


Keeping Kids Catholic: 101  
The Pain and the Promise!

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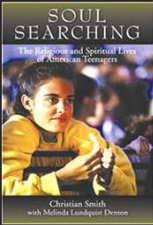
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REFLECTION:

- I think having faith is important because ...
- Something I like about being Catholic is ...
- It seems more challenging today to pass on faith because ...

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*“...religious faith and practice themselves exert  
significant,  
positive,  
direct, and  
indirect influences  
on the lives of teenagers, helping to foster  
healthier, more engaged adolescents who  
live more constructive and promising  
lives.”*

Soul Searching: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of American Teenagers, p. 263

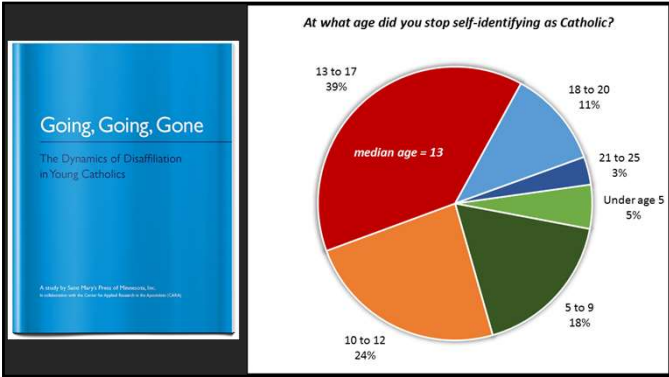


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The Challenge

- There are 20 million “former Catholics” – and 74% of those who stop identifying as Catholic, do so between the ages of 10 – 20. (SMP 2015)
- Of those who leave, 50% become unaffiliated and 50% join other denominations or religions
- **Why do they leave?** It’s NOT only about doctrine or theology, it’s about experience ... “parish doesn’t meet my spiritual (emotional, physical, social, etc.) needs.”
- How and where are those needs being met?

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DIMENSIONS OF FAITH




Faith as Believing

- Cognitive or intellectual dimension
- Creeds, traditions, teachings ... the “WHAT” we believe



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Faith as Trusting

- Affective dimension – relationship of trust with a personal God – the “WHO” we believe
- Different experiences of God – unique gift to us



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Faith as Doing

- Behavioral or action dimension – “HOW” we live out our faith
- “Faith without works is dead” - James

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Faith as Believing (Head)

Faith as Trusting (Heart)

Faith as Doing (Hands)




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ENGAGING YOUNG PEOPLE IS IMPORTANT:


A new paradigm: “In most cases, belief does not lead to belonging, belonging leads to belief”

Belonging ..... behaving ..... believing



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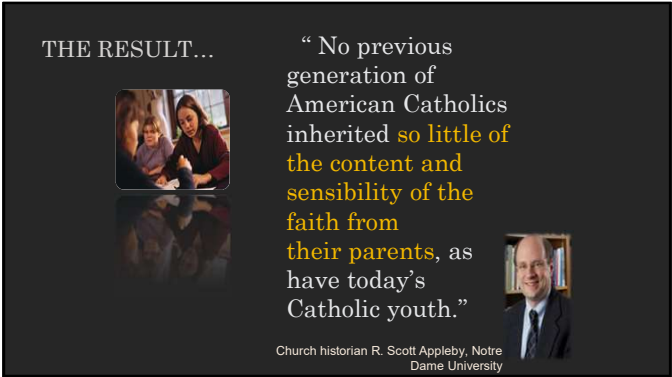
- Modern world: people come to worship to *know* more about God – “That sermon made me think”
- Post-modern world: people come to worship to *experience* God – “That worship really moved me” ... experience is the criteria!



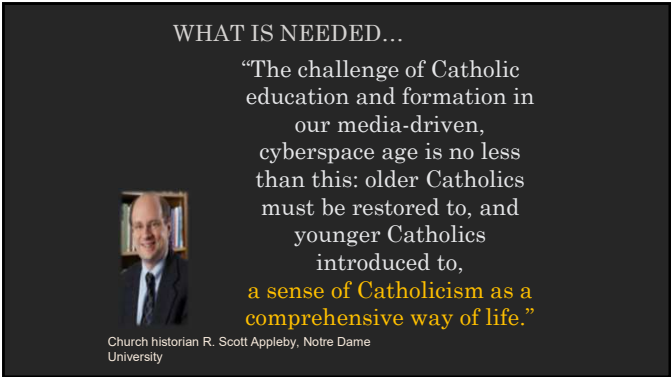
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**Catholicism Rediscovered**

*To be Catholic is social*

- We are communal
- Catholic identity is connected with the community
- Belonging to behaving to believing
- Accompaniment



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**TO BE CATHOLIC IS TO BE COMPREHENSIVE:**


- vertical and horizontal spirituality
- head, heart, and hands = know, love, and serve God



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**To be Catholic is to see differently**


- Catholic imagination ... Catholic world view
- Our sacramental lens
- Everything expresses the transcendent: beauty, the arts, ritual, gatherings, nature, devotionals



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**To be Catholic is to engage the world through justice, service, and heroic charity**


*Catholic Social Teaching ... discipleship in action*



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The Jesus Experience:  
The Heart of Catholicism as Spiritual Path



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Parish Impact: More = More

*The greater the availability of religiously based relationships, activities, programs, opportunities and challenges for teenagers...*



*...the more likely teenagers are to be religiously engaged and invested.*

Soul Searching: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of American Teenagers

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PARENTS: WHAT CAN WE DO?

· Practice our faith!

· Pray at meals and help kids lead prayer.

· Do family faith sharing at dinner.

· Display religious art around the house.

· Serve together (church and community).

· Read scripture



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PARENTS: WHAT CAN WE DO?

➤ Bless our kids each night and/or before they go out of the house

➤ Creat3 family religious traditions around Christmas, Easter, Thanksgiving

➤ Creat3 family faith celebrations (sacraments, weddings, funerals, etc.)



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### PARENTS: WHAT CAN WE DO?

- Discuss current events using Catholic teachings and values
- Connect your children to adult faith filled mentors or role models (The Village!)
- Make Mass, youth ministry, and church events high family priorities.



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### Parents: What can we do?

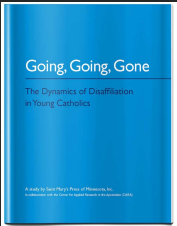
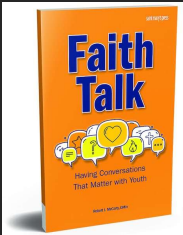


Teach basic faith 'practices':

- sign of the cross/basic prayers
- genuflecting
- using holy water
- fasting/abstaining
- using scripture
- participating in Mass

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