

Executive Summary
Nativity of Christ Greek Orthodox Church
Strategic Planning Survey
April 2019

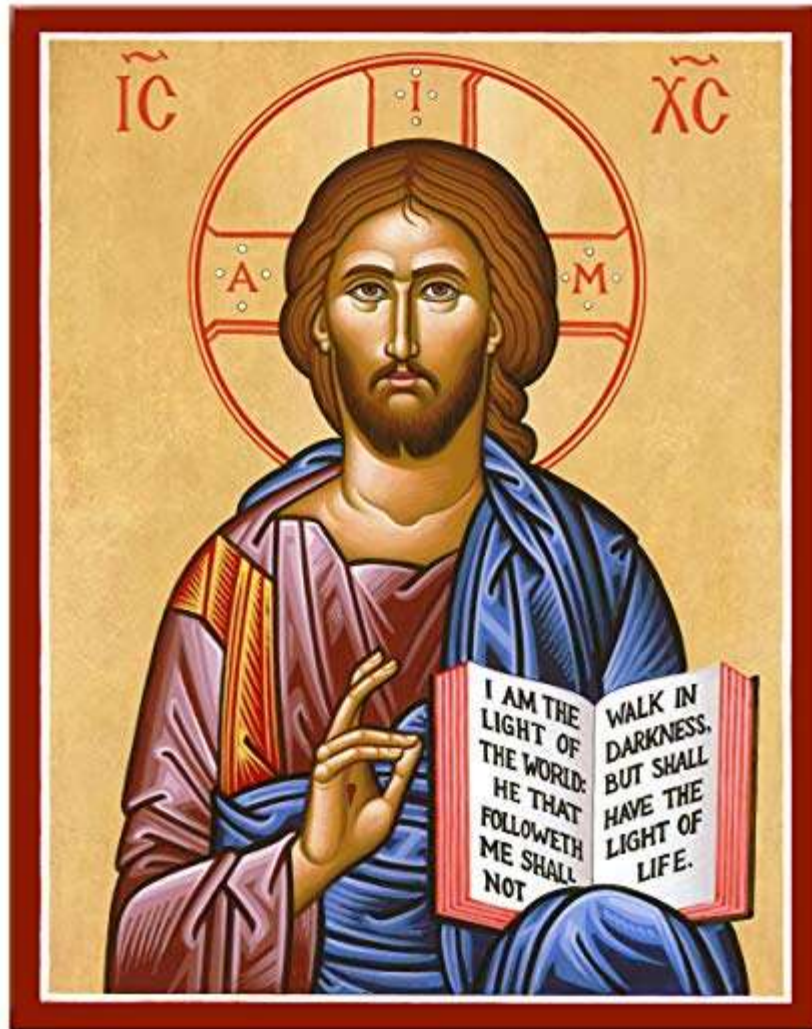


For Faith, Family,

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 Executive Summary of the Strategic Planning Survey

The executive summary is 36 pages long. However, the large number of graphs and charts, together with large fonts for should make for easier reading. What is missing are the many pages of comments offered by the 82 participants taking the survey. These comments may be found in the Complete Survey Report. Both versions – the Executive Summary and the Complete Survey Report are available on the parish’s website (or soon will be). The Complete Survey Report is approximately 115 pages long.

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 onto 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 eighty-two survey takers collectively expressed their choices and responses to the 44 questions in the survey.

Special gratitude is offered to the 82 survey takers, the Strategic Planning Steering Committee, the Parish Council, 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 Executive Summary to 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. This is true of the es Complete Survey version because of the many pages of comments.

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 in the written Strategic Plan. These will then be presented in the final edition of the 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 provided with a paper copy of the Executive Summary upon their arrival for the Workshop. Please read through the document. You may find the Executive Summary 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 in the Complete Survey Report 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 of one parish 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 alarm but the evidence shows that we are living in a shrinking Church. This does not mean that Nativity cannot 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

Responses to Survey Questions

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

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
	Answered	77
	Skipped	5

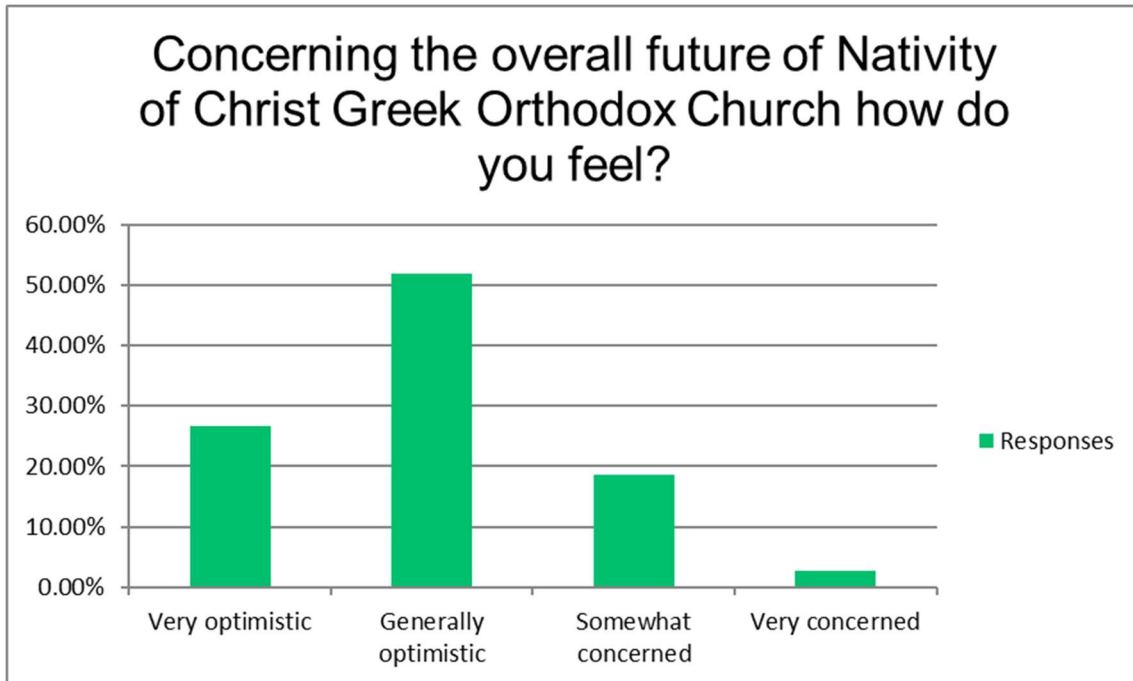
Question #8: The name of the survey taker was requested.

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 the misunderstanding.

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



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? (The 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 improvedbut 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
	Answered	65
	Skipped	17

If you wish to read the full listings of comments please access the Complete Survey Report on the parish website.

Question #16 How important is liquidating the debt (which is approximately \$300,000) on the parish home?

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
	Answered	76
	Skipped	6

If you wish to read the full listings of comments please access the Complete Survey Report on the parish website.

Question #17 How would you rate the Word, our parish's monthly 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
	Answered	82
	Skipped	0

If you wish to read the full listings of comments please access the Complete Survey Report on the parish website.

Question #18 How do you receive the Word?

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
	Answered	79
	Skipped	3

Question #19 How would you rate the 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
	Answered	73
	Skipped	9

If you wish to read the full listings of comments please access the Complete Survey Report on the parish website.

Question #20 Fr. John asks for feedback on his emails.

Fr. John thanks you for the many helpful suggestions on improving email communications. Please read the full Survey Report if you would like to read these suggestions.

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
	Answered	81
	Skipped	1

If you wish to read the full listings of comments please access the Complete Survey Report on the parish website.

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
	Answered	79
	Skipped	3

If you wish to read the full listings of comments please access the Complete Survey Report on the parish website.

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
	Answered	77
	Skipped	5

If you wish to read the full listings of comments please access the Complete Survey Report on the parish website.

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
	Answered	80
	Skipped	2

If you wish to read the full listings of comments please access the Complete Survey Report on the parish website.

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
	Answered	73
	Skipped	9

If you wish to read the full listings of comments please access the Complete Survey Report on the parish website.

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
	Answered	77
	Skipped	5

If you wish to read the full listings of comments please access the Complete Survey Report on the parish website.

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
	Answered	78
	Skipped	4

If you wish to read the full listings of comments please access the Complete Survey Report on the parish website.

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
	Answered	79
	Skipped	3

If you wish to read the full listings of comments please access the Complete Survey Report on the parish website.

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
	Answered	78
	Skipped	4

If you wish to read the full listings of comments please access the Complete Survey Report on the parish website.

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
	Answered	81
	Skipped	1

If you wish to read the full listings of comments please access the Complete Survey Report on the parish website.

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
	Answered	79
	Skipped	3

If you wish to read the full listings of comments please access the Complete Survey Report on the parish website.

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
	Answered	82
	Skipped	0

If you wish to read the full listings of comments please access the Complete Survey Report on the parish website.

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
	Answered	79
	Skipped	3

If you wish to read the full listings of comments please access the Complete Survey Report on the parish website.

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
	Answered	77
	Skipped	5

If you wish to read the full listings of comments please access the Complete Survey Report on the parish website.

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
	Answered	81
	Skipped	1

If you wish to read the full listings of comments please access the Complete Survey Report on the parish website.

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
	Answered	77
	Skipped	5

If you wish to read the full listings of comments please access the Complete Survey Report on the parish website.

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
	Answered	78
	Skipped	4

If you wish to read the full listings of comments please access the Complete Survey Report on the parish website.

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
	Answered	82
	Skipped	0

If you wish to read the full listings of comments please access the Complete Survey Report on the parish website.

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
	Answered	76
	Skipped	6

If you wish to read the full listings of comments please access the Complete Survey Report on the parish website.

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
	Answered	76
	Skipped	6

If you wish to read the full listings of comments please access the Complete Survey Report on the parish website.

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
	Answered	77
	Skipped	5

If you wish to read the full listings of comments please access the Complete Survey Report on the parish website.

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
	Answered	78
	Skipped	4

If you wish to read the full listings of comments please access the Complete Survey Report on the parish website.

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**

Final comments by participating survey takers are available in the Complete Survey Report on the parish's website.

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
Efstathiou	Patricia Destein	Anthony Scott
George Sarantakis	Anthony Kosmas	Stassie Sideris
Presbytera Kay	Mary Kay Stratigos	
Efstathiou	Dina Stathis	
anonymous		