

RELIGION TO REALITY

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Prayer from St. Francis de Sales

*Do not look forward in fear to the changes and chances of this life;
Rather, look to them with full confidence that, as they arise,
God, to whom you belong, will in His love enable you to profit by them.
He has guided you thus far in life, and He will lead you safely through all trials;
and when you cannot stand it,
God will carry you in His arms.*

Do not fear what may happen tomorrow; the same everlasting Father who cares for you today will take care of you then and every day. He will either shield you from suffering, or will give you unfailing strength to bear it. Be at peace, then, and put aside all anxious thoughts and imaginations.

Amen.

September 2024

DeSales Media: Catholic Discipleship in the US

*Episode 2:
Spiritual Direction –
Guidance and Grace*



Agenda

Speakers

Initial Findings

New Findings

Coming Attractions

Appendix



Speakers

Speakers



Dr. Greg Popcak
Catholic Counselor
Co-Founder of Catholic HOM



Fr. Boniface Hicks, O.S.B.
Director for Spiritual Formation
Director of the Institute for Ministry Formation,
St. Vincent Seminary, Latrobe



Fr. John Gribowich
High School Instructor of Theology
Director of Curriculum, Sunday to Sunday



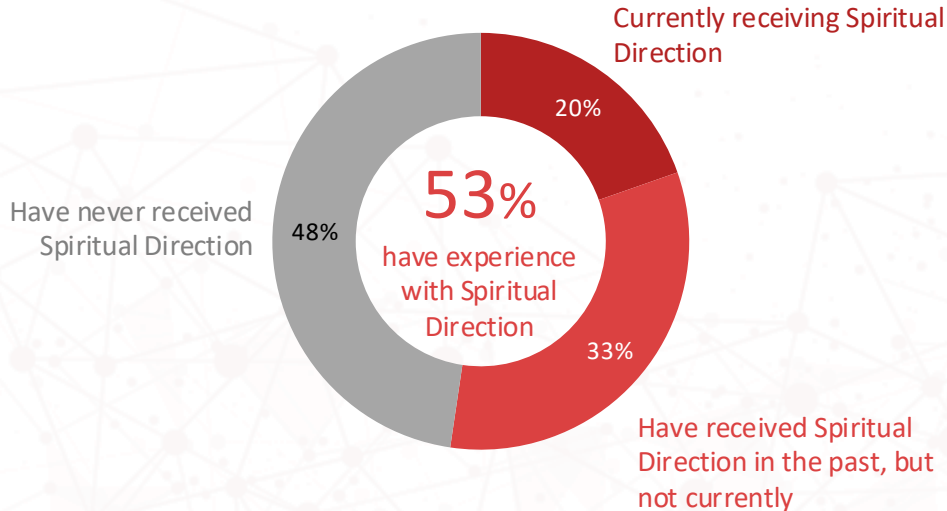
Dave Plisky
Director of Product &
Innovation, DeSales Media

Initial Findings

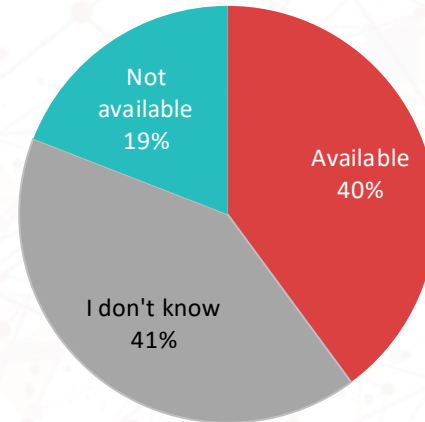
Over half of respondents have experienced Spiritual Direction, but only 1 in 5 are currently engaged in it. Only 4 in 10 know that it is available nearby, indicating a need for heightened visibility and availability.

Spiritual Direction – Current Status and Availability

Are you currently receiving, or have you ever received, Spiritual Direction?



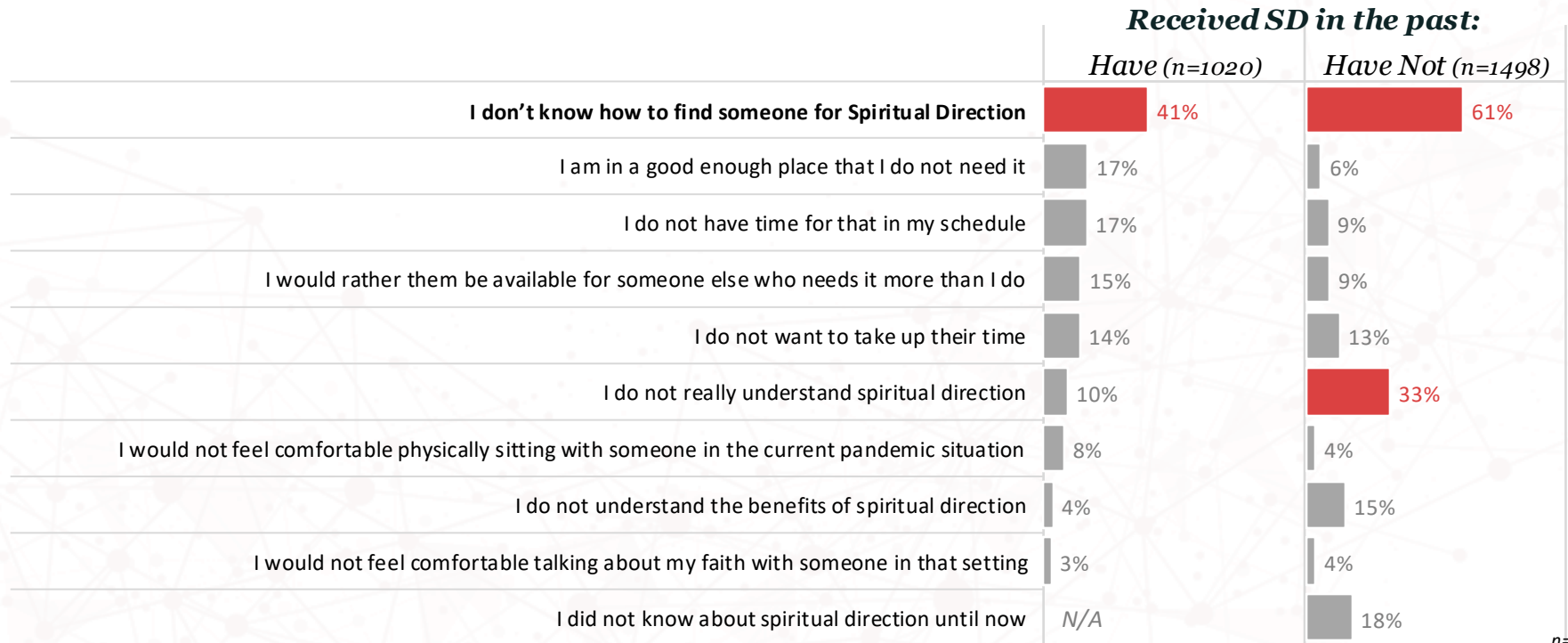
Is Spiritual Direction available in your home parish or any faith community to which you belong?



n=3137

Simply providing a resource to find spiritual directors will meet much of the existing need in this area.

Reasons for not Currently Receiving Spiritual Direction



n=1020

Regardless of past experience with spiritual direction, many would do online spiritual direction, especially those not having previously received it.

Likelihood of Receiving ONLINE Spiritual Direction

Among those currently receiving Spiritual Direction

n=619

Extremely or
Somewhat
UNLIKELY

Extremely or
Somewhat
LIKELY

39%

41%



Among those who received in the past, but not currently

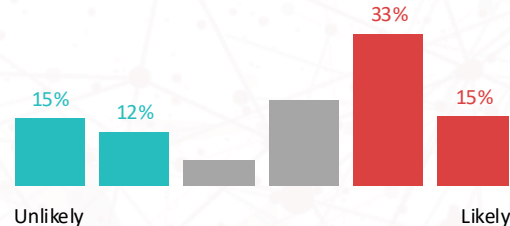
n=1020

Extremely or
Somewhat
UNLIKELY

Extremely or
Somewhat
LIKELY

27%

48%



Among those who have never received Spiritual Direction

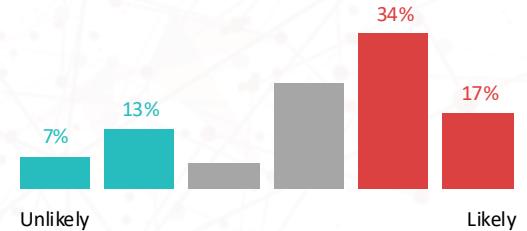
n=1498

Extremely or
Somewhat
UNLIKELY

Extremely or
Somewhat
LIKELY

21%

51%



New Findings

Objectives

Having completed an analysis of devout Catholics, DeSales Media is now interested in understanding how these Catholics cluster and what can be learned from them to help in their evangelization efforts.

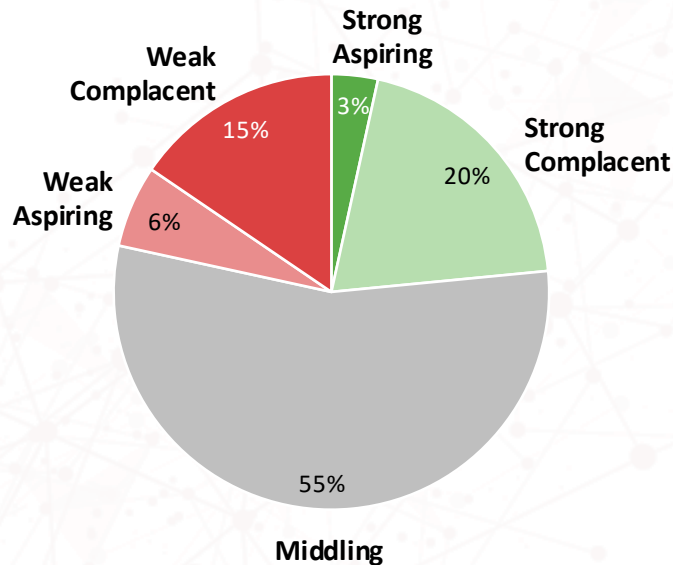
Our objectives:

1. Identify and describe distinct Catholic segments based on key metrics
2. Discover correlations between responses to different but related topics



Five segments were identified using self-perceived strength and desired growth across a number of areas: discipleship, interior fruits of faith, interior life, sacramental life, and expressive fruits of faith

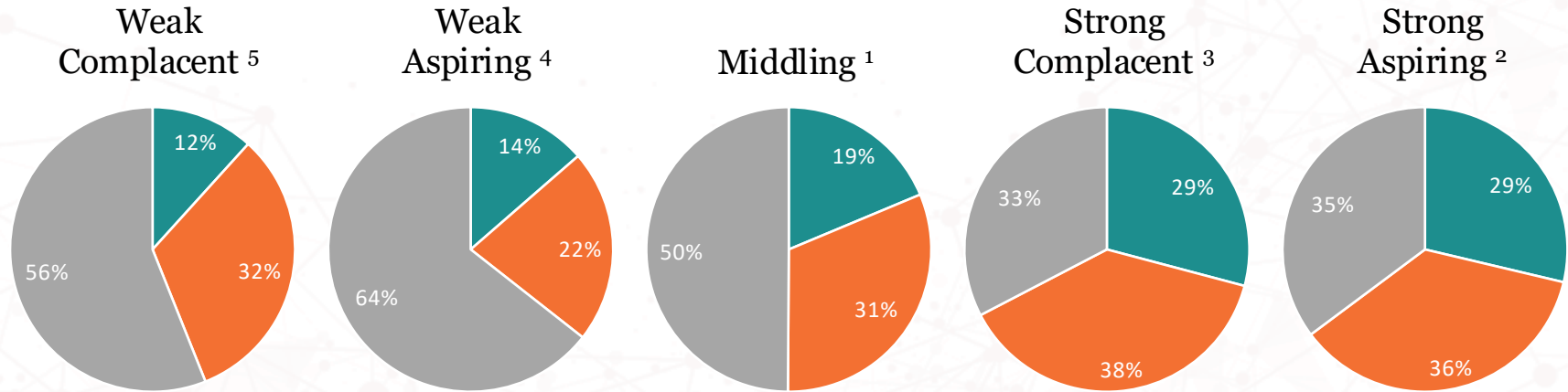
Respondent Segmentation



n=3137

Spiritual direction is much less likely among the two “weak” segments.

Spiritual Direction – Current Status



Currently receiving Spiritual Direction

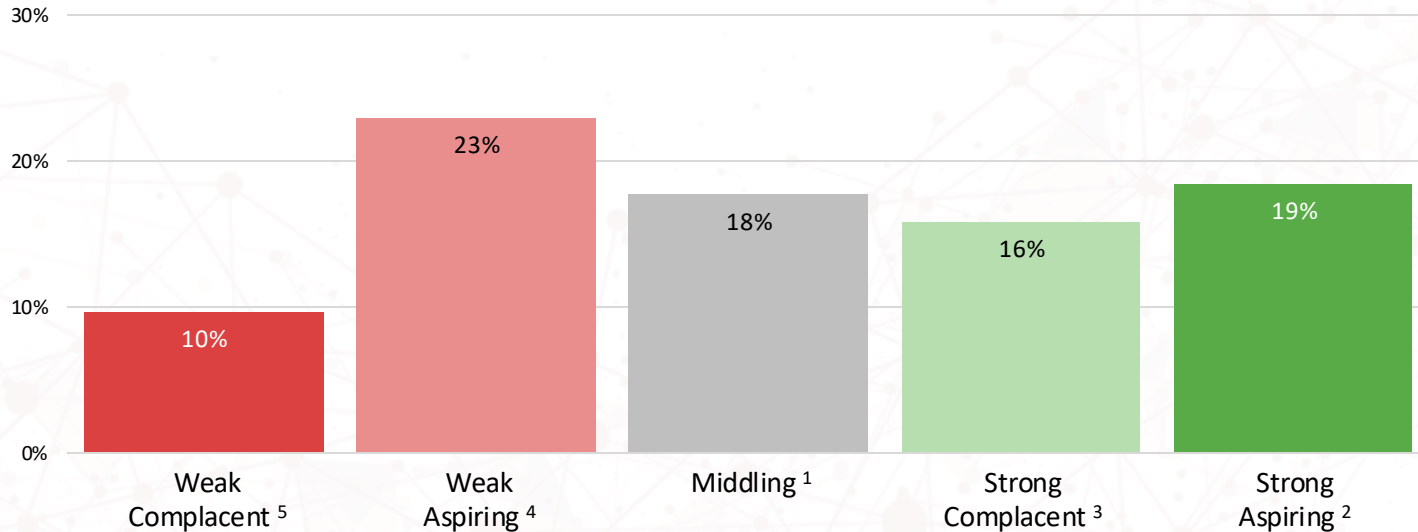
Have received Spiritual Direction in the past, but not currently

Have never received Spiritual Direction

n=3137

Slightly more of the Weak Aspiring are very likely to receive online spiritual direction.

***Likelihood of Receiving ONLINE Spiritual Direction:
Extremely Likely (a certainty that I would do it)***



C1: Spiritual Direction

▶ A7: Prayer Frequency

Prayer Days a Week: 7 Days

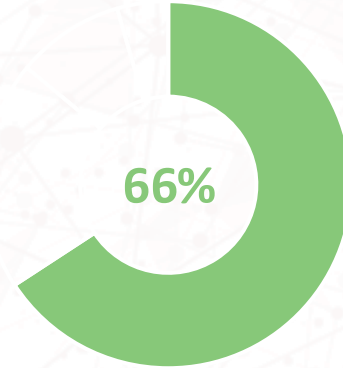
Currently Receiving



Past, but
Not Currently



Never

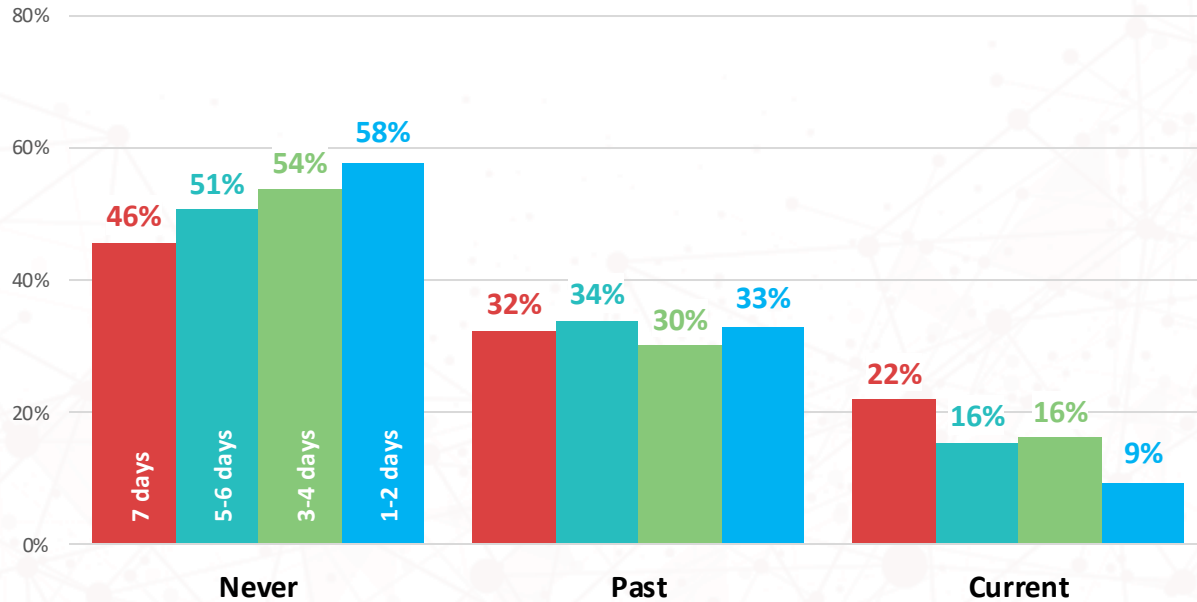


	n
Current	619
Past	1020
Never	1498

A7: Prayer Days / Week

► C1: Spiritual Direction

Are you currently receiving, or have you ever received, Spiritual Direction?

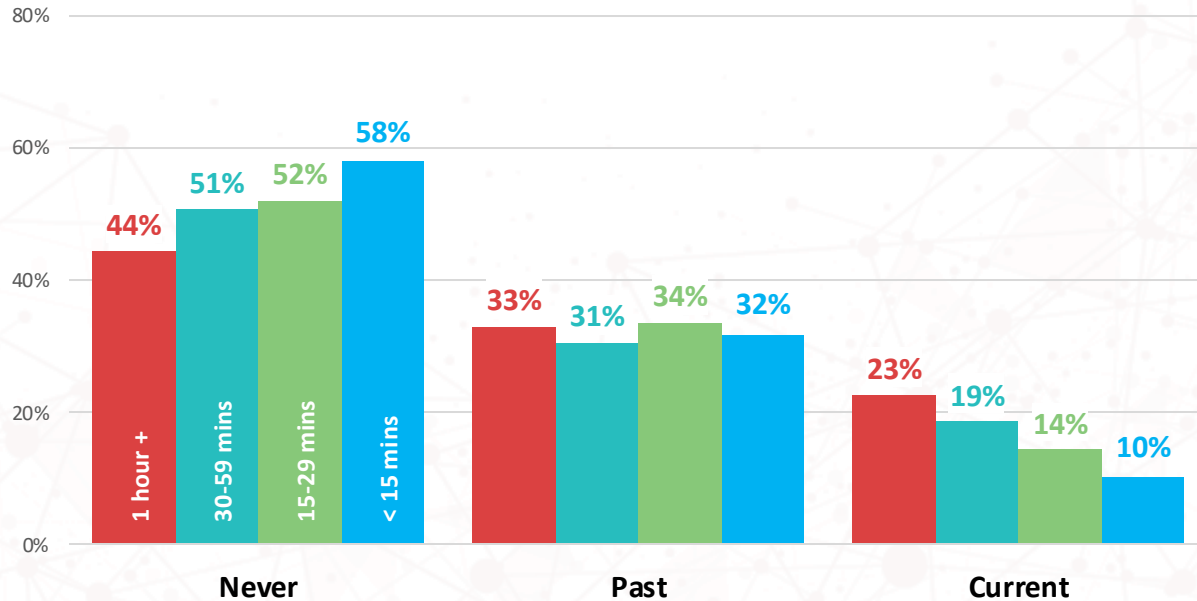


	n
7 days	2150
5-6 days	599
3-4 days	266
1-2 days	116

A8: Prayer Time / Day

▶ C1: Spiritual Direction

Are you currently receiving, or have you ever received, Spiritual Direction?

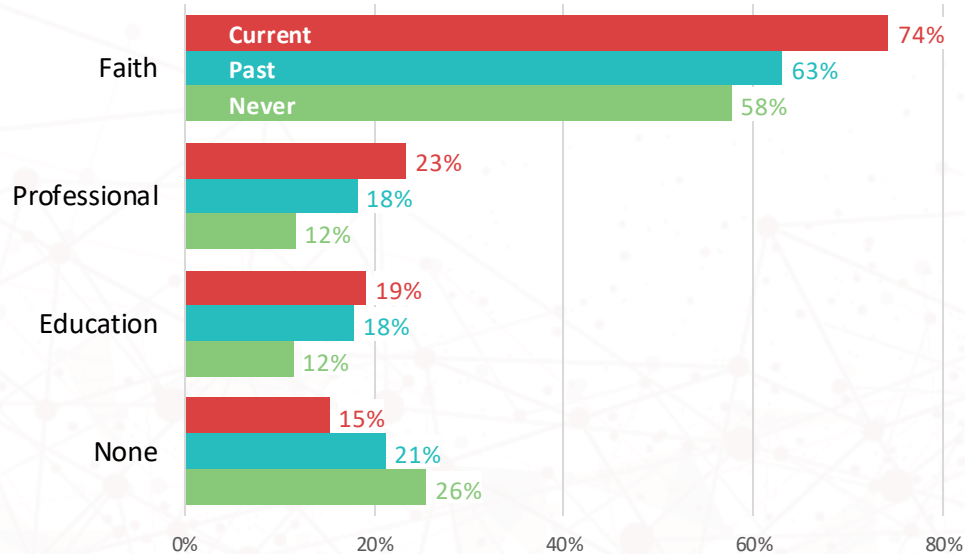


	n
1 hour +	1788
30-59 mins	674
15-29 mins	446
<15 mins	223

C1: Spiritual Direction

► D1: Group Involvement

Are you involved in any types of social or community groups for any of the following categories?



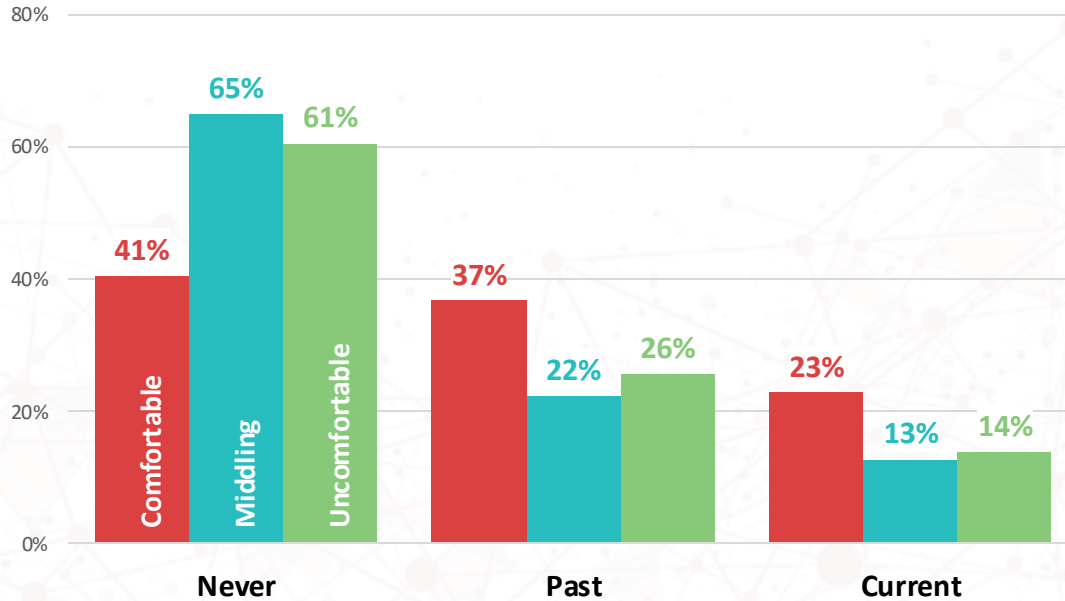
	Current	Past	Never
Hobby	13%	15%	15%
Sports/Fitness	15%	13%	13%
Parenting/Family	9%	9%	8%
Health/Support	10%	8%	7%
Political	7%	6%	4%
Lifestyle	6%	6%	4%
Ethnic/Cultural	7%	4%	3%
Other	6%	8%	8%

	n
Current	619
Past	1020
Never	1498

B1: Comfort Faith-Sharing

► C1: Spiritual Direction

Are you currently receiving, or have you ever received, Spiritual Direction?

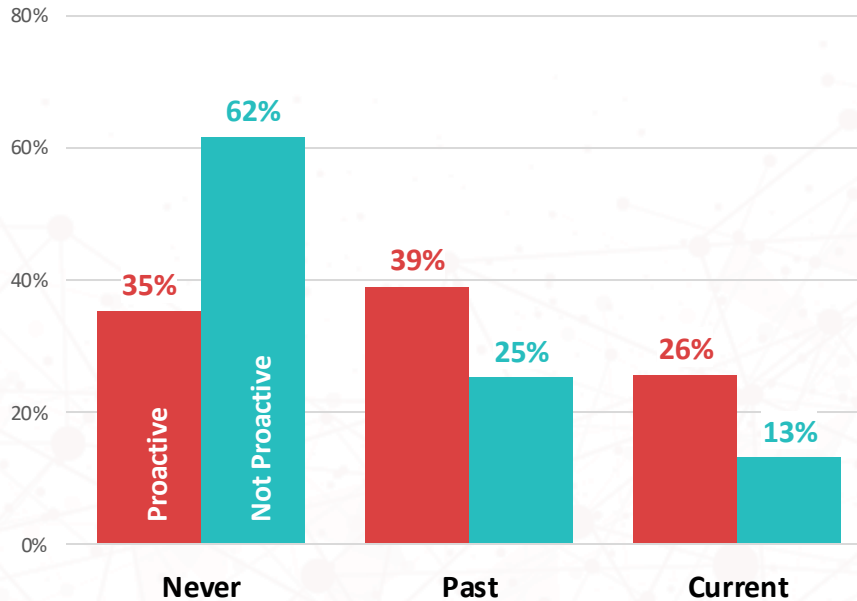


	n
Comfortable	2151
Middling	690
Uncomfortable	296

B2: Proactivity Faith-Sharing

► C1: Spiritual Direction

Are you currently receiving, or have you ever received, Spiritual Direction?



	n
Proactive	1649
Not Proactive	1488

C1: Spiritual Direction

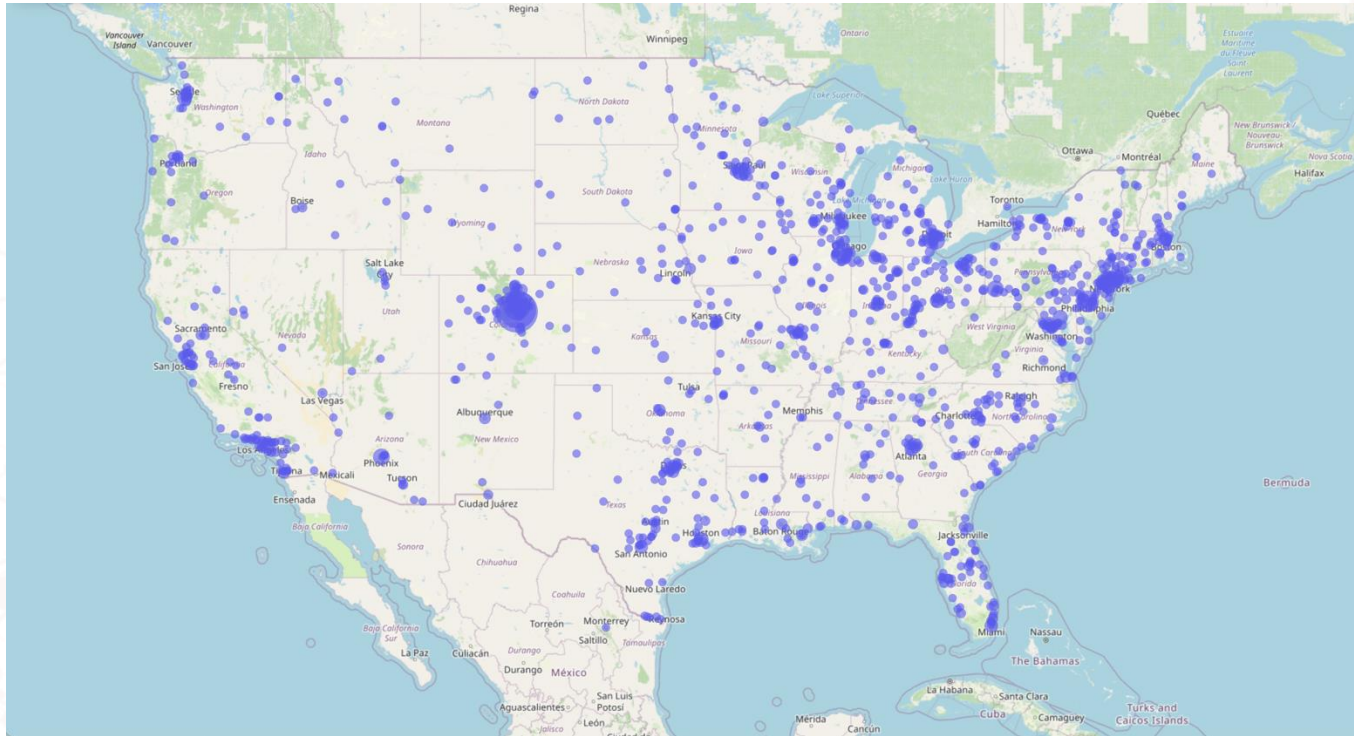
► C2: Spiritual Direction Availability

Is Spiritual Direction available in your home parish or any faith community to which you belong?

	Current	Past	Never
Yes	100%	40%	15%
No	-	28%	21%
I don't know	-	32%	64%

	n
Current	619
Past	1020
Never	1498

Respondents' Locations



Coming Attractions

 **Vinea** RESEARCH

 **DeSales**
Media



Upcoming Webinars in this Series

Episode 3: Technology and Faith – Embracing Tech for Spiritual Growth

Guests: Juan Acosta, Founder of [Tabella](#), and Alessandro DiSanto, Founder of [Hallow](#)

Monday, Oct. 28, 1:00pm EDT

Episode 4: Nurturing Growth in Faith – From Seeds to Saints

Guests: Brian Butler, Co-Founder of [Echo](#), and Paul Fahey, Counselor and Founder of [Third Space](#)

Monday, Nov. 11, 1:00pm EDT

Episode 5: Community – Connection, Growth, and Renewal

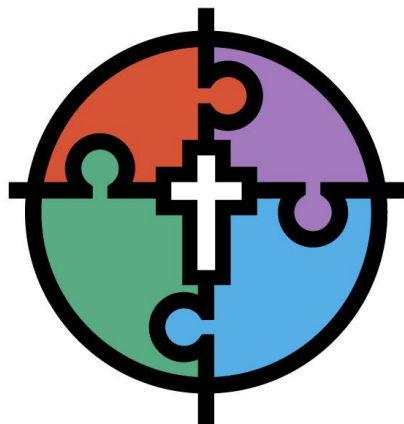
Guest: Scott Weeman, Founder of [Catholic in Recovery](#), and Andrew Whaley, Founder of [Calix](#)

Monday, Nov. 25, 1:00pm EDT

Episode 6: Generational Differences in Discipleship – Same Goal, Different Roads

Guest: Josh Packard, Founder of [Future of Faith](#)

Monday, Dec. 9, 1:00pm EDT



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Appendix

C1: Spiritual Direction

► B4: Barriers to Faith-Sharing

What most hold you back from sharing your faith with others?

	Current	Past	Never
Situational appropriateness	64%	63%	62%
Lack of confidence	33%	35%	51%
Lack of knowing how to start conversations	31%	33%	46%
Not wanting to offend	33%	34%	41%
Lack of experience	25%	25%	41%
Lack of opportunity	23%	25%	25%
I need a better understanding of scriptures	17%	18%	29%
Fear	23%	19%	25%
I never learned how	15%	13%	26%
I need a better understanding of my Catholic faith	15%	14%	25%
Worry about political correctness	19%	15%	21%
Don't feel prompting from the Holy Spirit	17%	16%	17%
Today's culture says I should not	12%	14%	16%
Embarrassment	11%	9%	10%
Worry that the Church is unwelcoming or inhospitable	10%	11%	8%
I struggle in my own faith	3%	5%	5%

	n
Current	619
Past	1020
Never	1498

C1: Spiritual Direction

► E3: Religious Apps + E7: App Interest

Do you use any Catholic, spiritual, religious, or faith-focused apps regularly (at least 3 days a week)?

	Current	Past	Never
Yes	76%	69%	71%
No	24%	31%	29%

If a new Catholic faith mobile app were to become available, which features would you find most helpful in your spiritual journey?

	Current	Past	Never
Connect to someone for in-person spiritual direction	24%	33%	32%
Spiritual Direction directly within the app via chat or video	16%	25%	23%

	n
Current	619
Past	1020
Never	1498

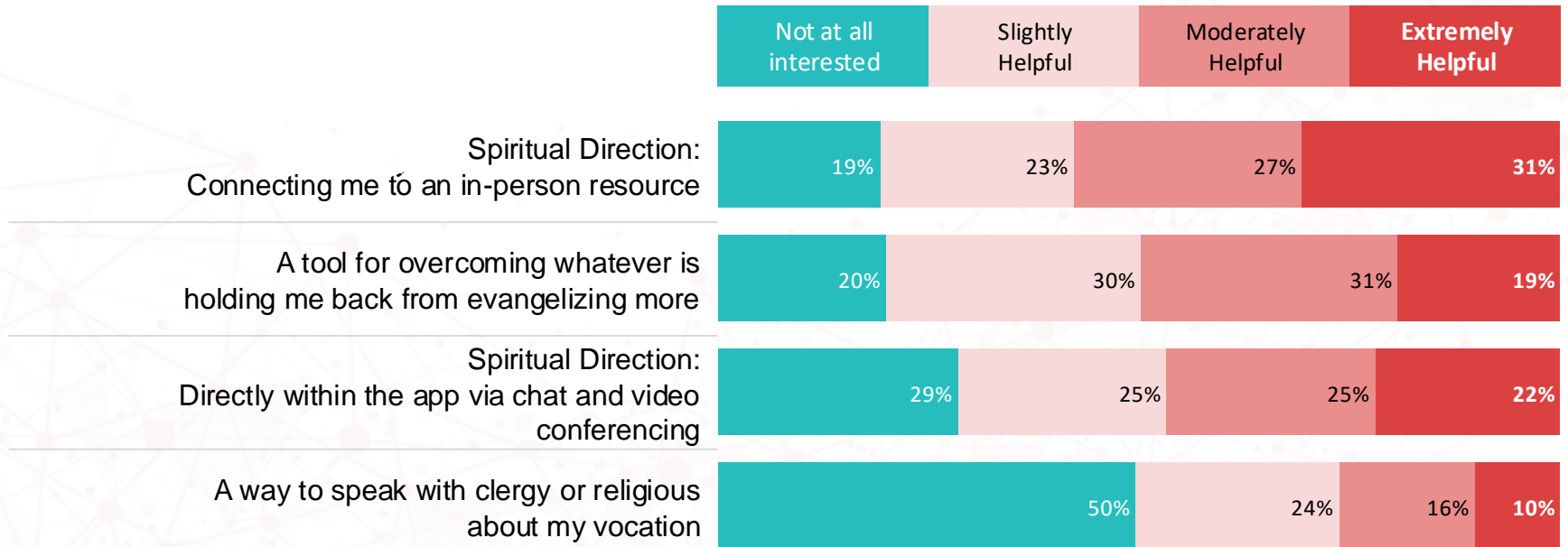
C1: Are you currently receiving, or have you ever received, Spiritual Direction?

E3: Do you use any Catholic, spiritual, religious, or faith-focused apps regularly (at least 3 days a week)?

E7: If a new Catholic faith mobile app were to become available, which features would you find most helpful in your spiritual journey?

There is significant interest in an app that allows respondents to participate in Spiritual Direction, even if it is done digitally.

Catholic App Interest: Growth



n=3137

S3: Mass Attendance

► C1: Direction

Are you currently receiving, or have you ever received, Spiritual Direction?

