

The Complete Survey Report  
Nativity of Christ Greek Orthodox Church  
Strategic Planning  
April 2019



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*For Faith, Family,*

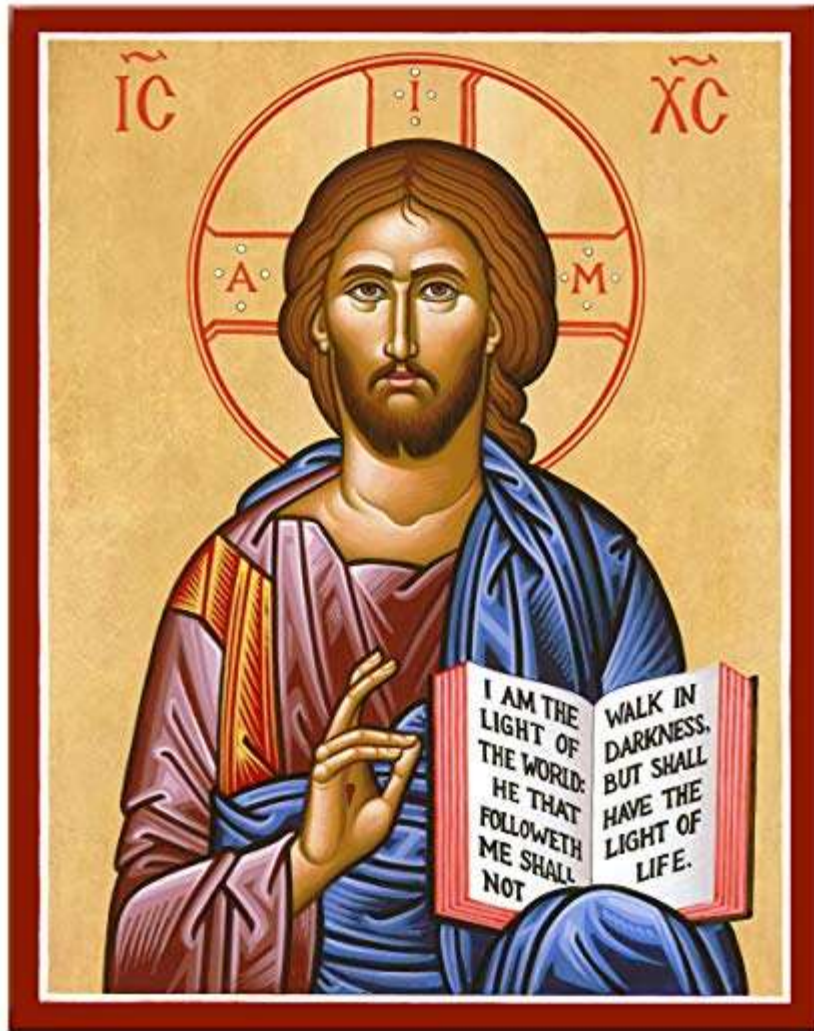
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*and our Father's House*

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## Invocation

Almighty God, our Help and Refuge, Fountain of wisdom and Tower of strength, who knows that we can do nothing without Thy guidance and help; assist us, we pray Thee, and direct us to Divine wisdom and power, that we may accomplish this task, and whatever we may undertake to do, faithfully and diligently, according to Thy will, so that it may be beneficial to our parish and to others that we serve, and to the glory of Thy Holy Name. For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit: now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

# Fr. John's Pastoral Letter to the Community

*“For even as the body is one and yet has many members, and all the members of the body, though they are many, are one body, so also is Christ.” 1 Corinthians 12:12*

As St. Paul reminds us, though we are many persons in the parish of Nativity of Christ Greek Orthodox Church, we are also one united body in our Lord Jesus Christ because He is the Church. This is the beauty of our faith and the beauty of our diversity. The Survey was conducted as a part of our Strategic Planning Process. It is a means by which we learn and perhaps rediscover the rich variety of opinions, concerns, hopes, perspectives and cherished love we have for each other, for our parish and for Our Lord Jesus Christ. As you read this survey, I pray that you will keep St. Paul's message to the Corinthians in the forefront your minds.

I particularly thank our Strategic Planning Steering Committee for the many hours they have worked and continue to work in an effort, together with the entire parish, to discern God's will for Nativity and how each person has a role to play in charting our path forward. Yes, there are significant challenges before us and yet there are also wonderful opportunities before us, God being our Helper.

There is an abundance of information in the survey, perhaps even too much information. Yet it's better to have too much information than to have too little. We tried hard to let every voice be heard, so we have passages with many comments. Many years from now perhaps another comprehensive survey will be taken and comparing them, we can see the progress, thanking God from the bottom of our hearts.

As we continue to celebrate our 50th Anniversary, may we continue to allow our Lord to discern His will upon our community so that we may fulfill its mission of faith, love and service to those in need.

In Christ,  
Fr. John

# Introduction to the Strategic Planning Survey

There are two versions of the Survey Report. You are now reading the Complete Survey Report. It is approximately 112 pages long and includes all the comments of the 82 participants in the survey. The second version of the Survey Report is the Executive Summary. It is approximately 36 pages and omits most of the comments to allow a quicker reading, though the comments do offer a rich source of community sentiment.

For Orthodox Christians all strategic planning must begin with a humble, faithful and sincere desire to discern God's will and then to follow God's will. Thankfully, God the Father sent His only-begotten Son to teach us the will of the Father: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment and the second is like unto it: You shall love your neighbor as you love yourself." (Matthew 22:37-39)

In seeking to discern our preferred future we must ask ourselves, "Do we love God with all our heart, soul and mind?"; "Do we love our neighbor as we love ourselves?" Are we also mindful of the teaching of Jesus: "Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you." (Mathew 6:33)

Though honest mistakes may be made, let us at the end of this process at least reassure ourselves with this thought: "We truly tried to follow God's will."

We invite the reader to now page through how the 82 survey takers, representing also those in their homes and approaching nearly 200 people, collectively expressed their choices and their clarifying comments.

Special gratitude is offered to the 82 survey takers, the Strategic Planning Steering Committee, as well as to Rebekah Harmon, our hard-working Office Administrator. We are especially grateful to Fr. John whose pastoral wisdom, prayers and peaceful disposition kept us attentive to the task in bringing this document, full of collective community wisdom, deep faith and gratitude, and perhap also a little humor, before the community.

We ask readers to keep in mind that this document remains a research document. It is not a voting and deciding document, although it is an important gauge of community sentiment. The ultimate priorities of a Strategic Plan's goals and objectives must be considered and balanced with other factors such as timing, sequence, available funds, urgency, cost, importance, feasibility, available volunteers and staff, cost/benefit ratio, etc. More research and more prayers will be required. Ultimately, Fr. John together with the Parish Council and the Strategic Planning Steering Committee, giving careful consideration to all the information gathered and community sentiment, will determine the proposed priority goals and objectives over a five-year period. These will then be presented in the final edition of the written Strategic Plan to the parish at a June Parish Assembly (presently June 9) for an up/down vote on the five-year Plan.

Those who plan to attend the Saturday Workshop on April 13 from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM, will be presented upon arrival with the Executive Summary Report. You may find the survey report to be quite interesting and at times, revelatory. We do suggest reading it with a charitable and compassionate heart and perhaps a dose of light-heartedness remembering that human beings – ALL human beings, save One, are deeply flawed.

One last thought: reading through the unattributed comments on the forty-four questions offers to the reader a rare glimpse into the internal life of a parish priest, most of which he must keep deep within himself. One elder priest with decades of service once said, "In the life of a parish priest one will experience the very deepest of human sorrows and also the very greatest of human joys – sometimes on the same day!" We all need to pray for our priests!

The compiler of this document asks forgiveness for any errors or mistakes in the text or layout of the document.

# What Archdiocese Statistics Tell Us

Before jumping into the content of the survey, let us pause for a moment and contextualize this local survey into the larger environment of the 550 parishes of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese. We will look at the metrics of the Archdiocese as regards baptisms, chrismations (conversions), funerals and marriages spanning 20 years (1996-2016). We do not wish to create unnecessary alarms but the evidence show that we are living in a shrinking Church. This does not mean that Nativity will not thrive in this environment. There are many exceptions of parishes experiencing dynamic growth. "With God all things are possible." (Matthew 19:26)

## Archdiocese Statistics

### Baptisms

In 1996 there were 7,155 baptisms

In 2016 there were 5,933 baptisms

### Chrismations (Converts)

In 1996 there were 939 conversions

In 2016 there were 880 conversions

### Funerals

In 1996 there were 3,313 funerals

In 2016 there were 4,591 funerals

### Marriages

	Orthodox marries Orthodox	Orthodox marries Christian
1996	1,267	2,588
2016	931	1,442



## Editorial Comment on Orthodox Demographics

Statistics do not show how many have left the faith, or hopefully, are only taking an extended break before coming back. Neither do they show how many marry someone who may be a wonderful person, but who is not a Christian and subsequently leaves the faith. Statistics do not show how many go off to college and while there embrace a different set of metaphysical principles – or none at all! The statistics also do not show how many leave a parish for causes worthy of a blessing, such as a career move, but who then fail to find a compatible Orthodox parish in their new environment.

Presently, in America, the average family birthrate is 1.8 children. Greek American birthrate has conformed to the general American family birthrate. If not somehow replenished, this is a net loss.

Immigration has slowed to a very low rate. In 2016 Greek immigration to the United States was 1,664. If every one of these immigrants immediately joined one of the 550 Greek Orthodox parishes in the United States, Nativity of Christ's share would be 3 new parishioners.

From 1996 to 2016 Nativity of Christ averaged 4.36 Chrismations (conversions) per year. From 1996 to 2016 Nativity of Christ averaged 8.36 funerals per year for an average loss of 4 members per year in the Chrismations/Funeral comparison.

How effective are Orthodox Churches in evangelization (announcing the fullness of the Holy Spirit in the Holy Orthodox Church?) Though sad to say, it seems that the "Great Commission of Jesus Christ" somehow got misplaced along the way. The Great Commission is the instruction of our resurrected Lord Jesus Christ to His disciples to spread His teachings to all the nations of the world.

"Then Jesus came to them and said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the world'" (Matthew 28:18-20).

In a low-level sort of way this has been done. There are Christians in every country of the world. Yet the Great Commission got lost to Orthodox consciousness when Orthodoxy became a state religion and everyone in that country assumed everyone was already Orthodox. Hence, no need for evangelization! This carried



into immigrant communities who assumed everyone around them was *not* Orthodox so they would concentrate on maintaining Orthodoxy within the ethos of the community. And that's where we presently stand. The question for us now, however, is what have we done to reach the "nones" and the "dones". Nones are people who have never had any specific religious upbringing. Dones are those raised in Christianity, who now voluntarily have left the Church. These categories are two of the fastest growing demographics in religious surveys covering all faith traditions.

## Next Steps in Strategic Planning

1. April 13 Saturday Workshop – Envisioning the Future  
Open to all interested parish members
2. Heads Down Draft Analysis and Prioritization of **Ministries**  
Fr. John, Parish Council and Strategic Planning Steering Committee
3. Heads Down Draft Analysis and Prioritization of **Facilities**  
Fr. John, Parish Council and Strategic Planning Steering Committee
4. Written Five-Year Strategic Plan for Nativity Orthodox Church  
June 9 Parish Assembly up/down vote on Strategic Plan
5. If Strategic Plan Approved then Fundraising Feasibility Study in September  
Ascertains reasonable fundraising capacity and funding for Strategic Plan
6. Capital Campaign Conducted in October and November
7. 2020 Implementation of Strategic Plan Begins

# Questions and Responses

## Question #1: Time and Date of Survey

(Responses to question #1 not shown due to irrelevance.)

## Question #2 : “Do you believe life has a purpose?”

79 survey takers answered affirmatively, usually typing “yes” into the text box

There were 3 survey takers who offered alternative responses:

- ✓ Yes, most of the time
- ✓ YES its purpose is about me being happy
- ✓ Sometimes I believe it

## Question #3: If you believe life has a purpose how would you describe that purpose?

Six people elected to skip this question. The remaining comments were almost universally about loving God, other people and a concern for the environment.

- ✓ I believe in giving back in whatever little way I can to thank God for my many blessings and hopefully to have made a difference.
- ✓ God put me on this planet for a reason. While I am not sure all the time what is my purpose, I do know that if God created me, I should aspire to glorify Him.
- ✓ Love.
- ✓ It's a bit of a mystery to me but I definitely believe there is a purpose.
- ✓ I have come to the belief that my life is a praise to God. My purpose is to draw closer to God and glorify Him in all things and endeavors.
- ✓ To follow the word of God. To form meaningful connections with others, provide service and help our community and others in need.
- ✓ Seek salvation.
- ✓ Everything I do has a purpose

- ✓ Every one has a purpose unique to them. Not everyone is meant to have big life changing skills. It could be as simple as being a good listener.
- ✓ To Love. Love is God and God is eternal. The purpose is to find the path to eternal life through love
- ✓ To know and love God, fulfill His will for my life, and share His love with my fellow man, by following His example and commandments, by His grace and mercy.
- ✓ Again, its about me being happy all the time.
- ✓ Bring the values of heaven to life on earth.
- ✓ To teach and learn and reteach and relearn.
- ✓ Finding Union with God, to pursue Theosis ,on a path guided by the Holy Spirit, defined by his Commandments, and to grow in the light of the Lord to make a difference as a Husband, Father, Grand Father, God Father and Friend.....
- ✓ Life's purpose is like a gift. It is given to us by God out of His love. He wants us to enjoy this gift, realize the sacredness of that gift, to be grateful for that gift, and to give others this same gift.
- ✓ I believe that each individual determines their own purpose ultimately.
- ✓ To emulate Christ in our daily living and in our relationships with others; to be good stewards of our homes, communities and the earth around us. To be educated and to use the talents God has given us to the best of our abilities. To love one another; to spur each other on in life's struggles. To glorify God; to seek Him and His will; to leave a legacy of faith for future generations.
- ✓ Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things (many blessings) will be added onto you. (Matthew 6:33)
- ✓ The Golden Rule

#### Question #4: How many people live in your household?

All told, survey takers have 198 people in their various homes, counting the survey takers themselves. Though we have no objective evidence of this, it wouldn't be completely irrational to assume that the survey takers likely represent the consensus of those living in the home concerning the 44

questions asked in the survey. If so, then a broad and numerous spectrum of the parish participated in this information rich survey. Among survey takers,

- There are 10 homes in which 1 person lives
- There are 34 homes in which 2 people live
- There are 14 homes in which 3 people live
- There are 16 homes in which 4 people live
- There are 5 homes in which 5 people live
- There are 2 homes in which 6 people live

### Question #5: Are you on the parish’s email list?

58 survey takers responded affirmatively

24 did not respond

### Question #6: How many people in your household are converts to the Orthodox Faith?

82 Survey takers collectively reported 22 converts in their homes.

### Question #7: How would you describe your identity?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Greek	9.09%	7
Greek-American	38.96%	30
American of Greek ancestry	31.17%	24
"Hyphenated" American but not Greek e.g., Russian-American	1.30%	1
American	18.18%	14
Citizen of the world	1.30%	1
Write your own description including a specific hyphenated identity if you wish		12
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>77</b>
	<b>Skipped</b>	<b>5</b>

### Comments

- ✓ I was raised from Irish & Italian parents in a very ethnic Italian neighborhood and attended Catholic school in the neighborhood
- ✓ Christian

- ✓ I don't. If asked I say I am Greek background but I don't describe myself to others in the ways above
- ✓ I am AMERICAN. But I very proud of my Greek Heritage.
- ✓ artist
- ✓ Arab American
- ✓ Born in the US, of Greek immigrants
- ✓ Greek- and Italian-American
- ✓ We came to US when I was 10 yrs. old.
- ✓ An Orthodox Christian of Cretan and Constaninoplian Roots, a Mosaic American
- ✓ Why label people and provide implicit value? It promote superiority. If asked by Greeks I say I am "Greek by Marriage"
- ✓ American convert to Orthodoxy worshiping in a Greek Orthodox Church

### Question #8: The name of the survey taker was requested.

From a few received comments, there appears to be a misunderstanding regarding anonymity. The text announcing the survey specified that anonymity would be preserved regarding *comments* that people may wish to register – that no comment would be attributed to a particular purpose. That continues to be true.

In response to the request for the survey takers name, 10 decided upon anonymity, which is fine.

The remaining 72 have their names listed at the end of the report as participants in the survey. We apologize for any misunderstanding.

### Question #9: Concerning the overall future of Nativity of Christ how do you feel?

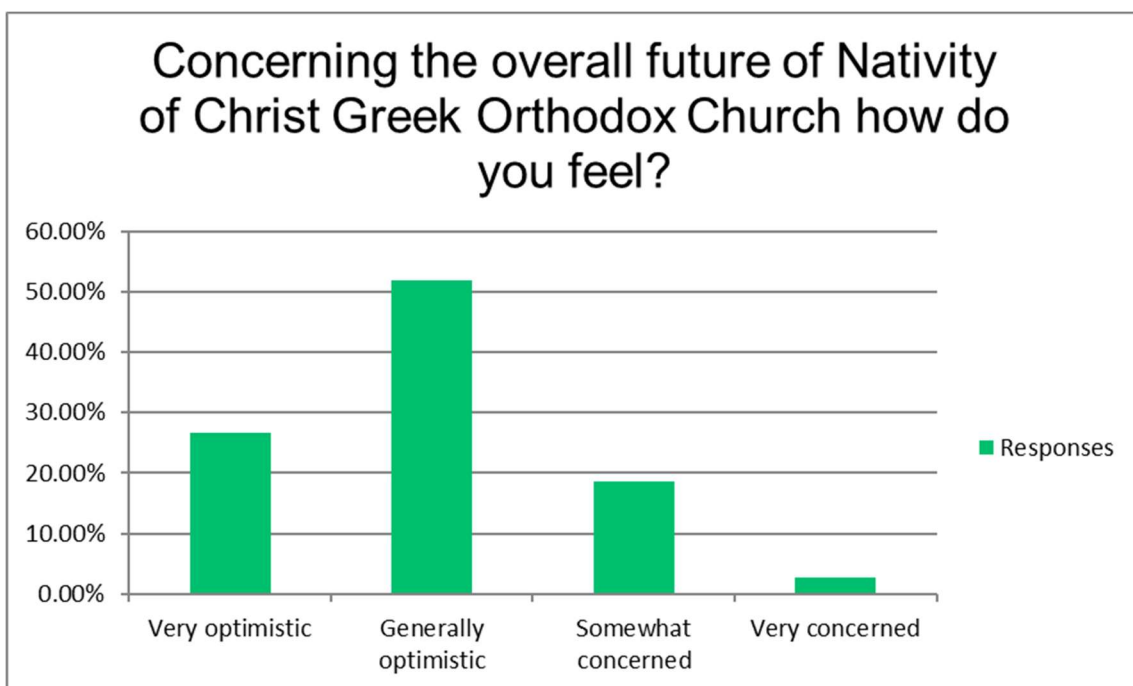
75 out of 82 people responded to this question; two chose to skip the question.

78% of respondents registered either “very optimistic or generally optimistic.”

22% of respondents registered either “somewhat concerned or very concerned.”

### Comments

- ✓ Fr John inspires and gives me hope in many ways. The accomplishments to improve, maintain our campus, plan for the future. The ability to grow in many ways. The addition of events and programs.
- ✓ It is encouraging to see the younger families entering our parish and taking leadership roles. As in all organizations, the few continue to carry the weight of volunteering. I appreciate the integration of our Greek Heritage into our Church Community; it is the Greek Culture that enriches our religion.
- ✓ I need to participate more in the Church in order to make a meaningful statement.
- ✓ I am concerned about our inability to attract new members who are not of Greek heritage.



- ✓ I feel some of the church plans are way more ambitious than this small parish can afford both monetarily and with physical parishioner support.
- ✓ Concerned about the future of our Church and religion in general. We need to do a much better job at acceptance. We tend to judge and we know there is only one judge. We don't accept people of alternative life styles and that concerns me. Everyone is capable of love so why do we discriminate. We tend to be very hypocritical of our faith.
- ✓ With Father's guidance, there is a lot of movement and planning for our future as opposed to having a "that's how it's always been done" attitude.

- ✓ The size of our parish has fluctuated over time but generally not grown. In a time where religious values are under attack or scrutinized some would say that continuing to have a constant parishioner base is a victory. Some would hope that we would be able to grow a stronger parishioner base to sustain our faith and parish into the future.
- ✓ The church has a good vibe going. Although I have seen a lot of new families it seems that it's the same few people doing a lot of the work. So hopefully we can start getting more families engaged and involved.
- ✓ I am concerned that there seem to be few millennials still actively participating.
- ✓ My faith compels me to be optimistic, recognizing at the same time the challenges that confront us and the need for a continued and renewed commitment to Christ, and understanding of the nature of the Church and her mission.
- ✓ Generally optimistic that God is with us and He loves everyone of us. However, I become less optimistic as I recognize our brokenness (in me) and not continuing to heed His teachings & knowing what should be our priorities.
- ✓ Always the same individuals involved with the different groups of this organization; it is a scary thought to know this church is continued to be run by these individuals.
- ✓ As long as there are Greek Americans in our community we will have a Parish. I think Greeks will always find a way to come together in support of our Church in desperate times. Especially concerning the preservation in the future of our children, religion, and culture.
- ✓ I am concerned about declining enthusiasm of our youth.
- ✓ The youth and young adults are our future and I believe those who are engaged as young people will carry the parish into the future in a positive and faithful way.
- ✓ The Parish is on a positive trajectory.....out of the Doldrums and Purgatory of the Past.
- ✓ We have a considerable treasure - our constituents want to plan for our future.
- ✓ I think the Parish is headed in a really positive direction with some great momentum, but I am also fearful that a fair number of long-standing parishioners will continue to hold us back.



- ✓ The church has not grown by reaching out to converts and too much Greek during Liturgy for example all English during Litany so we can follow along.
- ✓ Although there is an undeniable underlying love and concern for all, there is in the forefront too much judgment and jockeying for position. People acting to better their personal positions and/or to elevate their own value and worth causes rifts and exclusion.
- ✓ Stewardship is a problem: inadequate financial support.
- ✓ I was very active in the parish and served on the Parish Board for seven years. We had our ups and downs but on the whole we worked together and to this date much has been accomplished. I feel it will continue.
- ✓ I would feel more optimistic if more people were actively involved in at least one project or ministry.
- ✓ I feel that we are on the right path in both our religious leadership as well as the parish council.
- ✓ Too much focus on building things instead of community. Little effort to engage the local community. Direction has been largely controlled by a small faction within the parish.
- ✓ Father John has brought so much to our church!
- ✓ The Parish has been very fortunate to have had strong priests and a community of energetic people. We had become stagnate and fearful of change as our older members get older and our younger members move away due to work and economics. We have found our way back to consistency, commitment and community. We are still working as outside world works very hard to take up this time with God.
- ✓ Internally, there are many positives. However, externally there are many challenges - socially, technologically, culturally and politically - The gates of hell shall not triumph over the Holy Orthodox Church!

### Question #10a: What do you like most about Nativity?

#### Comments:

- ✓ Ability to worship Jesus Christ with Father John's spiritual guidance

- ✓ The hard working elders -our tradition- our location
- ✓ The great comfort I take in the sanctuary and the friends I've made
- ✓ Positive environment overall
- ✓ Mommy and me and the dance group
- ✓ The Holy Orthodox Faith and a generally cohesive community
- ✓ It's humble simplicity as a place for worship and fellowship; it's diverse, inclusive, and welcoming community
- ✓ The enthusiasm and optimism of our Priest which is contagious and has encouraged involvement from a broad spectrum of our potential community.
- ✓ Most of the people
- ✓ Adherence to Scripture, Tradition and Sacraments
- ✓ The Divine Liturgy
- ✓ It has become my home
- ✓ I'm pleased to see there exists an overall positive atmosphere. The parish is blessed to have a most capable, faithful, and dedicated Priest and Pastor in Fr. John
- ✓ The feeling of being at home with God
- ✓ Working together with other parishioners for events and the festival. The beauty of the church, the warmth of (most) of the people, Greek in the Liturgy, religious mission and also keeping Greek cultural traditions because I think most of the young people really like that and want to be part of that community
- ✓ We're at an important time in our history - do we move forward and grow or do we maintain the status quo?

Question #10b: What would you most like to see changed?

Comments:

- ✓ More young adults participating in ministries and leadership roles
- ✓ The facility doesn't meet the needs of the people spiritually functionally
- ✓ Sunday school classes to start earlier so there is more time for delving deeper into lesson instruction. For 3rd grade & under, hold Sunday school classes during Liturgy

- ✓ I am challenged to find my place in our community and observe several factions within our Parish
- ✓ Too much emphasis on the Greek culture. Eastern Orthodoxy is a universal faith
- ✓ More youth involvement in the operation - especially teenage and young adults. They could play greater roles in working at and organizing church events. We should also consider including Andy representing the youth at our counsel meetings
- ✓ Access for our older community to all areas of the church and grounds, housing for our older community
- ✓ Become more evangelistic both internally and externally
- ✓ outreach to the community at large in a philanthropic way
- ✓ Fellowship has been getting better since Father John's arrival so I would just like to see more of that!
- ✓ The divide between the culturally Greek and others
- ✓ The constant appeal for money donations
- ✓ Increased resources for youth and young adults to increase their participation in church life
- ✓ More Bible study/adult classes in the evenings
- ✓ For stewards to feel gratitude. With gratitude, comes more patience, generosity and love
- ✓ Increase emphasis on religious experience, de-emphasize fund raising activities, including eating and dancing
- ✓ More involvement by the members of the parish with additional programs for young Men and Women as well as couples
- ✓ Adding too much Greek to the Liturgy, also the Sunday School has declined
- ✓ A way to bring more people of orthodox faith and non orthodox faith to experience orthodoxy with the Nativity community
- ✓ More English and less Greek in the services

Question #11: What external factors threaten the future of Nativity? (All of these factors below are listed in no particular order.)

## Economically

The factors most often noted by survey takers were no surprise: the high cost of living in Marin in the Bay Area; demanding careers that leave little time for family and church; the high cost of housing; lack of opportunity to earn a living wage; financial mismanagement of the Archdiocese; the unwillingness on the part of parishioners to shoulder the cost of the church through stewardship; loss of income from the cell tower

## Social/Cultural

Threats mentioned are keeping traditions and culture at a Greek church when most parishioners are not Greek and virtually no one else outside our community is Greek; most of my friends are not Christians or don't go to church; the growing options of things to do on Sunday; shrinking number of young families; more and more inter-Christian marriages; constant stream of new ideas and values often antithetical to Christianity; Too much emphasis on dance; Very few activities for older youth.

## Demographic

The most often mentioned threats concerning demographics were older leaders of the church passing on; Marin itself is a retirement community; xenophobia; lack of converts and baptismal membership growth; putting "Greek" above "Orthodoxy"; generally low interest in Christianity in Marin

## Technology

The often mentioned technology threats were too many media distractions; fast pace of change; information overload; young people addicted to smart phones; too many emails

## Theological/Spiritual

Mentioned threats include as a church Orthodoxy is becoming more fundamentalist-evangelical; culture has declared war on Christianity; divisions in the Orthodox Church; Clergy scandals in the Catholics Church; decreasing belief in God; rising power of secularism; competition with other faith traditions such as Buddhism, Hinduism and Nature Worship

Question# 12: What external factors offer the most opportunity for the future of Nativity economic, social/cultural, demographic, technologic and theological/spiritual?

### Economic

Most often mentioned opportunities include the affluence of the parish; interest rates are low; national economy is strong; Our land; population growth; more affordable housing being built

### Social/Cultural

Opportunities include People love Greek culture, which gives us a leg up regarding attracting non-members to our community. There are opportunities we have not yet explored; have more events at the church that are open to all; step back from the raging culture that surrounds us; offer open prayer and meditation opportunities at the church, teaching other Christians the Jesus Prayer, for example; Greek culture still binds us

### Demographic

Demographic opportunities include a huge host of unchurched or dissatisfied Christians fleeing other churches; NOC is well-known and locally highly-regarded; develop a local evangelization program to teach members of the church how to effectively communicate the Orthodox faith

### Technology

Technology opportunities consist of better utilization of social media; a section on the website that offers an array of resources for seekers and new Orthodox moved to town: Have online Sunday Liturgy for shut-ins; Use Zoom for group contacts with and without the parish; Sponsor Ancient Faith Radio locally

### Theological/Spiritual

Opportunities in this category include promoting Orthodoxy as the ancient church that had no part in the Reformation and Counter Reformation try Eastern Christianity, the western version seems to be falling apart!

## Question #13 What are the internal strengths of Nativity?

- ✓ A core of faithful Stewards, a focus on Christ, and a faith with beautiful traditions.
- ✓ Community, nucleus of dedicated and committed members
- ✓ Committed volunteers, a legacy of devoted faithful clergy, parishioners who love their parish, a strong spiritual and moral foundation built and nourished by Fr. Constantine and now Fr. John
- ✓ The faith of our parishioners, the sense of community (among those who participate), our empathy and willingness to help, and to make things work—when given knowledge and direction.
- ✓ The choir, the priest's vision for the future, the greek school and the parish council's dedication.
- ✓ Our priest, Services (even though I wish for a Saturday liturgy); Dance group; Philoptochos
- ✓ Current leadership, Philoptochos, Greek Festival, location, facilities, programs for all generations
- ✓ Loving, faithful parishioners
- ✓ Devotion to Orthodoxy, Sense of Community, Love of our Greek Heritage people
- ✓ Family atmosphere. And I love all the Greek Yiayia's. They are the LIFE BLOOD of the church.
- ✓ The parishioners and clergy, and their love of the Church
- ✓ Excellent priest, beautiful setting, fairly cohesive core group of members (wasn't always that way)
- ✓ The religious and cultural programs; Groups such as VIP, Mom's group, Youth programs; guest speakers/presentations; cohesiveness and talents of parishioners
- ✓ strong community of families, dynamic new priest, skilled and educated parish counsel gearing to make changes
- ✓ The heart, soul, strength and hard work of the founding members of Nativity of Christ Church
- ✓ substantial number of people who are talented and capable and want to help improve the parish
- ✓ The Divine Liturgy, Social interaction,

- ✓ intelligent, welcoming, beautiful, well-placed,
- ✓ Consistent in our teachings,
- ✓ culture, people, access to resources
- ✓ our priest, our ability to work together towards a common goal, our faith, our facilities, our events (as a way to share our faith and community),
- ✓ The fierce desire of our founding families to create this parish is still a force which positively affects us. We have a lot of very talented folks of varied backgrounds to call upon when needed.
- ✓ young committed priest, beautiful setting, great admin, some very nice committed members, a great foundation to grow on,
- ✓ You have to be the strength of the church Fr. John, to guide the church and its parishoners towards what God wants.
- ✓ A beautiful church and parish campus, ample opportunity to worship, strong pastoral leadership, active and supportive lay leadership (Parish Council), educational opportunities, youth activities, philanthropy (Philoptochos & Parish), visitation and outreach to shut-ins.

#### Question# 14 What are internal aspects of Nativity that could be improved upon?

- ✓ the same people are involved in multiple activities, not reaching out to more parishioners who may not be involved on a micro level with the church but who may be interested in being involved in one project or event, the cliques that have formed between couples and families that makes others feel excluded, believing the old ways are the best way (although I strongly feel that this has changed with Fr. Luke and Fr. John's guidance) but I believe there are some people who would prefer to go back to the "old ways."
- ✓ The effectiveness with which we utilize the talents of parishioners. Outreach to the community and beyond in order to expand the parish.
- ✓ insufficient financial support relative to income of the area
- ✓ Need for greater participation in worship, and educational opportunities, (adults & children)
- ✓ Bookstore, reaching out to others, calling & encouraging one another.
- ✓ there is very little communication to all of the parishioners past or present of the activities that are being held at this church; yet there is never any mention



made of where all of the money goes that has been raised from these activities;

- ✓ need more youth ministry activities that will apply to today's youth interests so as to keep them engaged and feel part of a group
- ✓ Sunday School
- ✓ Could be more welcoming to newcomers
- ✓ I think we as a community tend to think community stops at the church grounds border. NoC is part of a larger community, as well, being the only Greek Church for many miles, particularly to the north.
- ✓ We should work together not against each other, egos have no place in a church, everyone should feel welcome no matter how often they come to services, please never say "it's nice to see you" with a tone that really means "you haven't been here in a long time" because no one really knows what the other person or family is going through that has kept them from church or work or school
- ✓ Maturation of Leadership, Need more energy and investment on the part of Leadership and Parishioner, Communications , much improved ....but needs to continue to ascend ,Church Life needs to be the center of our lives,
- ✓ We need to be more inclusive of non-Greeks
- ✓ Youth retention, General increased participation in church life
- ✓ Out of date facilities, struggling stewardship program, inconsistent children's education ministry
- ✓ Church attendance, interest in spiritual matters, notion of generosity, patience with other parishioners
- ✓ We rely too much on food cooking and serving to make ends meet. This takes too much time and energy that could be spent better elsewhere.
- ✓ People who are not forward thinking, people who are negative
- ✓ We need more volunteers
- ✓ Bathroom upstairs, and elevator to lower level!!! The dance group is too dominating over our youth. There are no other activities for youth not participating in both dance and Greek school. Children have dropped out because of this exclusion
- ✓ I think Sunday school program is not very strong, I think my son's teachers are great though, not sure if it's because there are just not a lot of kids though, and classrooms are dated.

- ✓ Church can be intimidating to those who are not close to it; parishioners are not always welcoming or engaging
- ✓ Increased English throughout the liturgy. The choir rarely sings in English. Liturgy not starting on time and lack of consistency as to when the sermon is delivered. Lack of outreach to newcomers to welcome them and introduce them to the community. Lack of volunteer projects offsite connecting to the community and bringing parishioners together. There is a lot going on at Nativity and feels overwhelming at times.

**Question #15 Choose the solution that seems most likely to significantly increase operating revenue with the least amount of overhead and labor**

Answer Choices	Responses	
We should have more fundraising events	33.85%	22
Research the possibility of hosting a for-profit school or a for-profit day care service	36.92%	24
We should have an annual drawing like other churches have	10.77%	7
Cut back on expenses	18.46%	12
We need to truly give sacrificially and be prepared to alter our lifestyle in order to honor our pledge	32.31%	21
Comment		47
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>65</b>
	<b>Skipped</b>	<b>17</b>

- ✓ Altering lifestyles to honor our pledges is desirable, but not easy. Not mentioned are creating robust programs for gifts of appreciated securities (common stocks) and bequests, which are very easy to do.
- ✓ We need to educate our parishioners about the importance of Stewardship and why we need to rely on ourselves to support our church, not the outside community.
- ✓ Yikes. Hard to choose, the difficulty being “with the least amount of overhead and labor.” Each of my choices is problematic—good fundraisers are labor-intensive; not sure day care would be profitable enough; and giving sacrificially to the point of changing lifestyle just ain’t gonna happen.
- ✓ We have the space for a school or preschool and think it would be a great idea to increase sustainable revenue.

- 
- ✓ we need to develop our property to create revenue
  - ✓ Rent the large and/or small fellowship hall to outside organizations two or three times per week.
  - ✓ Consider other opportunities to generate revenue for our parish that is outside the normal avenues
  - ✓ we should think of ways to raise money with the least amount of effort. Parishioners are burnt out on fundraising
  - ✓ This question exemplifies the survey bias that is rampant throughout this survey
  - ✓ Hard to comment intelligently on the topic.
  - ✓ I do not believe this is the best solution, but the question was worded to consider the least amount of overhead and labor. We does the survey presuppose the goal is "least amount of labor and overhead?" Poorly constructed question IMO
  - ✓ I honestly don't know but would be open to all realistic possibilities. I like the idea of a day care but don't know if that would produce sufficient revenue
  - ✓ there are opportunities for additional fundraising for our church and/or opportunities to rent out facilities to increase revenue for our church with less effort and upfront costs though it seems there is a lot of resistance from parish members to make these changes.
  - ✓ Use the facilities you currently have to raise more income
  - ✓ Check into the childcare situation at St. Nicholas Antiochian Orthodox Church in San Francisco, 415-648-5200.
  - ✓ So many parents struggle to find affordable day care in Marin. This could be lifesaver for families and a potential income source for Nativity.

- 
- ✓ Strive to achieve a norm in which stewardship provides the fund necessary for the operating/maintenance costs of the parish. Provide fund raisers or pledge drives as needed to fund capital improvements. I believe that we could be very successful at raising funds for improvement and investments in our future if the parishioners are in support of these items. Counting on fundraisers to fund ongoing operations/maintenance comes with uncertainties which are difficult to plan with.
  - ✓ A leading question... also very challenging to accomplish
  - ✓ My choice was driven by the condition "least overhead & labor". I think there could be additional fundraising events but all would require additional labor.
  - ✓ How can we change our mentality. We can be generous & yet not when we come to the coffee fellowship or to a luncheon.
  - ✓ I have visited a day care/ preschool at a church in Terra Linda. I believe with some changes we can increase revenue by renting to private schools.
  - ✓ Have more people donate their time doing the prep work for the festival. Those who do the cooking preparation day in and day out for months in advance of the festival are the ones that should be applauded. Most people in our parish do little work ... much fewer than I see in other parishes.
  - ✓ Continuing to exhaust the resources within our community risks hindering a negative correlation among parishioners and their place of worship.
  - ✓ Never heard of a drawing, also, I believe people need to honor their pledges and give more.
  - ✓ Fundraising events that reach out into the community that can also carry our message to people who may need to find a place to belong. Also gives opportunity for us to work together and get to know each other better.

- 
- ✓ There are creative ways to deal with real estate and activities that are Budget and Parish Building
  - ✓ From my experience on the parish council I feel our parish is willing to give generously to the church. But many don't pledge generously. They need other ways to give.
  - ✓ Our 'connection' to the Marin County Fair is misplaced and ill-advised. Too much of our efforts is paid to the county for this activity. Put the same level of overhead and labor into an event(s) that returns 100% to the Nativity.
  - ✓ It is not one thing or another. Our church has always run on whatever one another can give. I understand the way of the world is to get into debt, however this parish and its parishioners are of various ages. Some have been giving their whole life, maybe they should reap the benefit of knowing our church is paid off?
  - ✓ We do not need to operate our church community beyond its needs
  - ✓ Giving more generously and altering ones lifestyle to do it are two separate things. We need to work on both.
  - ✓ We're a Church. Not a fundraising organization. The more fundraisers the more we lose focus of who we are.
  - ✓ I see no reason to pick one fund raising technique. There may be several core activities of the Church that may need to be covered by Stewardship contributions, others by special fund raising events and certain others where charging a fee might be appropriate. For example, if we were to start a school there is no reason not to charge the students for at least the cost for running the school. However, I would feel uncomfortable if our Church uses ministries of the Church as profit centers.
  - ✓ It would be great to host a school or day care since there is a tremendous need for these services in Marin. It's a shame to see the building empty much of the time during the week when it could be used for such a positive purpose.

- 
- ✓ Giving is great but I don't think you are going to get people to give sacrificially and be prepared to alter their lifestyle. More events at church even if they are not fundraisers.
  - ✓ Seek out parishioners that have talents to help the church to help with improvements when possible.
  - ✓ People will donate more if they can receive naming rights; i.e. Levi's Stadium. Vanity sells.
  - ✓ while researching this option, start by hosting classes and workshops, even a preschool class on our campus that are led by people within and outside of the community that charge a fee that can be shared with the church. Just like the park and recreation department hosts various classes and the City and the instructor make money from the class, so we could do the same on our campus. Make our community center a real community center that serves not only our parishioners but the greater Marin community. In fact, why not look at opening a parish school of our own, starting with a preschool class and building up if that is successful?
  - ✓ Open our facilities to foster external relations, bring visibility and to help our community
  - ✓ More effective fundraising that doesn't make people feel guilty and for elders to be involved in
  - ✓ I don't understand why it's so difficult for people to give a fair share. I admit no idea of how to encourage more giving. I'm concerned with the above ideas because the same people do all the fund raising work, start-up costs for a school would be prohibitive, no one will alter their lifestyle and it seems we're already pretty lean for more cut-backs.
  - ✓ involvement of a more diverse group of people in the leadership of the church will bring a greater sense of attachment among parishioners and a corresponding desire to contribute time and money
  - ✓ We need a school for our children and grandchildren

- ✓ With a plan we should be able to give and feel that treasure is being used to better each of us and the community around us.
- ✓ There is no mention of fundraising events in the New Testament - its ALL personal sacrificial giving.

## Question #16

How important is liquidating the debt (which is approximately \$300,000) on the parish home in terms of the future well being of our parish?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Extremely important	17.11%	13
Very important	21.05%	16
Somewhat important	32.89%	25
Not so important	17.11%	13
Not at all important	11.84%	9
Comment		42
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>76</b>
	<b>Skipped</b>	<b>6</b>

## Comments

- ✓ In my letter to the Parish Council because I was on vacation and unable to vote on Chris Kalabokes' presentation, I recommended that we should have a Parish House fund-raiser first, and then implement his well-devised plan of accelerated mortgage payments from our operating income. If we had done so, then I believe we would have paid off our total debt by now, and we would be in a much better financial position to finance another major project. Saddling our parishioners with new project debt before paying off the Parish House mortgage is imprudent.
- ✓ I do not feel comfortable taking on new debt until the parish home debt is liquidated.



- ✓ I say somewhat because it's always nice to not have to pay a mortgage each month. But while interest rates are low, and state and local taxes fall with the deductible range, carrying debt is not as awful as some think.
- ✓ it is important but should not get in the way of a larger vision
- ✓ I need to better understand the terms of this debt to respond.
- ✓ we should have never bought a home and built on our land a priest house and rentals
- ✓ Pay it monthly
- ✓ Not sure
- ✓ unable and unwise to consider without additional information regarding the debt.
- ✓ building equity in the parish home will afford many opportunities for our parish whether it be drawing on the equity for future projects, renting out the property to generate a steady stream of income with additional benefits if we are able to build on the church grounds at some point, etc.
- ✓ To properly comment on this I would want to know the terms of that debt, i.e., interest rate, number of years left on the mortgage, etc.
- ✓ Continuing to decrease this debt by using the current plan enacted by the Parish Council is extremely important to Nativity. Being debt-free affords us the luxury of using our treasures to grow the church.
- ✓ I place more importance on the ensuring that the parish is solidly in favor of capital improvements or investments for the future. If so, the debts will be taken care of. If not, then it turns any debt into a crisis for many.
- ✓ I can't answer without better understanding our finances. Sometimes it makes more sense to invest money than pay down a debt.

- ✓ You can't keep buying things when you still owe money. Slow and steady.
- ✓ Liquidating debt is always important, especially if plans for expansion are in the works
- ✓ why would you put this liquidating debt on the parishioners?
- ✓ debt is not a problem, provided it is a low interest rate.
- ✓ I'm fiscally conservative. I believe in not being in debt ... only being in debt when necessary.
- ✓ I think if the Church decided to pursue the vision of Housing this question can be answered easier.
- ✓ The value of the home property will only increase with time
- ✓ Somewhat important? I have to defer to someone who knows a little more about that. I don't think you can even have that conversation without knowing what other debts there are, what other income there is, the financial solvency and future building plans?
- ✓ Needs to be placed in perspective
- ✓ We need to be wise with our money. And debt cost money, in interest. We should always weigh that in our decisions, but there may be more important things to do with surplus fund than pay down that dept.
- ✓ This debt is new. What's wrong with a mortgage? At least instead of paying rent we are building equity.
- ✓ That debt is costing the parish more than 4.75% for each \$ borrowed for each year. That's very expensive.
- ✓ It is good to have a reserve.
- ✓ We should prioritize liquidating debt before other less necessary projects

- ✓ To me, eliminating a \$300,000 debt on the parish home is a "nice to have", not a "must have". Refinancing a \$300,000 mortgage (or lower) would make for a very comfortable payment, while allowing the parish the opportunity to divert those funds to other needs.
- ✓ As long as we're able to continue double payments
- ✓ Liquidating the debt is very important especially if there are funds available for such use and there are no better uses of that money.
- ✓ Pay off existing debt before incurring new debt for projects that have been proposed!
- ✓ Interest rates are low; lock in low rate and use money for other purposes
- ✓ It is a necessity to have and maintain a parish home.
- ✓ As long as the interest rates are low and the property values are high this is of little risk
- ✓ more info needed to answer
- ✓ There is just so much one could do . There has to be some way other than taxing the parishioners.
- ✓ It will happen in time we have been use to making payments
- ✓ Marin property value generally escalates so much that the church should not sacrifice programs for property
- ✓ It should not prevent the parish from improving the church (new entrance etc.)
- ✓ We should not be too fast to eliminate all debt. We should ask for money to pay down the mortgage.
- ✓ The amount of debt we have is very low. If we had other places to use the money for ministry to expand it would be better to use daily

funds. The debt of the Parish home is something we as a community should make a special donation as pay off. Stewardship should not be used for this but instead paid through gifts to support our priest and the need of having a priest.

## Question #17 How do you rate the Word, our parish's newsletter?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Excellent	37.80%	31
Good	54.88%	45
Fair	3.66%	3
Poor	3.66%	3
Suggest how we can improve the Word		28
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>82</b>
	<b>Skipped</b>	<b>0</b>

## Comments

- ✓ Really needs a redesign: it is not reader friendly. It's not easy to find things, the most important items are not in the "hot spots."  
Typography and its use is inconsistent and hence does not aid usability, readability and legibility. Also, I can't find it online on our website.
- ✓ One of the best publications I have seen!
- ✓ Wish list, more graphics; More photos; Parishioner Business advertising...why not support our fellow members
- ✓ Web-based with links to additional information/ further details; i.e: Constant Contact
- ✓ I don't read it, don't even get it. Needs to be widely distributed without having to hunt for it.
- ✓ Just starting receiving it.

- ✓ I like the pull-out calendar as reference for the month; add a "needs list" close to the front of the newsletter that delineates specific parish needs
- ✓ I used to get this each month in my e-mail and it was easy to access and keep up on news and events. I haven't received it for years and don't always have the time to go out on the church website and look for it, so I don't keep abreast of what is going on in the community
- ✓ I look forward to receiving the Word and generally read everything in it. I love all the pictures that are being included.
- ✓ During Father Constantine's era the newsletter listed sacraments that happened at are parish as well as sacraments of parishioners that took place at other parishes (e.g. my wedding in Ohio). It also listed deaths of parishioners or family members of parishioners (that may or may not be orthodox). If I didn't hear of something, it was a nice way for me to congratulate or extend sympathy to a fellow parishioner. It was also nice to be on the receiving end when I got married or when my father passed.
- ✓ Sharing information on activities from other parishes (lectures, guest speakers, retreats, etc.) that might be of interest to our parishioners.
- ✓ Perhaps, mentioning events of spiritual or edifying being presented in other Orthodox parishes in our area.
- ✓ Would like to see some articles in both Greek and English. There are elderly in our community whose first language is Greek and as they grow older they forget their English or they feel more comfortable reading in Greek.
- ✓ Have a teen zone portion ..have them write a column...or a "dear yia yia". Where one can write in about a problem ..etc...could get interest in the paper!
- ✓ Photos need to be a little higher quality because sometimes they are blurry online. I've asked to receive mine in the mail because I never read it online. When we have it on the breakfast table the whole family looks at it.

- ✓ I love the word and it keeps me involved in the church even though I cannot actively participate at times.
- ✓ Better than past publications
- ✓ Great articles and pictures- very well done. There is lot of information to read. Maybe pull quotes or shortening the amount of text.
- ✓ Have the monthly calendar available in the narthex or on the coffee tables at fellowship hour for people to glance at and take a copy home, especially if they are not receiving the Word at home.
- ✓ The content is okay but a more modern, electronic friendly version needs to be developed. Use marketing to engage readers and broaden the audience.
- ✓ Very informative. Thank you
- ✓ More ways to get to more people
- ✓ less wordy
- ✓ We should receive it at least 5 days before the start of the month.
- ✓ Enjoy it
- ✓ Everything can always be better, corrector etc., but overall it does a great job and with reminders through e-mail and at church I have no complaints. If I miss it is my fault.

## Question #18 How do you receive the Word, our Parish's newsletter?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Snail Mail	49.37%	39
email	43.04%	34
Narthex or Office	1.27%	1
Parish website	6.33%	5
I receive it but do not read it	0.00%	0
Other (please specify)		21
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>79</b>
	<b>Skipped</b>	<b>3</b>

## Question #19 How do you rate our parish's website?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Excellent	17.81%	13
Good	67.12%	49
Fair	12.33%	9
Poor	2.74%	2
Suggest how we can improve upon it		27
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>73</b>
	<b>Skipped</b>	<b>9</b>

## Comments

- ✓ Much improved, but not many changing features to keep you coming back to the site. I recognize this is a time-consuming task.
- ✓ Upsides: it's pretty and easy to read. Downsides: some of the links are misleading. For example, when I click on Events, I expect to see things like dates and info on the Festival, or the Holiday Craft Fair...best if the calendar's link was named "Calendar." Under Media, put reprints of articles written about us (in the IJ, the Hellenic

Journal), links to articles about our parishioners and/or the good work they do. Right now the website functions more as an intranet, serving those already in the know. I'm thinking it might become more dynamic. It could function as a key piece in our overall, integrated marketing communications and should be designed as such.

- ✓ can donate on line for pledges or whatever
- ✓ Never seen it.
- ✓ Does the church want the website to be a repository of information such that people can be directed to the website to download forms and such? Have we considered having a link for the Philoptochos cookbook on the website? It could be informational or a way to actually order and pay for cookbooks.
- ✓ As a parishioner, I only use the site to read the newsletter and look at the calendar. As a whole the website is informative and easy to navigate. I think some pages are too wordy and requires too much scrolling. I don't think we need such a big logo on every page. It takes up a lot of real estate especially on a small screen.
- ✓ Engaging and attractive
- ✓ Oops, I haven't looked at in a long time!
- ✓ Maybe more videos from community events, the festival, the church life. Maybe a vertical bar in the home page featuring the latest events/ trends etc.
- ✓ I rarely visit the website.
- ✓ Good I think. I don't really use it except to read the word sometimes.
- ✓ I have never looked at it. I don't use the computer much.
- ✓ I'd defer to persons that design websites professionally.
- ✓ Great visual presence, it just needs additional features/information to be truly effective



- ✓ Most of the time I go to the website it is for the purpose of checking the Church Calendar. I wish it was in one of the first pages or easier to locate.
- ✓ I'm neutral on this topic. I don't generally access a website for information on churches.
- ✓ I haven't seen the website. Usually track on Facebook
- ✓ Lacks compelling reason to attend church vs other alternatives but depends what is ultimate purpose of the website
- ✓ From what I understand no one is trained currently to update the platform. We should consider investing in that and having two people trained.
- ✓ A major upgrade to what we had in place previously. I'd like to see registration forms and community event forms online so folks can print them out at their leisure, or just register for certain events and activities online.
- ✓ It needs to be modernized, easier to navigate, kept up to date and fresh.
- ✓ It's frequently out-of-date. Perhaps a parishioner could help maintain it under the direction of Father John.
- ✓ It performs better for a smart phone than a tablet. Some sections of the website do not appear to have been updated since site inception.
- ✓ Does not change or showcase all that we do
- ✓ Could be updated more and have new contact and picture changes.
- ✓ Need easily identifiable menu item addressed to seekers together with a myriad of suggestions on where to go for further information on Orthodoxy - SVSPress, Ancient Faith Radio, suggested reading list, etc.

## Question #20 Fr. John asks for feedback on his emails and parishioners respond:

- ✓ I think the emails are great. The topics are clear in the subject lines.
- ✓ I enjoy reading about the lives of the saints, but there are too many e-mails for me to read all of them. But that's O.K. Keep sending them. Someone is reading them each time, even if I'm not.
- ✓ No changes. The frequency make me feel current and up to date with the church. I scan them all and read the majority of them
- ✓ The quality of the emails from Fr. John is good, but the volume is overwhelming. At one point I was receiving so many emails from Fr. John (almost daily) that I could not read all of them, and I began to skip over them when they came in. This seems to have improved somewhat recently.
- ✓ I love Father's emails. I like being reminded of things coming up. I also really like the emails with the info about the saints we are celebrating, except I wish they had more paragraphs; too hard to track big chunks of small type. In addition to death notices, I'd like to see births and other milestones noted (Chrismations, marriages, baptisms). Re the frequency of emails, I get so much stuff from other sources that I usually delete upon receipt. But I always read Father John's (and that's the truth).
- ✓ He is a great communicator, however wish the format was more interactive and easier to read.
- ✓ Although I enjoy reading and learning about the particular Saint as an example they are too long and discourages me from reading. During the day even just a message as to what Saint Day it is and a message or quote from that Saint
- ✓ The Monday email of weekend updates and weekly happenings is very informative and helpful.
- ✓ I read and enjoy his emails, although, I must confess, the longer ones about the lives of the saints are difficult to read all the way through.
- ✓ I really like Father's emails, yet I find that I have email fatigue..too many emails. A maximum of one email a week from the parish is sufficient and will get my attention.
- ✓ Not to have 1 everyday or it seems like it
- ✓ I enjoy the Emails

- ✓ Not on the mailing list. My access is filtered through my wife so I only get what is interesting.
- ✓ Maybe a daily or weekly Devotional with Bible Verses and Life Lessons. You gotta make Jesus in your daily life REAL. Give your flock a chance to incorporate Jesus in the daily lives.
- ✓ I am online most of each day and receive hundreds of e-mails. I always check out the e-mails from Father, however I do not read long e-mails for "spiritual enrichment", but do read informative calendar and event oriented messages. I do not need Father to resend e-mails I receive from Metropolitan Gerasimos. That is duplication, and I prefer to not have to spend time on seeing the same e-mail twice
- ✓ I actually find Fr. John's emails more useful than the Word and hope he continues to send them. Like many, I pretty much live in my email and getting frequent emails from Fr. John helps get through the week.
- ✓ I believe the more communication the better. I read them and don't feel they are excessive. I also think it's good to send additional emails - especially call outs for help - as reminders. Example: Church clean up day on April 6 - should have a couple of emails as reminders
- ✓ I appreciate receiving these emails though I sometimes do not have the time to read them in totality due to the frequency and sometimes the length of the emails. I do like the weekly updates with the week's events listed.
- ✓ I like that Fr. John is reaching out.
- ✓ i read his emails first. frequency good, content good. we should have email updates from ministry leaders as well.
- ✓ I like the emails! Even though it may be difficult for me. How about some spacing, larger print for us old ladies?
- ✓ once a week would be fine
- ✓ There too long
- ✓ I like the emails as it is the only form of communication I personally read
- ✓ I enjoy Father's emails although I don't always have time to read the (usually) lengthy content about the saints. It's nice to get reminders about what's happening at church because I may have forgotten.
- ✓ We all get a lot of e-mails and while I do try to read most of what comes out, I do not find enough time to get through it all. I'm not sure what would improve this. I do like to have the subject line infer how time sensitive an e-

mail is. Is it something to read right now, at home later today or in the coming days....

- ✓ I think we are receiving too many emails. We had this issue at my daughter's school, and I like their solution. We now only receive an email every other Thursday (I think ours should be weekly). Upcoming Events are listed down the left. Detailed school information is in the center chunked by groups (principal, PTA, Foundation...) with links to detail information. We could have priest notes, holy/saint days, ministry information.... I'm happy to share an example. This way everything you need to know for the week is in one place. Of course, as with school, if there an emergency or a death in the parish then an additional email can be sent.
- ✓ I enjoy reading about the saints and their struggles. Maybe a bi monthly email with the monthly activities and meetings
- ✓ I appreciate the frequency of the emails and although I ignore/delete many that I receive I always open his. I don't always read the sometimes lengthy details about an obscure saint but nice to know the information is available.
- ✓ I find them helpful and appreciate Father's efforts. I suspect, however, that some might find them to be too frequent.
- ✓ I'm sorry but the frequency is a bit much for me and yes with so many emails daily, I hardly read the entire email.
- ✓ I appreciate them!
- ✓ decline to answer this question; like this survey it proves no purpose
- ✓ The emails are fine and very informative. Because of the busy lifestyle and the large amount of emails I receive daily I will probably not read long emails. Maybe highlighting some points or with different color would make it easier to read - he already writes things in bold which is helpful
- ✓ I love Father John's emails. He is great at reaching out to the community this way.
- ✓ Appreciate Fr. John's emails; namely, when a parishioner has departed, Feast Days, Saints' Days. Appreciate knowing Fr. John is always thinking of his flock via emails.
- ✓ I actually read most emails. I may not finish all of them but I like having the information on hand. I would like to see more guidance how to incorporate faith in relation to today's world and raising children of the 21st century.
- ✓ I only read ones that pertain to upcoming activities.

- ✓ I rather like the weekly updates on Church life and lives of Saints.
- ✓ I admit I do not always read them, but since I do not delete them I can always find them!
- ✓ I like the emails.
- ✓ Too frequent, too long. I basically just scan them quickly. Upcoming schedule is good to include. I appreciate the funeral notices. The cut and paste info is too much to read. I already get the Metropolis emails and then I get them again from Fr John. Seems like first world problems and I don't like to be whiny about it but I think messages could be more effective if they were shorter and less frequent.
- ✓ Don't get them. I gave my email in the survey.
- ✓ I enjoy receiving these emails and learning about saints and feast days. I receive many emails a day but these stand out and are frequently search for a reading material for my commute home.
- ✓ I like when he sends the biography of the Saints.
- ✓ In this world of being connected 24/7 it is typical for me to receive more than 100 emails per day. After a review of local news, national news, world news, my notification that my Schwab trade was completed, my notification that a new AT&T billing has been received, etc., etc., it's not often that I have enough time to read every email from Fr. John. Still, it's probably the best way to get a message to most of the parishioners.
- ✓ I love Father John's emails. I keep all the ones which educate me about the Saints. (one day to look at them even more). Father John is very informative, and I appreciate every email put one which again makes me feel very connected to our Parish. EXCELLENT
- ✓ I do receive quite a lot of emails, but the frequency of the emails is not too much. They are good overall
- ✓ Like it as is
- ✓ Fr. John is an excellent communicator. I have no current suggestions.
- ✓ I think Fr. John's emails are amazing

Question #21 How do you feel about the use of Greek and English in the Divine Liturgy?

Answer Choices	Responses	
We should have more Greek	12.35%	10
We should have more English	23.46%	19
The balance of Greek and English is about right	64.20%	52
Comment		34
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>81</b>
	<b>Skipped</b>	<b>1</b>

## Comments

- ✓ The future of the Orthodox Church in America is English, not Greek. I suspect that even half of those of Greek heritage don't entirely understand formal liturgical Greek.
- ✓ The use of predominantly English in our services is imperative if we hope to have successful outreach and attract more people to Orthodoxy and our parish. Hymns that are not repeated should be sung in English, not Greek. Repeated hymns should be sung just once in Greek and all other times in English. During the 28 years that Fr. Constantine served our parish, the congregation had memorized a lot of hymns in English, and we taught the children the hymns in both Greek and English in Sunday School. Congregational singing was highly encouraged. After his retirement we have lost ground because each new priest uses his own translations, different from the ones we knew and used. For instance, "Ti Ipermaho" was sung in English enthusiastically, but after several changes in the translation, we barely can follow along. I understand that each priest brings his own style with him, but I sometimes wonder if it is best for the parish to have to learn new English translations with each change in clergy. The possible slight improvement in the translation may not be worth the loss of parishioners being able to embrace the hymns in their native language.
- ✓ Tough one. I think the Greek sounds so much better but I really appreciate the English so I know what is being said. That said, I wish all the petition responses were in Greek: they are short, and to those who don't know them, they will learn if they follow the liturgy book!
- ✓ Though, I do enjoy the hymns in Greek and the chanting in Greek.
- ✓ I like the songs in Greek the English is harsh and hard on the ears.

- ✓ I love the Greek. I may not understand it all, but It is ancient and spiritual and some English is good of course. Hearing Greek cements the childhood memories of church with Yiayia and Papou.
- ✓ I personally have no issue with the amount of Greek but as I said earlier, I think it can be off-putting to spiritual seekers who are not of Greek heritage.
- ✓ It is important to have some Greek hymns as there are beautiful. However, it is very important to keep in mind about the younger folks and converts.
- ✓ The Greek language is much more demonstrative.
- ✓ I think it's best to use the language that is most understood by the congregations. This is the part where I want to be anonymous 😊. I also would prefer a quicker pace of the liturgy especially the chanting. I know the service varies slightly week to week, but some weeks seem very slow and my mind wanders off. We had to leave at 11:00 the other week and totally missed communion.
- ✓ Greek choir. The music isn't written for English words. We need to focus on getting a full choir
- ✓ This is an emotional issue, but for me, as much as I appreciate the depth and beauty of the Greek, it is a matter of communication and understanding, and praying in a language that the vast majority understands, which has its own depth and beauty.
- ✓ However, sometimes, not enough English. Even when I understand "some" of the Greek in a special hymn, I appreciate the depth & meaning in English.
- ✓ There are still enough people who know Greek and would like to hear some of the liturgy in Greek. The meaning of some Greek words and sentences is more deep than the English translation. Also, the hearing of Greek in a church creates an atmosphere that reminds Greece, it is more touching for some, more familiar and again some elderly feel more comfortable as they grow older to use their native language. Also, it is a reminder to the younger of the origins of our church and of the history - ie some Gospels were originally written in Greek.
- ✓ 50/50 seems good.
- ✓ I think it's really meaningful to have short discussions after liturgy about current events and guidance
- ✓ Music sounds better in Greek.

- ✓ At least always do the Kyrie Eleisons and Parashou Kyries in Greek! I did not grow up speaking Greek but I learned the hymns by listening to them. I understand most of them now but sometimes choose to read along in English. In this world today, so many families think their kids will get ahead by learning Mandarin and other obscure languages and they pay a lot of money for that exposure. Here we have actual Greek, spoken and chanted beautifully during Liturgy. Why do we not want to share that knowledge with our children, the same ones who are learning Mandarin, Spanish, French etc? They can be exposed to the beautiful Greek language in church and taught the meaning of the hymns and chants by a quality Sunday school program! It's a win-win!
- ✓ More English would be nice, but I understand the reasons for Greek.
- ✓ This one is really about our times today. Our youngsters speak English. 100% of the Divine Liturgy should be in English. To me this is the epitome of senseless and meaningless examples to demonstrate that we're not ready to make our religion be a part of our everyday lives.
- ✓ Although it is nice to have Greek during the liturgy, as the older generation who primarily speaks Greek dies off, we need to transition more and more to having English in the liturgy, especially if we hope to have more non-Greek concerts in the future
- ✓ More English. More like a 80/20 ratio
- ✓ It will never satisfy everyone
- ✓ We live in America and I appreciate use of the English language.
- ✓ The congregations becomes confused with the insertion of too much Greek, observed more often happening.
- ✓ I wouldn't mind more Greek especially in the choir but I also know there are more English speaking older adults in this church.
- ✓ Who is the critical target audience?; I would say the 18-35 years old? More English
- ✓ More English, and more of the current English translations in the pews so we can sing along with the choir, cantors and priests! Also we have several other nationalities like Romanian, Serbian, Lebanese/Palestinian, Russian, Eritrean and so on represented in our church and it would be really lovely to include a Lord Have Mercy and even the Lord's prayer in those languages each week so people can experience the universality of our faith and so people of those backgrounds feel an additional connection to our parish.



- ✓ As I haven't been for some time , I can only say that in the past I found it tolerable (I do not speak Greek well).
- ✓ The Greek is beautiful and adds spirituality. I do not care for saying it twice in two languages.
- ✓ As long as we don't repeat the English to Greek and Greek to English. Where I found that happens on occasion.
- ✓ Is there is any way that the books that are in each pew could match the liturgy, I feel it would be a great help to those following the liturgy. The current books do not follow the services. It would really help
- ✓ All good. We may need to include other languages as the community grows.
- ✓ 98% of the people who come to Sunday Church understand English, a MUCH smaller minority and NO visitors or seekers (or actual Greek-American members of the parish) understand ecclesiastical Greek, which is an archaic form of modern spoken Greek . Repeating both languages throughout the service is time consuming and tiresome. It's a serious obstacle for people who are looking for an alternative way to experience Christianity.

## Question #22 How important is library/bookstore?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Extremely important	11.39%	9
Very important	26.58%	21
Somewhat important	36.71%	29
Not so important	16.46%	13
Not at all important	8.86%	7
Comment		40
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>79</b>
	<b>Skipped</b>	<b>3</b>

- ✓ You can buy most books more cheaply on Amazon.
- ✓ With the internet and e-books, etc., fewer people are purchasing hard copy books. That said the exposure to religious/spiritual books is

important and having that easily accessible after church is a plus. Just not one of the higher priorities.

- ✓ The library and bookstore could be a wonderful resource for newcomers, ole timers like me wanting to know more, and curious visitors. Future ourgrowths could be a parish book club, selections for each grade of Sunday Schoolers. A venture into religious and cultural items could be another source of revenue.
- ✓ I would love a dedicated space for purchasing books, icons and children's books.
- ✓ The Library/Bookstore used to be in the Fellowship Hall every Sunday. Where is it now?
- ✓ I would enjoy recommendations for reading that would contribute to my spiritual journey.
- ✓ It should be out every Sunday for the coffe hour!
- ✓ It would be nice to have parish specific info and history but general books I can get online
- ✓ Additional library material would be more beneficial to me, but you need a person to oversee check outs and returns. Most books sold by the bookstore can most likely be ordered online should people want to own the book and again, you need someone to manage the bookstore inventory and sales.
- ✓ Education is important
- ✓ I know there was a bookstore during Fr. Constantine's tenure, but honestly I never took much advantage of it. If the bookstore were to return, perhaps there could be a section in the Word with reviews or recommendations, why would I want to read this book or this book would teach me about "a specific subject".
- ✓ The importance become more evident if the resource were more prominent. For instance when we had a bookstore in the hall on Sundays it was very visible and frequented by many. Is there a listing of what resources are available in the library? There is no mention of this resource on the website. How are people to know what is available to them?
- ✓ A library makes more sense to me than a book store. I'm not sure how much revenue a bookstore would make given the amount of time and

work it is to keep it up. Especially, the under 40 crowd is mostly reading online. Perhaps monthly suggestions in the newsletter on books to read. It would be up to the individual to download or order. There is so much information at our fingertips. Those want to learn will find a way.

- ✓ How about selling products online as well.
- ✓ In today's world of e-readers not sure there is a need for expansion here - except maybe for children's books
- ✓ Very important components of parish life.
- ✓ Also, offer free material to Sunday school teachers & parents (such as "Paxis" publication), etc.
- ✓ "A house without books is like a room without windows" (Horace Mann) Books are important and maybe there is some tech material that appeals better to younger generations
- ✓ A parish bookstore would be nice. It would provide an additional chance the get exposure to the Church Fathers and Mothers.
- ✓ Nobody reads books any more... unfortunately...
- ✓ Most stuff is online or available to purchase online. Maybe just do a couple events each year selling books and other religious items like before Christmas and Easter. We've attempted a parish library and bookstore in the past and neither was effective and we are left with a lot of old dusty books in that room downstairs in the small hall...
- ✓ I would support a bookstore, but don't see a strong need for it because of availability of orthodox books and things on the internet.
- ✓ I'd like to see greater utilization of modern resources and technologies as well as books and reading materials.
- ✓ Seems unnecessary as we already have a large collection of books and the Internet seems to make a bookstore redundant
- ✓ It would be nice if we actually had either.
- ✓ Easy access to icons, books, spiritual items is critical
- ✓ Unfortunately people do not read as much as they used to.
- ✓ My personal opinion is that the internet is the best and most used resource. I'm not opposed to having a library/bookstore on site as the older generation and very young will use hard copis, but millenials and future generations will go online for information.

- ✓ Important to have available for spiritual growth and another way of connecting to each other
- ✓ is that what is really missing; I suspect Amazon can help anyone who really wants to find something relevant and they offer free delivery!
- ✓ Not sure about current use and profit from book sales
- ✓ Education is key!! Getting books and materials into parishioners and seekers' hands is really great. Same with having religious items available for purchase such as stefana, prayer ropes, icons, children's books, etc. Great for outreach to our parishioners and the greater secular community! Come and See, Come and Learn! and the proceeds going to the church as a result help with the operating budget.
- ✓ I would rather see reading lists, reviews, recommendations online so I can purchase or borrow books at my leisure.
- ✓ library is a way to introduce orthodox teaching to new converts
- ✓ I don't think this has proven worthy... ask Pres. Kay
- ✓ The more educational info is better
- ✓ Crazy not to have a bookstore at this point in the life of the parish. Effort and funds should be dedicated to creating one.
- ✓ Having a place that people can find books and not hidden in a closet will be of great value. Education is important and without a place to present this information we are sometimes ignorant of our faith.
- ✓ If enthusiastically promoted it has the potential to change lives

### Question #23 How important is investing time and additional resources into adult education?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Extremely important	23.38%	18
Very important	33.77%	26
Somewhat important	29.87%	23
Not so important	10.39%	8
Not at all important	2.60%	2
Comment		32
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>77</b>
	<b>Skipped</b>	<b>5</b>

## Comments

- ✓ I love the fact that we offer some adult education—and I wish I could take part but work and other important commitments make it tough. Perhaps the occasional all-day retreat would work for some things. I also think a program attractive to young people and parents would be great (the future won't happen without our young folk).. I find the more one understands the why and hows of the Church, the more one is attached to it and its services. But we'd have to find a way to make it appealing and doable for young parents especially. Perhaps by offering childcare.
- ✓ Faith & cultural programs for the adults; I think a six week dance course for anyone from the community would be a good way of bringing people together.
- ✓ Unfortunately the days/times of adult education does not fit into my schedule. I may possibly be unique.
- ✓ Not for me but should be available to people who want it. The church should pay but offer facilities
- ✓ Greek classes might be fun. COOKING Classes would be wonderful. Just get that Cultural Immersion going!
- ✓ I think adults are set in their ways.
- ✓ For many adults their only interaction with the church may be Sunday services. Not everyone has a desire or the opportunity to serve on the Parish Council or to be a coordinator of a booth at the festival, so opportunities to interact with other parishioners and grow their faith sound good to me.
- ✓ I'm all for lifelong learning. I've enjoyed the few evening sessions I've attended when it coordinates with my child's dance practice. However, between the commute and family obligation it's difficult to attend in the evening and I work during the day.
- ✓ What kind of adult education. I would like bible study at night where all age ranges can come and people that work during the day can make it. Bible more on topics of today rather than just reading the Bible. We can read it at home, I believe discussion is more educational.

- ✓ Really enjoyed the times I participated in the Journey to Fullness - it broadened by appreciation for Orthodoxy.
- ✓ Can't emphasize enough.
- ✓ Unfortunately, most people only attend Sunday liturgy (if at all ! ). Having adult education is important, The challenge is getting people to attend.
- ✓ Most adults do not have the time..over extended, traffic, etc
- ✓ I would love to attend courses in the Old Testament and the New Testament, very basic courses somewhat like a guided history class where you read a lot of the Bible stories and infer the meaning of the teachings, rather than preaching and dogma. Or how about a book club to analyze different pieces of literature for Christian meaning? Just not dogma.
- ✓ I think it's very important, and am a little frustrated that what is offered today doesn't fit with my work schedule.
- ✓ If we don't train the adults, then how do we expect the children to follow?
- ✓ I WOULD LOVE to be able to participate even more with the adult education, however it is not the our churches problem - I am the one with the time constraint.
- ✓ It's very nice to have but not essential
- ✓ You can't teach/pass-on what you don't know!
- ✓ Convincing adults that they need to be educated is the key!
- ✓ I do not understand what is meant by "adult education"
- ✓ For me personally, it is not important
- ✓ I will reiterate by saying that I find it very helpful and educational to read Father's email with respect to historical literature of the Saints, church news/updates, etc. i have yet to make it for bible study classes, but would really enjoy reading the information shared via email.
- ✓ Explore different formats
- ✓ 18-35 is the critical target audience; with the internet available is lack of resources the real issue?- suspect not.
- ✓ Need to be scheduled at times that are convenient for people who work

- ✓ Yes, I think adult education and fellowship important to help us learn/relearn things about our faith and to feel connected with our church, Christ and one another.
- ✓ I am not sure what adult education refers to. Is this religious, language, ???
- ✓ If one wants to learn more they should go forward on their own. They could get more personal attention that way and get to ask questions they have that brings them to wanting to learn about our religion.
- ✓ There are many opportunities for adult education. Many adults don't know where to turn when they need help. Legal help, marriage help, help with medical issues, end of life planning
- ✓ Most of us have been baptized into the faith and education is important. Also those that come to the faith are looking to learn and we need to have a place for this education.
- ✓ Fr. John is an excellent resource for this but I would rather see more of this type of activity and less fundraising events

Question #24 How important is investing time and additional resources into youth and young adult ministry in terms of the future well being of our parish?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Extremely important	63.75%	51
Very important	30.00%	24
Somewhat important	5.00%	4
Not so important	0.00%	0
Not at all important	1.25%	1
Comment		36
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>80</b>
	<b>Skipped</b>	<b>2</b>

- ✓ But we need to be mindful of the costs. Vital! The number of youth participating at our parish has declined so steeply that we will not have a church in 25 years if we don't attract and retain the youth.
- ✓ We gotta get 'em while they're young! But are there enough youth and YA's to warrant the time, treasure and talent for something sustainable? Would it be possible to establish programs both relevant and open to non-members?
- ✓ Children need to feel welcomed and engaged in the Church
- ✓ I am an active member of Nativity of Christ for two reasons: The examples of my grandmothers, who were spiritual and extremely involved in their Greek-American Orthodox Community AND the experiences I had as a child and teenager with my hometown Greek Orthodox Community.
- ✓ Builds camaraderie, future community strength
- ✓ If you don't get the kids young, you will never get them. Nurture the kids.
- ✓ I feel this is the priority of the parish. I feel that the youth should be incorporated into most aspects of the church - including in the usher rotation, greeters, and organizing events. Youth usually rise to the occasion when they are given leadership roles
- ✓ The youth is the future
- ✓ Our youth have been and always will be the future of our parish and our faith. Building friendships within our faith is a part of what makes people feel they belong somewhere.
- ✓ While the church competes for time with many other youth activities, the youth are a very important part of the future of our church and parish. With the challenges of distance to travel to church, how do we best overcome the challenges we face and engage our youth. Adult ministries are equally important to maintain a thriving community.
- ✓ Our youth is the future of the church.
- ✓ The kids don't appreciate what they have until they begin to minister to ones less fortunate. It's very important to guide them towards Gods works.
- ✓ We need to get youth inspired and involved - I think it is unfortunate that the church continues its patristic ways and doesn't offer more participation for girls like it does for boys.
- ✓ Youth are the future of our parish, the future of our faith, and the future of our world.
- ✓ This is a key demographic, and we need to keep them engaged.



- ✓ There will be no future if there is no youth! We're missing the mark with the Sunday school challenges. Keep up the family evening events, keep supporting the dance program, develop a basketball and a volleyball team, encourage them to attend retreats and other GOYA and YAL events. Check in with the older ones in a non-threatening, non-condescending, non-judgmental way because that is sometimes part of the problem that they don't come around. I have heard it from them. Don't turn them away because they don't come as often as maybe they should. We must always be there for them because I believe in my heart that they will come back, if we treat them with love and understanding whether they are there every Sunday, once a month or even just once a year. We need to stick together, be a good, warm and loving example to them.
- ✓ Without youth and young adult ministries what do we have? Answer: not that much.
- ✓ Our youth is our future...
- ✓ The youth are the future. If we don't work to keep them involved in our church it will cease to exist
- ✓ Without our children, the church is in trouble.
- ✓ The youth need the Church and we need to make sure they know they're welcomed and encouraged to be part of the church
- ✓ Here too it depends on what kind of youth and young adult ministries we are considering.
- ✓ Keeping our youth engaged is optimal for the future of the church. I am very impressed with with the youth group ministries and events and hope they continue to be successful.
- ✓ In spiritual matters
- ✓ We do a good job on the youth but lose them after high school; lots of distractions after HS- college, job, marriage etc.
- ✓ Please! GOYA/Sunday School/Young Adult...all important to helping kids feel connected to one another and the parish
- ✓ The youth is the Parish's future. If they do not continue, the church will cease to exist.
- ✓ resources directed at youth is important but young adults are the cornerstone of the parish.

- ✓ Greek Dance Groups are very attractive to young people, encouraging fellowship
- ✓ The youth is who will keep our parish thriving
- ✓ This is very important as long as the religious importance is not a step-child to the cultural component.
- ✓ More diversity in what we offer is needed. Kids end up going to private classes in marin to do art, learn robotics, learn programming or cooking, sewing, designing.
- ✓ The most important. We must help them understand faith and the bonds of community.
- ✓ Obviously, if we fail to retain our youth, we're threatening our very existence

Question #25 How important is investing time and additional resources into growing sacrificial stewardship giving?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Extremely important	23.29%	17
Very important	34.25%	25
Somewhat important	30.14%	22
Not so important	8.22%	6
Not at all important	4.11%	3
Comment		36
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>73</b>
	<b>Skipped</b>	<b>9</b>

- ✓ This is important not only financially but spiritually. We need to grow to understand why this is important to our spiritual growth and well being.
- ✓ That's going to be a tough sell—but not impossible. First off, don't call it sacrificial stewardship unless its for some legal or theological reason—sounds terrifying. At the least, we might do a whole campaign around

building sustaining stewardship. Paying some each month as opposed to writing out one big check is, for some, more doable AND easier psychologically.

- ✓ It will be important to assess if actual stewardship giving will increase if there is an investment of time and resources,
- ✓ I will need to have a better understanding of “sacrificial stewardship” before I can answer.
- ✓ Its Yiayia guild, everyone tunes it out
- ✓ I think people give what they feel they can give monetarily. And sadly just a few give their time and talent.
- ✓ Please, Do not burn out young folks
- ✓ People who want to give will.
- ✓ I'm not sure I understand the meaning of sacrificial stewardship. An explanation could be very helpful.
- ✓ This is potentially one of the greatest sustainable funding sources available. Stewardship should be sufficient to cover operating and maintenance of the parish.
- ✓ If a person is giving a sacrificial stewardship than they are truly invested in the church. If every member was giving sacrificially, the future of the church would be very bright.
- ✓ Don't make people feel guilty into giving but just tell them give what you can.
- ✓ Not sure you can 'grow' it - I think it needs to be inspired.
- ✓ Does this need a comment?
- ✓ It will happen primarily if we are growing in our faith.
- ✓ People's stewardship giving is less a function of their perception of financial need, than it is about how they feel about giving, in general (not just to the church). We should be focusing on, and RECOGNIZING, the giving of time and talent.
- ✓ Sacrificial? Happily giving to support a major part of your life is hardly a sacrifice; it's an honor.
- ✓ I believe that will all come organically if we can be a more cohesive, loving, non-judgmental, educational, cultural and spiritual family together and to the people who don't come around as often.

- ✓ Whoa there..why is charitable giving, yes, even to my church, deemed to be sacrificial? That's a very poor choice of words to describe something that is very personal to each person. I'm sorry, but describing my charitable giving as 'sacrificial' just leaves me wordless.
- ✓ I do not know what this is? As I mentioned before stewardship is important.... however it is just as important to let individuals give according to their conscience. Keep the parish involved with the knowledge of expenses. It has worked so far.
- ✓ It's already hard enough to get people to donate to the church, I feel as if this is focused on people will get fatigued hearing about donating
- ✓ This is a chronic problem in most churches. People need to understand this is not a token gesture.
- ✓ Our Church must be able to survive without a Festival and cell towers.
- ✓ Here too it depends on what kind of ministries we are asked to sacrifice for. I don't understand the meaning of "sacrificial" stewardship. If that means pledge commitments, of course that is extremely important to the continuation of the church and campus.
- ✓ I don't have a sense of the giving of the parishioners.
- ✓ Of course if one does everything else well this comes naturally but then again it is hard to do everything else well.
- ✓ Does this mean tithing? Can people really do this living in Marin and still afford to live here?
- ✓ I'm not sure what "sacrificial" stewardship means.
- ✓ There is too much competition and the stewardship campaigns feel like strong arm guilt tactics
- ✓ It seems when talking and listening to others so many do not like to be told what they should give. We should be able to give as we feel we can and not have to follow a chart that in many ways makes one feel that they are not doing their part all because of other responsibilities one has.
- ✓ Need to realize that some people cannot sacrifice as much as others
- ✓ I do not feel comfortable using the words "sacrificial" and "stewardship" in the same context. We should fill that stewardship is a sacrifice, which causes people to feel unworthy of attending church due to financial restrictions.

- ✓ We need to fix participation first. Lack of people makes it hard to create new things
- ✓ This will come with faith education.
- ✓ People care deeply about things they invest time and resources into.  
"Where your treasure is, there is your heart." (Matthew 6:23)

Question #26 In terms of the future well being of our parish, how important is it that we invest time and resources in establishing a planned giving program?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Extremely important	10.39%	8
Very important	33.77%	26
Somewhat important	36.36%	28
Not so important	11.69%	9
Not at all important	7.79%	6
Comments		33
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>77</b>
	<b>Skipped</b>	<b>5</b>

- ✓ Do we have any Trust or Estate attorneys in our Parish? Anyone to make it easier to understand and implement (an impediment might be thinking such a thing is more complicated and time consuming than it is? Not sure how the new tax laws figure into this but there might be other benefits.
- ✓ Considering our economic situation, a planned giving program may not be a feasible option for the majority of our community.
- ✓ People may not consider this so nudging could be helpful. Especially encouraging small honorariums, etc.
- ✓ Marin County is an affluent and highly educated community. Most know how include consideration in their planning. I do think a simple

arrangement with a financial planner could make it easier for those that need assistance. I am ambivalent about "gently encouraging"it

- ✓ I resent this type of solicitation.
- ✓ there is much more we can do on this. potential is huge.
- ✓ Individual Matter
- ✓ We can't know individual's estate planning but reminding them that giving to their parish is an option and an opportunity is very important. As I age and think about estate planning, that could offer me a way to give more to my church.
- ✓ This has proven to be significant in the life of our parish in being able to retire previous debts.
- ✓ I believe most people know it's an option. A gentle reminder on the annual stewardship card is good hurt as well as a resource, if there is one. I don't think it's something we need to invest a lot of time and resources.
- ✓ Have a wall with whoever donates after their death, their name will be memorialized on the wall.
- ✓ 'Gentle' is nice but I believe you need to be direct as well.
- ✓ Another important component.
- ✓ Everyone has priorities, but a portion should be included for our church.
- ✓ why would I remember Nativity in my estate? really there are many organizations; hospitals medical centers, cancer centers that could definitely benefit from my estate;and I could see my money go to good use; how would it go to good use for this establishment ?
- ✓ I'm not naive. I realize that a church requires \$\$ to operate. However, there always seems to be a focus on raising money. That turns people off.
- ✓ Most are well aware of said opportunity.
- ✓ That just seems greedy to me. A total turn off.
- ✓ Again, I will not respond with an answer but will have a comment: here's the deal - if we don't have parishioners willing to donate to the Nativity, there can be no Nativity. Gently encouraging? Tell the parishioners that their parish's finances are their's (the parishioners) to own to grow or to go bankrupt.

- ✓ It certainly helps the church but I think we already do a good job of this
- ✓ This is an excellent way to encourage giving.
- ✓ Many people don't think about this as a possibility. There are many ways to give to the Church
- ✓ To have a successful program in this area would require that we put together a group of projects or ministries worth considering for a gift. The issue here that there are a lot of competing ministries for the same funds. Ours have to have much better than the others. Unfortunately most charities , including our own, prefer unrestricted gifts which are not easy to sell to donors.
- ✓ Personally, I would be quite offended by that. Giving should be voluntary and I don't appreciate "gentle encouraging."
- ✓ I think those that want to give to the church are going to do that anyway in their estate.

Question# 27 How important is investing time and additional resources in creating a hospitality and evangelization program to retrieve those who have drifted away from our parish and also to bring new people into Orthodoxy?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Extremely important	34.62%	27
Very important	35.90%	28
Somewhat important	19.23%	15
Not so important	5.13%	4
Not at all important	5.13%	4
Comment		31
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>78</b>
	<b>Skipped</b>	<b>4</b>

- ✓ This is a spiritual and practical imperative. Spiritual because we are called to do this by Christ Himself; practical because the future health of our parish relies on growing our numbers.
- ✓ Establishing another whole ministry would further stretch the resources of those already involved (and as we know, it's the same people). I'm thinking (and this is a wholly unformed idea, mind you) that each ministry could assume one aspect of hospitality and evangelism. For example, Parish Council would be responsible for X, Philoptochos for Y, etc. Each ministry would have at least one member function as the Hospitality/Evangelism rep and liaison. Not sure this would work in practice...
- ✓ Depends on the person...hahaha
- ✓ Outreach is essential
- ✓ I agree in reaching out to parishers who have drifted away. Yet, I have conflicting emotions about bringing in new people into Orthodoxy. Our Greek Heritage enriches our Orthodox Religion.
- ✓ A better question is why people have left and fixing that problem. New people need to feel welcomed. Not going to happen if people are treated like second class citizens
- ✓ Easier to get the Believers than to get converts? Maybe so.
- ✓ If a person has felt slighted by the church, it is terribly difficult to win them back. They have found solace elsewhere. The church should try harder not to burn their bridges.
- ✓ we are too internally focused
- ✓ Important , but very difficult
- ✓ I am torn on this subject only because the first thing I think about are other faiths who come to your door to encourage you to learn more about their faith. To me, that is not a way to bring people to God. I do believe it's very important to have means to share our faith with others. Bringing back those who have drifted away or felt pushed away is also very important. That requires a delicate balancing act of listening to their concerns and understanding why they left.
- ✓ Growing our parish is key to being sustainable.
- ✓ This is how we will grow our parish. We need to make sure new members feel welcome. However, it's not just about numbers. The goal should be about having people being more engaged and committed to the church.



- ✓ This is very important, not just for the church but to help people find God and peace.
- ✓ Yes, extremely important.
- ✓ We have not learn to do this! We become comfortable with our own as in most of our churches.
- ✓ Probably best done through hospitality for those who have drifted away (see my comments above). I think that many of the "converts" over the years were first attracted to our parish for what some may consider superficial reasons, like the beauty of the church inside, the culture, the festival etc. And many of those "converts" became very, very positive, active, giving parishioners. That's one of the reasons I feel so strongly about continuing and continually improving the festival and the gyro booth, because we can have an impact on the community and we can attract people to us.
- ✓ It's the call of any person of faith to attempt to heal those who have drifted away. It's been going on a long, long time. I don't see how that changes, so to me it's no important at all.
- ✓ We don't need to do anything special for this. acting with Christ's love in and around our community is the best way to evangelize
- ✓ I have always felt that you need to satisfy your own before you can confidently reach out to others. If we're not doing a good job of attracting (and retaining) those who are already Orthodox, then how can we hope to do so for those who are not. I would love to find ways to strengthen our base.
- ✓ It is extremely important but it is also extremely difficult. On some of these subjects it may be helpful to check with churches that have a lot more experience than we do. For example the catholics found out sometime around 2003 that there were about 70 mil. catholics in the US and a little over 30 mil. former catholics. Furthermore the former catholics were older, richer and more influential. Pope Benedict declared 2013 to be a year for evangelizing to the former catholics. I suspect they did not manage to bring back to the fold many of the former catholics but I am not sure. I think talking with the appropriate catholic officials could give us a better understanding of what is possible. I suspect they did not have spectacular success but I hope they stemmed their further losses.

- ✓ People are absent for a variety of reasons. Rather than creating a "program," it's always nice when members of the parish call their friends or acquaintances to "check in" and inquire if everything is okay.
- ✓ Evangelism is of the upmost importance for the church to survive and thrive!
- ✓ Critical to long term success of any organization.
- ✓ and truthfully to hold on to the folks who are already here too. Sometimes people are absent for a few weeks; does anyone check on them to see why? Get our youth to mill around at coffee hour; serve coffee bring their smiling faces to coffee hour and connect with an elderly person. Put on a simple luncheon for Coast Guard families stationed at Hamilton; host a welcome back to school year prayer service for teachers in September; endless possibilites!!
- ✓ It is important to keep the proper perspective with this...sometimes quality is more important than quantity. Many people have left the church because they don't feel welcome. It would be nice to bring people back.
- ✓ Easier said than done. Once one is hurt by their church where it should be a happy, loving environment it is a very hard thing to overcome.
- ✓ Some will always leave looking for something else. Its not a crime to change churches but reaching out to those that left may reveal important information
- ✓ Feeling welcome and invited back is every persons want.
- ✓ Churches grow three ways - immigration, birthrate and converts. Immigration is WAY down, birthrate is Way down and we're terrible as a church at evangelization, plus there is more loss through marriage than there is gain.

## Question# 28 How important is investing time and additional resources into the childrens' Sunday School program?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Extremely important	55.70%	44
Very important	27.85%	22
Somewhat important	13.92%	11
Not so important	1.27%	1
Not at all important	1.27%	1
Comment		31
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>79</b>
	<b>Skipped</b>	<b>3</b>

### Comments

- ✓ The decline in our Sunday School attendance is heartbreaking to me, and the #1 threat to the continuance of the parish.
- ✓ Again, get 'em while they are young. But before appropriating resources, I'd want to know more about our current program: of our current parishioners, how many have Sunday School aged children? What percentage of those go to Sunday School? What age group is most participatory? Re those who don't enroll their children, what are the impediments? How best to address those?
- ✓ Sunday school is where our children will develop their understanding of the faith and also grow friendships that will last a lifetime.
- ✓ They need to be doing more than coloring and crafts. They should not have to experience so much listening. The youth need an opportunity to speak and share their thoughts and feelings
- ✓ I feel the teaching of morality, character and behavior is much more important than church doctrine.
- ✓ That's the big chance to instill religious growth in the younger generation
- ✓ This program is only as good as your director dedicated to the program.
- ✓ Again, our youth is the future of the church. I don't feel the program is as organized as it once was. Especially the older kids, need to feel like they are

- getting something out of it else they just tune out. I think there is a lot of potential for growth here.
- ✓ This is crucial, but requires a whole new way of thinking that involves, adult education as well, and the overall participation and involvement of the whole family.
  - ✓ Again, it's not resources as it is personal. Personal contact of love & acceptance.
  - ✓ Most important program of our church
  - ✓ Youth focus is important. With the direction the world is going, teaching people proper values is of paramount importance. I attribute our child having been raised going to church and Sunday School as a primary factor in him being a good person.
  - ✓ Another group we want to keep engaged and interested in how Christianity, particularly Orthodox Christianity applies in modernity
  - ✓ Pretty good already
  - ✓ The children are the future of our faith and they need to understand the faith to take it into the future. They need to learn the history, the Bible stories, the culture, the Liturgy to develop their spirituality within the faith and stay in it.
  - ✓ If we don't educate then we don't grow.
  - ✓ We are all part of our Church and that includes our youth :)
  - ✓ This is again necessary for the future of our parish. Giving our youth a solid background with their faith is extremely important
  - ✓ Our program now lacks consistency and energy. Most of the time, my children ask to skip church because they don't want to go to Sunday School.
  - ✓ Sunday School needs to be able to compete with sports and other extra curricular. Kids need to want to come
  - ✓ Children are fundamental to the future of the church.
  - ✓ The growth of the church is through a well structured curriculum with classes for teachers to attend and required meetings.
  - ✓ Parents have much more influence but good reinforcement and socialization for the kids and good reason for parents to attend church as well.
  - ✓ Sunday School and GOYA/HOPE/JOY are of paramount importance to educate our children in our faith. We should look at whether or not the current format of the teen class is the right approach and also be looking overall at Sunday School attendance, then seeing where we can improve. Is our current Sunday

school format successful? And if kids aren't coming to SS/GOYA etc, why not?  
Is it format? Curriculum? Teachers? something else?

**Question#** How important is investing time and resources into a grief and loss support ministry for people who have experienced the passing of a loved one, or any other major loss causing grief?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Extremely important	30.77%	24
Very important	30.77%	24
Somewhat important	30.77%	24
Not so important	5.13%	4
Not at all important	2.56%	2
Comment		27
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>78</b>
	<b>Skipped</b>	<b>4</b>

- ✓ Wow. In the best of all possible worlds, such a ministry would be fabulous, and might be very valuable to those who wouldn't seek help elsewhere. But such a ministry would demand training its volunteers, perhaps developing materials. Or maybe I'm overthinking? Thinking too big?
- ✓ My religion has been extremely supportive during the loss of a loved one.
- ✓ A priest should visit the person a home more than one time.
- ✓ It seems like the community does a good job at this. Not sure how more money would improve it
- ✓ It should also include the loss of a person due to disease (alzheimers, tragic accidents,the cancer journey, etc.) not just death.
- ✓ Takes a supports group atmosphere
- ✓ If you have a member who is active in the church they will automatically get this
- ✓ I would want to learn more about how a program like this would work.
- ✓ It sounds very nice on paper, but grief and loss are also a very personal thing. Personally, I don't think I would want "strangers" trying to console me. I would not be in the mood for small talk and do not open-up to people I don't

know. However, everyone is different. If it can help people, go for it. Just be sensitive to the person's needs.

- ✓ If people want counseling or for someone to visit them after a passing of a loved one is what God wants and is important in Orthodoxy. Our focus is love and compassion to bring us closer to God
- ✓ I think this is important - but there are many community resources (like hospice) that already offer these services.
- ✓ Again, a very helpful ministry.
- ✓ Especially, when there's a need—lack of family.
- ✓ This is consistent with our christian values !
- ✓ I believe the parish priest is the best person to offer grief counseling and support. Certainly Father Constantine was always there for us at the times we needed someone the most. I don't think anyone else on earth could have helped us through what we experienced when Elektra was born and when she had open heart surgeries and other procedures. He was there for every single one when she was young and it was a comfort to us and to her.
- ✓ The very foundation of Christianity - Eternal life, everlasting - tells me that we're in the right spot and it's not important to invest time and resources. To call me a Christian and then I ask you to invest time and resources in helping me grieve makes me sound very selfish and uninformed.
- ✓ That is why we have Father John right? He is there for us as needed.
- ✓ Please don't take my rank as an indication that I don't believe this is important. I just don't feel it needs to be prioritized relative to everything else.
- ✓ I have not have any experience here too but I understand that it is an important ministry.
- ✓ Personally, this would not be so important to me but it may be to others in the community. I tend to seek out my own family members and friends in times of sadness or grief.
- ✓ Trained members to console and assist those that are grieving!
- ✓ Are there not other resources and support services ut there already? Not sure.
- ✓ Great idea. Education is needed to encourage people to speak up and to let them know that Nativity is there for them!! Yet another opportunity to

- support our own folks and welcome others from outside our community to find comfort and support.
- ✓ The loving dedication of our Parish is our biggest asset. We should be focusing on helping people, especially in dark times or community disasters
  - ✓ These are times that many truly need to friendship and love of the Church and Community.
  - ✓ It should be offered in the best possible way and then see if there's a sustained response from parishioners.

Question# 30 How important is an effective and active program of maintaining the good working condition of our facilities in terms of the future well being of our parish?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Extremely important	48.15%	39
Very important	41.98%	34
Somewhat important	8.64%	7
Not so important	0.00%	0
Not at all important	1.23%	1
Comment		24
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>81</b>
	<b>Skipped</b>	<b>1</b>

## Comments

- ✓ I want to be sure we can afford to maintain what we have before we spend a lot more money on building and expanding.
- ✓ Essential. On all sorts of levels: health and safety overall but we can only do what our facilities allow. And if we want to attract new members and expand our numbers, we need to show we are viable and up to the task.
- ✓ most important is the Leadership and their ability to make things happen positively and effectively
- ✓ Better question is, what is not getting done? Aren't we already doing this?
- ✓ This should be the utmost priority. What is the alternative, bulldoze it? I was raised to believe that "Cleanliness is next to Godliness". Clearly God has not been to the Nativity of Christ Kitchen!!! As recently witnessed, it is in disgraceful condition. The filth is extremely unhealthy, especially to prepare food to serve the public and as a facility to be rented out to the community. As with a person, they may appear "beautiful", but it is on the inside that is the MOST important. On the outside, our church looks presentable. On the inside, this kitchen is a disgrace. The community should be ashamed. .
- ✓ Keep up the Church as one keeps up their homes?
- ✓ This is what people see when they are here. Having cabinet doors falling off and rodents active in the facilities brings into question the priorities of our facilities activities. This is very disturbing and disappointing to many and can lead to dismay and lack of support. Some would wonder why we are even contemplating additions to the campus if we cannot take care of what we have to begin with.
- ✓ Our building and facilities is an investment that we should take pride in. The cost of regular maintenance is small compared to the cost of a major repair. Also, a well-maintained building makes me feel good about my parish. This is God's home so we should treat it as such.
- ✓ Well, if the toilets don't work that's a problem.
- ✓ Though the church is the center of our facilities, the hall is in VERY BAD shape. The kitchen is rat infested ! The risk of a health epidemic is present. We should be collectively ashamed and incensed about this. I believe so strongly in this that I think we should not spend a penny on Narthex expansion until the kitchen and Hall are cleaned up (leaking stopped and pests eradicated).



- We should have a regular kitchen cleaning service .. nto just to wash pots and pans but to sweep the floor, clean the tables, etc !
- ✓ Kitchen renovation needs to be started immediately after the festival is complete
  - ✓ Who wants to come to a broken down church or dirty hall? Who is going to donate if they think their donation is to renovate someone's lack of respect to the facility which results in disrepair? And we really need disabled access!
  - ✓ Without a sound facility it is difficult to attract parishioners who are willing to donate time and resources.
  - ✓ We should maintain what we have
  - ✓ The facilities should be generally maintained, but we do not need any additional extra things on our campus. Let's work to maintain what we already have
  - ✓ There is no better indication of how strongly people feel about something than how they care for it.
  - ✓ The status of our facilities are a reflection of how much we care about our Church and God's house
  - ✓ Maintenance is important always
  - ✓ I think one of the main assets of this church is it's beautiful campus and there is an opportunity to generate more income from it.
  - ✓ Shows respect and importance of church and God himself in priority of things.
  - ✓ Please. So much deferred maintenance around this campus.
  - ✓ Practically, it is cheaper to maintain than rebuild and we have an obligation to be good stewards of our holdings.
  - ✓ If we want people to give of their treasures we must show that we respect the home of God.
  - ✓ How we care about God's house is an indication of the degree to which we care about God.

## Question# 31 How important is investing time and resources into growing our ministry to the poor and needy?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Extremely important	45.57%	36
Very important	25.32%	20
Somewhat important	25.32%	20
Not so important	2.53%	2
Not at all important	1.27%	1
Comment		32
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>79</b>
	<b>Skipped</b>	<b>3</b>

### Comments

Especially, growing our ministry to the poor and needy in our local communities to demonstrate our relevance to our neighbors.

- ✓ We are called to do this by Christ. It is one of the ways in which we grow as Christians. It is also a way to attract others to the Faith by being the visible manifestation of the love of Christ in our community. We should be so active and visible in our community in this way that people identify Nativity of Christ as the church that helps people. Who doesn't want to be part of a church that does that?
- ✓ Serving others, especially those in need, is work directed by God. But rather than being just the work of Philoptochos, all ministries should donate a portion of their time, treasure and talent to the cause. I said Extremely Important not to make it more important than other things in the survey, but to say it is extremely important for all members in all ministries to contribute in a meaningful way.
- ✓ Essential :
- ✓ But who decides where this is applied? If this goes outside the parish it can drive away donations. We have to pay our bills first.
- ✓ Take care of the poor and needy and the elderly of the Church. They cared for us, now it is our duty to help them.

- ✓ This should be a priority - first within our community then beyond
- ✓ involving our youth in these endeavors would be a nice way to have them get more involved and give back
- ✓ Isn't this what Christ did?
- ✓ it is a biblical imperative
- ✓ Important, but difficult
- ✓ Yes, that's what the bible tells us to do. However, I think it needs to be more than me submitting stewardship and then the parish sends the money to an organization. Yes, sometimes that is what makes sense to do but I would also like to see a more long-term hands-on approach with a local organization. It shouldn't always just be money
- ✓ That issue has been near and dear to my heart and would love to be a part of ministering to people that need God in their lives. It's something that I would love to do
- ✓ Not certain of the scope of this but certainly important. Again there are additional community resources serving this need.
- ✓ A vital ministry of the Church and aspect of our Christian calling.
- ✓ Being aware of those in our communities.
- ✓ Again ... consistent with our christian values. We should not just think of ourselves, but of those that are less fortunate.
- ✓ i am using a local non-orthodox non-Christian church as a venue to serve the needy.
- ✓ These types of programs and events help bring our community together (ex: blanket tying) and help the poor and needy outside of our community. Plus it helps our children and adults know how blessed we are to have homes, food and clothing.
- ✓ Imagine no possessions, I wonder if you can, No need for greed and hunger, a brotherhood of man.....
- ✓ I feel we do that individually, it is also very nice to do as a group. However, I don't think we should enforce such a program
- ✓ It is one of our duties as Christians. We should be doing this as much as possible
- ✓ This should be a focus of our parish.
- ✓ I do not understand why we are not doing more on this.
- ✓ In my opinion, that is the main purpose of a church and its community.

- ✓ We have not done enough in this area
- ✓ I think we need to be outward focused and help those in needs. It will keep us grounded and grateful.
- ✓ Numerous programs out there doing this of course and it is valuable but growing the ministry is more important.
- ✓ I am not sure what this means or looks like. How does ministering to these groups differ from ministering to others?
- ✓ I think part of our community and church should be based on helping others
- ✓ We will need to figure out what this truly means and help those as we can.
- ✓ We are transformed into better Christians when we do this. "As you do to the least of these, you do to me."Matthew 25:40

Question #32 How important is investing time and resources in growing Greek heritage programs (dance and Greek language) in terms of the future well being of our parish?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Extremely important	19.51%	16
Very important	34.15%	28
Somewhat important	28.05%	23
Not so important	14.63%	12
Not at all important	3.66%	3
Comment		32
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>82</b>
	<b>Skipped</b>	<b>0</b>

## Comments

- ✓ In the long-run, this is not so important, but near-term NOC attendance might be even worse without Greek heritage programs, especially for our high school students who participate in Greek dancing.
- ✓ I have nothing against these programs; my own children attended Greek School for 11 years and enjoyed Greek dancing. They are lovely activities for our youth. However, I do not feel they are essential to the future well being of

our parish and in fact may inadvertently perpetuate the idea that we are a parish primarily for Greek people.

- ✓ Like it or not, our heritage is often the glue that sticks us together. In a mixed marriage, the Greek side most often prevails because it comes with long-standing traditions, celebrations. And the Greek side is usually more fun. I'd argue that maintaining the heritage and language could do wonders. But think we have greater needs in the short run. (Frankly, I'd like to see us be able to offer dance, language, and cooking classes to the outside world. Another revenue stream, another way of allowing non-members (and non-Greeks) a closer look at what we have,
- ✓ The church can supply facilities it should not be financially subsidized. Why are these two things called out? Why not YAL, GOYA, volleyball, basketball or other events?
- ✓ Language and Cooking. Cooking means FAMILY and TRADITIONS. Dancing is great, and builds friendships, but you have to GROW the Family and the best place to do that is the KITCHEN.
- ✓ Dance and language are too exclusive of all but a few of the parishoners especially those not of Greek descent..
- ✓ this conflicts with evangelism
- ✓ Dance, cultural attitudes such as our parents taught us. Not in flavor of Greek school as I didn't like it. (SORRY!)
- ✓ These are good programs but should be optional and not ministries of the Church. They should be funded by the parents of the participants
- ✓ Although I think both ministries are great, I think the parish should support but not pay for the ministries. My family is part of the dance group and the cost (excluding FDF) is very reasonable and scholarships are available for those in need. It's that fine line between culture and religion. Sadly, a large percentage of the participants in the Greek heritage programs are not engaged members of the parish. They are strictly there for the cultural aspect. We can be hopeful that the programs can be a springboard to be more involved, but I have rarely seen that happen. As an active member, I would prefer my stewardship be used in other ways.
- ✓ Don't we have a dance group

- ✓ I think the Greek dance program is an essential social tool to get youth involved, not sure about the church needing to provide a language curriculum.
- ✓ I know I'll get some pushback on this, but these programs have all the support they require at this time, and will become less important for the future well being of our parish with the passage of time,
- ✓ My experience has shown me that it has not brought our people closer to the faith!
- ✓ Important to perpetuate our heritage, but many people involved with our dance program, do not participate in any other ministries of the church and many don't attend church on Sunday. Seems hypocritical.
- ✓ Greek language is important to learn or at least be exposed to for a lot of reasons. Learning the alphabet can help kids with math symbols, learning some basic words can help kids with biology terms, learning another language can help learn a third language. There is no downside to learning! I think you know how I feel about Greek dance. It provides an opportunity for preserving the culture, for experiencing fun and fellowship with the other dancers, it's good exercise and for some kids we've taught through the years, it's the only extracurricular activity they could do. That's true for our daughter Elektra and for several other dancers. One boy joined when he was in middle school and we thought he would never dance because he was so physically and socially awkward. Not only did he learn to dance, he was leading dances by the time he left for college. Dance gave him the confidence to do many things he wouldn't have done otherwise (that from his parents). We have other children too who for physical, developmental or social issues did not fit in at school but wanted to be a part of the group and worked very hard to learn the dances. Some of them were reciting poems, singing and dancing last week at the Greek Independence Day performance. Both programs provide additional opportunities to reach out to children and young adults, to bring them to the campus to be together, learn together and worship together.
- ✓ I enjoy celebrating our heritage. I do not enjoy watching competitions to see which parish has the best dancers and music. It's like we're a college with a football team.

- ✓ It is another bonding and cultural. It has always been present in our Church. It is something that the parishioners love and respect, so why not offer? It is a good thing, and St. Paul actually preached in Greece.
- ✓ This is something that is very nice and important to many people. If possible, it should continue as it strengthens our community
- ✓ It is important to keep the Greek heritage alive, but it won't help preserve the parish in the long run.
- ✓ A beautiful thing to do, but not necessary for the future well being of the the parish
- ✓ I agree with a portion of this. I think understanding the Greek language and culture can be very helpful in understanding the Church services. However, unfortunately the teaching of Greek is often limited to the Greek language and I suspect the language needing for tourism.
- ✓ It's important because it draws the children to the community.
- ✓ I would appreciate a robust Greek school for my children and Greek dancing memories are some of my cherished memories.
- ✓ Wholesome activities are always better than alternatives kids have today.
- ✓ There needs to be a good balance between Greek heritage programs and faith centered ministries of the church. Some kids don't want to dance or learn Greek. What else can we offer for their interests? At the same time, there are people both inside and outside our community who would love to learn these things; make the dance and I don't think the Greek programs alone are going to increase church attendance or cause the parish to grow by leaps and bounds, yet it is important to preserve the Greek heritage and at the same time offer and strengthen other programs that bring folks onto campus who have different extracurricular interests. I think also connecting why we have these programs...that they are more ways to be connected to one another at church is important to stress. I think maintaining these programs as part of our youth ministry offerings is important. Going outside our community to offer dance and language lessons to non members is also good because it can bring in additional revenue for the church, bring families onto campus and provide additional extra curricular opportunities for children in Marin.
- ✓ These are wonderful offerings but can be exclusionary and do not promote spirituality, community or helping others. I do not see these groups giving back to the parish or the community.

- ✓ But not just the formal program many families can't afford the expense or have that much time to devote and feel left out. Reaching out to those who just want to learn for fun and not an award also maybe learning Greek from a tape but meeting at Fellowship hour and sharing what you learned that week or meeting for coffee to practice
- ✓ I think our culture and religion are both important
- ✓ It is important as long as we don't have anything else that ties our Children to the Church.
- ✓ I'm not Greek but I do understand getting the youth into the church should be done any and all ways possible.

Question# 33 How important is investing time and resources into growing our VIP (Very Important Parishioners) program aged 60 and above)?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Extremely important	27.85%	22
Very important	43.04%	34
Somewhat important	21.52%	17
Not so important	5.06%	4
Not at all important	2.53%	2
Comment		31
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>79</b>
	<b>Skipped</b>	<b>3</b>

## Comments

- ✓ It is beneficial to have programs to bring our seniors together and to provide transportation for them to attend church services and events.
- ✓ Will the VIP program have a big impact on the future of the church? Not directly but it is certainly a way to show honor and gratitude to our elders, provide them with another way to socialize with their own. Could be a benefit to VIP's caregivers and family if we could provide transportation to those who need it.
- ✓ WE are many!
- ✓ It's important for us to take care of the elderly



- ✓ Take care of our elderly, our needy.
- ✓ But not if all you want is their money when they die. There is so much about life and the Greek culture they have to offer the future generations.
- ✓ It's important to make our seniors feel valued within the community.
- ✓ I believe there is a roll for everyone in the parish and our VIPs should not be forgotten.
- ✓ I'm almost of VIP age and would love the opportunity to help mentor the younger groups. Just cause we're not spring chickens doesn't mean we have to do old people things. I would like to see a mentor program for kids that need a grandparent figure in their lives to have one of us be available to them. Sometimes kids cant talk to their parents about stuff but still need an older persons view on something.
- ✓ With more of us in the senior category, its becoming more important.
- ✓ Hopefully, a committee could be formed so that all elderly (80+) do not feel obligated to bring something.
- ✓ I was taught to "respect our elders". These are the people that have sacrificed so much for us to have what we have today !
- ✓ It is important to our seniors and to our younger fokks yo show that they will still have a place when they get old.
- ✓ We need to take care of each other, be there for each other, support each other.
- ✓ I would like to see VIP housing on our grounds. From those people the church will have a chance to be in the estate plans”
- ✓ When we don't recognize our elders for their support and dedication for all of their years, our parish fails in it's obligation to provide leadership.
- ✓ It would be nice if their commitment is respected.
- ✓ Providing group programs and activities for our older parishioners is very important generally, but not to the future well being of the parish.
- ✓ All ages need to feel welcome to the Church on a weekly/daily basis
- ✓ For some seniors, this is their sole source of support and friendship.
- ✓ Senior need to be honored and remembered personally always
- ✓ It’s important not to forget our elderly
- ✓ Not sure what this program entails. However I dont see these folks being the issue for the church.

- ✓ Just like the youth, the elderly need to feel connected to the parish. Connect the two and it's amazing. Involve our youth in outreach to our elderly through coffee hour and visitations!
- ✓ I do not know about this, so no comment.
- ✓ We need to care for and respect our elders. Their wisdom can guide us.
- ✓ Why would you have V IP program. We should all be treated equally. We all try to do the best we can.
- ✓ More speakers, exercise program
- ✓ Depends on the amount of people and interest
- ✓ Giving back to our elders is very important. Especially in this time that many children live out of the area.
- ✓ We all need help and care and most seniors have learned the essential skill of self-care, spiritually. Unfortunately, however, it's a youth-oriented world and sometimes the elderly are forgotten.

Question# 34 Given the lengthy list of possible new or enhanced ministries of service described above, how important is it that we begin to think about, plan for, or act upon additional ministry personnel or office support - whether clergy or laity.

Answer Choices	Responses	
Extremely important	20.78%	16
Very important	38.96%	30
Somewhat important	28.57%	22
Not so important	6.49%	5
Not at all important	5.19%	4
Comment		33
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>77</b>
	<b>Skipped</b>	<b>5</b>

- ✓ In the past, ministries were run competently by volunteers. Perhaps that is a by-gone era. I would like to know more about the cost of additional paid personnel because NOC membership has remained constant for decades, and

I question why we need more paid personnel now to attend to the same number of parishioners.

- ✓ I do not believe we are at the stage where we need or can justify the expense of a second priest. If additional lay staff for the youth and/or general outreach would enable us to succeed in these areas, it might be worth considering.
- ✓ Any expansion is going to require the people to run and support it, so a consideration of what the human needs are must be a fundamental part.
- ✓ We need more paid staff to support the efforts of our priest.
- ✓ as small example we cannot find good help the Kitchen nor our Janitorial
- ✓ It is too much to expect of Father John.
- ✓ We should be inspiring volunteers. There are many who could help is allowed to and asked
- ✓ On a volunteer basis at this time. I don't believe the community could afford additional salaries at this time.
- ✓ If affordable?
- ✓ In confidence- I find your office personnel short and stand-offish when I call. This is not welcoming
- ✓ when it can be justified. You will find a lot of resistance. The older generation does not understand what it costs to live in Marin so hiring additional personnel when we need to fix things like the kitchen would not be well received
- ✓ One we know where we want to go, it will important to decide together how we are going to get there.
- ✓ As our parish grow, it is critical to have staff to support the growth and focus on his/her area of expertise. We cannot expect our parish priest to be able to attend every meeting and event of every ministry.
- ✓ Sign me up father. I would love to be on the ministry personell or spearheading group. I have many ideas.
- ✓ The needs are many and can appear overwhelming, so the need to prioritize is obvious. An essential part of meeting those needs adequately, however, definitely requires additional ministry personnel.
- ✓ I believe additional ministry personnel is needed in all our parishes! Our priest alone cannot take care of all the needs in a parish! Additional personnel is needed with the ultimate direction & approval of the priest.

- ✓ At the risk of sounding self-ritcheous, I'm disappointed that so many people want these things for our parich, but won't give a minute of their time. I'd love to see volunteerism improve !
- ✓ Plan for is very appropriate. Act upon is way too soon.
- ✓ Although I can't say for certain because I don't work for th church, it seems to be running very well with the staff we have and the dontation of time from parishioners
- ✓ At some future point, more full-time dedicated staff will be required.
- ✓ We have a great priest and staff
- ✓ As ministries are increasing there will be a need for adding additional support.
- ✓ I dont know. That question is probably best answered by the Parish Council.
- ✓ Growth and maturing church family
- ✓ Not sure what the need is but if the need exist then.. Yes.
- ✓ Nothing happens by itself.
- ✓ Important to prioritize importance of these new/enhanced ministries first before thinking about adding more ministry personnel.
- ✓ Again, this is hard to answer without more specifics. What would these additional resources do?
- ✓ volunteers could help
- ✓ Do you find the need.
- ✓ Our parish needs help with upkeep so we can rent out or facility
- ✓ We need more help and the community needs to share more talents to make it possible.
- ✓ It's extremely important. The strongest link between people and the Church is the priest and those who are actively engaged in program ministries.

Question #35 How important are the proposed facility and landscape improvements at the west entrance of the Church that together establish the best of Orthodox architectural and aesthetic tradition?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Extremely important	16.05%	13
Very important	19.75%	16
Somewhat important	16.05%	13
Not so important	11.11%	9
Not at all important	9.88%	8
I want to know more about this before expressing my opinion	27.16%	22
Comment		37
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>81</b>
	<b>Skipped</b>	<b>1</b>

## Comments

- ✓ These plans are beautiful of course, but the bottom line for me is will these improvements bring new people into our parish? If so, I would be more inclined to support. I'm not yet convinced that "if you build it they will come" applies here. I would also like to comment that this particular survey question is worded in a way that is biased and steers one to answer positively, unlike most questions thus far, which have been more fairly stated.
- ✓ Our Church needs a proper front entrance.
- ✓ Mainly people do not know where the ENTRANCE OF OUR CHURCH and do not recognize it as a Church
- ✓ I would be more assured in answering if the question had left out the reference to "best" of Orthodox Architectural and aesthetic tradition. That is subjective and restrictive at the same time! I do think it should be in architectural harmony with the existing building, and like the preliminary vision illustrated.
- ✓ However, I would not favor starting this project until a substantial portion of the cost had been raised.
- ✓ The proposed facility renovations are well overdue. I believe it will enhance not only the church experience but increase the long term value of the property. The enhancements will help the church grow into the grounds it is blessed with. I also think it is important to utilize the talents and goodwill of

- Christ and other contributors as they help design and implement the improvements. What a gift!
- ✓ we have a beautiful church that could be that much better. not only for aesthetic purposes, but also access for our large community of older members as well as for our young families.
  - ✓ Until proper maintenance of the existing facilities is attained for a reasonable amount of time (years), I would not be in favor of expanding the size of the facilities only to have them fall into disrepair in a short amount of time due to lack of funds and volunteers to maintain them. Should these improvements take place, I would deeply reconsider my monetary pledge to this church.
  - ✓ Looks great, but what about the costs, time, construction messes?
  - ✓ But not at the cost of taking away from maintenance and lowering our mortgage
  - ✓ More important is to be able to care for what we already have before moving forward with additions to the campus. No matter what the funding sources are, the parishioner perception that we are ready to move forward with this type of improvement is more important to me than the improvement itself. To have a grand entrance with nobody inside would be a tremendous set back for our parish. I would also recommend refraining from telling parishioners that this is the best Orthodox architecture and aesthetic tradition, since many have their own opinion of that from their own regions of Greece and beyond.
  - ✓ It would be very nice to have an aesthetically pleasing entrance to our church. In terms of the present well-being of our parish – it's the people and ministries that make a parish great not a building. The drop-off area, the walk way from the street, the area outside the door are all great enhancements. I love the simplicity of our church and hope the new design enhancement coordinates with the current design of the inside.
  - ✓ Works, before beautification.
  - ✓ I am impressed with the plans as presented - but there are other concerns that need to be addressed so we have a strong community to attend the newly designed church.
  - ✓ This is something I, and others, envisioned long ago. I think it would enhance the aesthetics of the church; the flow of the faithful entering and leaving, and add some needed facilities as outlined in the proposed plan, in question 36.

When it was discussed in the past, it was hard to get any traction because there was no real felt need.

- ✓ Building first the 2 single family homes & apartments will generate more revenue that will be used (will help) for the build/ expansion of the church and the parking lots.
- ✓ I answered "Not important" because we seem to be focused on how we look on the outside, and not what is happening inside. This is a metaphor for life. Our vanity has us driving fancy cars, while not nurturing our inner well-being and living a Christian life.
- ✓ Looks beautiful but appears to be a very expensive project.
- ✓ Improved disabled access is the only important thing and if that can be accomplished without the cost of changing the entrance that would be my preference. Then that money could be used for other improvements like the small hall. If, however, the entrance change is the only way to improve parking, drop off and accessibility of the church AND it came with an elevator, I would like that idea too.
- ✓ We need VIP housing. Good maintenance is all we need.
- ✓ I've said for a long time that we enter our church through a side door. It's very uncharacteristic and from a design sense, inappropriate. Still, I'd prefer entering through a side door of a parish that provided transportation to each and every parishioner who are not mobile enough to attend our Church. To me that's a bigger issue than the aesthetics of our entrance.
- ✓ I do not feel we should put our church into debt.
- ✓ A new face and entrance on our Church would be great, if we can afford it, and if a large majority of our parishioners will support it, but it is not so important to me overall right now because we have a beautiful Church already, and we have \$300,000 of current debt. You are posing the question: "If we build it, will they come," but the answer is not clear. In Europe, the answer has been "No." I persistently have asked how much this project will cost, but the answer has not been forthcoming. I believe that it will cost well over \$1 million. Given the expert building committee that has been assembled and all of the exploratory money spent so far, we should have a very good estimate of the total cost of this project by now, so how much is it? Unfortunately, if we are not careful and more forthcoming, we may risk disappointing our parishioners by promoting a glorious project that we cannot

afford. On the other hand, Christ Kamages is a world-class architect, and the architectural beauty and tradition our Church would be enhanced if his imprint were on it. All of us should be grateful for his plans, the generosity of his time and talents, and the potential opportunities to enhance our Church, buildings, and grounds. But cost is key. (I also want to add a comment about valid survey question structure. Question #35 is a leading question that will promote positive responses--Do you want the best of Orthodoxy, or are you satisfied with the substandard you have now? Such questions lead to biased answers.)

- ✓ A true waste of money and a bad idea. Would it be nice to have? Of course. But as you can tell, there are countless other much more necessary things we need to address before these aesthetic additions should even be talked about. We don't need a grand cathedral for our parish. It would cost way too much.
- ✓ We should always be looking to improve our facilities and grounds.
- ✓ It would complete change the way we approach, enter and experience our Church
- ✓ To the best of my knowledge I think any such project does not have the merits of a school for the young or housing for the seniors. I understand that John Hughes, the first catholic Archbishop of New York and father of the catholic school system in America said that "we shall have to build the schoolhouse first and the Church afterward". He was not against Churches since he is the one who also built the St. Patrick's Cathedral. I think we have a Church, a beautiful Church. Before we start re-doing portions of it, let's bring christian education and seniors in our Church Campus. There will be plenty of time to improve our building structures afterwards.
- ✓ Personally, I wouldn't be interested in significant expenditures for aesthetic purposes. I would prefer to see resources spent on upgrading existing offices, classrooms and the kitchens before considering other sizeable expenditures.
- ✓ Current facilities seem to be more than adequate especially if the number of parishioners is stable or falling. They should continued to be well maintained and some improvements are always welcomed but not the critical issue for the church right now.
- ✓ I want to know more about this as I have heard a few different things about how it would work. The question below makes it more enticing, but only



changing it for aesthetics right now doesn't make sense when we have deferred maintenance all over campus and a need to strengthen attendance and develop outreach.

- ✓ Would like to see kitchen and small hall taken care of better chairs and smaller round tables
- ✓ This is a troublesome survey question, as it somewhat pre-determines the quality and need of the program. It also seems to set a tone that other facility improvements would be of lesser merit. I question how parishioners with slight knowledge of this project could decide how it adds worth to the well being of our parish.
- ✓ Long over due. We need to change our to create a more welcoming entrance to our church
- ✓ Need a bathroom in the back of the church and a redesign is in order and about time.
- ✓ Needed but we will still go on either way.
- ✓ From what I understand, this is far overdue. Are we Orthodox, or not?

Question# 36 How important is the proposed expansion of the Narthex (the area at the back of the Church opposite the altar) provides a friendly and welcoming space for visitors, guests, seekers, curious folks and Orthodox Christians new to the area that includes bathroom access, a crying child and bride preparation room, a bookstore and storage area?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Extremely important	28.57%	22
Very important	23.38%	18
Somewhat important	24.68%	19
Not so important	11.69%	9
Not at all important	11.69%	9
Comment		31
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>77</b>
	<b>Skipped</b>	<b>5</b>

## Comments

- ✓ Questions #35 and #36 are related because it is the same project, and my answers and concerns expressed in #35 are common to both. The book store and storage room are not important to me at all. The other features would be

nice, but how much will they cost and how much will they be used, and will they bring more visitors and converts to NOC? The answers are unclear, especially in secular Marin County.

- ✓ Again, my bottom line is, do these improvements attract and retain membership. I see a plus in bathroom access as it might encourage the elderly and less-abled people to attend church. The cry room is a plus because it might make it easier for young parents to attend.
- ✓ Having access to a bathroom in the church and cry room for our children is of the utmost importance!
- ✓ Would love a bathroom. It's difficult for elderly and disabled people to access the other bathrooms because they can't use the stairs or walk down the uneven parking lot.
- ✓ None of this will improve our spirituality and it feels like vanity. We have more important things for our resources.
- ✓ Part of the answer above
- ✓ We need other repairs first (bathrooms, kitchen, leaking ceilings.
- ✓ I truly never thought about how the entrance to our church may not work well when we have visitors, etc. coming to the church because it's what I grew up with. But having all of the items mentioned above available on the same level as our church is something that to me should be a priority.
- ✓ While I personally support this project, I would not like to see it supersede our desire to have a coherent parish. I believe that demonstrating that we can care for what we have now will go a long way in furthering the desire to expand any facilities.
- ✓ It would be nice to have many of the amenities listed in this question. Again, it's the people that make someone feel welcomed to a parish not an addition to a building. The proposed design seems bigger than what is needed. A bathroom (I think one is plenty), a crying room, a bride/baptismal preparation room and some storage is all very practical and would be very useful. I'm not sure a bookstore is needed.
- ✓ We should improve the Narthex, but ONLY AFTER we clean up our kitchen, and fix what is architecturally wrong with our existing facilities (particularly the kitchen roof). It's a disgrace !
- ✓ That's a lot of stuff for one question. I think bathroom access is important unless we get an elevator to go down to the lower level bathrooms. Cry room

- is important but I'm indifferent about the bride prep room. Definitely don't think we need a bookstore. It all depends on the cost and if other needed improvements will be deferred for this project.
- ✓ The drawings I saw are beautiful, and I'd like to see these change. But I think the first priority should be strengthening our your hand young adult ministries and growing the parish.
  - ✓ I will never believe in crying rooms. When my child cried the bishop caught me sneaking out and told us not to go. That children are the foundation of our church.
  - ✓ I believe we have that already with our kindness and smiles.
  - ✓ See my comment to the previous question. Unnecessary and we have many other things that we should be focusing on
  - ✓ I can't think of a single, better way to improve the functionality, aesthetics, and architecture of our church.
  - ✓ All needed functions for our Church to thrive
  - ✓ See my comments on question 35. Same applies here.
  - ✓ It would be nice to have a nearby bathroom and room for children. When my kids were young, we generally ended up in the classroom upstairs, away from the church and services. Eventually I stopped bringing my toddlers to church because sitting in the classroom was not the reason I went to church!
  - ✓ I think it would be more complete. Having to go downstairs for a restroom is inconvenient and also not having a crying room for new moms is inconvenient.
  - ✓ That is not what drives the success of any church as long as the facilities are decent, clean and well maintained.
  - ✓ would be useful
  - ✓ accessible restrooms w/cry room should be top of the list
  - ✓ Should be done by fund raising or again not tax the same ones over and over again.
  - ✓ Not sure it is really necessary
  - ✓ I need to know more about it before I can express an opinion. We've only seen preliminary drawings.
  - ✓ This question seems to go beyond the scope of an initial strategic planning survey.

- ✓ This is not more important than our ministries and our spiritual health but if possible will create a better experience. The ability to have facilities that will allow those attending services to not leave the Church would be best.
- ✓ We need to be as accommodating as possible to both retain current members and to attract new members.

Question# 37 How important is it to the future of our parish that the interior of our Church (Nave) be beautified in a traditional Orthodox manner with a Byzantine iconostasis and traditional dome with the icon of Jesus blessing the world as Pantocrator? (the Ruler of all creation)

Answer Choices	Responses	
Extremely important	16.67%	13
Very important	12.82%	10
Somewhat important	25.64%	20
Not so important	26.92%	21
Not at all important	17.95%	14
Comment		35
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>78</b>
	<b>Skipped</b>	<b>4</b>

- ✓ I like our iconostasis just the way it is. In addition, I strongly prefer our choir to be in our choir loft.
- ✓ Money spent on this is unlikely to result in new membership. I like the rustic aesthetic of our iconostasis; it ties in with the beam ceiling and is unique. An ornate iconostasis would be out of place in our more rustically designed little gem of a church.
- ✓ Not so important for the next 5 years. Later though.
- ✓ I would love our Church to have a beautiful icon screen that would be consistent with other Orthodox Churches in our area.
- ✓ Our Icon screen which perhaps was to be temporary looks like the OK coral.. I think the Icons are beautiful but the screen needs to be changed including the floor
- ✓ It is better the way that it is.

- ✓ This question is offensive, disrespecting those who made decision previously. Church is not the building it is what takes place inside. These decisions were made and approved we should stick with them.
- ✓ The "Greek Village" feel of Nativity of Christ Church is what inspires me. Although the grandiose art of the churches built during the Renaissance is truly beautiful, it is not what I need to feel close to God.
- ✓ The Church should always be in good condition. It is a place or worship!!!
- ✓ Like it just like it is
- ✓ I would highly recommend this with a special fund raising
- ✓ Wasn't Jesus a carpenter? Why do we have gold crowns for our bishops? Let's get back to what really matters and that is delivering salvation
- ✓ One of the things I love most about our church is that it is authentic and doesn't aspire to be a "big city" church. It fits into the environment.
- ✓ I feel that the future of our parish is more dependent on the teachings and connection with our community. I do not think people will decide to remain or become orthodox because of the building itself, but rather for what the religion has to offer. One only need to look at our beginnings to see this. It did not matter that we were worshiping in the Elks Lodge, an old bank, or the Catholic church, it was our religion that transcended these spaces.
- ✓ I love the simple beauty of our church. I see absolutely no need for a new iconostasis. Not every church needs to be ornate. Perhaps add tinted glass to the dome so that we don't have that hot beam of heat in the summer. Other than that, I believe money can be better spent growing other ministries.
- ✓ The inside is beautiful enough. Would God be happier to see another wall filled with paintings, or for us to help others first?
- ✓ In my humble opinion, No. 36 is more important.
- ✓ God doesn't care what our church looks like. He cares what our hearts look like !
- ✓ The interior is already very beautiful and truly conveys the character of the community. Again it also depends on the cost and how that would affect funding for other projects at the facility and other programs like outreach and community services (helping poor and needy). I think helping the poor and needy is the most beautiful tradition of our Orthodox church and our church is physically beautiful enough.

- ✓ Fifty years ago people from our parish build our church. We payed to have. The icons done and now you want to change all that?
- ✓ I must admit that I've been in more beautiful Churches than our own Nativity. At the end of the day, what is the most important matter to us. Each of us have different requirements. I, for one, want to see more help to our senior and immobile parishioners, as well as the poor and hungry in our community before our Church become 'beautified'.
- ✓ I feel it might be nice and warmer if our church finishes the iconostasis around the church and if we had the funds the dome would be beautiful.
- ✓ Although the interior of the church is quite humble, there are again many other more important issues to be addressed. Additionally, I don't know why the iconostasis needs to be changed as it already has the necessary icons to be considered orthodox
- ✓ I consider the Nave to be an unfinished work of art. We should complete the job started by our founders.
- ✓ It would greatly enhance the worship experience
- ✓ I would rather see money spent on renovating existing structures (classrooms and kitchens) and for community outreach purposes.
- ✓ In my opinion, the simplicity and beauty of our Nave is what makes our church so special. Iconostasis are beautiful, but not something our church "needs". A main entrance, crying room and restrooms, yes.
- ✓ Prefer nicer facilities for the choir.
- ✓ A wonderful goal. If all else is equal it would be lovely.
- ✓ The church is beautiful in its own way. The dome maybe could have some help.
- ✓ It's important, but to be practical, we need more information about the costs.
- ✓ This survey seems to have jumped the gun on the purpose of an initial strategic planning tool.
- ✓ I had discussed in the past doing the pantocrator but the artist had retired and it was not discussed again. This brings up the concern of items being placed on a list and consistent priority given till done or decided not to be done.
- ✓ These are signature elements of the interior of an Orthodox Church, where we proclaim our faith and worship God.

## Question #38 How important is it to build out the small hall and renovate its kitchen to provide additional indoor space for education and organization meetings?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Extremely important	19.51%	16
Very important	26.83%	22
Somewhat important	31.71%	26
Not so important	10.98%	9
Not at all important	10.98%	9
Comment		34
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>82</b>
	<b>Skipped</b>	<b>0</b>

- ✓ On a cost benefit basis, I don't see an immediate need here. We already have ample spaces and rooms for the limited number of education and organization meetings we have now, and we use the kitchen very infrequently, with heaviest use during our 3-day Greek Festival.
- ✓ We rarely fill the spaces we have now.
- ✓ If we're going to have it, it needs to be far more functional. Could also be used by outside groups (aka another revenue stream).
- ✓ We need a smaller social space for Birthdays; Baby showers; Bridal Showers small group feeling closer in a smaller space. Kitchen just needs new cabinets and painting
- ✓ Not sure what this looks like. We HAD a small hall and built it into classrooms. Are you going to reverse that, build a new hall over the deck, ???
- ✓ FOOD. Cooking. It's a beautiful thing. And no one does it better than Greeks.
- ✓ I am not clear enough on how inadequate the current space is for how often it is used.
- ✓ Will benefits the proposed items listed above!!!
- ✓ The small hall has played an important role in bringing this community together, and it would be wonderful to be able to take advantage of the space better for presentations, meetings and the like. The kitchen definitely needs updating!

- ✓ More important than any one space is a concept and plan for the future build out of the whole facility. Once that is completed, then the importance of any one aspect of that should become apparent.
- ✓ Yes, it's time to renovate the small hall and kitchen. I think the space can be reworked to make better use of the space and provide the meeting spaces we need to support our growing parish.
- ✓ Could be very important depending on how the parish, its ministries and needs, grows.
- ✓ At one point, before the big hall was built, some of us would have settled for extending the downstairs and upstairs of our classrooms, kitchen space, hall & office spaces. It would still be nice but not a priority as the other suggestions.
- ✓ Finish, fix, and clean what we already have before we build out other areas !
- ✓ All those enhanced programs we talked about above need a home of their own! Right now the poor Little Minoans are having dance classes in that awful, musty, overcrowded former library room at the back of the Sunday school classroom building. I shudder to think what will happen when one of those little ones accidentally pulls down one of the decrepit, overloaded book cases!
- ✓ Good idea, but low on my priority list
- ✓ This depends on our interest to grow and expand the activities associated with these assets. Marin county has few indoor spaces for meetings and festivities. Can we create an asset to serve these opportunities?
- ✓ That would be nice if we had the money, and raised money towards that project.
- ✓ See previous comments. More pressing and important issues than building more
- ✓ Whether it be the small hall or the construction of a new building elsewhere on the campus, we should provide for additional indoor space.
- ✓ The space would be useful but we do already have existing space like it
- ✓ Improving kitchen facilities is very important as long as we rely on cooking for fund raising events
- ✓ I would support upgrading the existing hall and kitchen.
- ✓ It would be nice to have some where down the road. An elevator for elderly/handicap is more if a priority.



- ✓ I think it would provide more revenue generating opportunities for the church.
- ✓ Supports the Greek festival and other activities so not a bad idea.
- ✓ This space needs to be cleaned and renovated. That back media room and adjoining storage closets could be turned into an apartment that could be used by visiting clergy. That back media room should also be fixed up and used as a viable youth and general meeting room.
- ✓ Not sure it is needed
- ✓ Having a nice meeting place could bring rental opportunities.
- ✓ This question has validity due to the many years of discussion that have occurred.
- ✓ The church needs to be improved first
- ✓ It has been neglected and has great potential. A private apartment could be developed to host visiting clergy
- ✓ I think this area should be made to house the youth activities and for lectures. Creating an area the youth can come to with couches, Large TV for views and social events. With the outside area it can be used for many other events that the youth can support and sponsor. This area can also have built in trophy area that can have a visual history of some of the wonderful success of the Parish and history, The class rooms should also be updated with new flooring, window coverings and paint. New tables on rollers and chairs. Clutter should be removed or items not saved just because never asked why.
- ✓ If we're going to address a significant facilities upgrade, then this should be included

### Question #39 How important is it that our parish renovates the kitchen in the large hall?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Extremely important	27.63%	21
Very important	23.68%	18
Somewhat important	23.68%	18
Not so important	15.79%	12
Not at all important	9.21%	7
Comment		43
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>76</b>
	<b>Skipped</b>	<b>6</b>

## Comments

- ✓ Our large hall kitchen produces revenue, so it should be kept in a state of high standards. I'd like more information about what renovations are needed. I'm aware that we recently have purchased a new dishwasher and a new serving table, so I'm somewhat surprised that we need to spend even more money on the kitchen.
- ✓ Depending on cost.
- ✓ I'm prejudiced because I spend a lot of time in there. But it could really use better organization for prime efficiency.
- ✓ It would be nice to have an ice machine for events though!
- ✓ No renovation..just new cabinets and paint
- ✓ Not sure of the need
- ✓ We need to keep it working the functionality is good.
- ✓ You've got great outdoor space already.
- ✓ This kitchen is a disaster. The original design was poor to begin with and the community has dealt the best they can with the layout and lack of equipment. The fact that the roof was finally !!! redone and it continues to leak is so discouraging to those parishoners that voluntarily host coffee hour every Sunday and to those parishoners that devoted months of hard work to cook and prepare for the major church fundraiser, the Greek Festival. It is filthy and falling apart and an insult to those parishoners that dedicate their time there to benefit this church. To say nothing of the fact that this kitchen is in no condition to be rented out which would and could bring additional revenue to our church. I am mortified that this facility would be shown to a potential renter in it's current condition. We should have much more pride in the condition our current facilities before we entertain the idea of expanding them.
- ✓ It's not bad, but needs some improvements
- ✓ to generate additional revenue.
- ✓ The kitchen is key to our festival and an important factor for people choosing to rent our facility for events. It needs modernization to be utilized appropriately.

- ✓ A large scale renovation is likely not needed, however some improvements and maintenance of what we have is far overdue.
- ✓ Although the kitchen is still functional, it is time for a renovation and deep cleaning. A functional kitchen is needed to support the festival as well as other events throughout the year. What is most sad to me is the state of the kitchen. It's disgustingly dirty, the rodents are a health concern and equipment/supplies constantly disappear. When I first joined the parish, there was a group of ladies that kept the kitchen in tip-top shape. Sadly, most of the woman have passed or are no longer able to help. I don't see the same pride in the upkeep of the kitchen. If we are going to invest in a renovation, then we must also develop a plan not keep the kitchen clean and organized. The rodent situation needs to be resolved ASAP. From a health perspective, it makes me nervous cooking for the festival given the current condition.
- ✓ Possible revenue generator as an event space in the Novato community
- ✓ I thought the kitchen is more than adequate.
- ✓ I'm not informed well to make a judgement
- ✓ See many of my other answers. Our kitchen is structurally deficient, extremely dirty, and a disgrace ! ... and to think that we rent out the kitchen and hall. We run the risk of lawsuit and a health epidemic.
- ✓ I would like to qualify this- if the kitchen is keeping us from renting the hall, the it is a more important consideration.
- ✓ I'm not familiar with everything in the kitchen but it does seem to work for events and the festival. Definitely could use a face lift!
- ✓ I think the kitchen is a cornerstone of many of our fund raising activities, but I'm not aware of what the renovation needs are.
- ✓ 3/28/2019 8:07 PM Add tags – View respondent's answers
- ✓ Let's give that a couple more years? Future Project
- ✓ This kitchen is used quite often to support the church
- ✓ Our kitchen facilities should be state-of-the-art.
- ✓ Long over due
- ✓ This is a must!
- ✓ Could use new cabinet doors and better storage shelves in the store rooms
- ✓ Extremely important if we want to continue with our festival and hall rental.
- ✓ It needs an overhaul
- ✓ To support fund raising activiites like hall rental.

- ✓ Unfamiliar with current state of kitchen and/or issues /deficiencies
- ✓ Fix some issues first before renovating. Close some gaps where rodents can get in for instance.
- ✓ Is it not working as is. Update it if need be.
- ✓ The large Hall is rented out and holds our own big events
- ✓ As best I know, the kitchen is where most of our fund-raising comes from.
- ✓ We need to remove old equipment, finish the celing (missing near the freezer so rats and other vermin can easily enter). Cabinets are broken in many places. New LED efficient lighting is needed.
- ✓ The kitchen in the large hall needs paint and few cabinets fixed and an organizational system put in the closet by the refrigerator to organize the items. It also needs people to put items back properly and clean up. Get rid of items or food not used or given away to those that need or taken home by parish members. Having food sit and go bad is a shame. Big difference of pointing issues out and getting someone to fix or solve.
- ✓ A happy wife is a happy life. That's also true of volunteers.

Question #40 How important is it to the future of our parish that an elevator is provided between the administrative and lower level of our parish for ease of access and safety?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Extremely important	27.63%	21
Very important	23.68%	18
Somewhat important	23.68%	18
Not so important	15.79%	12
Not at all important	9.21%	7
Comment		43
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>76</b>
	<b>Skipped</b>	<b>6</b>

- ✓ This is not a high priority project for me because it is relatively expensive (\$50,000 - \$60,000), and I think few people are going to use it.
- ✓ Could make it easier for elderly and less-abled to attend church.
- ✓ More easy access means more participation: my mother might've brought my grandmother, who was lame, to church and fellowship if it were more accessible. Would certainly help the caregivers and their charges.
- ✓ Other things like a bathroom in the church and a cry room seem like a much bigger priority to me.

- ✓ this should not even need a comment...HANDICAP and growing older population
- ✓ If this is an ADA compliance issue, then it should be done.
- ✓ Something needs to be done ease people with mobility issues. The steps are an accident waiting to happen. A switchback or other friendly path is needed.
- ✓ Taking care of the elderly. Good.
- ✓ Not qualified to make that judgment
- ✓ it is extremely important to provide safe access to and from all areas of our church grounds for our older population and our younger members/families as well. an elevator seems reasonable. have we explored other options as well to provide various opportunities for access?
- ✓ Something to seriously consider before we expand and add to our facilities and once the current facilities are improved upon.
- ✓ only if it also goes to new development under the hall
- ✓ This is very important to be a part of the overall campus plan. But until that materializes, I do not believe in moving ahead with this on its own.
- ✓ I have no issue with an elevator. However, to me what is more important than an elevator is a safe “manual” way to get from the upper to the lower level. The center steps (not the ones by the office) are slanted and hard to maneuver. In addition, I would like to see a ramp built from the upper to the lower level. As a child/teen watching my father go from canes to a wheelchair, I know there is a sense of dignity and pride of being able to maneuver one’s self in the same area as everyone else instead of heading in the opposite direction to find an elevator. I know too well that elevators break, need maintenance and may not work in power outage. The elevator is a nice addition but let’s first renovate the area outside of the church so that all parishioners can safely get from the upper level to the lower level.
- ✓ We have a ramp for now
- ✓ Hmm. How about a covered escalator.
- ✓ is this a code requirement?
- ✓ OK, I think you know where I stand on this one! It's really difficult for the elderly, people in wheelchairs, moms with strollers to go from the church level to the hall level. One Sunday I watched poor Diane Fafoutis almost lose her husband Aris who was in a wheelchair and she couldn't hold it back as she tried to get him from the church to the hall through the parking to

(fortunately her son-in-law Christo was right behind her and caught the wheelchair in time before it spilled Aris onto the asphalt). I can't watch when Charles Walters maneuvers his power chair down the incline. One Sunday Elektra had to use the restroom, went down to the hall and never came back... she could not climb up the stairs because it made her out of breath. How about Maria Pappas who needs oxygen and is out of breath when she comes up to the church from the hall. Yes, EXTREMELY IMPORTANT. Without this access our elderly stop coming to church when they can't join the fellowship afterwards. It's definitely part of the reason that my own daughter is reluctant to attend services, knowing that she will have to go up and down the stairs because the medication she takes in the morning makes her need to use the restroom often.

- ✓ I think we need improved access from the church to the hall for the less mobile. I'm not sure we I is better, a handicap ramp or an elevator
- ✓ Even a preliminary examination of the access and safety of our site leaves one wanting more handicap accessibility.
- ✓ Does not seem completely necessary as we have existed for many years without one. I'm sure if implemented it would be helpful for some parishioners
- ✓ No brainer.
- ✓ The various elevation changes make it difficult for parishioners and it needs to be addressed
- ✓ It all depends on the cost and what else we do on premises. I used to be in favor of it what it was first mentioned but now with so many proposals out for consideration I do not know how the elevator fits into the overall plans.
- ✓ Important to accomodate people with special needs
- ✓ ADA required
- ✓ Shows we care about our seniors.
- ✓ No comment. I don't fully understand the need.
- ✓ Handicap friendly access?
- ✓ I am not sure exactly where the elevator would go but it would be helpful. Maybe knock out the stairs closest to the office and put an elevator there? Our staircases need some upgrading and we really need to make our grounds a little more ADA compliant.
- ✓ Some sort of handicap accessibility is necessary

- ✓ Important but due to the design of the church with the hall so far away its not an easy task. Perhaps an elevator and walkway in the large hall.
- ✓ I think it is important to figure out what our needs are and what building we are going to build before installing either a ramp or elevator. I think it will be found we need both. Many people can walk but the stairs are an issue for safety and don't want to use an elevator. They still can walk and just want a safe and gradual way to get down to the other level.
- ✓ I watch the elderly very carefully navigate the stairs down to the hall and always fear someone will stumble.

### Question #41 How important to the future of our parish is building housing for the elderly on the present property?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Extremely important	10.39%	8
Very important	15.58%	12
Somewhat important	29.87%	23
Not so important	27.27%	21
Not at all important	16.88%	13
Comment		33
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>77</b>
	<b>Skipped</b>	<b>5</b>

- ✓ Not important at all right now. This is a very expensive project that will be time-consuming because it will entail controversy with our neighbors and red-tape from the City of Novato.
- ✓ Especially if our own parishioners had priority to live. It is also a good thing for our parish to do for the county, which is disproportionately aging people and lacking senior housing.
- ✓ Need more info. Are we talking condos for independent living? Or something providing assistance?
- ✓ So wonderful to blend with your church and young people as you age
- ✓ If you have the money
- ✓ Would it be senior living? Run by a person with knowledge to provide exercise car service etc?
- ✓ Part of the original plan and it is a nice to have. We should create a community and help our elderly.
- ✓ The big parishes on the East Coast do this. I love the idea.

- ✓ Nice idea. Has a survey been done to evaluate the need? Would it house the elderly poor of our community regardless of their religious orientation? How would it be staffed? Who would pay the salaries? Lots more ?'s about this. Have you considered tiny homes for people trying to get back on their feet?
- ✓ senior housing is already a very major development in marin
- ✓ Needs to be studied
- ✓ Would be nice
- ✓ This would be wonderful
- ✓ This should be a component of the overall campus plan, but I do not recommend moving forward on its own.
- ✓ Conceptually I love the idea. It would provide a sense of community and security for our elderly. It will also provide an opportunity for those living in the home to stay active in the community. However, I would not want our parish to be in the business of “running” the home. I would want the home to be it’s own entity run by someone who knows the business.
- ✓ Finally, somewhere faith based I can go when I'm old. Plus, if there was an orthodox retirement community where I knew I would have greek friends there, I would be more likely to donate real property for care in your facility.
- ✓ Although I will soon be counted among the elderly, not sure that housing is important to the future of the parish
- ✓ Would be great, but at this point seems to be more a luxury than a necessity.
- ✓ How are residents selected. This could become a boondoggle. I've seen big problems with this in other Greek church communities.
- ✓ I think that would be a wonderful message of inclusivity and importance to our elderly (we're all going to be in that age group one day, God willing!). Of course we'll need to be sensitive to accessibility issues and more elevators probably.
- ✓ At the moment I'm not clear on what building housing for the elderly means. Will it be financed by our parish, by others? To me, this is a little too far into the future to enable me to respond.
- ✓ It would be nice :)
- ✓ Undecided on this one. Like the idea, but would have to further explore.
- ✓ The idea is great, but practical, logistical and legal concerns could greatly outweigh the benefits



- ✓ My childhood parish was St. Nicholas in Northridge. We built community housing and it was wonderful.
- ✓ Would be nice, but may not be economically feasible with current building costs.
- ✓ That is not our most critical mission at this time; other outside facilities exist to handle this today.
- ✓ we could not support this
- ✓ It would be a good future project.
- ✓ Lots of research needs to be done on housing people at the church. Not a simple task. Community will have a say.
- ✓ Housing should not be limited to elderly. We should consider the needs of those in our community as a whole. Mothers and Children, Seniors and those on limited income. We should be also looking at those that may help our ministries and how we can attract such talent with housing.
- ✓ The priest and the staff become landlords and superintendents

Question #42 How important is it that our parish builds two homes on available space for an additional income opportunity or for future staff?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Extremely important	14.10%	11
Very important	8.97%	7
Somewhat important	23.08%	18
Not so important	33.33%	26
Not at all important	20.51%	16
Comment		31
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>78</b>
	<b>Skipped</b>	<b>4</b>

- ✓ This will be another expensive project with a low return on investment. What future staff is anticipated? I thought priests preferred to live off campus?
- ✓ Love the idea. Think it should be part of the next strategic plan but for now, our plate is full and our coffers, not so much.
- ✓ Additional source of funding which would allow us to do more for our community and outreach
- ✓ We need rental income

- ✓ YES. Build revenue generating options!
- ✓ Don't know enough to offer opinion
- ✓ The charm of the setting of our Church should not be compromised by expansion and the desire to raise a few more dollars.
- ✓ this would be major distraction from our christian mission
- ✓ Also, needs to be studied
- ✓ cannot comment-too complex an issue
- ✓ I don't think the church needs to get into the landlord business. Also, when we researched this in the past, I believe there would be tax implication if the priest is not living in the house. Let's focus on the mission of the church.
- ✓ I would rather have that space for a senior community
- ✓ We're a religious institution, not a for profit real estate institution.
- ✓ Do we have that kind of funding available to us? This one is a real stretch. Would we sell the existing parish house to pay for it?
- ✓ I don't like the idea of the church being a landlord.
- ✓ Why two? Why any? This is too far away for me to provide my opinion.
- ✓ Priest housing does not have to be next door to the church. We have so far not had any problems when priests live off campus. Again, we do not need any additional structures for our campus
- ✓ I would only do it if we needed the money.
- ✓ Many great ideas, this one is not a priority right now
- ✓ It will create a community of people living on the Church campus. How wonderful!
- ✓ Hmmm, it's a strange concept for me. I don't see the purpose of the church as being a landlord!
- ✓ If we can down the road, then great.
- ✓ This is the first time I have heard of this..
- ✓ Easier to just consider investment property to buy and sell as needs change.
- ✓ Once again I don't know the need.
- ✓ definitely something to consider. Would future staff include an onsite church caretaker?
- ✓ That seems like a lot of money.
- ✓ Long term goal but not important at this time
- ✓ Important once we can establish that our growth is sustained or at least stable

- ✓ If rentals, then the priest and the staff become landlords and superintendents.

Question #43 Suppose one day you were overcome with the desire to deepen your relationship with God or learn more about spiritual life within Orthodoxy, then please rank the order in which these possibilities might appeal to you.

Though every option in this question is viable, in terms of personal spiritual development, the top three in terms of receiving the most 1-2-3's are the following:

A migrating bible study in the homes of parishioners received the highest appeal

An Orthodox guided reading and conversation group that meets monthly received the second highest appeal

Group listening or watching select Ancient Faith Radio offerings followed by conversation received the third highest appeal

Question #44 How do you feel about the strategic planning process thus far?

	Percentile	Responses
I'm very excited about this process and want to know more	15%	12
I feel positive but I want to see the costs and whether or not our parish is going to get behind this financially	24.05%	19
I am uncomfortable with the scope and depth of change that may be asked of us. I'm comfortable with our Church just the way that it is	2.53%	2
I could support a number of the goals and objectives suggested in this survey but I wouldn't want our parish to assume unmanageable debt trying to do more than we can afford.	26.58%	21
I'm deeply concerned about the entire process. I do not feel that parishioners are being given the opportunity to register their thoughts and feelings about priorities.	1.27%	1

**I'm supportive of the process and feel that it's being conducted in an open and professional way. I can't wait to see the proposed strategic plan going forward. This is a giant leap for our parish.** **22.78%** **18**

## Last Thoughts by Participants in the Survey About the Strategic Planning Process

- ✓ I hope this survey provides realistic responses because there is a tendency for parishioners to be more positive when responding to their priest to a survey that is not completely anonymous. In addition, we should be guided by our own history of our capital campaign 25 years ago. The proposed projects (Hall and never built adjoining small hall) cost twice as much as expected; we raised only half of what we needed; and we were hard-pressed to meet our operating expenses for six tough years because we were \$600,000 in debt. The only thing that bailed us out was a \$1 million bequest from Mr. Paponis. No one wants NOC to be in that position again. Some things are certain. Cost over-runs are inevitable. We can't do everything. Some parishioners will be happy, and others will be upset by the projects we choose. We must proceed with the utmost prudence, inclusion, and transparency.
- ✓ I think you've heard enough from me. Looking forward to learning what the results of the survey are. Very disappointed I can't be at the 4/13 meeting.
- ✓ I thought this survey was a little too long and the fact that you could not sign out and sign back in that you were forced to complete in ONE sitting will effect how many you receive back
- ✓ It feels as if there are a select few who have a vision and there is a cursory attempt at gathering input. There are items I could get behind but we need to strive for building our community not building idols of worship that will not improve our spirituality or community.
- ✓ Build revenue options (real estate development as mention above), take care of the elderly, nurture the kids, make people WANT to be Orthodox. Start with easy stuff like Cooking courses and languages. That way, you engage the older folks who are no longer doing the SIRTAKI dances and stuff. Greek

- dancing is great and is a great ministry for the kids, but you cannot ENGAGE the entire congregation with dancing in the same way you can involve EVERYONE in the Kitchen--the heart of the Greek household. I Imagine a lonely widow Yiayia would really love to--via the Philoptichos--maybe share HER skills--she can't dance, but she can cook and she can teach and pass down traditions. Without TRADITION, the Church is doomed. I am an adult convert who is a child of an inactive Orthodox mother. I chose Orthodoxy and love the Greek mysticism and get a lot out of it--I believe--bc I grew up attending Christian school with RIGOROUS Bible studies and courses. So the Gospel is not just a matter of standing up and crossing myself--I really get it...and still am "getting it." Orthodoxy to me is Christian Mysticism and I mean that in the BEST way. I appreciate the opportunity to "weigh in" and share how I feel about the Church to which I belong. I also feel that if we as a church are going to focus on international outreach and giving, that it should be focused on GREECE and her Christian people. First America, then Greece.
- ✓ Many thanks to those who have offered their time and talents. Great good will emerge from this. I do not think of it as an "exercise", and am encouraged that it is the first important steps to a long and fruitful process.
  - ✓ i feel that many of the proposed changes are a good thing for our parish and community. it is exciting to think that we will be possibly expanding in many wonderful ways, though yes, there is concern for the debt that may likely be incurred. i am hopeful that the proposed changes are implemented in a guided and strategic way where we are taking care of the important & necessary access and maintenance items first, and then moving to the larger scale projects that have been proposed, and hopefully prioritizing the projects with ones that would be generating income for the church first.
  - ✓ We need to improve what we currently have long before we move on to expanding our facilities and adding improvements that have nothing to do with Christ's teachings of our treatment of our fellow man. I would like to see additional monies we raise go to support the needy, especially children, in our community, long before I see us expand our buildings unless they are to serve the underserved.
  - ✓ I am very concerned about three issues which were barely touched on in this survey: 1) How can we stem the flow of 40% of our youth leaving the Church when they graduate high school, 2) How can we create a private K-12 school

- to protect our children from the "war on Christianity" they experience in the public government schools, 3) How can we devote more of our attention and resources to Jesus' clear and explicit command- "Therefore go, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them . . ."
- ✓ Do like that the writing opinion of the parishioners are taken into consideration. That's a first at any Church?
  - ✓ Since I support the Church to honor the memory of my deceased husband, who was instrumental in building and supporting the facility, I don't really have any strong opinion. However, I think what is being done with this survey is important to the growth of any institution and laud you for doing it.
  - ✓ I think many more conversations will be necessary in order to build a strategic plan that will accommodate many parishioners' views and feelings.
  - ✓ I think that I am very comfortable with a plan which identifies the desires that we have in moving forward and provides some prioritization of those desires. I think that some parishioners are afraid that this will define details on how to accomplish our goals without additional input. I believe that successful implementation of desires involves much discussion and parishioner input on how to move forward.
  - ✓ I want to be a part of the ministry program. Implementing and executing.
  - ✓ I feel a key component to making this work is to make sure we have the next generation of orthodox ready to step forward and be supportive. There are likely to be fewer native born Greeks so I think there may need to be adjustments not to the beliefs but to the clergy - especially the episcopacy.
  - ✓ Fr. John & Anthony, thank you for putting this survey together. I pray there is a good response to it.
  - ✓ I'm very pleased with the whole process & efforts that have been given so far. I would feel more comfortable if there is sufficient response to this wonderful survey. Please forgive me if I have not understood or answered some of the questions adequately!
  - ✓ You are creating areas to put the community of this church into more debt; all of these items mentioned are not important as this community has lost many members due to the way the organization is run; its not about the parishioners its about the metropolis community trying to get as much as possible out of those who want to come to this place of worship;

- ✓ We should manage/fix our existing facilities (and spend time, money, energy managing our hearts as a priority over building additional facilities.
- ✓ I also have concerns how our parish can afford such changes. As a property owner and experience in property management I see great returns and investment with the proposed housing. I would move forward with the path that would provide income before creating more debt. I would like to hear more before offering a proper opinion.
- ✓ Survey was too long with too many directions being explored.
- ✓ I have always thought the parish would get together to support another building project but in light of the current economic uncertainty in the US, I'm just worried for all of us. I definitely wouldn't want to put the parish OR parishioners in unmanageable debt. I believe that anything we do needs to be done in a staged fashion, starting with what is most needed (hint: elevator) and working towards the other goals in a very conservative, thoughtful manner. I do feel that so far the process has been conducted in an open and professional manner and I pray that continues to be the case. Thank you for listening :)
- ✓ -Leadership that is on time is already too late.... -Chance Favors the prepared Mind.... -People without Vision....Perish/Parish -A Journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step -All you need is the plan,the road map....and the courage to press on to your destination
- ✓ Ξέρω ότι έχουμε στην εκκλησία μας αρχιτέκτονες που σχεδιάζουν εκκλησίες. Αυτό δεν θα πει ότι θα πρέπει να αλλάξουμε την εκκλησία που χτίσαμε με τόσο κόπο και στερήσεις. Πολλοί Από τα μέλη της εκκλησίας μας βάλανε τα σπίτια τους υποθήκες. Εργαστήκαμε κάντε τον καιρό της οικοδομής για να παρουσιάσουμε αυτό που τώρα έχουμε. Δεν ξέρω αν έχουμε δικαίωμα τώρα να το αλλάξουμε. Αν θέλουμε να κάνουμε τόσες πολλές αλλαγές γιατί δε βάζουμε αυτά τα λεφτά να χτιστεί μία δεύτερη εκκλησία Που δεν υπάρχει εκκλησία μεταξύ εμάς και πιο πάνω απ' τη Ukiah. Thank you
- ✓ We need to address the most problematic facility issues first: elevator, rest rooms, handicap access.
- ✓ We do not need additional buildings or structures. The church campus as a whole is phenomenal and there are maybe one or two days in the whole year when the church is completely full. Until that happens every Sunday, I do not see the point in spending large amounts of money to build unnecessary

- structures while we could be donating our time, talents, and treasure to other much more important things such as helping the poor, helping our greater community, and helping our fellow parishioners and church community
- ✓ I'm a bit biased here! I hope the majority of people are feeling the same.
  - ✓ Great survey that I hope will give the parish a strong idea of the perspective of the parish
  - ✓ I would like to see what we are proposing to have on our Church campus 10 or 20 years from now. Is it going to be a church building that we keep improving every few years and is used for a couple hours every Sunday morning or, a campus with a beautiful Church building with students learning and praying and seniors spending the last years of their lives in a beautiful environment with their church close by where they can pray any time they want and they can socialize, attend lectures and church services with friends and neighbors around their Church? That's up to the parishioners to decide. I hope they make the right decision
  - ✓ I think engaging the Nativity community in this process is important. I have been away from the community for a few years so I don't feel that I have enough information to make comments in certain areas.
  - ✓ We pray for our beautiful Orthodoxy at Nativity of mature as the body of Christ to His Glory!
  - ✓ The most critical issue facing the church (not just ours) is the loss of the faithful after HS into the secular world we live in. Somehow apparently we all believe that all real miracles stopped occurring a 1000 years ago. Suspect they occur everyday but we really don't hear or talk about them. How does one enter a church, observe a crying icon and not stop and take stock of their busy lives? Now that would draw a crowd down the block and back to highway 101. May even make the evening news between Warrior score.
  - ✓ I am concerned that the Church is heading in the direction of a business. What has happened to humbleness?
  - ✓ Nativity is a lovely community and a great place to call my church home. We have our strengths and our shortcomings but I am concerned about the declining / inconsistent attendance/involvement. I also really like a lot of the ideas presented in this survey but don't want us to do more than we can realistically handle. What is the proposed timeline for some of these things? it seems like building up programs is really important and taking care of



deferred maintenance is also really important. changing the entrance is a nice goal but if we have dwindling attendance it doesn't matter whether we enter the church through a side door or not. We really need to work on retaining members, reaching out to others and making the youth and everyone else know they have a home at Nativity. I have seen people fall away for so many reasons; their feelings were hurt, they don't have friends at church; they don't want to dance; they don't feel a connection to the Greek heritage; they want a more interactive high school Sunday School experience not just a lecture; they want a more "bible-based" church and so on. . .our faith will save us; our heritage won't and we need to make sure that when we say "Come and See" they come and see that we are a Christ centered church! We need to have some free activities/freewill donation events that invite both our own folks and the secular community in to re-learn or learn about Orthodoxy, about our faith, and yes even about our Hellenic heritage which goes beyond dancing and speaking Greek. With that said why not encourage others to come learn Greek and come learn to dance. . .have a monthly dance class for a small cover fee and let people learn. Same with a Byzantine Art or Chanting class. . .Other parishes advertise their services online, in print and event with banners in strategic locations around town. Why not use our campus during the week for classes and events where the profit is shared between the instructor and the church? (tutoring/exercising/art class)...drawing on the strengths of our own parishioners...what can they teach? (we have architects, teachers, nurses, real estate agents. .and so many more with talents that could host a class); hosting a school is great or better yet starting an Orthodox preschool on campus! Or having a Christian based homeschool program on campus with a facility fee and supply fee charged per family...make this campus work for us on many levels. There needs to be a shift too in thinking that all our parishioners have a lot of disposable income to pay for everything here in Marin FDF puts a lot of our families in hoc for months after attending. This is really probably something to take up with His Eminence but we need to find a way to help our families who participate because it costs anywhere from 1500 to 3000 or maybe more for families to go to FDF when you factor in hotel for four nights, driving or airfare, registration costs meals and so on! It's fabulous that GOYA retreat is underwritten so kids can go for a reduced price. Sometimes I think the

cultural aspect of our Greek Orthodox Churches hinders growth. So many people I know say, I am not Greek can I still come to your church? My response is always YES! Come anytime. But that is an ongoing perception. I am also concerned that people come to church for the programs more than for the faith. I think this is why education is so important for kids and adults. Why are we here? I run into people in Novato who grew up Orthodox but are now other religions because they are more "tolerant" or go to other denominations of Christianity where they feel the faith is more accessible. We also need a safety plan on campus; Natural Disaster and Lockdown Drills. No one wants to think about these things but what do we do if there's an earthquake, fire or flood on campus? What do we do if we have an active shooter or some other irrational threatening person on campus or in the area? Do we know what to do? Also is the current format of the middle school and high school Sunday School classes something that is bringing kids to class regularly or does it need to be revamped to retain students and make them excited about their faith and engaged? Also in this strategic planning it would be really good to get a picture of how many volunteer hours are spent to make Nativity run. at schools, volunteers sign in when they arrive and sign out when they leave. And the PTAs and administrators get a picture of how much time it takes to make a certain program run...

- ✓ Thank you for the time and energy that is being put into the process. Whether or not we agree with the outcome or proposals, the effort is very appreciated.
- ✓ If the Church is in the position to assume such a project without getting in a financial fix I say go for it.
- ✓ I worry that the emphasis seems to be more on building or re-building structures rather than on developing a "safe" environment for a wider spectrum of parishioners.
- ✓ If the parish is going to move forward, we have to progress with the changes suggested in the presentation. We as a community (young and old) for the continued viability of the church have to do this for the future of the church
- ✓ I look forward to the Strategic Plan helping us to become more united as a parish/community both spiritually and personally with one another. Having a plan will create an understanding of the why we go to Church, Why we care so much about Church and why we want to see growth in our ministries and

- in the daily life of our parish. Seeing Sunday as a very special day but knowing we have a larger Spiritual life than just those two hours on Sunday.
- ✓ In addition to the goals and objectives that we may generate on the facilities and the programs and ministries, we could also generate personal and perhaps collective spiritual goals and objectives. These could be simple and somewhat easy to achieve such as keeping a gratitude list, praying for people we feel have offended us, short selected readings or doing something loving, unexpected and ideally, anonymously for someone in our life.

## Orthodox Prayer of Thanksgiving

O Lord our Savior and our Master, we, Thine unprofitable servants, with fear and trembling give thanks unto Thy loving goodness for all Thy benefits which Thou hast poured so abundantly upon us, Thy servants. We fall down in adoration before Thee and offer Thee, O God, our praises; with fervor we cry to Thee:

O God, deliver us from all adversities and mercifully fulfill in us such of our desires as may be expedient for us. Hear us, We entreat Thee, and have mercy, for Thou art the Hope of all the ends of the earth, and unto Thee, with the Father, and the Holy Spirit, be ascribed glory, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

We praise Thee, O God of our Fathers, we hymn Thee, we bless Thee, we give thanks unto Thee for Thy great and tender mercy. To Thee we flee, O merciful and mighty God. Shine into our hearts with the True Sun of Thy righteousness.

Enlighten our minds and keep all our senses, that henceforth we may walk uprightly and keep Thy commandments, and may finally attain unto eternal life, even to Thee, Who art the source of life, and be admitted to the glorious fruition of Thine inaccessible Light; for Thou art our God, and unto Thee, O Father, Son and Holy Spirit, be ascribed glory, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

## List of Survey Participants

Chris & Keri Antonis	Fran Corcoran	Patricia Kamages
Bruce Corcoran	Dina Camamis	Kathy
Dean Kuvelis	anonymous	Elaine Harvey

Gigi Pappas Medan	Eirini Karatzaferi	anonymous
anonymous	anonymous	Chrisoula Capetanos
Maria Pappas	Theodore & Elaine	Nick Livanos
Dino Madias	Passaris	Renee Scott
Dawne Athanasia	Lena	Ann George
Streutker	Carol Economy	anonymous
Phil Marshall	Patrick Fuss	Margaret (Maggie)
Chris Siefkas	Liz Rouman	Vassiliou
Cheryl Simone	Paula Plessas hall	Marti Madias
Messner	Effie Fourakis	Michael D. Lagios
joanna castro	Christ John Kamages	Nonie Giusti
anonymous	Sophia K. Eliopoulos	Connie Jouganatos
charles walters	Scott Walters	Vicki Kalabokes
Pat Arango	Evdokia Smith	Irene
Ann Gigounas	Theo Mainaris	Irene Starling
Katina Pantazes	Chris Kalabokes	Susan Stockton
Pete Stathis	Stella Stenros	John Stockton
Cathy Selmi	Victor Gavallos	anonymous
Ed Keller	George Sotiras	George A Georgeson
Matina Seremetis	Steve Rouman	Anonymous
Sylvia Haritakis	Fr. John Kocolas	Niki Haris
Kenn Cunningham	George Tacticos	Joan Marsala
Fr. Constantine	Nico Haris	Spiro Stratigos
Efstathiu	Patricia Destein	Anthony Scott
George Sarantakis	Anthony Kosmas	Stassie Sideris
Presbytera Kay	Mary Kay Stratigos	
Efstathiu	Dina Stathis	
anonymous		