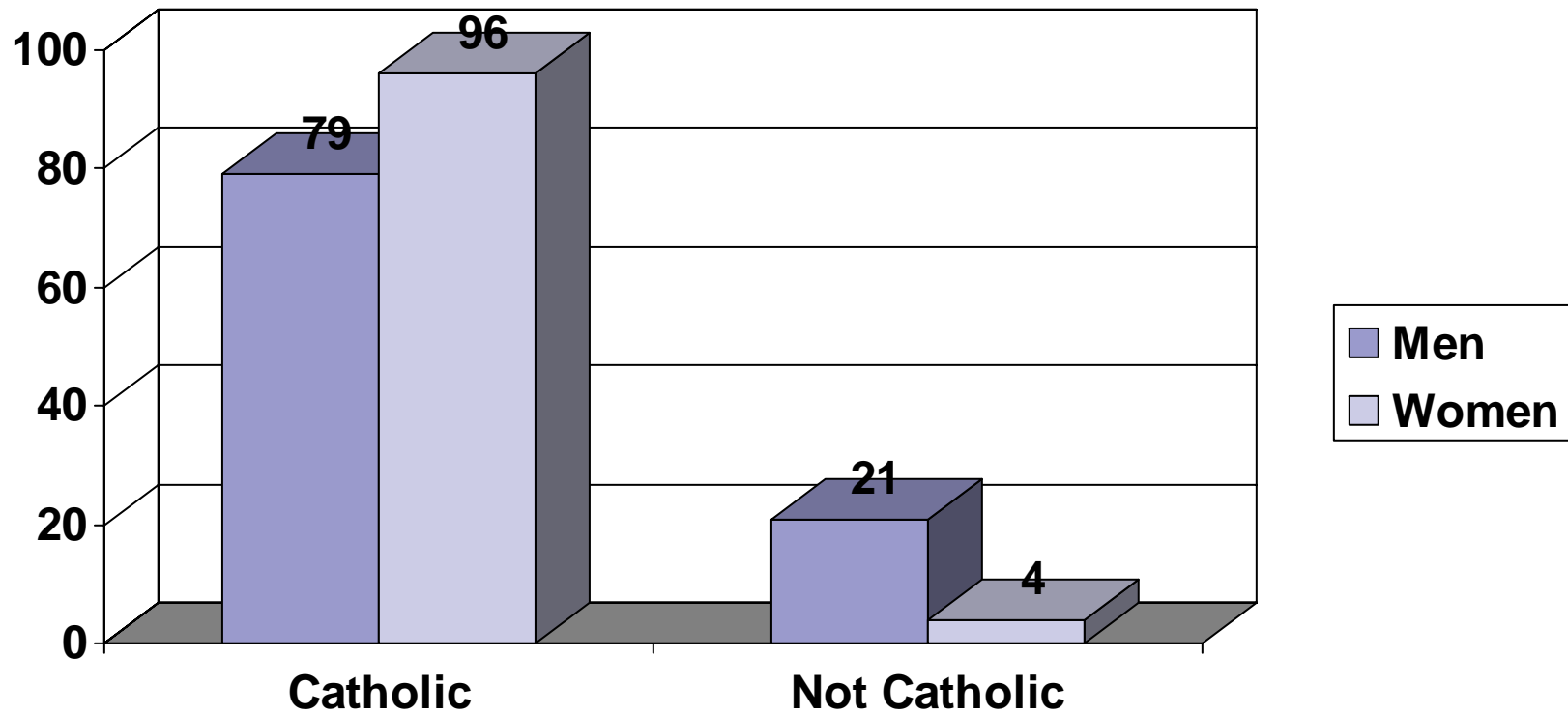
# Age: Holy Spirit vs. Warren County

Holy Spirit is characterized by having more people in the extremes of age – very young children and older adults. Compared to the county, we have extremely few young adults – age 20-34.



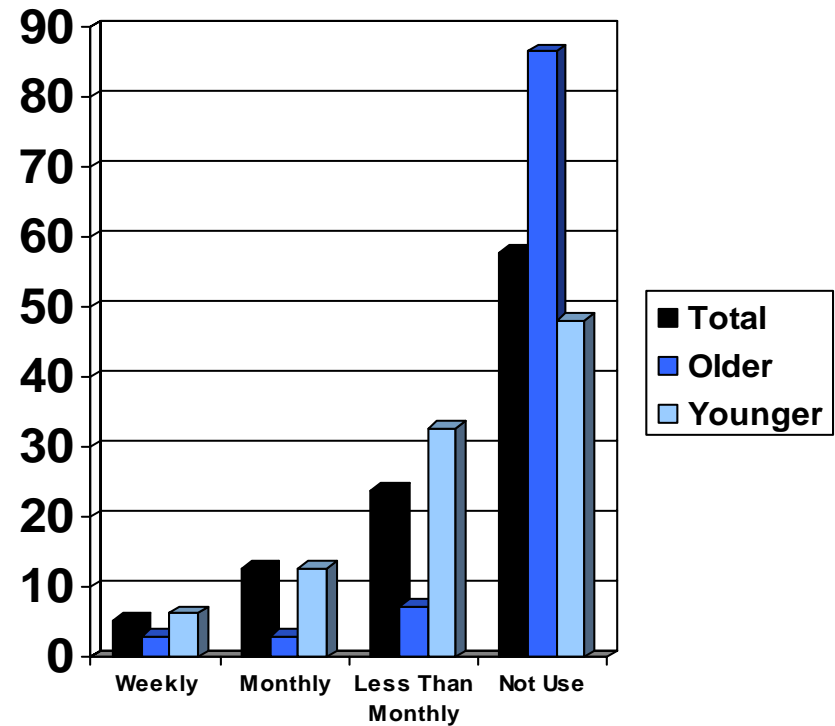
# Household Catholicism Background

Five times more men than women are not Catholic.



# Web Site Usage

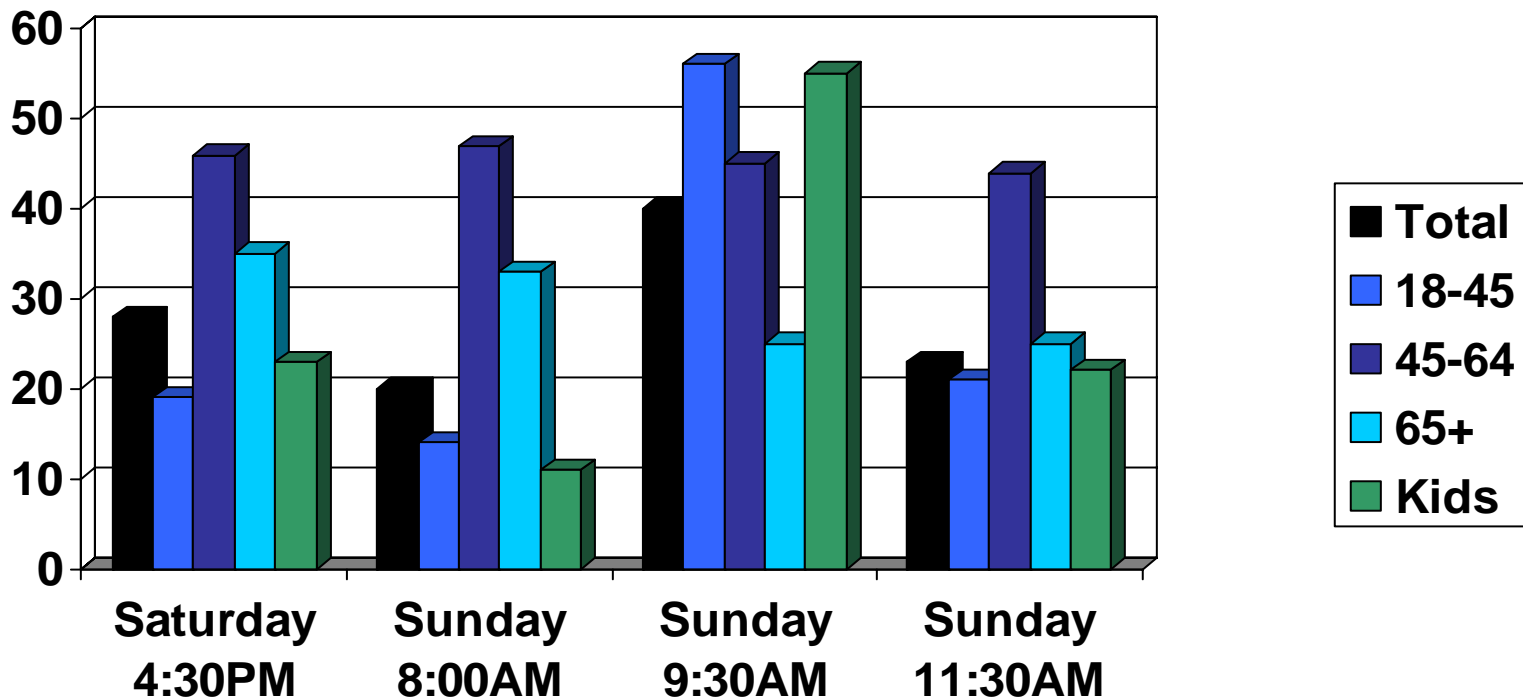
- Usage of the parish website is not yet very high. Less than 20% are utilizing the site monthly or more.
- A little over half (58%) of all parish households do not use the website at all, either because they do not have a computer/access to the internet (18%), or because they just haven't done so (40%).
- Over 85% of older parishioners (65+) have not visited the website.
- Younger age, higher household income and presence of children in the home increase electronic visits to Holy Spirit.

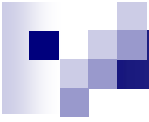


# Mass Attended Most Often

The most frequently attended Mass is 9:30AM Sunday morning, followed by 4:30PM Saturday, 11:30AM Sunday and 8:00AM Sunday.

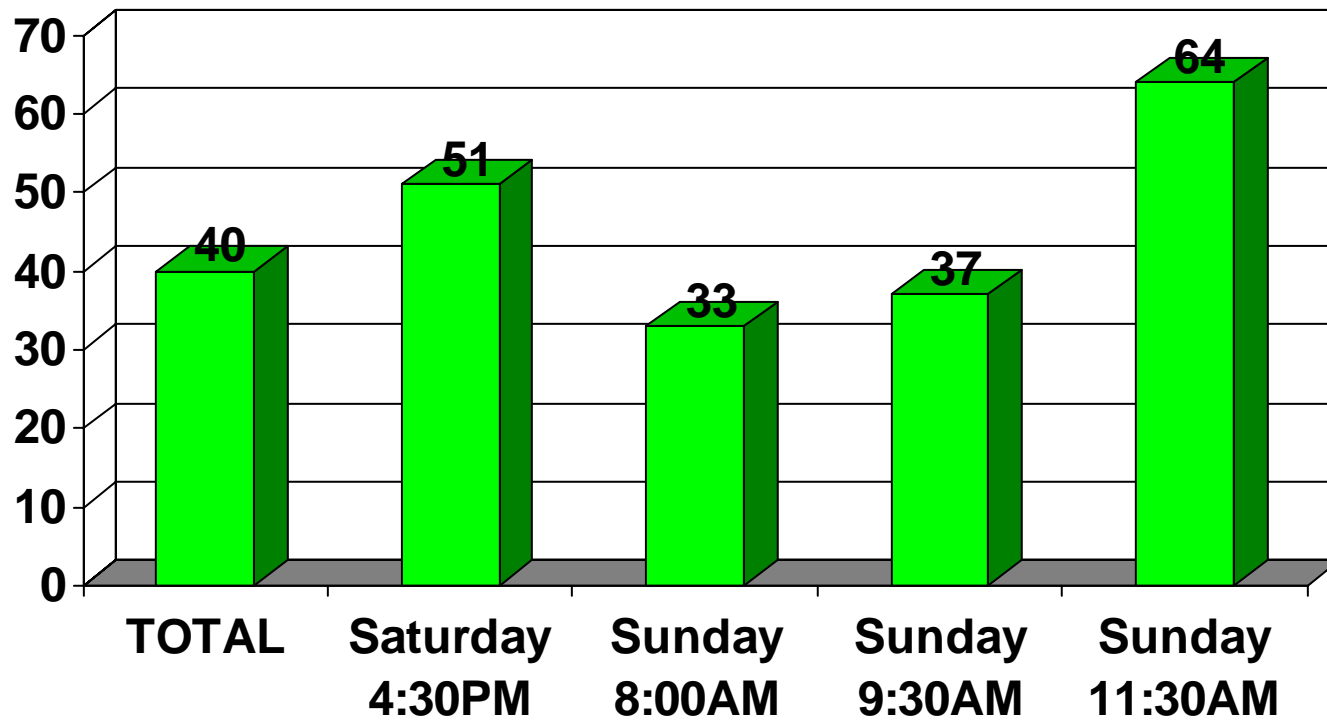
Composition of Mass attendees at different times is noticeable: the 9:30AM Sunday Mass is attended mainly by families with children where the head of household is age 45 or younger; the 4:30PM Saturday Mass attracts a more general congregation but is skewed toward older parishioners; the 8:00AM Sunday Mass tends to attract the oldest group.





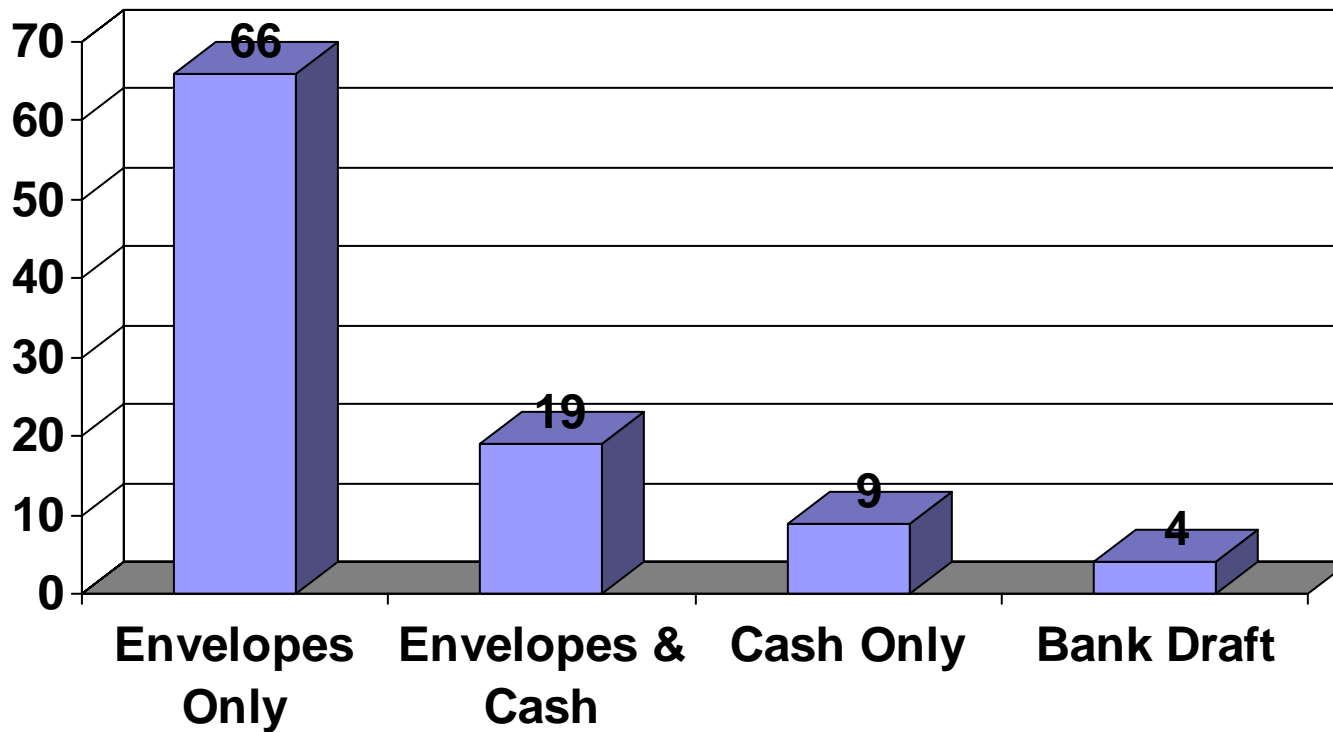
# Interest In Sunday Evening Mass

By Mass Now Attend Most Often



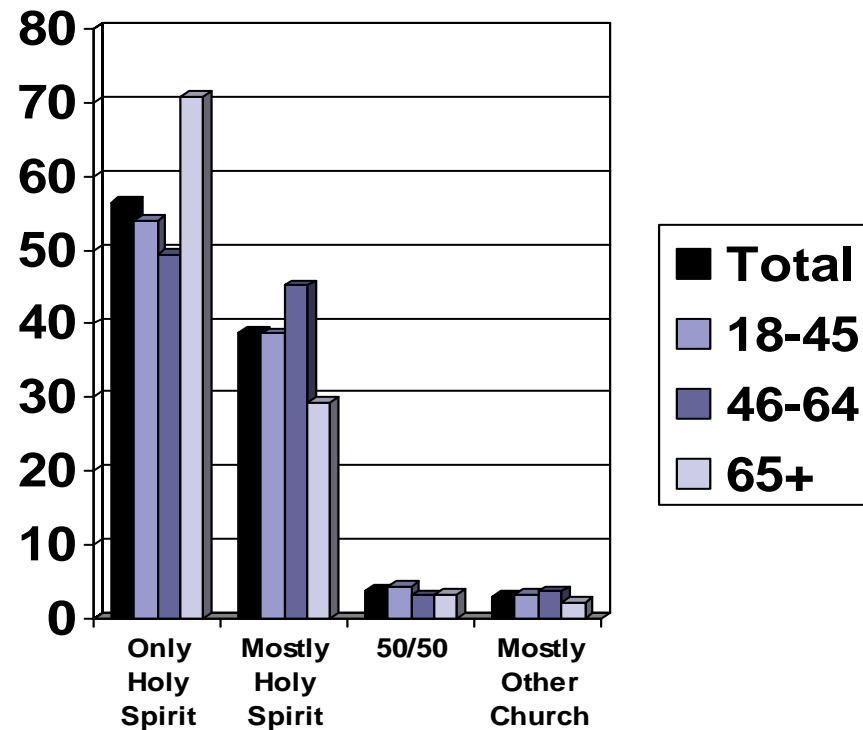
# How Contributions Are Made

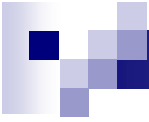
In total, 85% of parishioners use envelopes, 28% put cash in the basket.



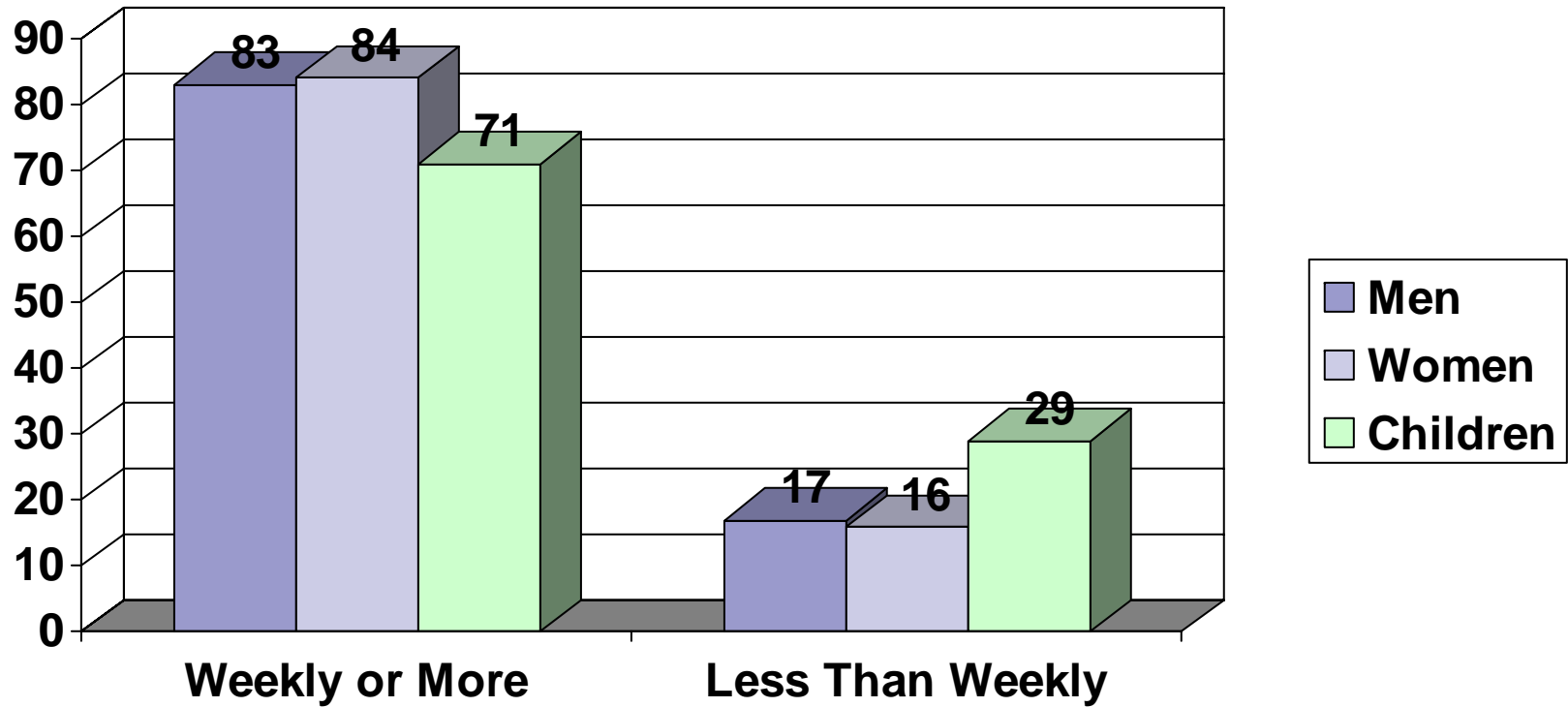
# Attendance at Holy Spirit vs. Other Churches

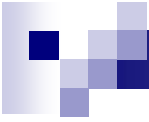
- In total, the vast majority of parishioners (95%) reported that they either exclusively attend Holy Spirit or attend Holy Spirit most of the time.
- Just over half (56%) of all parishioners attend only at Holy Spirit.
- An additional 39% attend Holy Spirit most of the time.
- Parishioners age 65 and over are the most “loyal” - 71% of them attend only Holy Spirit.



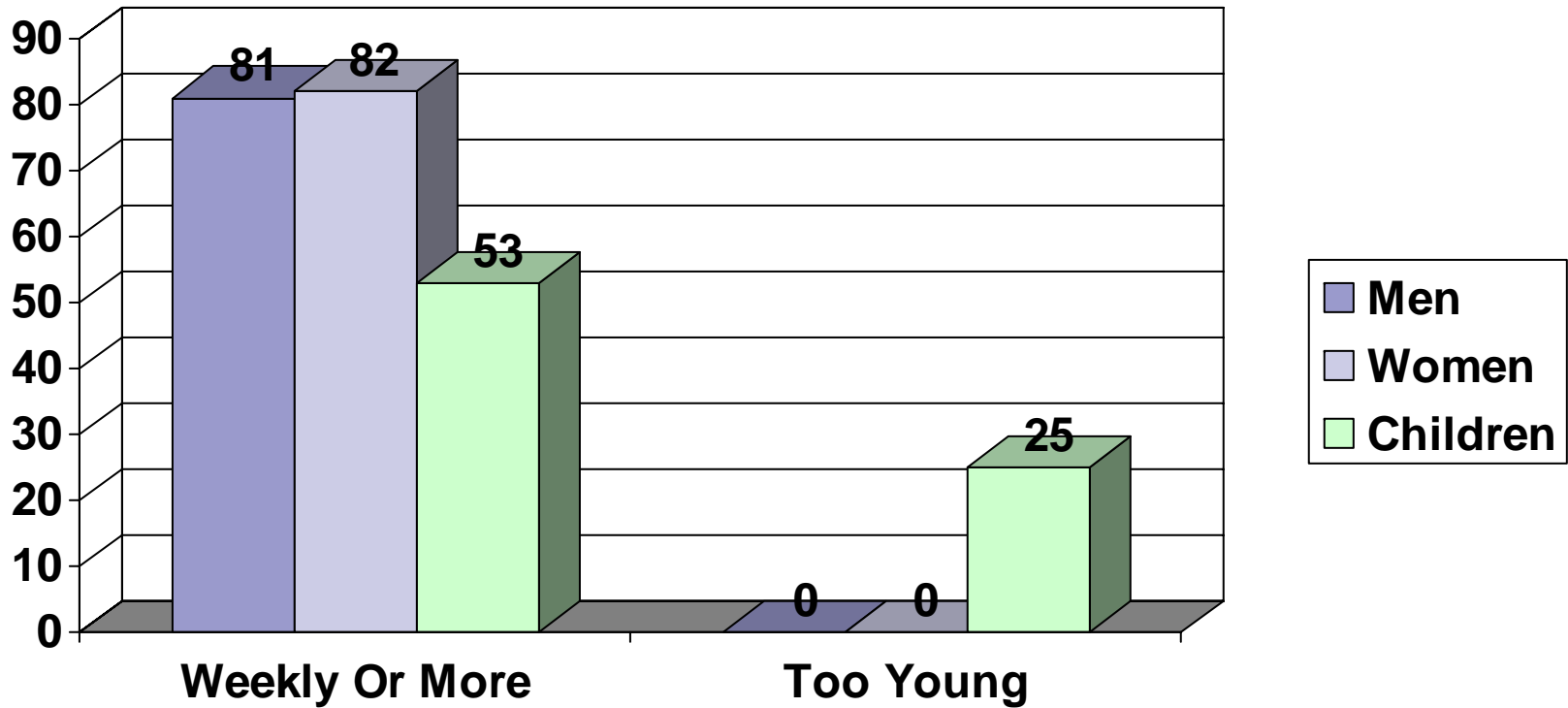


# Mass Attendance

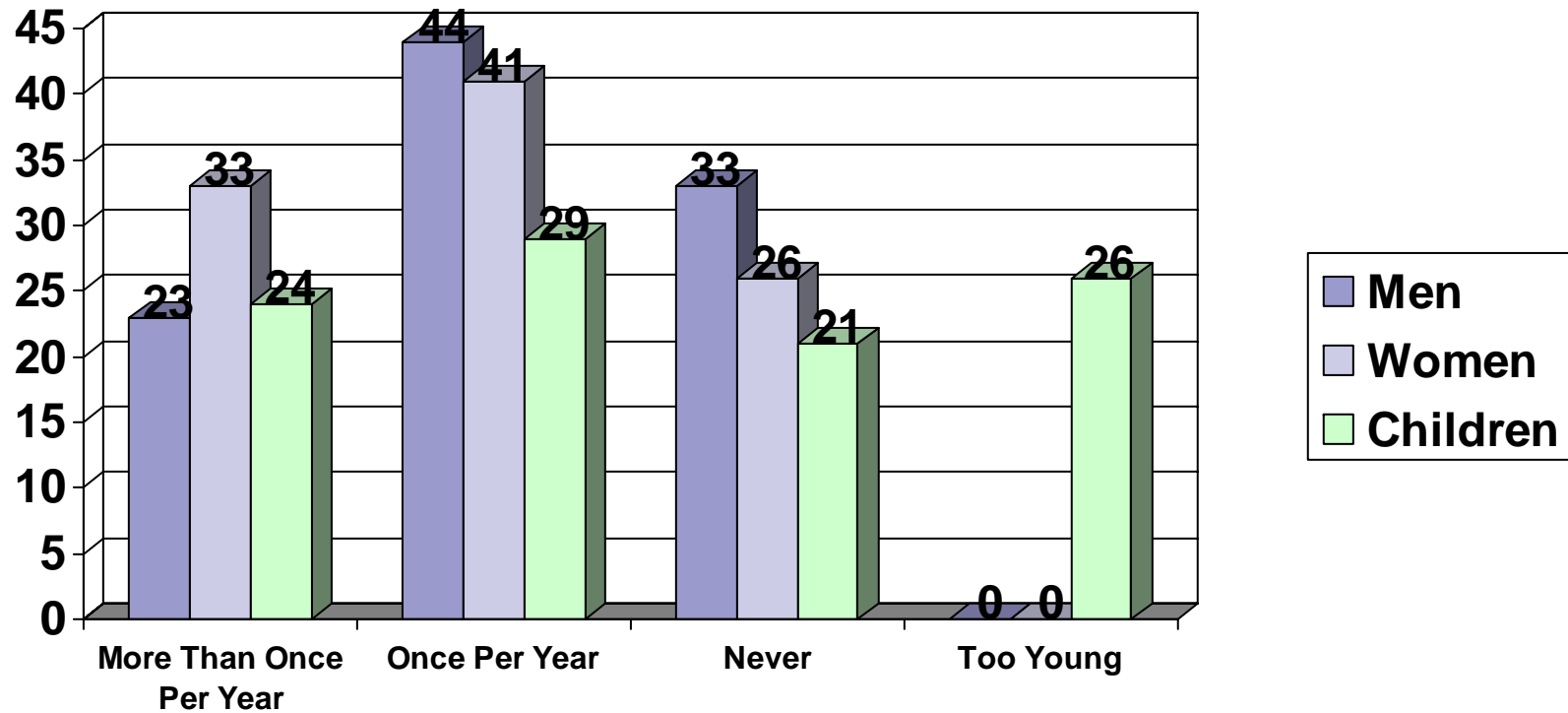


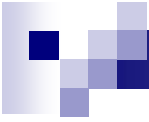


# Communion Reception



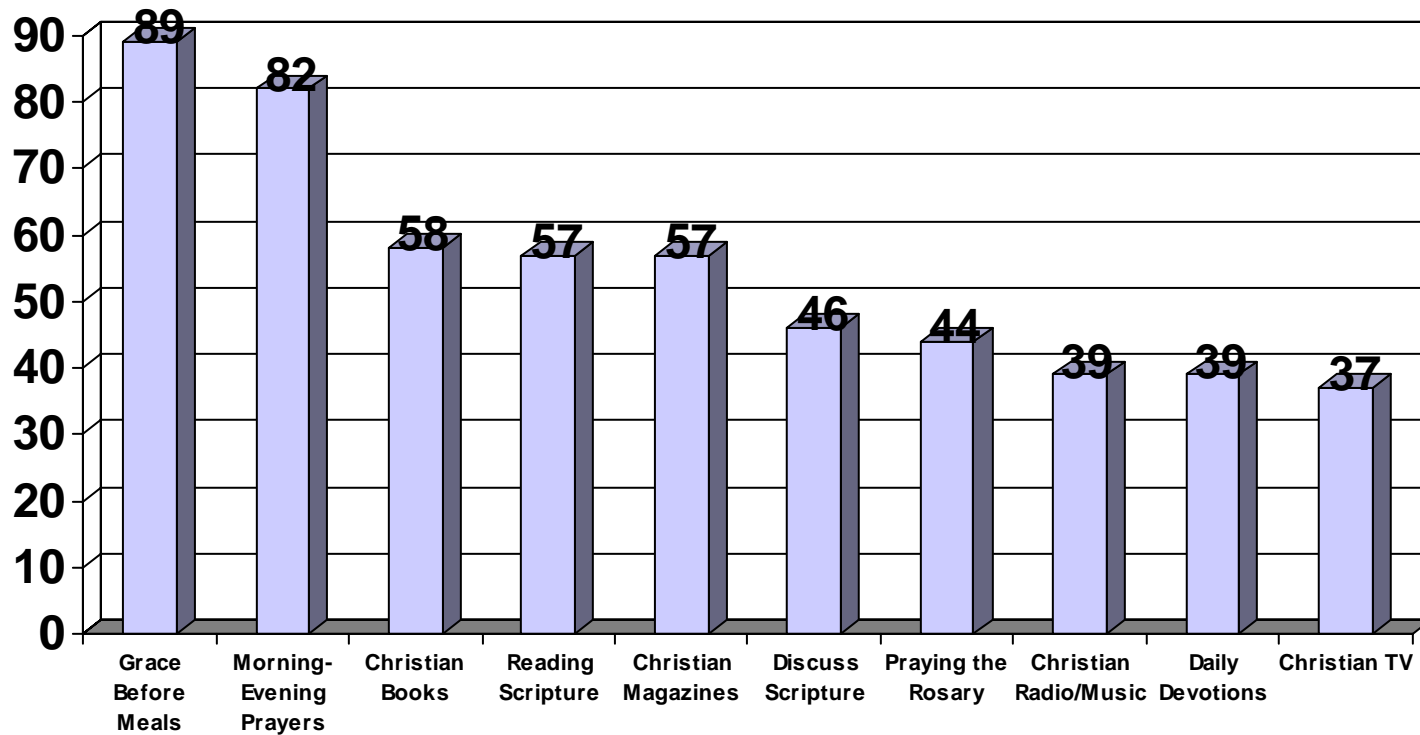
# Frequency of Confession



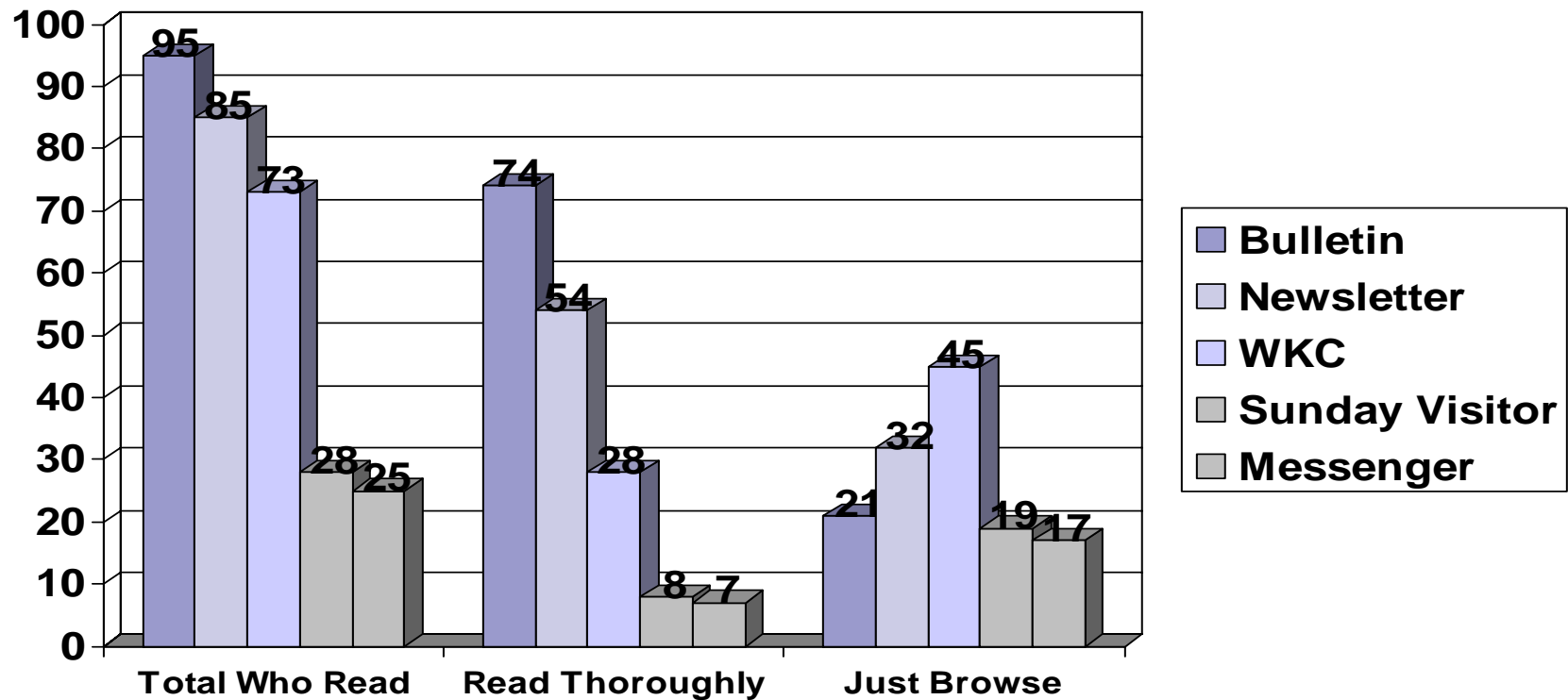


# In-Home Religious Practices

(Practice Regularly or Occasionally)

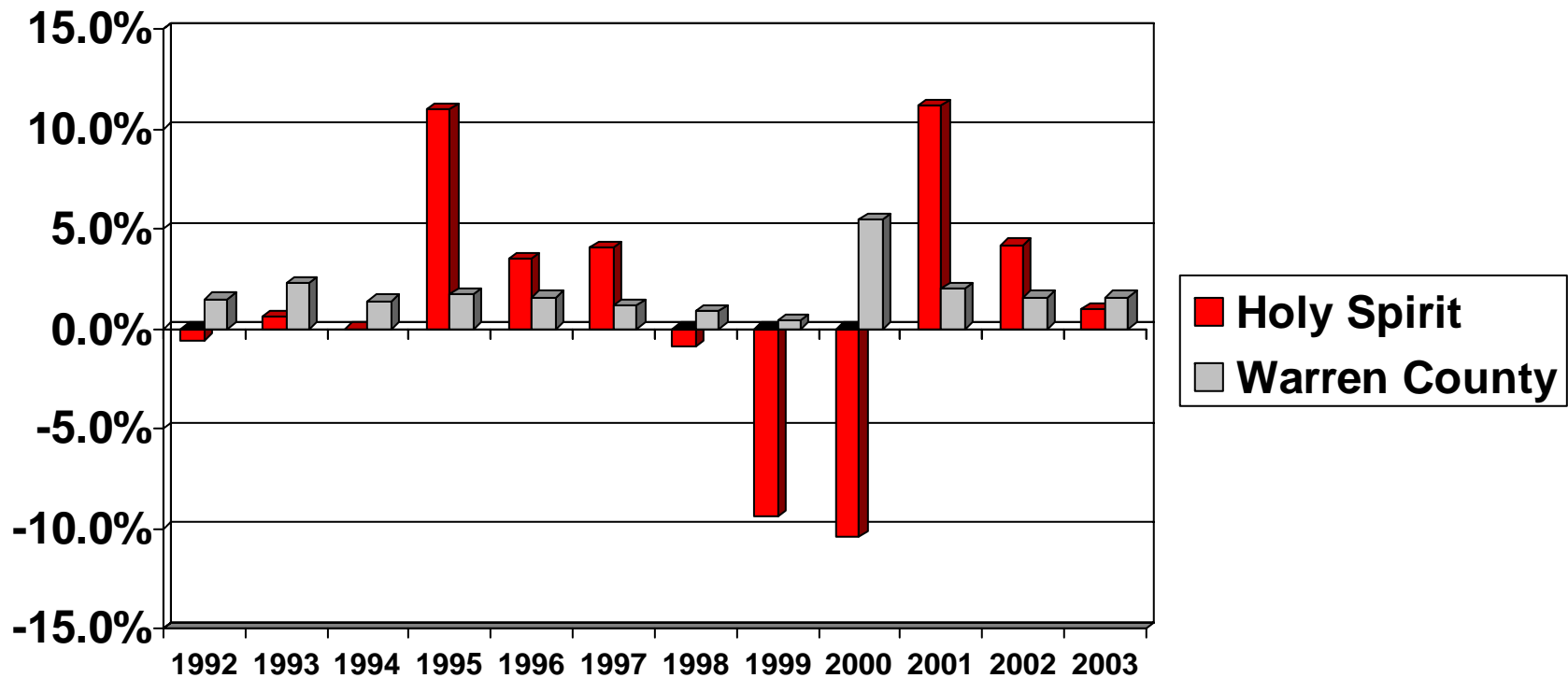


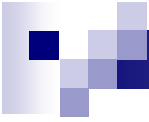
# Readership of Parish Literature



# Past Growth Rates

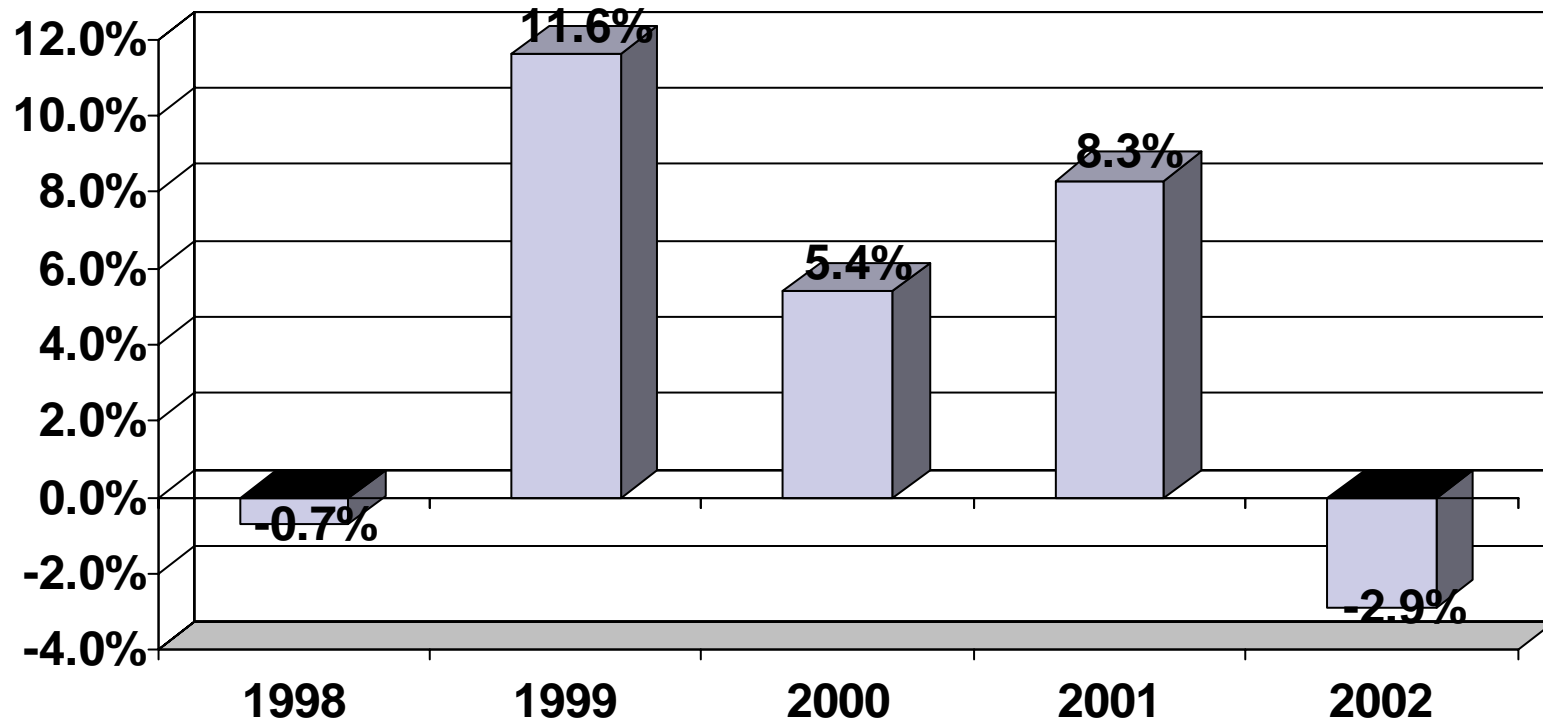
Holy Spirit rate of growth is erratic; over 10 years, Holy Spirit has grown at half the rate of the county (1.2% vs. 2.2% annually); over the most recent 5 years, Holy Spirit has declined compared to the county (-1% vs. +2.3% annually).

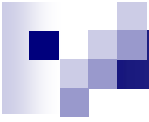




# Church Attendance Data

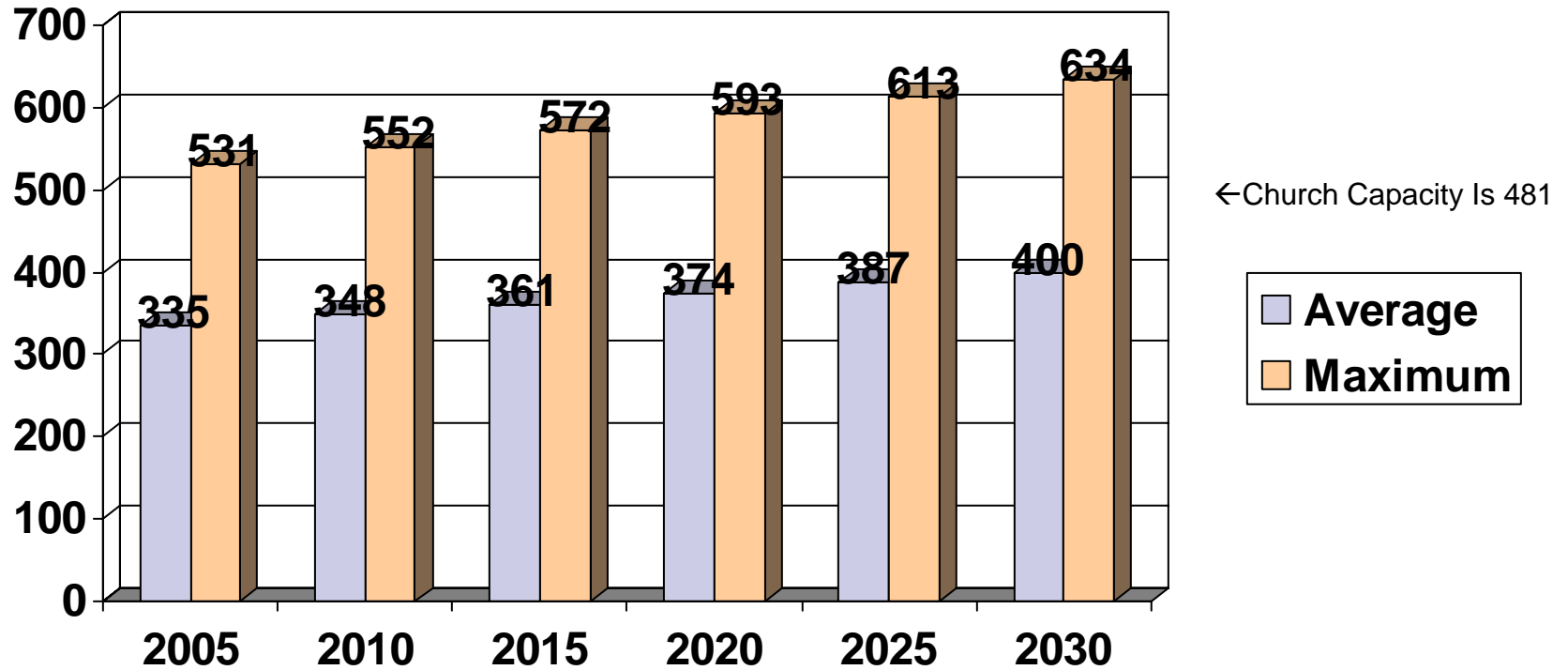
Taken during a 3 week period each Fall and indicates similar trend as parish membership: erratic growth and declining growth over time.





# Projected Attendance Per Mass

(Not Including Major Holydays)





## Projection Conclusions

- With our pew capacity at 481, more seating is already needed for some 9:30am Sunday Masses.
- The new or remodeled church will need to seat about 650 to satisfy peak capacity (not including Christmas/Easter) until the year 2030.





Peace

