

Survey Results and Program Evaluation of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese Ministries

Executive Summary

Background and Objectives

As a first step in gauging the efficacy of the investments made by the Archdiocese in its Ministries, the Archdiocese commissioned Barna Group, a leading research group that works with faith-based organizations, to perform a study with two phases:

- In Phase I, interviews were performed with a wide range of Clergy and Lay Leaders in Metropolises across the U.S. as well as the Archdiocese covering 10 Ministry areas and general opinions.
- In Phase II, the input was factored into a questionnaire sent to Clergy, Parish Council Presidents and Archdiocesan Council members (Other Lay Leaders).

The objective of the research was to determine which Ministries are found to be the most useful to users and should be maintained, perceptions of the value of those Ministries and where investments should be made, reduced or eliminated to optimize the use of Total Commitment funding.

Methodology

An online survey was utilized that was managed by Barna and to ensure validity of the study, responses were collected anonymously.

In total, 565 participants completed the survey: 309 Clergy, 208 Parish Council Presidents and 48 other Lay Leaders.

Participation by Metropolis:

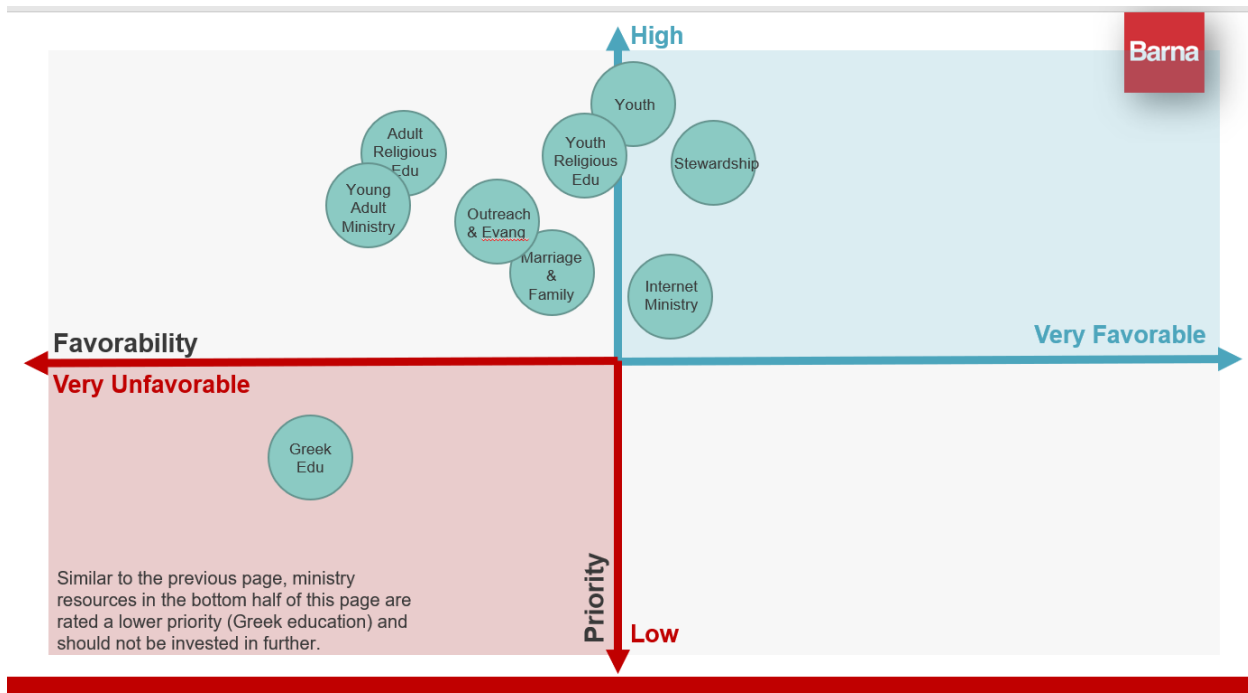
- Atlanta: 50 clergy (75% of total) and 38 lay leaders
- Boston: 46 clergy (71% of total) and 47 lay leaders
- Chicago: 37 clergy (64% of total) and 40 lay leaders
- Denver: 23 clergy (43% of total) and 12 lay leaders
- Detroit: 21 clergy (58% of total) and 13 lay leaders
- Direct Archdiocese District: 39 clergy (40% of total) and 21 lay leaders
- New Jersey: 24 clergy (47% of total) and 16 lay leaders
- Pittsburgh: 27 clergy (55% of total) and 29 lay leaders
- San Francisco: 39 clergy (45% of total) and 33 lay leaders
- Archdiocese: 10 leaders

Top Line Findings

- The contextual question about the broader challenges facing the Greek Orthodox Church today found that Clergy and Lay Leaders found most pressing the issue of a lack of commitment or apathetic Greek Orthodox Christians followed by the importance of engaging the next generation.
- Among Clergy, the next highest pressing issues were: Personal spiritual growth, secularism, recruiting volunteers/motivating people to serve and finances/generosity. Lay Leaders found recruiting volunteers/motivating people to serve, finances/generosity and developing the next generation of Church leaders to be the next highest pressing issues.
- The idea of next generation development is a common thread in feedback on Ministries. Clergy, even more so than Lay Leaders. prioritize ministries that help youth and young adults.

Ministry Assessment

- The research evaluated Ministries and resources of the Archdiocese as follows:
 - Priority of the Ministry
 - How favorably they rated resources by Ministry
 - Desire for further investment or reduced investment in a Ministry
- The highest priority Ministries were: Youth Programs, Youth Religious Education and Stewardship.
 - Youth Programs were rated as a high priority by 57% of Clergy and 56% of Parish Council Presidents
 - Youth Religious Education was rated as a high priority by 46% of Clergy and 41% of Parish Council Presidents
 - Stewardship was rated as a high priority by 41% of Clergy and 48% of Parish Council Presidents
 - In descending order of priority were: Adult Religious Education, Young Adult Ministries, Internet Ministries, Outreach and Evangelism and Greek Education.
 - The data was also sorted by Large Parishes with over 250 attendees and Smaller Parishes with under 250 attendees. Large Parishes are more likely to say that Youth Programs are a high priority compared to Smaller Parishes (69% versus 39%). Similarly, Young Adult Ministries are a considerably higher priority in Large Parishes (31%) than Smaller Parishes (18%). For other Ministries, there aren't significant variations based on size of Parish.

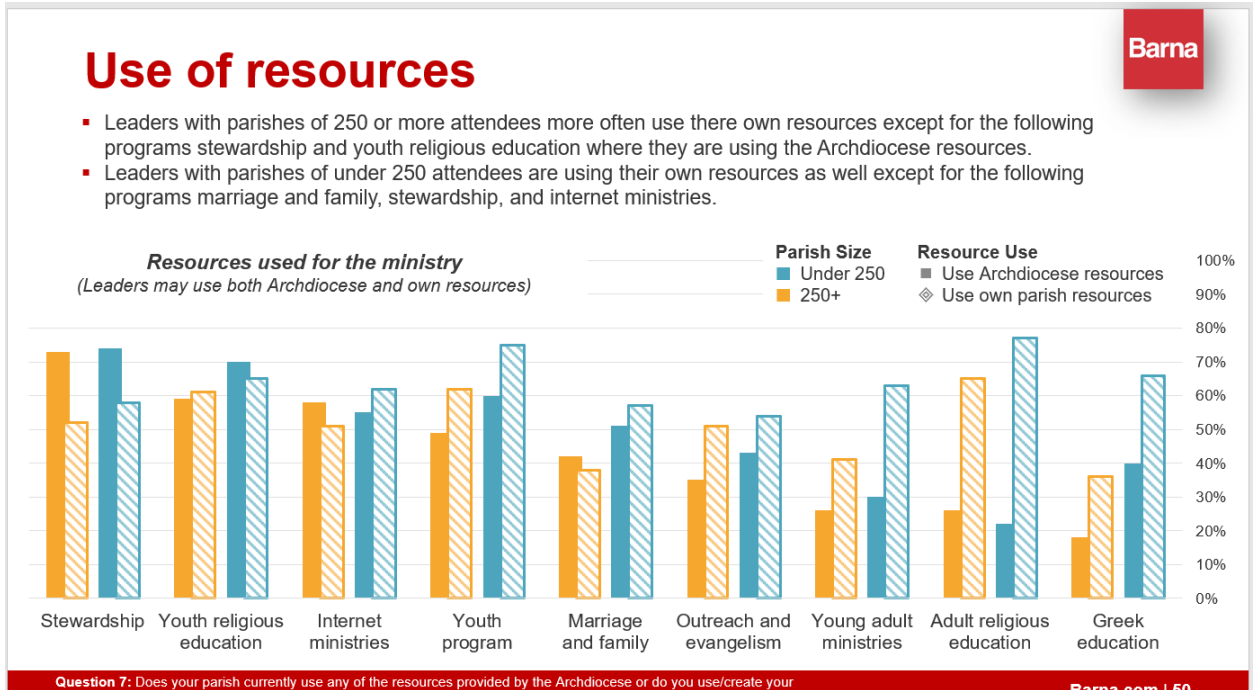


The above chart plots favorability against priority and shows those Archdiocesan Ministries that have the highest priority and the most favorable ratings in the upper right-hand quadrant: Youth Programs, Stewardship and Internet Ministries.

- The survey asked about the perceptions of Archdiocesan resources. Those Ministries that received the highest favorability ratings (very favorable or somewhat favorable) in terms of utilization of Archdiocesan resources were:
 - Youth Programs: Clergy 74%; Parish Council Presidents 61%
 - Stewardship: Clergy 77%; Parish Council Presidents 67%
 - Internet Ministries: Clergy 81%; Parish Council Presidents 46%
 - Youth Religious Education: Clergy 60%; Parish Council Presidents 58%
- Other Ministries trailed in terms of perceptions of Archdiocesan resources with Greek Education materials receiving the lowest ratings where only one in ten of church leaders have a very favorable opinion of resources provided by the Archdiocese.
- The survey also looked at how Archdiocesan resources are used by the Parishes for each Ministry and whether they use the Archdiocese’s resources, their own resources or don’t use any resources at all. There is a high utilization of Archdiocese resources in the following Ministries:
 - Youth Programs, Youth Religious Education, Stewardship and Internet Ministries.

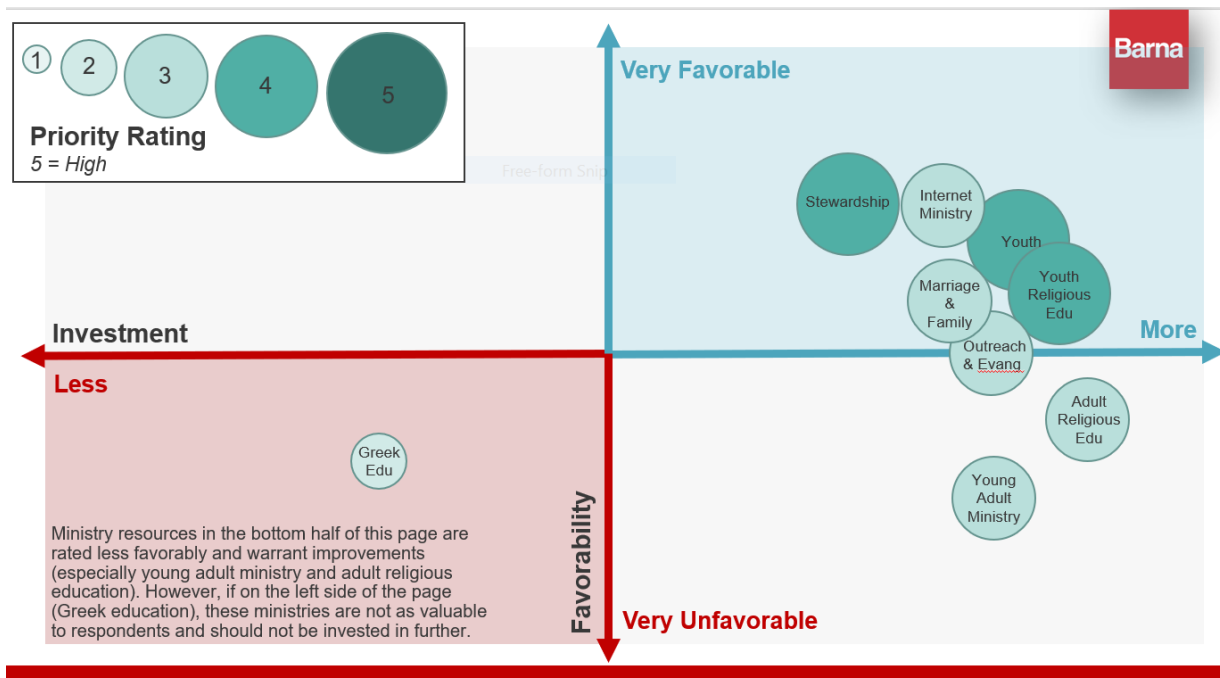
75% or more of all leaders prefer programs and resources developed by the Archdiocese that they can modify to fit the needs of their local parish including 75% of Clergy.

Just 14% of Clergy prefer programs or resources developed by the Archdiocese that can be administered without any additional work of the part of the Parish.



- Importantly the survey asked about where the Archdiocese should invest in terms of Ministry dollars and resources. Ministries where more investment is warranted:

	<u>Clergy</u>	<u>PC Presidents</u>
Adult Education	81%	55%
Youth Religious Education	77%	70%
Outreach and Evangelism	72%	59%
Young Adult Ministries	71%	69%
Marriage and Family	67%	53%
Youth Programs	65%	74%
Internet Ministries	61%	54%
Stewardship	53%	62%
Inter-orthodox Ecumenical and		
Interfaith Relations	24%	50%
Greek Education	12%	29%



The above chart plots favorability of Ministries against investment and shows those in the upper right-hand quadrant as being most favorable and requiring more investment.

- The survey also found that at least half of all leaders are very or somewhat satisfied with their access to the technology/tools that they need to do their job. This is especially true among the Clergy where 71% are very or somewhat satisfied with the technology/tools.

Other Areas Surveyed

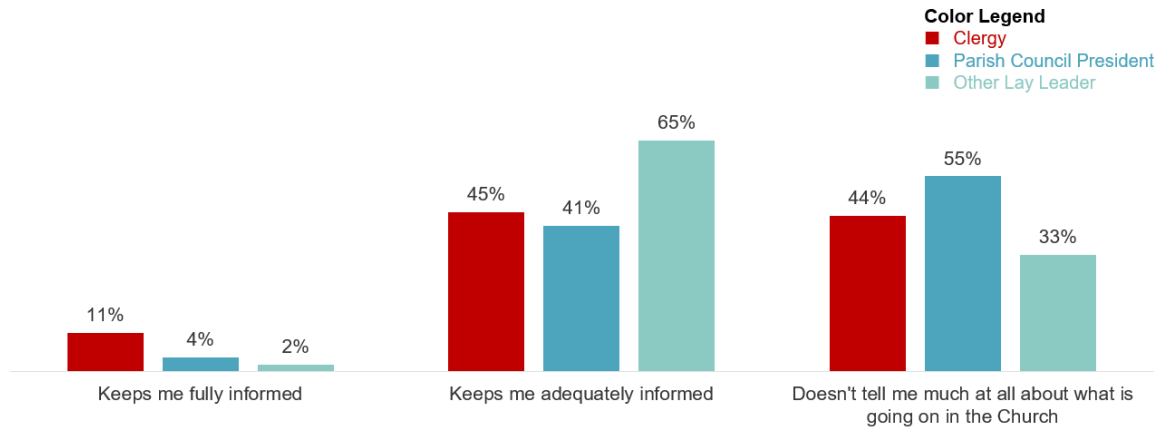
- The survey provided feedback and suggestions on the Clergy Laity Congress which will be shared with the Committee that is planning the 2020 Clergy Laity Congress. Areas surveyed included rating of the Clergy Laity Congress, benefits of attending the Clergy laity Congress, reasons for not attending the Clergy Laity Congress and suggestions on how to make it more effective.

- Communications were also surveyed and had the following top line findings:

Impression of communication

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- 45% of clergy and 65% of other lay leaders say their impression of communication from the Archdiocese is that it keeps them adequately informed.
- The balance of leaders mostly says their impression of Archdiocese communication is that it doesn't tell them much about what is going on in the Church.

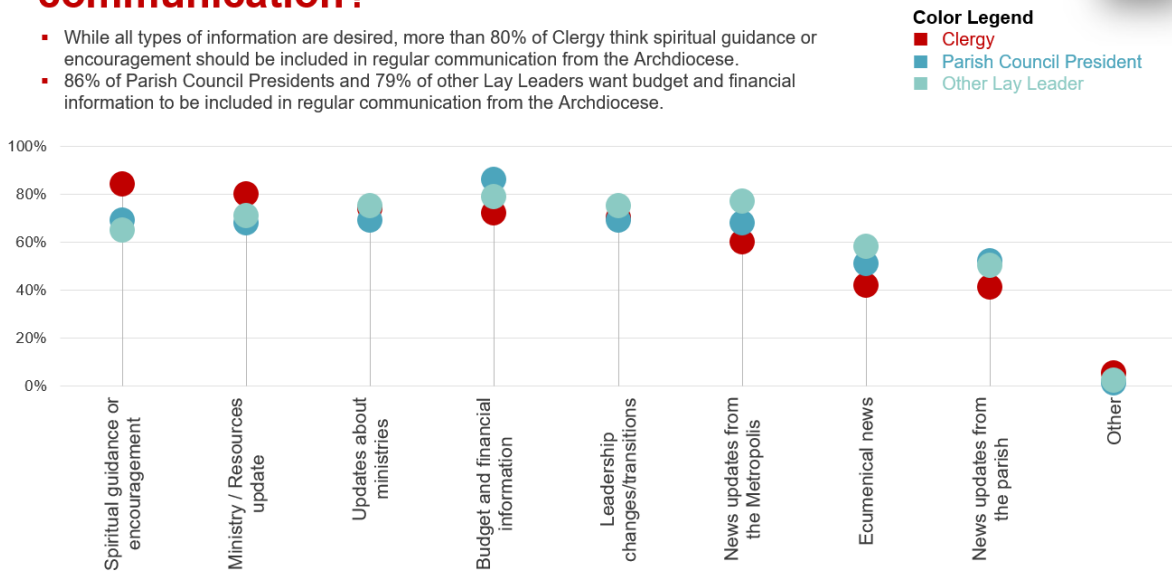


The following are the types of information that are most sought by Clergy and Lay Leaders to be included in regular communications.

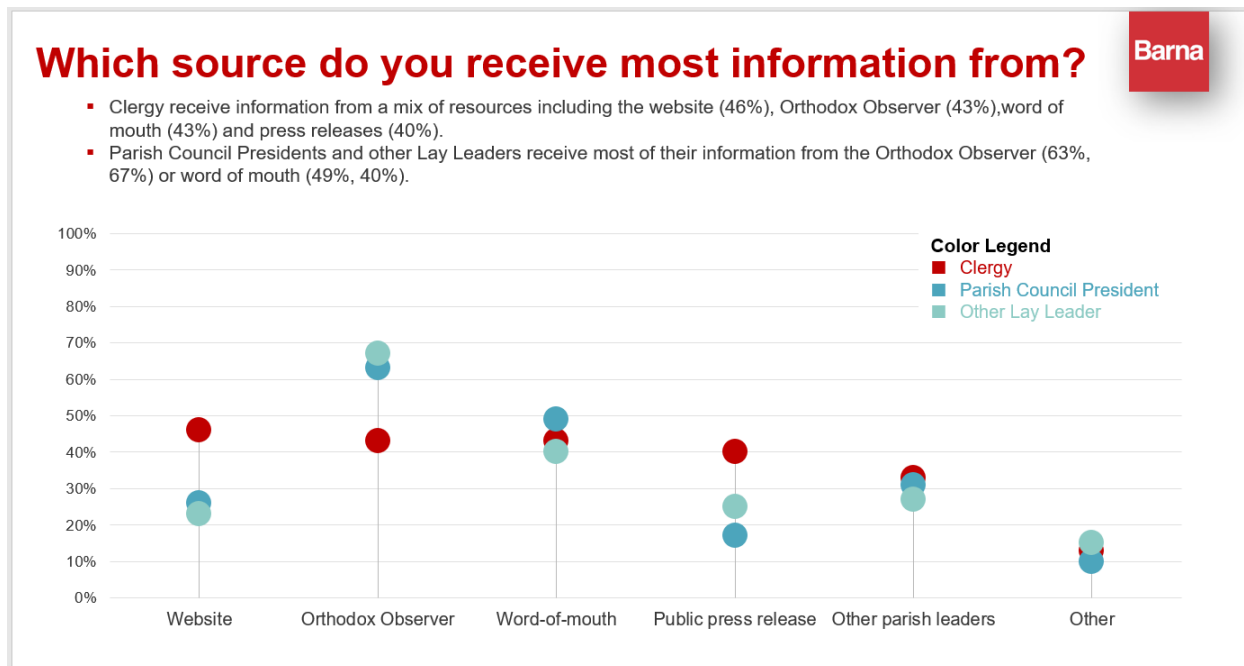
Which should be included as regular communication?

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- While all types of information are desired, more than 80% of Clergy think spiritual guidance or encouragement should be included in regular communication from the Archdiocese.
- 86% of Parish Council Presidents and 79% of other Lay Leaders want budget and financial information to be included in regular communication from the Archdiocese.



- Sources of information are received from the following:



Funding and Next Steps

- This research project was funded through a generous grant from Leadership 100.
- The results of the survey have been made available to the Ministry department heads and their respective Committee Chairs and they had the opportunity to speak with the representatives from Barna to help them interpret the findings and inform their work going forward.
- The expectation is that these survey results will be considered as part of the budgeting process for 2020 and assist the Archdiocese in determining the most effective use of its resources.