
ASIAN AND PACIFIC ISLAND CATHOLICS IN THE UNITED STATES

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**A Report Prepared for the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops
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Table of Contents

	PAGE
Introduction	1
About the Study	3
Asian and Pacific Island Identity	7
Asian and Pacific Island Catholicism	28
Parish Demographics	42
Parish Atmosphere	51
Leadership and Representation	58
Challenges	69
Future	80
Appendix I: Guideline to In-pew Survey Tables	84
Appendix II: Topline Responses to the NSAPIC (Online Survey)	85

Introduction

Catholics of Asian or Pacific Island descent constitute a valuable part of the Church in the United States. Representing vast diversity in country of origin, ethnic background, native language, and religious histories, nearly three-quarters of Asian and Pacific Islanders are foreign-born. The rate of Asian migration to the United States now outpaces that of all other racial groups, making them the fastest growing contingent of new U.S. citizens. One out of every five Asian and Pacific Islanders in the United States is Catholic.¹ Together, they comprise nearly three million American Catholics. Though concentrated especially along the West Coast of the United States, the presence of API Catholics impacts dioceses throughout the country.

While the contemporary expansion of the API population in the United States may be read as “new,” their presence has long been a part of American Catholicism. Native Hawaiians, for example, do not exhibit the migration history of most Asian populations. Filipinos settled in the swamps of Louisiana as early as 1587. Chinese migrants introduced large-scale Asian immigration in the early nineteenth century. One of the oldest Chinese Catholic parishes, St. Bridget, starting serving Chinese immigrants and children in Los Angeles’ nearby Chinatown in the 1920s, before racially restrictive immigration laws substantially curbed non-European immigration. Many Asians who migrated to the United States during exclusionary federal immigration quotas (between 1945 and 1964) came as military spouses and children. Revision to immigration laws in 1965 ended a long period of anti-Asian restriction, thereby revitalizing the United States as a destination for Asian and Pacific Islanders. Growth has experienced a fairly steady incline ever since.

Even among Asian communities currently comprised of predominantly first generation migrants, many have a presence in their diocese that spans decades. Some, for example, formed amidst Vietnamese Catholics’ refugee flight from persecution and poverty in the early 1980s. Others, such as Burmese Catholic communities, arrived to the United States mere months ago. All bring richly contextualized practices surrounding their faith, their practice of Catholicism, and their day-to-day lives as Americans. Some see their Catholicity and their ethnicity as nearly one in the same; others continually navigate a near-incompatibility between the two.

The 2001 pastoral letter *Asian and Pacific Presence: Harmony in Faith* brought new visibility and acknowledgement to the contributions and challenges of diverse API populations in the Church. Now fourteen years later, the present study reiterates enduring challenges formerly expressed by *Harmony in Faith* as well as highlighting new iterations of identity, community, perseverance, and novelty in contemporary Asian Pacific Island Catholic experiences.

The *National Study of Asian and Pacific Island Catholics* is unprecedented in its scope, depth, multi-language translation, and multi-dimensional exploration of Asian and Pacific Island Catholics in the United States. It first emerged out of planning conversations among a steering committee appointed by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Secretariat for Cultural Diversity, pursuing the idea of a National Pastoral Plan for Asian and Pacific Island Catholics. The Secretariat, in collaboration with the Asian and Pacific Island Affairs subcommittee, subsequently commissioned Dr. Tricia Bruce along with Drs. Jerry Park and Stephen Cherry to conduct a year-long, multi-pronged, original social scientific research study. The Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) of Georgetown University was also engaged to complete a component of

data gathering in-pew, extending work previously commissioned to examine cultural diversity in the Church. Research for the current project commenced in August 2014; data gathering began in November 2014 and continued through mid-2015.

About the Research Team

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About the Study

The *National Study of Asian and Pacific Island Catholics* was originally envisioned in the abstract by an experienced steering committee of the USCCB's Subcommittee for Asian and Pacific Island Affairs. Its social scientific design and leadership came from the collaborative efforts of Drs. Tricia Bruce (Maryville College), Jerry Park (Baylor University), and Stephen Cherry (University of Houston Clear Lake).

The stated desire of the USCCB was for broad and open inclusion such that all API voices could be heard in this study. Given this desire for both breadth and depth, and given the smaller numbers of Asian and Pacific Islanders relative to the overall American and American Catholic population, this study engaged mostly non-probability methods of selection. In other words, the study's sample is purposive rather than drawn randomly from among the entirety of the United States API Catholic population. All had an opportunity to participate.

Prior studies of U.S. Catholics that use random methods (for example, D'Antonio, Dillon, and Gautier 2013) leave virtually untold the perspectives of API Catholics, due to their numerical minority among Catholics overall. With API Catholics constituting just three percent of the overall American Catholic population, a random sample for the current study would have been exorbitant in cost and time. Random digit dialing to recruit participants, for example, would have generated only three participants for every 100 calls dialed randomly. Non-probability sampling methods were, therefore, more appropriate to study aims. For this reason, findings reported here reflect study participants but may or may not be generalizable to the API Catholic population-at-large.

Given this context, the methodology of this study proceeded along six trajectories.

- 1) Secondary analysis of available representative data on Asian and Pacific Island Catholics, drawn from PEW and Census data.

A complete summary of this analysis appears in a previously released report entitled "Asian Pacific Islander Catholics in the United States: A Preliminary Report," prepared by the lead researchers (Drs. Park, Bruce, and Cherry).

That report can be accessed online here: <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/cultural-diversity/asian-pacific-islander/resources/upload/Asian-Pacific-Islander-Catholics-in-the-United-States-A-Preliminary-Report.pdf>

- 2) An open, online survey of Asian and Pacific Island Catholics and those working in ministry to/with them. The majority of statistical summaries and tables provided in this report reference this online survey.

This survey was offered in English as well as translated into 12 Asian languages (Burmese, Chinese Traditional, Chinese Simplified, Hmong, Indonesian, Japanese, Khmer, Korean, Lao, Mayalam, Filipino, and Vietnamese). It was open to respondents age 18 and above. No direct incentives were provided to respondents for completion.

The survey generated upwards of 3,000 responses. Analysis in this report of findings is limited to the 1,560 respondents who completed the survey in its entirety as of June 2, 2015. This allows for a consistent “n” across all questions. The survey was open to all, generating a non-random sample. For this reason, findings may or may not be generalizable to the API Catholic population at large.

- 3) An in-pew survey of a subsample of twelve Catholic parishes throughout the country identified as having a sizable community of Asian and Pacific Islander parishioners. This includes:

- Two parishes serving Filipino communities (located in Florida and Illinois)
- Two parishes serving Korean communities (located in California and Nebraska)
- Two parishes serving Vietnamese communities (located in Massachusetts and Pennsylvania)
- One parish serving Filipino and Vietnamese communities (located in Pennsylvania)
- One parish serving Filipino, Vietnamese, Chinese, and Micronesian communities (located in Hawaii)
- One parish serving Filipino, Vietnamese, and Korean communities (located in California)
- One parish serving Indonesian, Vietnamese, and Filipino communities (located in Pennsylvania)
- One parish serving Japanese and Filipino communities (located in California)
- One parish serving Vietnamese, Filipino, and Pakistani (located in Pennsylvania)

This component of the study was designed and implemented by CARA of Georgetown University as an extension of a larger study commissioned by the USCCB Secretariat for Cultural Diversity on culturally diverse parishes.

Findings referenced in this report that draw from the in-pew survey will specifically refer to “in-pew respondents,” to distinguish them from online respondents to the main, separate survey described above.

- 4) Focus groups with small gatherings of Asian and Pacific Island Catholics.

Thirteen conversations were conducted in Baltimore, New York City, Houston, and Chicago. Focus group composition was as follows:

- One pan-API focus group in New York, NY
- Two pan-API focus groups in Baltimore, MD
- One Filipino focus group in Houston, TX
- One Indonesian focus group in Houston, TX
- One Indian focus group in Houston, TX
- One Filipino and Japanese focus group in Chicago, IL
- One Filipino and Korean focus group in Chicago, IL
- One Vietnamese focus group in Chicago, IL
- One Laotian, Karen, East Indian, and Hmong focus group in Chicago, IL

- One Burmese focus group in Chicago, IL
- One Chinese and Indonesian focus group in Chicago, IL
- One Chinese focus group in Houston, TX

The Chicago conversations also included participants from Milwaukee, Wheaton, Indianapolis, and Rockford. Focus groups lasted between 45 minutes and two hours. They were recorded, transcribed, coded using qualitative data analysis software, and analyzed for the purposes of this report.

- 5) In-depth, one-on-one interviews with 40 leaders occupying various positions vis-a-vis ministry to Asian and Pacific Island Catholic communities.

Interviews included bishops, paid USCCB staff and consultants, multicultural directors, priests and pastors in API-serving parishes, and long-term lay leaders. Interviewees draw heavily from the West Coast, along with substantial representation from leaders in the Midwest, Hawaii, Texas, and Northeast. Leaders' diocesan contexts vary widely in terms of prominent API populations served, available resources, and social histories.

Interviews lasted between 45 minutes and two hours and were conducted in-person or via telephone. With few exceptions, interviews were recorded. They were subsequently transcribed, coded using qualitative data analysis software, and analyzed for emergent patterns.

- 6) Three months of in-person participant observation, field visits, interviews and informal conversations among API communities in the greater Los Angeles, California area. Additional field observations were conducted in Houston, Texas.

This report proceeds thematically, synthesizing data from multiple methods organized within the following seven categories: (1) Asian and Pacific Island Identity; (2) Asian and Pacific Island Catholicism; (3) Parish Demographics; (4) Parish Atmosphere; (5) Leadership and Representation; (6) Challenges; and (7) Future. Appendix I presents a guideline to reading tables depicting data from the in-pew (not online) survey. Appendix II provides topline responses to the online survey (NSAPIC), including questions not covered in the report's narrative. A report from CARA ("Topline Report for In-pew Surveys in Asian/Pacific Islander Catholic Parishes"), provided separately, summarizes all in-pew responses as compared to all in-pew responses gathered through CARA's parish cultural diversity study.



Asian and Pacific Island Identity

A report of research on Asian and Pacific Island Americans begins with a strong caveat: “Asian and Pacific Islander” is a socially constructed category encompassing huge diversity therein. Primary among dimensions of diversity are (1) one’s specific ethnic identity (e.g., Guamanian, Hmong, or Laotian); and (2) one’s country of birth (whether somewhere in Asia, the United States, or elsewhere). The very category of “Asian and Pacific Islander” (henceforth “API”) is thus fraught with complexity, as the API Catholic experience varies broadly along these primary dimensions.

Table 1 presents a breakdown of self-identified ethnicities among participants in the National Survey of Asian and Pacific Island Catholics (henceforth NSAPIC), conducted online for this report. The second column presents the ethnicity of respondents’ spouse, if married.

Table 1

Respondent Ethnicity*		Spouse Ethnicity	
Bengali	<1%	Bengali	<1%
Burmese	<1%	Burmese	<1%
Cambodian	<1%	Cambodian	<1%
Chamorro / Guamanian	3%	Chamorro / Guamanian	2%
Chinese	17%	Chinese	15%
Fijian	<1%	Fijian	<1%
Filipino	31%	Filipino	22%
Hawaiian	<1%	Hawaiian	<1%
Hmong	<1%	Hmong	1%
Indian	8%	Indian	8%
Indonesian	2%	Indonesian	2%
Japanese	1%	Japanese	<1%
Khmhu	<1%	Khmhu	<1%
Knanaya	4%	Knanaya	6%
Korean	9%	Korean	7%
Laotian	2%	Laotian	1%
Marshallese	<1%	Marshallese	<1%
Melanesian	1%	Melanesian	<1%
Micronesian	<1%	Micronesian	<1%
Montagnard	<1%	Montagnard	<1%
Native Hawaiian	<1%	Native Hawaiian	<1%
Pakistani	<1%	Pakistani	<1%
Polynesian	<1%	Polynesian	<1%
Samoan	<1%	Samoan	<1%
Sri Lankan	<1%	Sri Lankan	<1%
Syro-Malabar	3%	Syro-Malabar	2%
Syro-Malankara	<1%	Syro-Malankara	1%
Thai	<1%	Thai	<1%
Tongan	<1%	Tongan	<1%
Vietnamese	16%	Vietnamese	13%
Other API	2%	Other API	2%
Other non-API	5%	White NH	12%
		Black NH	<1%
Total N	1560	Hispanic	1%
		Other non-API	1%

The table makes readily apparent the diversity of ethnic background encompassed by the “API” label. Filipinos constitute the highest percentage among API in our study sample, followed by Chinese and Vietnamese. Several ethnic groups participate in smaller numbers, as the minority among the minority.²

Likewise, API identity (including whether one relates to the category “Asian/Pacific Islander” at all) hinges strongly on one’s country of origin.

Among self-identified API Catholics in the survey, nearly eight in ten were born outside the United States.

Table 2 presents respondents’ country of birth, as well as that of their mother, father, and spouse.

Table 2

	In what country were you born?	...your mother?	... your father?	...your spouse?
United States	22%	11%	15%	19%
Myanmar (Burma)	<1%			<1%
Cambodia				<1%
Guam	2%	2%	3%	2%
China	5%	5%	9%	6%
The Philippines	25%	31%	27%	22%
India	10%	9%	9%	13%
Indonesia	3%	1%	<1%	2%
Japan	<1%	2%	<1%	
North Korea	<1%			<1%
South Korea	8%	13%	12%	8%
Laos	2%	1%	1%	3%
Malaysia	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%
Samoa	<1%	1%	2%	<1%
Sri Lanka	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%
Taiwan	5%	4%	4%	5%
Thailand	<1%	<1%	1%	<1%
Tonga	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%
Vietnam	13%	14%	13%	14%
Another country not listed above	3%	3%	2%	4%

The in-pew survey reveals similar patterns of migration (with 21 percent born in the U.S.). API Catholics are similar to other Catholics in their likelihood of being married in the Catholic Church, and slightly more likely to have enrolled their children in Catholic schools. Table 3 shows these findings from the in-pew survey:

Table 3

First Generation; Catholic Marriage; Children's Catholic Schooling Percentage responding "Yes" in the in-pew survey*			
	Were you born in the U.S.?	If ever married, were you married in the Catholic Church?	If you have children or stepchildren living in your home, are any currently enrolled in a Catholic school?
All Respondents:			
Self-identifies as API	21%	72%	24%
Does not self-identify as API	55	74	20
Parishioner API Background:			
Filipino	5%	72%	24%
Vietnamese	6	89	29
Korean	4	52	20
Other or Unknown API group	56	71	24
API Respondent Survey			
Language:			
English	23%	73%	24%
Non-English	6	70	21
API Respondent Place of Birth:			
U.S.-born	100%	62%	22%
Foreign-born	0	74	24
Parish Serves Community:			
Filipino	53%	84%	18%
Vietnamese	41	90	16
Korean	9	50	15
Other or multiple API groups	36	72	23
Not an API parish	54	73	20
API Respondent Within the Parish:			
Majority API parishioners	28%	68%	25%
Plurality/minority API parishioners	16	75	23
Few or None API	55	74	20

* See Appendix I for a guide to using the in-pew survey tables in this report

Country of origin can matter substantially for whether or not one identifies first as "Asian," or first as one's specific Asian ethnicity, or a combination of the latter two with their identity as Americans. Respondents overall were most likely to identify as their specific ethnicity in combination with "American" (e.g. "Vietnamese American") when presented with a list of options, as Table 4 shows.

Table 4

In general, do you primarily think of yourself as:	
An Asian American	15%
A [your ethnic group]	27%
A [your ethnic group] American	49%
An Asian	3%
An American	5%
Other	2%

The majority of the first generation Asian and Pacific Island Catholics we talked to in focus groups self-identified with either a particular ethnic background or their national origins. One first-generation Chinese individual, for example, stated, “To me I didn’t even think much about Asian or - of course the stronger identification is Chinese” (FG001). Another first-generation Chinese individual simply stated, “I’m from Taiwan” but went on to clarify the differences between being ethnically Chinese from mainland China versus being of Chinese descent and born in another county. “They are different, Chinese and Taiwanese, different regions. And Cantonese and they were born there or they grew up there. And then I’m Chinese from Taiwan but I was actually born in China and also have Chinese who came Mainland China. Chinese from the Philippines, Chinese from Indonesia, from Malaysia [are different too]” (FG010). Although most of the first-generation Asian and Pacific Island Catholics we interviewed gave similar responses to these respondents, others were quick to point out that the way they responded to self-identifying themselves largely depended upon who was asking the question.

One Filipino we talked to during a focus group, for example, stated, “For me, I guess it also depends on who I’m talking to. Because if I’m talking to all Filipinos here, then I would identify myself coming from my province...” (FG006 Filipino). Agreeing with this sentiment, another Filipino stated, “I think I feel the same way as him. It depends on who you’re with. I mean if I’m with Caucasians and other nationalities, I consider myself as American: Filipino American. But if I’m among Filipinos, I’m from Manila. I was born in Manila but grew up here. And then, you know within the other context of again, depending where you’re at, and the environment that you’re in, I’m Asian” (FG006 Filipino). Others that we spoke with offered similar responses. A first-generation Indian we spoke with during a focus group, for example, stated, “Indian. I would say I’m from India, but I would [also] say I’m from Kerala and my husband is from Mangalore [also in India]” (FG013).

Although some of the people we talked to in focus groups self-identified as Asian or Pacific Island, the majority found these terms as either confusing or too broad to describe themselves. One person we spoke with suggested, “...because of how I look, I’m an Asian Pacific Islander, I guess (FG001). One leader shrugged in a one-on-one interview at the question of ethnicity, saying “I mean, I don’t know the specific terminology, but my parents are Filipino. They were born in the Philippines. My brother and I were born in the United States. So what does that make us? ...I mean, what did I circle on my college application? Asian Pacific Islander” (LI032).

Others highlight the complexity and diversity of the geographic area most people call Asia. “It’s a pretty wide continent. Myself, I think ‘Asian’ probably is too broad of a word, and then ‘Pacific Islander’ narrows it to a pretty wide geographical area, but in terms of numbers of people, it’s not that big. Asia is an extremely diverse continent. It’s we are more Balkanized than the Balkans. It’s hard to say” (FG002). Offering a similar explanation in another focus group, one Vietnamese person we spoke with stated, “I think because Asia’s so big, I think saying someone is Asian-American isn’t really specific enough to understand what it is about them that makes them who they are” (FG007 Vietnamese). Likewise, a Burmese individual we spoke with in yet another focus group emphasized the limitations of the ‘Asian’ terms by emphatically pointing out, “No, when you say Asian, you lump anybody of Asia. When you say ‘Burmese American,’ that means people from Burma” (FG009 Mixed Burmese).

Leaders convey a similar discomfort with the pan-Asian label, apart from its utility. One director of multicultural ministries (LI002) likened it to a patchwork quilt:

The quilt is made up of different patches of fabric and those different patches of fabric are all the different people within that Vietnamese, Korean, Filipino, Cambodian, Samoan, Chinese type of community, whatever API community you want to put on that label. So within the API community, although you might see a lot of similarities, each one is a different piece of fabric making up an intricate quilt. What we’ve seen all together and formed some consistency in that unity are the threads, and those threads are those shared sacramental and practices ... Those are the threads that combines all those members of those communities together and holds them together.

Both leaders and laity warn of “lumping” all Asian Catholics together without attention to the vast difference therein. One respondent wrote in response to an open-ended survey question, “Asians & Pacific Islanders’ covers many different cultures. You can’t & shouldn’t think of them as a single group (they are pretty diverse). It is more important to be a part of the country you chose to live in than the country you chose to leave behind.”

In general, the longer an individual lives in the United States, the more likely they are to self-identify as an ethnic or other-national American. Half of the respondents to the online survey chose ‘[Ethnic group]-American’ as their preferred self-identification. The Burmese American case quoted earlier is an exception; perhaps owing to their refugee status in the country and a desire to identify with their new home. But most, like a Vietnamese individual we spoke with in a focus group, suggested, “I think the answer to your question depends on how long they’ve been in United States and whether they were born here or came here in 1975 or later and were age. I myself came over here when I was eight years old in 1975. So I identified more with the American parish, American culture than the Vietnamese...” (FG007 Vietnamese).

Agreeing with this statement, another Vietnamese person we spoke with in the same focus group, stated, “...So I came here in ’75 at the age of five, and I grew up Americanized, but my family is Vietnamese, Vietnamese family. So when we first came to Michigan, we were the only Vietnamese family there in Lansing, Michigan. So there were no Vietnamese children. So we had to be, you know, assimilated to the American culture” (FG007 Vietnamese). Others, such as a person of Chinese ancestry we spoke with in another focus group, simply stated, “I consider myself Chinese American Catholic. I was immigrated to this country 40 years ago” (FG003 Chinese).

Likewise, a person of Laotian descent, stated, “I think for me, is that I would define myself as Laotian but since I’m a U.S. citizen, you know I tend to be a Laotian American” (FG008).

Like the individuals in the first or 1.5 generation (the latter having arrived in their youth), the second generation of Asian and Pacific Island ancestry we spoke to in focus groups mostly identified as ethnic or other-national American or just American. One second-generation Chinese individual we spoke with in a focus group, for example, stated, “Our dad really wanted us to keep Chinese culture. We went to Chinese school, Chinese restaurants every weekend, tried to speak to us in Chinese in our home. But I’m American” (FG001). Likewise, another second-generation person we spoke with in another focus group simply stated, “I consider myself second generation. I’m Chinese American” (FG003).

Another second-generation Chinese person we spoke with in yet another focus group highlighted the complex negotiation between how she identified within her parish community and outside it. “But like within the community though, within our own church community, we wouldn’t really say ‘I’m Chinese American’ but it’s more like oh, ‘I’m Taiwanese’ or ‘I’m Cantonese’... Outside the parish then oh, ‘I’m Chinese American’” (FG011 2nd generation Chinese).

Describing the distinctiveness of Asian and Pacific Island values, themes of the collective, including a strong focus on the family (or perhaps “clan”) resonated among survey respondents and those we spoke to in interviews and focus groups. A second-generation Filipina woman, for example, did not share a need to negotiate her identity, but highlighted how her identity is nonetheless shaped by her collective culture. “...I feel like we’re not any different than other practicing Catholics, except for the fact that like we have – we celebrate it a little bit more – like our – like culturally, we just have different ways that we engage in our faith that are like from our roots if that makes sense” (FG004 Filipina).

Three leaders summarize this dynamic of the collective as they have observed it:

Biggest difference is being a collective culture as opposed to, you know, the church more of a western model and high context culture. That...just the way they work and talk and include everything. ...They are much more concerned with making sure everybody’s getting along and things are going smoothly and things like that. When there is conflict, they will be quiet most often to keep peace and so that people can work together and things like that, you know? (LI036)

There are some underlying values that are stronger, I think, than the predominant community, the culture, rather, and that is strong family values. And also relationships and how to maintain those and the commitments they would have to family. (LI004)

Working with Chinese Catholics – yeah, because I think one of the differences we probably from Asia, from China. We are very family-orientated. Yeah, so family. We see family how do we really live up the gospel and preach to the family or maybe focus on family - well of the family so that in that way we can reach and reach to others. Yes and also community I think. It’s a little bit different, I think, because we are living in different country and Chinese together. Like all our ethnic pride we feel a bigger sense of belonging to the community – much stronger – a little bit stronger in that way. Yes. (LI028)

A director of a Korean Catholic Center articulates a Korean value of independence:

I think Koreans are a lot more, what can I say – insulated. I don't know, maybe. I don't know the other ethnic communities that – we are – we're like – we're very – we like – they like being to themselves, you know? We just – they just stay quiet in society in general. We just stay quiet. We just do our own little part. We work hard and stay together and – but I kind of feel we're that way...but what was the question again? I'm sorry. [laughs] (LI007)

Some leaders caution against stereotyping Asian and Pacific Island Catholics, however, as it can limit one's ministry and deep understanding of cultures. Stereotyping was mentioned as a concern among numerous respondents to the survey. One pastor shares:

I always get frustrated when I hear people do this kind of training because they stand up and give a little stereotypes and basically saying "Asian Pacific people think we're this." And I've been to so many of those things and they're all well-meaning people, often Asian Pacific people, but they're giving you all these "Well, their people... They love family and you Americans don't. The Asian Pacific people they are into community and you're into competition." I mean there's just all this stereotypes that aren't very helpful, especially when you're talking about people from Japan all the way to people from the Middle East and you're going to make these big generalizations, stereotypes. (LI023)

The same priest goes on to suggest that learning diversity comes more effectively through exposure to – and integration within – API communities themselves, seeing diversity among and within all ethnicities and not approaching Asian and Pacific Islanders through one monolithic lens.

Asian and Pacific Islander and Catholic

Balancing an identity at the intersection of one's ethnic heritage and religion, just over half of API Catholics in our sample indicate that their religious and ethnicity carry equal importance to their self-identities. Among others, respondents were more likely to give their religious identity primacy over their ethnic identity.

Table 5

Which of the following is most important to your sense of who you are?	
Your ethnicity	5%
Your religion	34%
Both religion and ethnicity equally	55%
Neither	6%

Responses to a similar question asked in focus groups and leader interviews produced a fairly bimodal pattern: being Catholic and being of a particular ethnic background may hold great synergy...or they may be held largely apart. Some Asian Pacific Island Catholics describe

themselves as straddlers and compulsory educators, at times othered by their ethnic identity and at times othered by their Catholic identity. Families and spouses may not be Catholic (relatedly, nine in ten in-pew respondents agree that their parish should be more involved in welcoming non-Catholic spouses). The seamlessness (or not) of one's Catholic and Asian identity are highly contingent upon the religious nature of one's Asian country of heritage.

Leaders were somewhat split regarding whether "Asian" and "Catholic" identities coexist in harmony or tension, largely dependent upon (but not necessarily determined by) one's specific API ethnicity. A director of a Korean Center, for example, states that "To me, the Koreanness and Catholicism – it has to be blended. You cannot have two separate things. Then something is missing in your faith experience" (LI006). A Filipino leader similarly shares that "For me, as a Filipino Catholic, it's one – it's one in the same," adding the caveat that "of course we cannot generalize all Filipinos as Catholics" (LI011). Another Filipino priest affirms that "it's integrated, very much so – it's almost inseparable" (LI021).

By contrast, a leader at a Japanese Catholic Center shares that Japanese Catholics separate their ethnic and religious identities (LI019). A pastor of a Chinese ministry (LI023) hypothesizes that being Chinese and Christian is seen as an increasingly accepted option. Two Hmong leaders say that Catholic and Hmong leaders are "totally different" (LI036), requiring Hmong Catholics to go to church Sunday, "and then the rest of the week we are living a Hmong life and we tend to forget about church" (LI038). Clearly, one's ethnic identity, culture, and practices do not always lend themselves to a seamless integration with one's Catholic affiliation.

With the exception of the Burmese we spoke with, who in many cases were new to Catholicism, most people we talked to in focus groups saw Catholicism as an important part of who they were both ethnically and culturally. The Burmese saw Catholicism as an important part of who they were individually but not necessarily culturally or ethnically in Burma. Those from the Philippines, however, were most likely to think of their Catholic and ethnic identity as conjoined. Highlighting this, one person we spoke with stated, "I think the Filipino experience is very different from the other Asian countries, because the Philippines is predominantly Catholic" (FG003). Drawing further attention to the case of the Philippines, a Korean individual we spoke with in another focus groups suggested, "I think for me it's a little bit different depending on what ethnicity you are. Like, my wife is Filipino American, so as you know most Filipinos are Catholic. And so, it's just part of their culture whereas my family, we're Korean. And my parents are both Catholic, but there aren't as many Korean Catholics as there are Protestants, particularly Presbyterians. So it's not as much of a culture I think for Koreans" (FG001).

Likewise, people we spoke with in other focus groups recognized that where you are from exerts a tremendous amount of influence on your relationship with Catholicism and how you see your own ethnic or national identity. "Korea is predominantly Presbyterian. But the Catholic community is growing so fast. The Holy Father just went to Korea, and he made it the first stop in his Asian trip. That says a lot about the church in Korea. For example, in Vietnam, South Vietnamese are Catholics, and there's a political and cultural affinity to the church as well. But North Vietnamese are not. So, but as far as Chinese Catholics, I don't think there is very much of an intertwining. Sometimes it's a direct conflict" (FG003). Those not from a Catholic nation, such as Japanese, explained that their faith often comes as a shock to those who ask. "I'm always like this, Catholic and Japanese. And I can just state, oh, you know? Like dropped from heaven. Then I realized, well then I have to explain myself as a Japanese, but also Catholic,

which surprises some people. So it really depends on the situation” (FG005).

Most leaders suggest that faith and culture are intrinsically intertwined, even if in conflict. As one Bishop put it, “There’s some meshing between cultural identity and faith identity. It really, I think their faith is cloaked in their culture, and to a certain extent when you take the cultural cloak out of the way, it’s very hard for them to see themselves in terms of their faith. I think their faith is seen through the prism of their culture” (LI004). Another bishop shares similarly, “Faith is embedded in the culture of Asians. It’s so hard to separate our faith and cultural identity. I think it’s intertwined, faith and culture, and that’s why the Asians bring their faith traditions into the cultural context of where they live in as much as possible” (LI020).

Table 6

Has the Parish Hosted a Program Focused on Respondent's Ethnicity		
	<i>Parish did <u>not</u> host</i>	<i>Parish hosted program on my ethnic or cultural group</i>
Ethnicity		
Chamorro / Micronesian	78%	22%
Chinese / Taiwanese	67%	33%
Filipino	54%	46%
Indian	72%	29%
Korean	65%	35%
Vietnamese / Montagnard	62%	38%
Other Asian	72%	28%
MultiEthnic Asian	59%	41%
Total	63%	37%
Region		
Northeast	67%	33%
Midwest	64%	36%
South	66%	34%
West	58%	42%
Total	62%	38%
Involvement in API ministry		
Leader - involved in API ministry currently	51%	50%
Laity - not involved in API ministry	69%	31%
Total	62%	38%
Parish Ethnic/Racial Composition		
No one of R's ethnicity at parish	75%	25%
1 thru 79% of R's ethnicity at parish	63%	37%
80% - 100% of R's ethnicity at parish	55%	45%
Total	63%	37%

“Indian” includes those who identified as Knanaya, Syro-Malabar, Syro-Malankara

“Other Asian” includes Hawaiian, Indonesian, Melanesian/Fijian

The integration of ethnicity and religion may also stem from the presence (or absence) of ethnicity-based programming at one's parish. Asked in the NSAPIC whether their parish has hosted a program focused on the respondent's ethnicity, most respondents (63 percent) said no – their parish has not hosted such a program (see Table 6). Filipinos were most likely to say that yes, their parish has hosted a Filipino program, however, the majority (54 percent) said that their parish did not.

Not surprisingly, respondents attending parishes where their ethnic group is the majority are most likely to say that yes, their parish has hosted a program focused on their ethnic or cultural group. Those in parishes where they are virtually alone in their parish (ethnically) are especially likely to say that no programming has been oriented to their own ethnic group.

Diversity in Language Preferences

Part and parcel with the ethnic diversity that characterizes Asian and Pacific Island Catholics is a diversity in language abilities and preferences.

83 percent of API Catholic respondents speak a language other than English at home.

The list of languages spoken is quite extensive. Of those who indicate that they speak a non-English language at home, three-quarters speak it “very well.” Indonesians hold the highest levels of fluency in a non-English language. Moreover, most API Catholic respondents are bilingual, with above two-thirds indicating that they also speak English at least “pretty well.” This, too, is differentiated by generation: first-generation (born outside the U.S.A.) API Catholics are more likely than others to speak a non-English language fluently, and to prefer that language for Mass and other sacraments.

Eighty percent of in-pew survey respondents agree at least “somewhat” that their parish should be more involved in using materials inclusive to all of the languages spoken by parishioners. Nearly half (48 percent) agree “somewhat” or “strongly” that they are best able to read the bulletin or parish website in a language other than English. Not surprisingly, those responding to the in-pew survey in a language other than English are especially likely to support the need for language-inclusive materials.

Language abilities and preferences also shape preference for prayer, Mass, and other sacramental offerings in one's native (non-English) language. Tables 7 through 14 break down online respondents' preferences for Non-English languages in these activities. A large majority of in-pew respondents (88 percent) agree that their parish should be more involved in welcoming non-English speakers.

Respondents are somewhat divided about their preference for Mass in a language other than English; overall, four in ten “neither agree or disagree” that they would prefer Mass in another language. Korean respondents are most likely to “strongly agree” that they prefer Mass in Korean, followed by Chinese respondents. Comments about needed ministries reflect this (“Have more Korean speaking churches so that Koreans do not have to travel too long every Sunday”; “Korean Community Church by Korean Language because lots of Korean members are

having trouble speaking English”; “Language barrier is impacting ability to understand our Mass”).

By contrast, fewer than one in twenty Filipino respondents strongly prefer Mass in a non-English language. One respondent wrote that “It really doesn't matter. We need to learn how to assimilate. We don't need to have masses delivered in Tagalog. We are in America. English is the language here.” Interviews suggest also that the challenge of finding native speakers fluent in multiple dialects can sometimes supersede a desire for a non-English Mass.

Table 7

Preference for Non-English Language in Mass					
	<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<i>Somewhat agree</i>	<i>Neither agree nor Disagree</i>	<i>Somewhat Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>
Ethnicity					
Chamorro / Micronesian	8%	15%	54%	12%	12%
Chinese / Taiwanese	31%	14%	33%	13%	10%
Filipino	4%	8%	54%	16%	19%
Indian	24%	16%	26%	11%	24%
Korean	34%	10%	20%	14%	23%
Vietnamese / Montagnard	27%	25%	34%	8%	6%
Other Asian	24%	20%	42%	5%	10%
MultiEthnic Asian	11%	11%	43%	24%	12%
Total	20%	15%	39%	13%	14%
Region					
Northeast	26%	16%	32%	13%	13%
Midwest	16%	14%	48%	11%	12%
South	23%	16%	38%	10%	13%
West	19%	13%	37%	14%	18%
Total	21%	15%	38%	12%	15%
Involvement in API ministry					
Leader - involved in API ministry currently	17%	17%	41%	12%	12%
Laity - not involved in API ministry	21%	13%	38%	13%	16%
Total	20%	15%	39%	13%	14%
Parish Ethnic/Racial Composition					
No one of R's ethnicity at parish	16%	10%	40%	12%	21%
1 thru 79% of R's ethnicity at parish	15%	15%	44%	12%	14%
80% - 100% of R's ethnicity at parish	33%	16%	26%	13%	12%
Total	20%	15%	39%	13%	14%

“Indian” includes those who identified as Knanaya, Syro-Malabar, Syro-Malankara

“Other Asian” includes Hawaiian, Indonesian, Melanesian/Fijian

Half of respondents whose parishes are comprised of 80 percent or more parishioners sharing their ethnicity “strongly” or “somewhat” prefer Mass in a non-English language, compared to a quarter of respondents in the minority at their parish. This suggests that API Catholics may be choosing their parishes in part due to Mass language offerings, if this is important to them (and if it is not, then their minority status in the parish may matter less).

Interestingly, API Catholics signal a slightly stronger preference for a native language when it comes to prayer. Though again quite different across ethnic groups (and fairly ambivalent overall), four in ten respondents (39 percent) agree “somewhat” or “strongly” that they prefer prayer in a non-English language. Korean, Chinese, and Vietnamese/Montagnard respondents are especially likely to “strongly” agree that they prefer prayer in their native language. Table 8 shows overall preferences among respondents.

Table 8

Preference for Non-English Language in Prayer					
	<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<i>Somewhat agree</i>	<i>Neither agree nor Disagree</i>	<i>Somewhat Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>
Ethnicity					
Chamorro / Micronesian	8%	8%	69%	8%	8%
Chinese / Taiwanese	36%	16%	28%	9%	11%
Filipino	3%	9%	51%	14%	22%
Indian	29%	22%	22%	9%	19%
Korean	36%	11%	21%	10%	22%
Vietnamese / Montagnard	35%	24%	30%	6%	5%
Other Asian	27%	20%	37%	8%	9%
MultiEthnic Asian	12%	20%	38%	15%	16%
Total	23%	16%	36%	10%	15%
Region					
Northeast	33%	21%	24%	7%	15%
Midwest	17%	15%	46%	10%	12%
South	26%	19%	34%	10%	12%
West	22%	12%	35%	12%	19%
Total	24%	16%	35%	10%	15%
Involvement in API ministry					
Leader - involved in API ministry currently	19%	20%	37%	11%	13%
Laity - not involved in API ministry	25%	14%	35%	10%	16%
Total	23%	16%	36%	10%	15%
Parish Ethnic/Racial Composition					
No one of R's ethnicity at parish	24%	11%	39%	6%	20%
1 thru 79% of R's ethnicity at parish	18%	17%	39%	12%	15%
80% - 100% of R's ethnicity at parish	36%	16%	26%	9%	13%
Total	23%	16%	36%	10%	15%

“Indian” includes those who identified as Knanaya, Syro-Malabar, Syro-Malankara

“Other Asian” includes Hawaiian, Indonesian, Melanesian/Fijian

Language preferences for other sacraments (baptism, confession, confirmation, marriage, anointing of the sick, and funerals) are also presented in Tables 9 through 14.

Table 9

Preference for Non-English Language in Baptism					
	<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<i>Somewhat agree</i>	<i>Neither agree nor Disagree</i>	<i>Somewhat Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>
Ethnicity					
Chamorro / Micronesian	4%	8%	65%	15%	8%
Chinese / Taiwanese	23%	18%	37%	12%	11%
Filipino	3%	5%	55%	16%	21%
Indian	22%	15%	25%	12%	26%
Korean	32%	7%	25%	11%	25%
Vietnamese / Montagnard	26%	21%	42%	5%	6%
Other Asian	19%	15%	47%	9%	11%
MultiEthnic Asian	7%	12%	45%	20%	17%
Total	17%	13%	43%	12%	16%
Region					
Northeast	20%	18%	34%	12%	16%
Midwest	14%	12%	48%	13%	13%
South	19%	15%	41%	10%	15%
West	17%	10%	42%	12%	19%
Total	18%	13%	42%	12%	16%
Involvement in API ministry					
Leader - involved in API ministry currently	14%	14%	46%	13%	14%
Laity - not involved in API ministry	19%	12%	41%	12%	18%
Total	17%	13%	43%	12%	16%
Parish Ethnic/Racial Composition					
No one of R's ethnicity at parish	16%	10%	42%	9%	23%
1 thru 79% of R's ethnicity at parish	13%	12%	47%	13%	16%
80% - 100% of R's ethnicity at parish	27%	16%	32%	11%	14%
Total	17%	13%	43%	12%	16%

“Indian” includes those who identified as Knanaya, Syro-Malabar, Syro-Malankara

“Other Asian” includes Hawaiian, Indonesian, Melanesian/Fijian

Table 10

Preference for Non-English Language in Confession					
	<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<i>Somewhat agree</i>	<i>Neither agree nor Disagree</i>	<i>Somewhat Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>
Ethnicity					
Chamorro / Micronesian	4%	4%	69%	15%	8%
Chinese / Taiwanese	31%	18%	25%	12%	14%
Filipino	4%	4%	51%	18%	24%
Indian	24%	16%	24%	10%	28%
Korean	38%	7%	18%	9%	29%
Vietnamese / Montagnard	28%	18%	36%	9%	8%
Other Asian	25%	17%	34%	13%	12%
MultiEthnic Asian	15%	8%	32%	24%	22%
Total	21%	12%	36%	14%	19%
Region					
Northeast	28%	16%	25%	12%	19%
Midwest	15%	9%	41%	17%	18%
South	24%	14%	36%	11%	15%
West	20%	10%	35%	14%	21%
Total	21%	12%	35%	13%	19%
Involvement in API ministry					
Leader - involved in API ministry currently	17%	14%	39%	14%	17%
Laity - not involved in API ministry	23%	10%	34%	14%	20%
Total	21%	12%	36%	14%	19%
Parish Ethnic/Racial Composition					
No one of R's ethnicity at parish	18%	12%	37%	10%	23%
1 thru 79% of R's ethnicity at parish	16%	11%	40%	15%	18%
80% - 100% of R's ethnicity at parish	33%	13%	23%	12%	19%
Total	21%	12%	36%	14%	19%

"Indian" includes those who identified as Knanaya, Syro-Malabar, Syro-Malankara

"Other Asian" includes Hawaiian, Indonesian, Melanesian/Fijian

Most of the API in-pew survey respondents have received first communion and have been confirmed as Catholics (86 percent and 77 percent, respectively). Koreans and those who did not take the in-pew survey in English are among the least likely to have received their First Communion (72 percent and 75 percent, respectively). Table 11 shows preferences for a language other than English for confirmation, as indicated by respondents to the NSAPIC.

Table 11

Preference for Non-English Language in Confirmation					
	<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<i>Somewhat agree</i>	<i>Neither agree nor Disagree</i>	<i>Somewhat Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>
Ethnicity					
Chamorro / Micronesian	4%	4%	65%	19%	8%
Chinese / Taiwanese	23%	15%	37%	12%	12%
Filipino	3%	3%	54%	17%	23%
Indian	22%	10%	25%	12%	32%
Korean	31%	10%	23%	8%	29%
Vietnamese / Montagnard	22%	20%	42%	9%	7%
Other Asian	17%	18%	40%	10%	15%
MultiEthnic Asian	7%	11%	40%	22%	21%
Total	16%	11%	41%	13%	19%
Region					
Northeast	22%	16%	31%	13%	18%
Midwest	13%	10%	48%	14%	16%
South	19%	13%	42%	11%	16%
West	15%	11%	40%	13%	22%
Total	17%	12%	41%	13%	19%
Involvement in API ministry					
Leader - involved in API ministry currently	12%	13%	43%	14%	17%
Laity - not involved in API ministry	18%	10%	40%	12%	20%
Total	16%	11%	41%	13%	19%
Parish Ethnic/Racial Composition					
No one of R's ethnicity at parish	16%	9%	41%	10%	24%
1 thru 79% of R's ethnicity at parish	12%	11%	45%	15%	18%
80% - 100% of R's ethnicity at parish	27%	14%	31%	10%	18%
Total	16%	11%	41%	13%	19%

"Indian" includes those who identified as Knanaya, Syro-Malabar, Syro-Malankara

"Other Asian" includes Hawaiian, Indonesian, Melanesian/Fijian

Table 12

Preference for Non-English Language in Marriage					
	<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<i>Somewhat agree</i>	<i>Neither agree nor Disagree</i>	<i>Somewhat Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>
Ethnicity					
Chamorro / Micronesian	4%	4%	65%	19%	8%
Chinese / Taiwanese	24%	17%	35%	11%	14%
Filipino	3%	5%	53%	17%	22%
Indian	24%	11%	24%	17%	23%
Korean	33%	7%	27%	10%	23%
Vietnamese / Montagnard	28%	20%	38%	6%	8%
Other Asian	18%	21%	43%	4%	14%
MultiEthnic Asian	13%	15%	32%	21%	20%
Total	18%	13%	40%	12%	17%
Region					
Northeast	25%	16%	31%	14%	14%
Midwest	12%	14%	46%	14%	13%
South	22%	16%	38%	11%	15%
West	18%	9%	40%	12%	21%
Total	19%	13%	39%	12%	17%
Involvement in API ministry					
Leader - involved in API ministry currently	16%	13%	44%	12%	16%
Laity - not involved in API ministry	19%	13%	38%	13%	18%
Total	18%	13%	40%	13%	17%
Parish Ethnic/Racial Composition					
No one of R's ethnicity at parish	17%	11%	40%	9%	23%
1 thru 79% of R's ethnicity at parish	14%	12%	44%	14%	17%
80% - 100% of R's ethnicity at parish	29%	15%	29%	12%	15%
Total	18%	13%	40%	12%	17%

"Indian" includes those who identified as Knanaya, Syro-Malabar, Syro-Malankara

"Other Asian" includes Hawaiian, Indonesian, Melanesian/Fijian

Table 13

Preference for Non-English Language in Anointing of the Sick					
	<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<i>Somewhat agree</i>	<i>Neither agree nor Disagree</i>	<i>Somewhat Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>
Ethnicity					
Chamorro / Micronesian	8%	8%	69%	8%	8%
Chinese / Taiwanese	25%	17%	36%	9%	14%
Filipino	3%	5%	54%	15%	23%
Indian	25%	16%	26%	9%	25%
Korean	33%	12%	21%	7%	26%
Vietnamese / Montagnard	28%	21%	36%	8%	8%
Other Asian	17%	22%	43%	6%	12%
MultiEthnic Asian	15%	7%	40%	21%	18%
Total	19%	13%	40%	11%	17%
Region					
Northeast	24%	17%	34%	8%	17%
Midwest	15%	14%	44%	13%	14%
South	23%	14%	38%	9%	16%
West	17%	12%	39%	12%	21%
Total	19%	14%	39%	11%	18%
Involvement in API ministry					
Leader - involved in API ministry currently	15%	14%	44%	11%	15%
Laity - not involved in API ministry	20%	13%	38%	11%	19%
Total	18%	13%	40%	11%	17%
Parish Ethnic/Racial Composition					
No one of R's ethnicity at parish	18%	11%	39%	9%	23%
1 thru 79% of R's ethnicity at parish	14%	13%	44%	12%	17%
80% - 100% of R's ethnicity at parish	30%	14%	30%	9%	17%
Total	19%	13%	40%	11%	17%

"Indian" includes those who identified as Knanaya, Syro-Malabar, Syro-Malankara

"Other Asian" includes Hawaiian, Indonesian, Melanesian/Fijian

Table 14

Preference for Non-English Language in Funerals					
	<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<i>Somewhat agree</i>	<i>Neither agree nor Disagree</i>	<i>Somewhat Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>
Ethnicity					
Chamorro / Micronesian	15%	12%	58%	8%	8%
Chinese / Taiwanese	25%	17%	37%	10%	12%
Filipino	2%	5%	54%	17%	22%
Indian	29%	16%	28%	8%	20%
Korean	34%	11%	23%	9%	24%
Vietnamese / Montagnard	30%	25%	35%	4%	6%
Other Asian	23%	20%	38%	7%	12%
MultiEthnic Asian	18%	7%	41%	18%	18%
Total	20%	14%	40%	10%	16%
Region					
Northeast	28%	19%	31%	8%	14%
Midwest	16%	16%	42%	14%	13%
South	23%	15%	40%	8%	14%
West	19%	12%	40%	11%	19%
Total	21%	14%	39%	10%	16%
Involvement in API ministry					
Leader - involved in API ministry currently	17%	16%	42%	11%	14%
Laity - not involved in API ministry	22%	13%	38%	10%	17%
Total	20%	14%	40%	11%	16%
Parish Ethnic/Racial Composition					
No one of R's ethnicity at parish	20%	9%	40%	9%	22%
1 thru 79% of R's ethnicity at parish	15%	14%	43%	12%	16%
80% - 100% of R's ethnicity at parish	33%	15%	31%	8%	14%
Total	20%	14%	40%	10%	16%

"Indian" includes those who identified as Knanaya, Syro-Malabar, Syro-Malankara

"Other Asian" includes Hawaiian, Indonesian, Melanesian/Fijian

Language reflects a key area of cultural preservation and pastoral need, particularly for Catholics whose English fluency is limited. Fewer than six in ten in-pew respondents agree strongly that parish communications are made in the language(s) used by parishioners. “Language makes a lot of difference because if you don’t speak or you don’t understand, it’s hard to participate,” shares one Chinese director of religious education (LI001). A Chinese vicar goes further to say that language can divide the parish: “Language unites the people who speak the same language. It creates a distance to the people who do not speak that language” (LI005).

Language preferences can also divide the same community, creating issues between generations, not just regions. “When I went to Vietnamese church, I hear confession in English. The young adults at the end would always say, ‘Father can I say the Acts of Contrition in Vietnamese.’ I said, ‘That’s wonderful for them, but I can’t force our church children to do the same thing.’ So the English, Chinese – there is some tension in worship in one and not both languages” (FG001). Likewise, as one Vietnamese man admitted to us, “My kids hate the Vietnamese and hate to be in Mass too.” Continuing, he stated, “We want Vietnamese. That’s why I do. I try to say that I am first, a Vietnamese man. It’s me that make some people upset, but the thing is, come to the church for spirituality. Ethnic or not, country or not. So the tension I see now is for the young group here. They prefer Mass if you want Vietnamese flavor, yes. But English. The elders say no, listen in Vietnamese for all our lives and a couple years of English, let me speak Vietnamese” (FG007 Vietnamese).

A Korean leader shares also of the diversity that characterizes mono-ethnic communities that may look homogenous to outsiders:

You know, Korean communities are not homogenous community. Even within this community we have people who are, you know, pretty much monolingual English speaking Korean American. And then you have people who are more bilingual. Then you have monolingual Korean. So, they’re different subgroups here culturally. Like, for example, we have a young adult group. It’s a Korean speaking young adult group. Not that they don’t speak English, but their preference, their cultural preference, language preference is Korean. And we have an English speaking young adult group here, a small faith community. They can communicate but culturally when they, the way they do things different culturally. So, they don’t always get together and do things together. They do things separately. Once in a while and when we have a big parish project or when we have music, we would try to reach them through music. So, we have made like Christmas CDs the last two years. (LI006).

Many communities we spoke with suggested that language was a problem across groups and within their communities, though it was only one of many challenges they face.

Notably, fluency in a non-English language does not necessarily play out in a preference for liturgy and communal celebrations in that language. This reflects in part a theme from both the focus groups and interviews: language, while an important carrier of culture, is not the *only* carrier of culture. Other gatherings, celebrations, and meaningful rituals can also foster ethnic community and retention – absent even the option of a language-based ministry. One pastor of a parish with large Chinese and white communities critiques the strong association of language and ethnic culture, as if you need the former to have the latter:

Ministry with Asian Catholics is specialized as long as you don't know anything. But as soon as you speak English, then you get pushed out of the specialized ministry into the mainstream American Church. Whereas if you look at the past, we had the Polish church – Polish language, then we had Polish church – English language, and then we had kind of integration. And what we're telling people now is there's no room for that. All there is now is: we'll tolerate you're kind of like slating yourself in a minority ministry until you learn English. Once you learn English, it's over. Then you need to join the mainstream church. ...And I think it's because of the fact that people see cultural things [as] language and a series of little things that you do, as opposed to the much deeper sense of what it is – a multi, rich texture to culture. (LI023)

This creates an imperative for culturally-based activities that are not wholly (or solely) offered in non-English languages, as he goes on to suggest:

I think that if we're going to have any hope at all with Asian Catholics, we have to find a way to have English ministry that's still Asian-focused and I think we need to have ministries that Asian and that is really rooted in an American cultural idiom, but also kind of understand the comfortability of being with other Asians. Not everybody, but there's some Asian Catholics that were raised in such a mainstream white American world that they don't even feel comfortable with an Asian setting. (LI023)

Ministry options, by consequence, would synthesize language and cultural needs within the context of diverse receiving audiences.

Communication Strategies

Specific language, of course, is merely one facet of communication. We also asked leaders to describe cultural dynamics they have learned through experience that have worked well in ministering to particular API groups. Several multicultural ministers echoed the imperative of first learning how a particular Asian or Pacific Islander community understands leadership, including preferred contact persons. Leaders expand with the following:

There's a certain gentleness that is expected, certain courtesy is expected. And you know, I mean, they will be open and honest, but they have to know that you trust them and that you want to hear their opinion and so on and if anything a certain gentleness of approach. (LI003)

I have this particular way of doing things. If you compliment people, compliment people in public. If you want to correct people give a piece of your mind, do it the private way, and especially don't harp on the order or tell how bad that the people are, how bad these parishes are. The people who need to listen are not there. (LI005)

It's hard to put it into words what do I know. I think the main thing is not to come to conclusions too quickly. I think when you think you understand a culture is when you don't. And I think when you've made up your mind, "Oh, I understand what's going on here," and that's where you really need to step back because you don't. I think that's a really key is to don't – don't be so quick to say, "Oh, I get" (LI023).

They come because they love the church. But the church has to show its welcome, because that's not our demanding. You have to earn their trust. You have to earn their respect. Because especially those coming from colonized countries or those who have fled persecution, either political or religious persecution, that is always a problem and so it doesn't mean to say that now that you're in America and you doubt them – somebody in the hierarchy doubt them, you need to do this, that they'll come running. They will not. (LI024)

We have to, especially in Asian culture, we respect elderly. And yeah, especially we respect to them. And for the younger generations maybe they tended to more look up at these leaders – as U.S. leader. You lead them. Sometimes they want that direction from you. So, yeah. And elderly – that's a part of Chinese culture. (LI028)

For most of the countries, standing is very polite, but for some, especially for us down there in Samoa, sitting is really respectful. For us in Samoa, when someone touch your head like the [] do, that's impolite. But some other places, laying your hands on the head of the elder is such a blessing, but for us, when you touch your head or the feet, that's really impolite. Don't do it. (LI029)

Sometimes I am too direct. Vietnamese like to go around a little bit. ...not showing any problems. So, at times I do challenge them to face the topic and face the problems rather than to just go round and round. It is very challenging for the Vietnamese community. (LI035)

When you ask a Hmong to do something, make it sound as if it will not succeed without their participation! [Laughter] There is a very much a personal invite. Never would it work for me to say, "Hey, I need some people to do this, no one would come forward. It always has to be by invitation. The other thing is ...like I needed to have some traditional Hmong ... they would not listen to me or they would not come forward, so I needed a liaison from the community who is respected by the non-Catholics to be that contact. And that is true in all of the Asian cultures that I've worked with. (LI036)

Along with these effective strategies, leaders also conveyed that even the best of efforts can encounter miscommunication or unintended effects. In the words of one multiethnic diocesan minister, "Sometimes things that work great in our American Catholic and European centric-based churches don't translate so well across that cultural divide easily, toward API Catholics."

Part of the universal Catholic Church, Catholicism is lived out by Asian and Pacific Island Catholics with distinctive celebrations, cultural richness, and traditional/transnational representations. Asian and Pacific Island Catholics we spoke with in focus groups practice a wide range of ethnic celebrations, in addition to various apparitions of Mary and the veneration of national and regional saints. From Our Lady of Manaoag and Our Lady of Antipolo in the Philippines to Our Lady of LaVang in Vietnam or Saint Andrew Kim in Korea, the diversity is astonishing. Nearly half of in-pew survey respondents agree “somewhat” or “strongly” that their parish celebrates differently than many other Catholic parishes in the United States.

cultural parish
devotions know
involvement parishioners
Simbang traditions strong community
practices through different hospitality
Catholics contribution church volunteers
local good celebrations contribute
culture monetary participating new Chinese
presence Asians Mary diocese Filipinos sense
money service being devotion Pacific help
hard all Asian food Filipino communities Music
youth love serve Family life children various
work masses more events Eucharistic Korean
Gabi parishes Choir other like spiritual
ethnic values financial language talent respect
fundraising Sharing activities support many
time ministry volunteerism vocations Helping
volunteer diversity faith religious
group Mass Vietnamese financially
attendance celebration contributions ministries
Catholic participation
education Volunteering

Devotions, Mary, and the Saints

Devotional practices stand out as particularly important to API Catholics. Many mention devotions, popular piety as being among API Catholics' most important contributions to the Church. Two-thirds of all NSAPIC respondents say that devotional practice is "very important" to them as Catholics. This is even more true for Filipinos, a full three-quarters of whom see this aspect as very important. Table 15 shows the high importance placed upon devotional practices by API respondents.

Table 15

Importance of Devotional Practice					
	<i>Very important</i>	<i>Somewhat important</i>	<i>Not very important</i>	<i>Not important at all</i>	<i>No opinion</i>
Ethnicity					
Chamorro / Micronesian	66%	24%	7%	--	2%
Chinese / Taiwanese	54%	33%	9%	3%	2%
Filipino	74%	20%	5%	1%	0%
Indian	70%	22%	6%	1%	1%
Korean	60%	34%	4%	1%	2%
Vietnamese / Montagnard	73%	22%	5%	0%	0%
Other Asian	63%	25%	8%	3%	1%
MultiEthnic Asian	59%	25%	11%	4%	1%
Total	67%	25%	6%	1%	1%
Region					
Northeast	60%	26%	10%	3%	1%
Midwest	66%	25%	7%	2%	1%
South	70%	23%	6%	1%	1%
West	69%	24%	5%	1%	1%
Total	68%	24%	6%	1%	1%
Involvement in API ministry					
Leader - involved in API ministry currently	73%	22%	5%	0%	1%
Laity - not involved in API ministry	64%	26%	7%	2%	1%
Total	67%	25%	6%	1%	1%
Parish Ethnic/Racial Composition					
No one of R's ethnicity at parish	64%	25%	8%	2%	1%
1 thru 79% of R's ethnicity at parish	67%	25%	6%	2%	1%
80% - 100% of R's ethnicity at parish	68%	24%	6%	1%	1%
Total	67%	24%	6%	1%	1%

"Indian" includes those who identified as Knanaya, Syro-Malabar, Syro-Malankara

"Other Asian" includes Hawaiian, Indonesian, Melanesian/Fijian

With the exception of Chinese / Taiwanese respondents, more than half of all NSAPIC respondents say that they recently participated in a rosary or novena. Seven in ten Filipino Catholics have done so (see Table 16).

Table 16

Participated Rosary or Novena in this Past Month	
	Yes
Ethnicity	
Chamorro / Micronesian	76%
Chinese / Taiwanese	39%
Filipino	71%
Indian	55%
Korean	56%
Vietnamese / Montagnard	56%
Other Asian	54%
MultiEthnic Asian	57%
Total	58%
Parish Ethnic/Racial Composition	
No one of R's ethnicity at parish	51%
1 thru 79% of R's ethnicity at parish	60%
80% - 100% of R's ethnicity at parish	57%
Total	58%
"Indian" includes those who identified as Knanaya, Syro-Malabar, Syro-Malankara	
"Other Asian" includes Hawaiian, Indonesian, Melanesian/Fijian	

Leaders affirm the importance of devotional practice. This came up again and again in our conversations with leaders, sampled below:

It's more centered on devotions, I would say. The Eucharist, certainly, is the center of it all. But there are a lot of devotional practices that are important to the API folks and I'd say more than others, in a way. (LI003)

Well, there's a lot more devotionism than would be in many of the non, let's say non-Hispanic non-API cultures, so more devotions – the concessions, novenas, that's a whole way of looking at the world is very different. I would say that in those cultures, there's more an awareness of the, for lack of a better term, supernatural, that the world is a spirit, whereas I think sometimes the non-Asians, the non-Hispanic communities are more rational. Not in a sense, not in terms of irrational, but it's not the same kind of experience, same kind of worldview, I would say. I think that's one way of looking at it. (LI004)

First of all, devotional life. Koreans are very devotional. That's why in Korean communities their major [] and devotions, like a Legend of Mary. A big devotion to

Mary. Legend of Mary often is the kind of core structure of the church for a community. (LI006)

The number one is I think the faith traditions that we have, like Novenas, you know, those kind of popular devotions, you know, spiritual exercises. Some of the Asians are very attached to popular devotions. We have the Vietnamese, Our Lady of LaVang, and all those kind of – we have the Filipinos and their Novenas and all those rosaries and all those kind of stuff. They bring that with them, their practice of their faith. And sometimes it's not common among parishes to have those kind of popular devotions. So they bring it there and there are times when pastors are hospitable enough to accommodate them and then they have some resistance too. It depends. (LI020)

These elements constitute a major component of Asian and Pacific Island Catholicism, and a major source of diversification in the broader Church.

Prayer groups also find some commonality among many API Catholics, four in ten of whom participated in a parish prayer group within the past month. Another three in ten participated in a prayer group outside the parish. Tables 17 and 18 show this tendency:

Table 17

Participated Parish Prayer Group in this Past Month	
	Yes
Ethnicity	
Chamorro / Micronesian	32%
Chinese / Taiwanese	33%
Filipino	43%
Indian	30%
Korean	40%
Vietnamese / Montagnard	45%
Other Asian	36%
MultiEthnic Asian	38%
Total	39%
Parish Ethnic/Racial Composition	
No one of R's ethnicity at parish	30%
1 thru 79% of R's ethnicity at parish	39%
80% - 100% of R's ethnicity at parish	43%
Total	39%
"Indian" includes those who identified as Knanaya, Syro-Malabar, Syro-Malankara	
"Other Asian" includes Hawaiian, Indonesian, Melanesian/Fijian	

Table 18

Participated Non-parish Prayer Group or Other Religious Group in this Past Month	
	Yes
Ethnicity	
Chamorro / Micronesian	15%
Chinese / Taiwanese	20%
Filipino	36%
Indian	28%
Korean	20%
Vietnamese / Montagnard	35%
Other Asian	31%
MultiEthnic Asian	29%
Total	30%
Parish Ethnic/Racial Composition	
No one of R's ethnicity at parish	28%
1 thru 79% of R's ethnicity at parish	33%
80% - 100% of R's ethnicity at parish	20%
Total	30%
"Indian" includes those who identified as Knanaya, Syro-Malabar, Syro-Malankara	
"Other Asian" includes Hawaiian, Indonesian, Melanesian/Fijian	

Devotion to Mary and the saints, including feast days, offer visible manifestations of Catholicism among API Catholics. One leader in a Chamorro Catholic community, for example, says that "Chamorro Catholics love their faith. They use that as a means to keep their culture alive by celebrating their village patron saints' feast days and also to continue the social aspect of our Chamorro customs through fiestas and dance." (LI008). Another Vietnamese leader shares:

Vietnamese are more expressive with faith. For example, May is the month of devotion to Mary and we offer flowers, very traditional Vietnamese to Mary. Every month we try to have visits and prayers so that people can relate to it. Like the month of June we have the month for the Sacred Heart of Jesus. November we do for All Saints. We do have different kinds of images. Even images to decorate in the church so that people can relate. Vietnamese do have different ways of expressing their devotion to God. In terms of that, it still very strong in the church. In the way that we believe, but also a little bit fading away because of this generation living in this society. It is a different way of expressing their faith. (LI035)

More than nine in ten respondents to the in-pew survey agree at least "somewhat" that their parish celebrates feast days important to them.

While just one in five API Catholics are "very satisfied" with the Catholic Church's incorporation of API images of faith, such as Our Lady of LaVang or San Lorenzo, almost half are at least "somewhat satisfied" with efforts on these fronts and another quarter have no

opinion. Similar proportions are as satisfied with the Church's emphasis on the importance of API saints. Tables 19 and 20 show these reactions to the Church's incorporation of API images of faith, and emphasis on API saints.

Table 19

How Satisfied Are You With the Catholic Church: Incorporating Asian and Pacific Island Images of Faith (e.g. Our Lady of LaVang or San Lorenzo)					
	Very Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Only a Little Satisfied	Not At All Satisfied	No Opinion
Ethnicity					
Chamorro / Micronesian	10%	18%	31%	3%	39%
Chinese / Taiwanese	10%	22%	21%	11%	38%
Filipino	23%	29%	18%	12%	18%
Indian	18%	28%	16%	7%	31%
Korean	11%	23%	7%	10%	50%
Vietnamese / Montagnard	26%	38%	13%	7%	16%
Other Asian	28%	24%	11%	7%	30%
MultiEthnic Asian	14%	30%	20%	13%	23%
Total	20%	28%	16%	10%	27%
Region					
Northeast	20%	32%	15%	10%	22%
Midwest	19%	28%	16%	14%	24%
South	19%	26%	18%	8%	29%
West	20%	28%	16%	8%	27%
Total	20%	28%	16%	10%	27%
Involvement in API ministry					
Leader - involved in API ministry currently	24%	31%	19%	9%	17%
Laity - not involved in API ministry	17%	26%	15%	10%	33%
Total	20%	28%	16%	10%	27%
Parish Ethnic/Racial Composition					
No one of R's ethnicity at parish	16%	25%	11%	7%	41%
1 thru 79% of R's ethnicity at parish	20%	29%	18%	11%	23%
80% - 100% of R's ethnicity at parish	19%	27%	14%	9%	31%
Total	20%	28%	16%	10%	27%

"Indian" includes those who identified as Knanaya, Syro-Malabar, Syro-Malankara

"Other Asian" includes Hawaiian, Indonesian, Melanesian/Fijian

One respondent to the survey wrote that the incorporation of API images would enhance Mass:

I don't know anything about API Catholic traditions or saints outside of the Filipin@ community. I imagine there are popular cultural traditions or even ways of practicing the Mass and sacraments (e.g., blended with native traditions or cultural music) that I've basically never seen except at the three Filipin@-themed masses. Wouldn't it be nice to

incorporate a song here or there, an icon of a non-European saint, or other diverse cultural traditions practiced within the universal body of Catholics into a normal Sunday Mass or parish here and there?

Table 20

How Satisfied Are You With the Catholic Church: Emphasizing the Importance of Asian and Pacific Island Saints					
	<i>Very Satisfied</i>	<i>Somewhat Satisfied</i>	<i>Only a Little Satisfied</i>	<i>Not At All Satisfied</i>	<i>No Opinion</i>
Ethnicity					
Chamorro / Micronesian	8%	31%	23%	8%	31%
Chinese / Taiwanese	10%	28%	20%	14%	29%
Filipino	24%	33%	14%	10%	20%
Indian	22%	31%	17%	7%	22%
Korean	19%	26%	16%	10%	30%
Vietnamese / Montagnard	25%	37%	17%	4%	17%
Other Asian	28%	32%	10%	6%	25%
MultiEthnic Asian	16%	35%	13%	15%	20%
Total	21%	32%	16%	9%	23%
Region					
Northeast	23%	29%	14%	11%	23%
Midwest	21%	35%	15%	12%	17%
South	20%	34%	14%	8%	24%
West	21%	30%	17%	8%	24%
Total	21%	32%	16%	9%	23%
Involvement in API ministry					
Leader - involved in API ministry currently	23%	38%	17%	8%	14%
Laity - not involved in API ministry	19%	28%	15%	10%	28%
Total	21%	32%	16%	9%	23%
Parish Ethnic/Racial Composition					
No one of R's ethnicity at parish	20%	24%	9%	12%	35%
1 thru 79% of R's ethnicity at parish	20%	33%	16%	10%	21%
80% - 100% of R's ethnicity at parish	22%	33%	19%	6%	20%
Total	21%	32%	16%	9%	23%

"Indian" includes those who identified as Knanaya, Syro-Malabar, Syro-Malankara

"Other Asian" includes Hawaiian, Indonesian, Melanesian/Fijian

At least one leader bemoaned the fact that his community has no saints of its own to honor, saying "Koreans, they have saints. Indonesians don't. I feel sad about that sometimes, you know. We need to have that symbol" (LI010). Although the devotional practices and adoration of these figures is often unique to specific ethnic communities, they are very Catholic nonetheless and highlight the immense variety of practices in global Catholicism.

Other practices within API communities, however, highlight where non-Catholic ethnic and cultural traditions have become interwoven with more widely accepted American Catholic practices. One focus group participant shared, for example: “So I’m not too clear of the story but it’s like some Buddhist person had given us a gift, and so we used it (FG011). In some ways Buddhism and Confucian thought are just as important to Asian and Pacific Island practices as Catholicism. “In our culture and being Japanese, we have maybe Buddhist and also Shinto background. Of course, Buddhism is not native to Japanese. We didn’t have a Buddhist until 6th century and we struggle what to do with this religion the Chinese brought. And I’m sure that they have that struggle, too, when the Spanish brought it first. But I think we eventually ended up in a category still maintaining our ancestors’ pre-Christian heritage and then the way we accept this Catholicism that was brought from Europeans to us. How can we best reflect our ancestors’ pre-Christian tradition into the teaching of Christ? So it’s always a struggle, too” (FG005).

A Korean vicar shares a similar narrative of mixing the East and the West: “It’s a little bit different from American Catholicism. Korean Catholicism is very much ready with the Asian religions...ancestry connection and things like that. ...One example: most of Korean Catholics do not know what the resurrection really means in our Christian faith/Catholic faith, but still they use the term ‘resurrection’ and they believe but they understand differently” (LI039). Another minister describes how the Hmong community he ministers to is divided in terms of embracing assimilation, or not:

The community is divided even within the church, because some want to do Hmong Catholic rituals; others want to assimilate. Another group would say, ‘I want to be 100% Hmong and 100% Catholic.’” (LI036)

This multi-faith awareness and versatility positions many API Catholics well for interfaith understanding and dialog. “They come with a lot more very different faith values that’s among the broader you know American population,” shares a leader in a Chinese Catholic community (LI001).

On the other hand, first generation immigrant Catholics from predominantly Catholic countries may find the religious pluralism of the U.S. to be uncharted territory. A Filipina leader, for example, describes the newness of being in a minority religious position:

It was something foreign for me to be here and to see people of other faiths and maybe people of no faith and try to understand that. And that there are people who worship differently from me, not in the sacramental ways that I have understood it and lived it and grown up with it at least what I see in the Philippines. ...In a new land where it’s so diverse, it kind of forces somebody -- and I still think about my experience -- to see the different realities and the underpinnings of all these realities. So, retaining the Catholicity is important, at least for me, and making adjustments (LI009).

Although most did not see these other faith influences as a problem, many noted that some of their traditions are not commonly associated with the Western calendar and thus set them apart during certain times of the year. Members of the Vietnamese and Chinese communities we spoke with, for example, stated that they widely celebrate the Lunar New Year in addition to observing celebrations in the Catholic liturgical calendar. Many of the communities we spoke with also stated that they annually venerate their ancestors. Indonesians

of Chinese ancestry, for example, stated, “Well, the Indonesian Chinese, there is like in the church because they practice the tradition that we have in the Chinese family. For example, we have annually probably or maybe twice a year that we pray to the ancestors. That’s big” (FG012).

Others we spoke with, such as Burmese and Filipinos, stated that although ancestor veneration was not too widely practiced in their communities, they believed in keeping the dead in their homes and praying for them for a much longer period than what is typical for most American Catholics (See FG005; FG006; FG009). Filipinos also stated that there are other celebrations and traditions, such as Simbang Gabi, a night Mass celebrated each night for nine days leading up to Christmas, that are essential to the faith of the community and its ability to come together as one people across their diversity. “One of the things that [Filipinos] have given us is the gift Simbang Gabi. It’s a big thing. It’s nine days going to different churches and it’s amazing how when you call some of the churches to ask whether you can have a Mass, how many times they’ll say yes or no, and for those who will say no it’s [only] because it’s not known to them and secondary about that, it’s a minority” (FG008 Filipinos).

Other Communal Activities among API Catholics

API Catholics additionally cited other communal elements as being essential to their experience of Catholicism. Prime among them is food: food is clearly an important part of Asian and Pacific Island religious life. As one Filipino pointed out, “Faith, then food – like what Father [John] say” (FG006 Filipino). Likewise, an Indonesian we spoke with stated, “The food becomes the central, the secondary after the Mass” (FG012 Indonesian). Indeed, some 57 percent of respondents participated in a food-focused community event recently, as shown in Table 21.

Table 21

Participated Fellowships/Potluck in this Past Month	
	Yes
Ethnicity	
Chamorro / Micronesian	46%
Chinese / Taiwanese	57%
Filipino	65%
Indian	47%
Korean	54%
Vietnamese / Montagnard	52%
Other Asian	57%
MultiEthnic Asian	51%
Total	57%
Parish Ethnic/Racial Composition	
No one of R's ethnicity at parish	44%
1 thru 79% of R's ethnicity at parish	57%
80% - 100% of R's ethnicity at parish	62%
Total	57%

“Indian” includes those who identified as Knanaya, Syro-Malabar, Syro-Malankara

“Other Asian” includes Hawaiian, Indonesian, Melanesian/Fijian

Music is also an important part of religious life for many API Catholics, about a quarter of whom participate in choir or music. Several Filipinos we spoke with describe music as a unique gift they bring to their parishes. “I feel like a lot of Filipinos are musically inclined” (FG004). More than a quarter of NSAPIC respondents participated in the choir in the past month.

Table 22

Participated Choir or Music in this Past Month	
	Yes
Ethnicity	
Chamorro / Micronesian	10%
Chinese / Taiwanese	25%
Filipino	31%
Indian	21%
Korean	20%
Vietnamese / Montagnard	29%
Other Asian	34%
MultiEthnic Asian	19%
Total	27%
Parish Ethnic/Racial Composition	
No one of R's ethnicity at parish	17%
1 thru 79% of R's ethnicity at parish	29%
80% - 100% of R's ethnicity at parish	25%
Total	27%
“Indian” includes those who identified as Knanaya, Syro-Malabar, Syro-Malankara	
“Other Asian” includes Hawaiian, Indonesian, Melanesian/Fijian	

One Filipino vicar shares, regarding music:

Filipinos are really-- they really love music. And so even here in the United States ...we have a lot of talented Filipino- Americans who are musically gifted and they use that in serving their parishes. ...And they get involved.

Music is an oft-cited contribution listed by respondents to the survey when asked to identify the greatest contributions of API Catholics to the Church.

Participation in Catholic education or Bible study finds even higher prevalence among API respondents, four in ten of whom say that they have engaged in this activity in the past month (see Table 23).

Table 23

Participated Catholic Education class or Bible Study in this Past Month	
	Yes
Ethnicity	
Chamorro / Micronesian	22%
Chinese / Taiwanese	58%
Filipino	39%
Indian	28%
Korean	46%
Vietnamese / Montagnard	50%
Other Asian	41%
MultiEthnic Asian	40%
Total	43%
Region	
Northeast	35%
Midwest	40%
South	40%
West	49%
Total	43%
Parish Ethnic/Racial Composition	
No one of R's ethnicity at parish	38%
1 thru 79% of R's ethnicity at parish	41%
80% - 100% of R's ethnicity at parish	50%
Total	43%
"Indian" includes those who identified as Knanaya, Syro-Malabar, Syro-Malankara	
"Other Asian" includes Hawaiian, Indonesian, Melanesian/Fijian	

One respondent wrote in the survey of how s/he organized a Bible Study activity in his/her own parish, saying "I had teamed up with 5 parishioners and invited a deacon to lead our (would-be) Bible group. I initiated and suggested that the Pre-registration be done in our backyard, by hosting a Luau Hawaiian Party, as indicated on all the flyers our group had distributed. Sixty-five parishioners signed up. The Bible Study group which started 7 years ago is still going on strong and passionately."

Social outreach, too, is something that roughly a third of API Catholics did in some form last month (see Table 24).

Table 24

Participated Parish Social Outreach in this Past Month	
	Yes
Ethnicity	
Chamorro / Micronesian	27%
Chinese / Taiwanese	24%
Filipino	40%
Indian	25%
Korean	25%
Vietnamese / Montagnard	34%
Other Asian	41%
MultiEthnic Asian	24%
Total	32%
Region	
Northeast	24%
Midwest	30%
South	29%
West	37%
Total	32%
Parish Ethnic/Racial Composition	
No one of R's ethnicity at parish	29%
1 thru 79% of R's ethnicity at parish	35%
80% - 100% of R's ethnicity at parish	27%
Total	32%
"Indian" includes those who identified as Knanaya, Syro-Malabar, Syro-Malankara	
"Other Asian" includes Hawaiian, Indonesian, Melanesian/Fijian	

But beyond the gift of music, parish ministries, and introduction of new celebrations, most of the Asian and Pacific Island Catholics we spoke with suggested that it is their faith that is the greatest gift they bring to their parishes. "I think the Filipinos – Fidelity. They are faithful to their faith. They are strongly rooted to their faith" shares a Filipino Vicar (LI011). An Indian pointed out, "I think Indian Catholics are more committed to their faith, as opposed to Caucasians and African Americans, who I've noticed shop for faiths. So if they're unhappy with particular church, they'll leave the church and go to another church like that but the Indian Catholics will stay, regardless of what the storm is" (FG013 Indian). Likewise, a Filipino we spoke with stated, "We bring our faith and devotion [to our parishes]" (FG004).

Perhaps correlating with this conceptualization of faith and commitment to the Church, the majority of API respondents tend to see as "very important" such Catholic teachings as those around social justice, Vatican authority, and a celibate male clergy (see Tables 25 through 27).

Table 25

Importance of Social Justice					
	<i>Very important</i>	<i>Somewhat important</i>	<i>Not very important</i>	<i>Not important at all</i>	<i>No opinion</i>
Ethnicity					
Chamorro / Micronesian	49%	42%	--	2%	7%
Chinese / Taiwanese	60%	33%	3%	1%	3%
Filipino	71%	25%	4%	0%	1%
Indian	67%	26%	5%	2%	
Korean	55%	34%	8%	--	3%
Vietnamese / Montagnard	67%	27%	4%	1%	1%
Other Asian	72%	18%	6%	4%	1%
MultiEthnic Asian	66%	25%	4%	2%	3%
Total	66%	27%	4%	1%	2%

"Indian" includes those who identified as Knanaya, Syro-Malabar, Syro-Malankara

"Other Asian" includes Hawaiian, Indonesian, Melanesian/Fijian

Two-thirds of API Catholics rate social justice as "very important" to them as a Catholic. This is twice that of American Catholics overall. API Catholics are also more inclined than Catholics overall to indicate that the Vatican's authority and the celibate male clergy are "very important."

Table 26

Importance of Vatican's Authority					
	<i>Very important</i>	<i>Somewhat important</i>	<i>Not very important</i>	<i>Not important at all</i>	<i>No opinion</i>
Ethnicity					
Chamorro / Micronesian	55%	38%	3%	3%	3%
Chinese / Taiwanese	58%	29%	8%	0%	4%
Filipino	69%	22%	7%	1%	2%
Indian	62%	24%	10%	3%	1%
Korean	48%	38%	8%	1%	5%
Vietnamese / Montagnard	67%	25%	6%	1%	2%
Other Asian	60%	24%	11%	1%	3%
MultiEthnic Asian	54%	26%	15%	2%	3%
Total	62%	26%	8%	1%	3%

"Indian" includes those who identified as Knanaya, Syro-Malabar, Syro Malankara

"Other Asian" includes Hawaiian, Indonesian, Melanesian/Fijian

Table 27

Importance of Celibate Male Clergy					
	<i>Very important</i>	<i>Somewhat important</i>	<i>Not very important</i>	<i>Not important at all</i>	<i>No opinion</i>
Ethnicity					
Chamorro / Micronesian	54%	31%	3%	5%	8%
Chinese / Taiwanese	40%	30%	17%	8%	5%
Filipino	61%	19%	12%	6%	3%
Indian	55%	21%	16%	8%	
Korean	51%	30%	5%	7%	7%
Vietnamese / Montagnard	66%	18%	11%	3%	3%
Other Asian	57%	21%	10%	8%	4%
MultiEthnic Asian	49%	21%	18%	10%	2%
Total	56%	22%	12%	7%	3%

“Indian” includes those who identified as Knanaya, Syro-Malabar, Syro-Malankara

“Other Asian” includes Hawaiian, Indonesian, Melanesian/Fijian

Together, these responses convey a Catholicism expressed by Asian and Pacific Island Catholics that puts greater weight on official Catholic teachings, as compared to the Catholicism expressed by Catholics overall.

API Catholics also highlight how their unique national histories have in their view made them stronger Catholics – stronger than the typical American – and thus an example of the perseverance of faith in struggle. “Given the history of turmoil and persecution of Catholicism in Vietnam, many suggested that, persistence, perseverance is among the attributes they bring to the Church” (FG002). And the same is true of China, “Because back in China, to become a Catholic is not cool” (FG010).

Despite national and cultural challenges, Asian and Pacific Islander communities are steadfast in their faith and devotion to the Church. They are devoted Catholics but still face many challenges as they immigrant to the United States and seek to build new homes, sometime within very unwelcoming environments, while trying to maintain their rich ethnic religious practices. It is to the demographics and dynamics of the parish that we next turn.

Parish Demographics

The Asian and Pacific Island Catholics who responded to the online survey are a highly active, committed, and Mass-going contingent of American Catholics. While the majority of American Catholics overall attend Mass less than weekly, an extraordinarily high 89 percent of API Catholics report attending Mass weekly or more often.

Table 28

Frequency of Mass Attendance			
	<i>More than weekly</i>	<i>Weekly</i>	<i>Less than weekly</i>
Ethnicity			
Chamorro / Micronesian	18%	54%	28%
Chinese / Taiwanese	28%	58%	14%
Filipino	44%	49%	7%
Indian	29%	57%	14%
Korean	26%	65%	9%
Vietnamese / Montagnard	45%	50%	5%
Other Asian	35%	45%	21%
MultiEthnic Asian	30%	55%	15%
Total	36%	53%	11%
Region			
Northeast	32%	55%	13%
Midwest	35%	52%	13%
South	38%	54%	9%
West	35%	53%	11%
Total	36%	53%	11%
Involvement in API ministry			
Leader - involved in API ministry currently	47%	48%	5%
Laity - not involved in API ministry	30%	56%	14%
Total	36%	53%	11%
Parish Ethnic/Racial Composition			
No one of R's ethnicity at parish	38%	49%	13%
1 thru 79% of R's ethnicity at parish	37%	53%	11%
80% - 100% of R's ethnicity at parish	34%	57%	9%
Total	36%	53%	11%

"Indian" includes those who identified as Knanaya, Syro-Malabar, Syro-Malankara

"Other Asian" includes Hawaiian, Indonesian, Melanesian/Fijian

Compared to Catholics overall, Asian and Pacific Island Catholics in our sample report much higher rates of Mass attendance. Nine in ten responding attend Mass at least weekly, compared to a third of Catholics overall.

The least frequent weekly Mass-goers are Chamorro / Micronesian (even then, nearly three quarters go at least weekly!), whereas Vietnamese / Montagnard Catholics report attending most often. Leaders involved in API ministry also report high levels of Mass attendance, typically more than once a week. API respondents also report regular participation in confession/reconciliation, another indicator of strong parish involvement. A quarter go to confession monthly or more often.

Table 29

Frequency of Participation in Confession or Reconciliation			
	<i>Monthly+</i>	<i>Once to several per year</i>	<i>Less than a year or Never</i>
Ethnicity			
Chamorro / Micronesian	12%	50%	38%
Chinese / Taiwanese	24%	46%	31%
Filipino	23%	53%	24%
Indian	22%	51%	27%
Korean	20%	69%	11%
Vietnamese / Montagnard	30%	64%	6%
Other Asian	27%	44%	30%
MultiEthnic Asian	23%	50%	27%
Total	24%	54%	22%
Region			
Northeast	21%	51%	28%
Midwest	24%	46%	30%
South	23%	55%	23%
West	26%	56%	17%
Total	24%	53%	22%
Involvement in API ministry			
Leader - involved in API ministry currently	31%	54%	15%
Laity - not involved in API ministry	20%	54%	26%
Total	24%	54%	22%
Parish Ethnic/Racial Composition			
No one of R's ethnicity at parish	26%	51%	24%
1 thru 79% of R's ethnicity at parish	23%	54%	23%
80% - 100% of R's ethnicity at parish	25%	57%	19%
Total	24%	54%	22%

"Indian" includes those who identified as Knanaya, Syro-Malabar, Syro-Malankara

"Other Asian" includes Hawaiian, Indonesian, Melanesian/Fijian

Neither Mass attendance nor confession vary significantly by parish composition.

Most API Catholics are registered in a parish. Most do not attend the parish closest to their home.

Almost nine in ten online API respondents say they are registered in a parish, but this number is lower among in-pew respondents (59 percent of whom report being registered). In-pew API respondents are also more likely than non-API respondents to live closer to a parish other than the one where they responded to the survey in-pew (58 percent compared to 48 percent). This suggests that many API Catholics are driving by other parishes in order to attend another preferred parish.

<i>Relationship to the parish</i>			
Percentage responding “Yes” in the In-pew Survey:			
	Are you registered at this parish?	Is this parish your primary place of worship?	Do you currently live closer to another parish?
<i>All Respondents:</i>			
Self-identifies as API	59%	79%	58%
Does not self-identify as API	71	85	48
<i>Parishioner API Background:</i>			
Filipino	55%	78%	58%
Vietnamese	63	79	60
Korean	77	90	58
Other or Unknown API group	62	79	57
<i>API Respondent Survey Language:</i>			
English	56%	78%	58%
Non-English	82	90	58
<i>API Respondent Place of Birth:</i>			
U.S.-born	62%	80%	59%
Foreign-born	58	79	57
<i>Parish Serves Community:</i>			
Filipino	69%	87%	38%
Vietnamese	89	95	41
Korean	88	95	59
Other or multiple API groups	58	78	55
Not an API parish	79	88	51
<i>API Respondent Within the Parish:</i>			
Majority API parishioners	66%	87%	62%
Plurality/minority API parishioners	53	74	55
Few or None API	71	85	48

Most API Catholics attend multicultural parishes where their ethnicity constitutes less than 80 percent of the parish.

Though parish composition varies across respondents to the NSAPIC, the largest proportion of respondents (65 percent, or about two-thirds) are in parishes where people of their ethnicity constitute between 1 and 79 percent of the parish. A substantial minority (13 percent) are the only parishioners of their ethnicity in their parish. And more than two in ten (22 percent) are in parishes that look the opposite, demographically, with between 80 and 100 percent of their fellow parishioners sharing their own ethnic background. Most respondents to the in-pew survey (82 percent) agree at least “somewhat” that they would like to see more diversity in their parish, including three in five who currently attend parishes with a plurality of API respondents.

The majority of the Asian and Pacific Island people we spoke with in focus groups are distinct minorities in their parishes. This is particularly true of Burmese, Indonesians, Japanese and Laotians, for example, whose populations in the United States tend to be small. One Hmong leader put plainly, “Because [Hmong] are a non-dominant culture everywhere in the world, they are very accustomed to living their culture within that dominant culture” (LI036). As one individual described their parish to us, “My current [parish] seems pasty white” (FG002). This is not necessarily a problem, but is a reality of the parish demographics that Asian and Pacific Island Catholics find locally across the country.

While Filipinos are often also minorities in their parishes, they tend to have larger numbers and thus are a more visible and often vocal part of their parishes. The same can be said of Chinese, Indians, Koreans and Vietnamese, in some cases, but often these populations can establish local ethnic parishes and thus are majorities within their own parishes. However, the Indian case is unique. Indians are divided between those who are Latin Rite and those who are Eastern Rite. Within the Eastern Rite, there are three distinct communities—Syro-Malabar, Syro-Malankara and Knanaya. Each of the Eastern Rites Churches are largely ethnic and regional specific, and hence majorities in their own ethnic parishes. In fact, the Knanaya are an endogamous community and largely excluded to outsiders. Those Indians who are Latin Rite attend largely mixed ethnic and racial parishes and are clear minorities within these parishes.

From a diocesan perspective, parishes that serve multiple communities of Catholics, including communities defined along the lines of ethnicity, are the most resource effective – or perhaps the only – available option. “The ideal is to have these communities in a shared parish, mutually rewarding relationship,” says one multicultural director (LI001). Nonetheless, NSAPIC respondents are somewhat divided on the issue of establishing parishes that minister specifically to them. Half (51 percent) agree “somewhat” or “strongly” with this; 38 percent disagree.

The Asian and Pacific Island Catholics we spoke with in focus groups suggested that they frequent other parishes, in addition to their home or registered parish, to be with and celebrate specific ethnic and national holidays and practices with people of their same background. Three-quarters of NSAPIC respondents say that they attend a parish other than their own “several times a year” or more often. “Special events or celebrations” are the most common reason why API Catholics frequent parishes other than their home parish.

Dioceses may see this either as an alternative to, or perhaps an interim step toward, an integrated / shared parish. A diocesan director of Asian affairs describes:

The focus of the church is really to help integrate them in regular parishes at some point in time. So this is only like a temporary thing or it could be a permanent kind of establishment because their first generation is not able to integrate themselves because of the language. So then they would have to continue to be ministered in that mission or center. So that is true for some of the Vietnamese. Now the question is – we have the second generation. We have also other Koreans, we have other Vietnamese who would like to be integrated in a regular parish and feel like the regular members of a parish, but the community may not want them to get separated from the rest of the community, for several reasons. (LI024).

The distinctive needs of generation and non-English speaking Asian and Pacific Islanders, in particular, may be recognized as legitimate rationales to create separate structures, whether in the form of personal parishes, centers, or missions.

Several leaders indicate a desire among their API community for such a separate entity; not all dioceses or bishops support this in principle and/or through resource allocation. Respondents are likewise fairly divided on this front. One respondent to the survey commented that “Ethnic Groups in church/dioceses should not be formed independently as this tends to isolate the group from the others. Rather, ethnic groups should instead be a subset of a unifying cultural group.” By contrast, many others specifically requested parishes, centers, or other focused spaces just for their communities.

Despite the likelihood of being in the numerical minority in their parishes, most (73 percent) API Catholics say that they have “never” felt uncomfortable because there is no one at the parish who shares their same ethnicity or race.

Three in ten API Catholics attending parishes where there is no one else of their ethnicity feel uncomfortable at least “sometimes” due to being in the minority.

Table 30

Felt uncomfortable because there were no other individuals of respondent's race or ethnicity in parish		
	<i>Always / Sometimes</i>	<i>Never</i>
Ethnicity		
Chamorro / Micronesian	22%	78%
Chinese / Taiwanese	31%	70%
Filipino	19%	81%
Indian	37%	63%
Korean	31%	70%
Vietnamese / Montagnard	28%	72%
Other Asian	29%	71%
MultiEthnic Asian	31%	69%
Total	27%	73%
Region		
Northeast	33%	68%
Midwest	33%	67%
South	24%	76%
West	26%	74%
Total	27%	73%
Parish Ethnic/Racial Composition		
No one of R's ethnicity at parish	31%	69%
1 thru 79% of R's ethnicity at parish	28%	72%
80% - 100% of R's ethnicity at parish	22%	78%
Total	27%	73%

“Indian” includes those who identified as Knanaya, Syro-Malabar, Syro-Malankara

“Other Asian” includes Hawaiian, Indonesian, Melanesian/Fijian

Among those who do report feeling “always” or “sometimes” uncomfortable for this reason, Indians stand out with higher frequency, as do Chinese / Taiwanese, Koreans, and multiethnic Asians. API Catholics living in the Northeast and Midwest are more likely to indicate that they feel uncomfortable at least “sometimes” as the minority in their parish.

Relatedly, few report feeling that fellow parishioners are unfriendly, or avoid them due to their ethnicity or race. Nonetheless, as many as three in ten Catholics from smaller API ethnic communities have “sometimes” or “always” encountered this hardship. Parish atmosphere is explored further in the next report section (on “Parish Atmosphere”).

Table 31

Felt that People Unfriendly/ Avoided the Respondent Due to Ethnic/ Race		
	<i>Always / Sometimes</i>	<i>Never</i>
Ethnicity		
Chamorro / Micronesian	22%	78%
Chinese / Taiwanese	20%	80%
Filipino	18%	82%
Indian	29%	71%
Korean	16%	84%
Vietnamese / Montagnard	24%	76%
Other Asian	31%	69%
MultiEthnic Asian	31%	69%
Total	23%	77%
Region		
Northeast	21%	79%
Midwest	28%	72%
South	22%	78%
West	21%	79%
Total	22%	78%
Parish Ethnic/Racial Composition		
No one of R's ethnicity at parish	24%	76%
1 thru 79% of R's ethnicity at parish	24%	76%
80% - 100% of R's ethnicity at parish	17%	83%
Total	23%	78%
"Indian" includes those who identified as Knanaya, Syro-Malabar, Syro-Malankara		
"Other Asian" includes Hawaiian, Indonesian, Melanesian/Fijian		

Ethnic unfriendliness or avoidance is least commonly reported by API Catholics attending parishes where their own ethnic community constitutes 80 percent or more of the parish. Asked separately about whether fellow parishioners have ever been reluctant to offer them the sign of peace, some eight in ten API Catholics (82 percent) suggest that no, this has never been the case.

Parish involvement

Between 20 and 39 percent of API Catholics responding to the NSAPIC indicate that they have served as religious educators, Eucharistic ministers, in music ministry, as altar servers, and/or as greeters/ushers (see Table 32). Eighty-four percent of in-pew respondents agree at least "somewhat" that they feel encouraged to participate in parish ministry.

Table 32

Service in Parish Ministry	
	Yes
Religious Educator	39%
Eucharistic Ministry	38%
Music Minister	24%
Altar Server	24%
Greeter/Usher	20%
None of the Above	22%

"Indian" includes those who identified as Knanaya, Syro-Malabar, Syro-Malankara
 "Other Asian" includes Hawaiian, Indonesian, Melanesian/Fijian

Only 22 percent of API Catholics report doing "none of the above."³ This indicates a strong level of parish involvement and leadership among API Catholics respondents to the NSAPIC. Compared to Catholics overall,⁴ API Catholics report higher levels of participation in each of these parish ministries – twice as high for music ministry, in particular.

However, when compared to other respondents in the in-pew survey, API respondents report a lower number of ministries or activities that they are personally involved with. A quarter of API respondents are involved in at least one ministry/activity, compared to 43 percent of non-API respondents. Korean respondents are most likely to be personally involved with at least one ministry or activity (52 percent). These findings are shown in Table 32.

Some leaders suggest that parish participation may increase within a community of coethnics. One Indonesian leader makes this point:

I think every ethnic community long to have a stable, you know, presence or say a more structured, more well-founded community... They have wanted to have their own parish. Many Indonesians everywhere would want that kind of structure.... They feel more at home. Also, can participate more, you know, to the extent of being familiar with their faith can be-- can see themselves being able to be more involved, you know. Whereas if you are say, you know, a member of a huge community, huge parish, you go there for Mass and that's it. So, you know, every ethnic especially if it is a small ethnicity, want more than that. More than, you know, coming to Sunday-- coming to, you know – They want community. They want relationships. They want-- I think they want beyond weekly participation.

API Catholic respondents to the NSAPIC attending parishes where no one shares their ethnic background are slightly more likely to *not* participate in the various parish service opportunities listed (25 percent say "none," compared to 20 and 22 percent of those in parishes with a higher percentage of co-ethnics). And in the in-pew survey, there is no clear relationship between parish composition and likelihood of involvement.

Table 32

<i>Number of ministries or activities you are personally involved with at this parish</i>				
Percentage responding as such or mean value:				
	None	One	Two or more	Mean
<i>All Respondents:</i>				
Self-identifies as API	76%	13%	11%	0.5
Does not self-identify as API	57	18	25	1.0
<i>Parishioner API Background:</i>				
Filipino	81%	11%	8%	0.4
Vietnamese	78	9	13	0.5
Korean	48	26	26	1.3
Other or Unknown API group	73	15	13	0.6
<i>API Respondent Survey Language:</i>				
English	78%	12%	10%	0.5
Non-English	57	22	22	1.1
<i>API Respondent Place of Birth:</i>				
U.S.-born	72%	14%	13%	0.6
Foreign-born	78	12	10	0.5
<i>Parish Serves Community:</i>				
Filipino	68%	16%	16%	0.7
Vietnamese	60	14	26	1.0
Korean	41	28	31	1.5
Other or multiple API groups	74	14	13	0.6
Not an API parish	47	20	33	1.3
<i>API Respondent Within the Parish:</i>				
Majority API parishioners	70%	15%	15%	0.7
Plurality/minority API parishioners	81	11	7	0.4
Few or None API	57	18	25	1.0

Parish Atmosphere

With most API Catholics reported no discomfort given ethnic minority status in their parishes, what characterizes the parish atmospheres of the communities they attend? Nearly all (89 percent) are satisfied or very satisfied with their parishes overall. For most, this includes a strong sense of welcome at the parish.

Nearly all responding API Catholics – 94 percent – “somewhat” or “strongly” agree that they feel welcome in their parish.

This percentage is fairly consistent across ethnicities and regions, as seen in Table 33. Though still a small percentage, API Catholics who are the only parishioners of their ethnicity in the parish are twice as likely as those in parishes with fellow coethnics to say they “disagree” that they feel welcome in their parish.

Table 33

Felt Welcome in Parish		
	<i>Strongly / Somewhat agree</i>	<i>Disagree/ DK</i>
Ethnicity		
Chamorro / Micronesian	97%	3%
Chinese / Taiwanese	92%	8%
Filipino	97%	3%
Indian	93%	7%
Korean	89%	11%
Vietnamese / Montagnard	94%	6%
Other Asian	87%	13%
MultiEthnic Asian	92%	8%
Total	94%	7%
Region		
Northeast	92%	8%
Midwest	94%	6%
South	93%	7%
West	94%	6%
Total	94%	7%
Parish Ethnic/Racial Composition		
No one of R's ethnicity at parish	90%	10%
1 thru 79% of R's ethnicity at parish	95%	5%
80% - 100% of R's ethnicity at parish	93%	7%
Total	94%	6%

“Indian” includes those who identified as Knanaya, Syro-Malabar, Syro-Malankara

“Other Asian” includes Hawaiian, Indonesian, Melanesian/Fijian

Focus group conversations confirm that the majority of the Asian and Pacific Island communities feel welcome in their current parishes. This is particularly true of those in ethnic specific parishes, such as the Vietnamese, Chinese and Koreans, who are majorities in their churches. However, for those in mix or multi-racial and ethnic parishes, their current welcome state is a result of a long period of struggle and intense negotiation and education between their communities and their local parish priest. “But when first came really is people call me like crazy. “Oh, I don’t want to go to that church anymore.” I say, “Why?” “Oh, they won’t shake our hands and they don’t want to say hello.” You know I don’t blame them because you know the Americans, they don’t know who you are. You know I mean they’re new for them” (FG008).

Most in-pew API respondents (84 percent) “strongly” or “somewhat” agree that parishioners are eager to understand the different cultures in their parish community. Those identifying as Korean (25 percent), those at parishes that serve a Korean community (25 percent), and U.S.-born API respondents (33 percent) are among the least likely to “strongly” agree with this statement. The large majority of in-pew respondents (92 percent) also agree at least “somewhat” that having people of different cultural backgrounds enriches their parish.

Open communication and sharing between multiple parish communities aids in efforts to create a welcoming parish atmosphere, as one Vietnamese pastor shares:

We do try to be sensitive to all the communities. We have meetings and consulting, mostly me as a person who is married between two communities. Try to work out and try to even decoration and do things. We try to accommodate with each other. Mostly, we respect each other. Then, work out with the facilities and all sorts of things. But we do consult each other and try to incorporate both unique differences and togetherness. I think it is very neat. Both communities learn from each other.

He admits that this is still a challenge, to bring communities together and understand differences in worship. Another respondent suggested in the survey that “sincere invitations to parish events” would be a needed improvement.

According to many that we spoke with, educating a parish community or parish priest about their community and their practices was/ is not an easy task and often met with ignorance or perceived racism. As one person pointed out to us, “I think for an Asian population to go into a predominantly white church, it’s really difficult” (FG003). Likewise, another person stated, “I think white American Catholics do not understand Asian Catholic traditions at all. Whether it’s implicit bias, or subconscious racism. Even within the church, I definitely think that that’s a reality” (FG003). One response to an open-ended survey question leveled a strong critique of the welcome extended to API Catholics, particularly to those most marginalized by migration history, language, and age:

“I am not aware of any ministries in the Catholic Church that would offer truly warm welcomes to the Asians. Catholic Churches have many superficial ceremonies, like handshakes that mean nothing. After the handshakes, no one takes another look around. Coffee and doughnuts after Mass are generally for the cliques. The culture of the Church needs to be changed. But the Church is too large. Some place, even larger Churches that could seat 3000 are built. An implant finds it intimidating to join any ministries, or to

make new friends. Many Asians are elderly, live alone, unable to speak the language. They need pastoral care visits and more.

A Chinese individual we spoke with suggested that this lack of understanding can occur in both directions: “We always they’re not very friendly to us [Chinese], and that they think we are not friendly to them” (FG001). More optimistically, one Vietnamese pastor summarizes that “We do have some differences, but we try to mingle and try to work with each other. We try to be at peace with one another, but we do have some differences. Sometimes it is difficult. Sometimes there are misunderstandings. But mostly there are no major problems, thanks be to God for that!” (LI035).

Table 34

Agreement on API Being Well Integrated into Parish					
	<i>Strongly agree</i>	<i>Somewhat agree</i>	<i>Somewhat disagree</i>	<i>Strongly disagree</i>	DK
Ethnicity					
Chamorro / Micronesian	56%	26%	10%	--	8%
Chinese / Taiwanese	43%	35%	10%	2%	10%
Filipino	57%	32%	5%	2%	4%
Indian	37%	27%	12%	14%	11%
Korean	33%	29%	11%	6%	21%
Vietnamese / Montagnard	46%	35%	11%	3%	6%
Other Asian	42%	29%	11%	8%	10%
MultiEthnic Asian	39%	36%	12%	5%	8%
Total	46%	32%	9%	4%	8%
Region					
Northeast	38%	40%	12%	3%	8%
Midwest	41%	29%	10%	10%	11%
South	46%	32%	10%	5%	7%
West	50%	31%	9%	3%	8%
Total	46%	32%	10%	5%	8%
Involvement in API ministry					
Leader - involved in API ministry currently	47%	36%	9%	3%	5%
Laity - not involved in API ministry	46%	29%	9%	5%	11%
Total	46%	32%	9%	5%	8%
Parish Ethnic/Racial Composition					
No one of R's ethnicity at parish	38%	28%	10%	8%	16%
1 thru 79% of R's ethnicity at parish	48%	34%	9%	2%	6%
80% - 100% of R's ethnicity at parish	46%	26%	9%	8%	10%
Total	46%	32%	9%	4%	8%

“Indian” includes those who identified as Knanaya, Syro-Malabar, Syro-Malankara

“Other Asian” includes Hawaiian, Indonesian, Melanesian/Fijian

Nearly half of all API respondents “strongly agree” that they are well-integrated into their parishes, and a large majority agree at least “somewhat.”

Koreans, Indians, and multiethnic Asians are the least likely to “strongly agree” that they are well-integrated into their parishes. Filipinos and Chamorro / Micronesians are most likely to agree strongly. On the other hand, one in four parishioners responding to the in-pew survey agree at least “somewhat” that they feel like an outsider in their parish because of their nationality, race, ethnicity, language, or culture. Responses show little variation between parishes of differing proportions of API Catholics.

Table 35

Has the Parish Held a Multicultural Mass		
	<i>Parish did not host/ NA</i>	<i>Parish hosted multicultural Mass</i>
Ethnicity		
Chamorro / Micronesian	61%	39%
Chinese / Taiwanese	43%	57%
Filipino	40%	60%
Indian	67%	33%
Korean	64%	36%
Vietnamese / Montagnard	47%	53%
Other Asian	52%	48%
MultiEthnic Asian	55%	45%
Total	49%	51%
Region		
Northeast	60%	40%
Midwest	55%	45%
South	51%	49%
West	41%	59%
Total	49%	51%
Involvement in API ministry		
Leader - involved in API ministry currently	39%	61%
Laity - not involved in API ministry	54%	46%
Total	48%	52%
Parish Ethnic/Racial Composition		
No one of R's ethnicity at parish	59%	41%
1 thru 79% of R's ethnicity at parish	45%	55%
80% - 100% of R's ethnicity at parish	57%	43%
Total	49%	51%

“Indian” includes those who identified as Knanaya, Syro-Malabar, Syro-Malankara

“Other Asian” includes Hawaiian, Indonesian, Melanesian/Fijian

Seventy-two percent of in-pew respondents agree at least “somewhat” that parishioners talk openly about cultural diversity in the parish. An even higher proportion, however, agree that their parish should be more involved in understanding the different cultures that exist within the parish community and more involved in celebrating cultural diversity. The presence of a multicultural Mass may be one means of generating welcome for API Catholics and cross-cultural communication among parish communities.

Half of API respondents report that their parish has held a multicultural Mass.

Multicultural liturgies are identified by a handful of respondents to the survey as being among API Catholics’ greatest needs. Eighty-six percent of parishioners in the in-pew survey agree “somewhat” or “strongly” that they would like more parish events that bring together parishioners of different nationalities, ethnicities, languages, cultures, and races. Ministries focused on hospitality and welcome are also among those most commonly recommended as areas for improvement.

Tensions between parish groups do occur. Thirty-two percent of in-pew respondents agree at least “somewhat” that there is some tension between different cultural groups in the parish. As one Vietnamese individual we spoke with pointed out, for example, “...I feel like there’s some tension between Vietnamese choir and the English choir, and that’s something I’m not feel comfortable with and I think that’s something we should address as a leader, you know, like we need to address that” (FG007 Vietnamese). In some cases, these impasses are breeched and Asian and Pacific Island communities negotiate a welcoming environment to express their faith and grow. In other cases, however, these impasses prove to be insurmountable, and they move to another parish. One focus group participant relays:

This is an experience. A group of Filipinos decided to relocate to another parish. The reason being that there was something between them. I don’t know how big was this group and the priest, because the priest was being dictated upon by a leader in that church. And this group of Filipinos would never get things done except through here, and they would never get these things done, because of her. So I think that the relationship worsen to the point that they relocated to another parish, because of the priest, and that lay leader who is so powerful in terms of the decision making by the pastor. I don’t mention names, because you might know some of them. But this is what has happened. A group relocated themselves to another parish... I’m not talking about the Filipino priest. I’m talking an American, a white priest. (FG006 Filipino)

Expressing more tension of this variety, one diocesan multicultural director told of how a small API community was not allowed to list their group name and contact information in the parish bulletin. Still another leader spoke of her community being asked to park elsewhere and use public transit so as to avoid taking up parish parking.

Even when a priest or parish community is welcoming and people do not feel the need to move to another parish, this can quickly change. “Anyway, every time we have a pastor that leave, and a new one will be assigned, I’m always... Worried, because I hear from other groups that some of their pastors are not so welcoming, and so I’m worried that he might not support us

anymore” (FG006). The majority of the Asian and Pacific Island Catholics we spoke with suggested that these transitions are difficult and fraught with worry. As one Filipina [woman] describes this to us, “So that’s why every time there would be a new pastor, I kneeled and prayed that the Blessed Mother, ‘Bring that good person”” (FG008 Filipino).

Agreeing with her but broadening the concern, another Filipino we spoke with in the same focus group, stated, “Well, it’s not only the pastor. It’s also the parish council. The parish council has a big thing to do with what is going on in the church, in the parish. So you know politics, you know something like that’s going on also within the church. So you have to really show that you are with them” (FG006 Filipino).

In this particular case, the Filipinos were able to convince their parish priest to celebrate Simbang Gabi. Explaining the situation, one Filipino we spoke with stated, “But we had to really be assertive to him, and finally, I think we won his heart...” (FG006 Filipino). This typifies the level of negotiation that often happens in these transitions but in many cases, good intentions and earnest expressions of faith are not enough. As one Indonesian we spoke with highlighted in his attempt to get a monthly Mass in Indonesian in his parish, “it’s because the prior priest has said no [to request for ethnic language Mass] not just to Indonesia, to any ethnicity group... He just said that we should use English better. And then that priest retired” (FG012 Indonesian).

Many times, issues emerge as a result of a communication problem born of both cultural and linguistic differences. “I won’t say tensions, but there’s like a just they cannot mingle together. That’s it. Because the language barrier, that’s the main thing” (FG003). Even within parishes dominated by a single ethnicity, language can act as a barrier to a fully welcoming environment due to communication impasses as well as the cultural differences that accompany them. As one Chinese individual we spoke with pointed out, “I think we’ve been talking about the Chinese Catholic faith in [our] area, we talked about the language, the need for Cantonese speaking priests or the need for Mandarin speaking priest. But then what I want to say now is that the Chinese Catholic immigrants are a very diverse group, depending on where they came from, their home state experience, if they grew up in a traditional Catholic family, the various sacraments, going to confession, going to the Eucharist. Or were they just baptized in the past few years, okay? They’re still learning about the faith” (FG010 Chinese).

Tension and divisiveness is not limited to relations between API and other groups, or among API ethnic communities, but extends also to relations within single API ethnic communities. Several leaders describe “infighting” as being as much of or more of a challenge than external disagreements. One Bishop relays:

A lot of the issues have to deal with either the relationships or the politics within the communities themselves. ...I was there, working in the Chancery office dealing with the division of the Korean community, it was terrible. And in the Filipino communities, there are, there’s still the whole politics that goes on as well. And I think that’s one of the unfortunate things – how to help people deal with those competing interests and relationships, and then try to move on to provide an excellent kind of pastoral ministry to those communities. (LI004)

Many leaders share optimism, nonetheless, for a cohesive and welcoming parish atmosphere for API and all Catholics, together. As one multicultural director put it, “Time and

patience is my definite friend. As long as I can keep a community in it and an agreeable shared parish relationship, the more that has to become familiar with that cultural diversity, learn about that cultural diversity and the communication becomes easier and simpler. And expectations are realized and understood on both sides of the table” (LI002).

A Bishop suggests, similarly:

I think there's – well, I don't say conflict, but it's lack of knowledge, lack of awareness. I think we are missing the education component to make the people understand this reality of building a migrant church, immigrant church in the United States. I think we have to go to help them move into the shift for more understanding, a paradigm shift from a mono-cultural to multicultural. And when you say multicultural, what does it mean? When you say a multicultural setting of a church, what does it imply? There are things other than language, there are different faith expressions and practices that should not clash, but should be welcomed. Now how can we integrate those in order to make it more enriching for the entire community? So that is definitely become a competition. In other words, we are weaving the different kinds, so it becomes a one kaleidoscope or what they call it. What you call the artwork? [Interviewer:Mosaic?]Mosaic. That's the right word. The key was to create a mosaic out of this. (LI020)

Leadership and representation may play a critical role in this shift from mono-cultural to multicultural – as detailed in the next section.

Leadership and Representation

Leadership in the Asian and Pacific Island communities we spoke with is a contentious issue. “The Asian community has a different way to look at leadership, so that you can’t have one model and include everybody through this process and then you’re a leader. It’s more like we need to start with the people and see what is needed there and how they have already discovered leadership within themselves, how they see it. Is it a group leadership concept that they have? Is it the individual? How do they train? What is the relationship to the older generation, with the youth? You know all that is so different in each of the communities... You have to pay attention to each individual group and to see what they need, utilizing their own local leadership and then also directing the Diocese itself to do the follow-up because in some places, there isn’t an office for the ethnic group and in other places, there is but even if there is, then the other offices are hands off... (FG008 Mixed).

Table 36

<i>I feel that parish leadership and staff understand my culture.</i> Percentage responding as such:				
	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
<i>All Respondents:</i>				
Self-identifies as API	58%	33%	6%	3%
Does not self-identify as API	57	31	8	4
<i>Parishioner API Background:</i>				
Filipino	64%	30%	4%	3%
Vietnamese	54	32	11	3
Korean	31	39	19	12
Other or Unknown API group	53	37	8	3
<i>API Respondent Survey Language:</i>				
English	58%	33%	6%	3%
Non-English	56	28	9	7
<i>API Respondent Place of Birth:</i>				
U.S.-born	50%	39%	8%	3%
Foreign-born	60	31	6	3
<i>Parish Serves Community:</i>				
Filipino	45%	37%	13%	5%
Vietnamese	63	30	5	2
Korean	35	36	17	12
Other or multiple API groups	57	32	7	3
Not an API parish	63	27	7	3
<i>API Respondent Within the Parish:</i>				
Majority API parishioners	60%	30%	6%	4%
Plurality/minority API parishioners	57	34	7	2
Few or None API	57	31	8	4

The members of the Asian and Pacific Island communities we spoke with want skilled community managers, not just diverse priests. They also want all levels of leadership to have more multicultural education and be more sensitive to their practices and needs. As one person explained to us, “They should be more responsive to parishioners needs. They should be listening, and try to see what’s needed like what the parishioners needs. Somebody like that who is a good listener, and see maybe what’s the problem with these parish parishioners. Is there anything I can do? Good listener. A good leader. And that goes to the archdiocese also. I mean not just our pastors. But since you are entering the position, we definitely need someone who understands us, is culturally sensitive, and just is willing to do more than just show up at events. Someone who is extremely substantive and understands the nuances of our Catholic practice” (FG003).

Nearly nine in ten respondents to the in-pew survey (89 percent) “strongly” or “somewhat” agree that their parish leadership and staff understand their culture, as shown in Table 36. A similar proportion agree that they would be comfortable talking with their pastor. Nonetheless, the online survey and focus groups reveal important moments of tension and insensitivity even among well-intentioned pastoral leaders. Eight in ten in-pew respondents agree at least “somewhat” that they would like to see more priests of different cultural backgrounds in the parish. Most in-pew respondents (58 percent) from parishes serving Korean Catholics, by contrast, disagree “somewhat” or “strongly” that they would like to see more priests of different cultural backgrounds, which may be read as a sign of support for having their own Korean priests.

A quarter of API respondents suggest that their local priest has been insensitive to their ethnic group at least “sometimes.”

From priests not recognizing or being sensitive to various communities’ traditions and practices to major miscommunications or refusing to eat with parishioners after blessing the food because they find the food “disgusting” and say so, every Asian and Pacific Island group we spoke with had a story to tell about their experience with leadership. “I had a problem with one of the pastor and it used to be our parish. We have traditions but he never acknowledged that” (FG004). This sentiment was present with many we spoke with. In one particular case, a Filipina [woman] we spoke with described how her local priest was not sensitive to her traditions and when she attempted to address the issue, nothing was done. “And I knelt down for communion and he asked me to get up. So after the Mass I told him, “This is my tradition, Father.” He said, “No, but the Bishop said you don’t have to kneel down.” I said, “Yeah, but this is my tradition. I have to kneel down when you say communion.” So I was very devastated with that. Instead of arguing with him, I prayed for him. I wrote him a letter and he wrote me – sent me back a letter – an answer that’s really not a good answer coming from a priest. So we moved to another parish” (FG004 Filipina). Although she attempted to take the matter to leaders in her archdiocese, she noted, “That went up to the Cardinal, but then we heard that this is Cardinal’s favorite priest” (FG004). After this, she dropped the complaint and moved to another parish.

Table 37

Felt that Local Priest Was Insensitive to Ethnic Group		
	<i>Always / Sometimes</i>	<i>Never</i>
Ethnicity		
Chamorro / Micronesian	24%	76%
Chinese / Taiwanese	20%	81%
Filipino	19%	81%
Indian	30%	70%
Korean	25%	75%
Vietnamese / Montagnard	32%	68%
Other Asian	28%	72%
MultiEthnic Asian	21%	79%
Total	24%	76%
Region		
Northeast	29%	71%
Midwest	27%	73%
South	22%	78%
West	24%	77%
Total	24%	76%
Involvement in API ministry		
Leader - involved in API ministry currently	29%	71%
Laity - not involved in API ministry	21%	79%
Total	24%	76%
Parish Ethnic/Racial Composition		
No one of R's ethnicity at parish	27%	73%
1 thru 79% of R's ethnicity at parish	23%	77%
80% - 100% of R's ethnicity at parish	25%	76%
Total	24%	76%
"Indian" includes those who identified as Knanaya, Syro-Malabar, Syro-Malankara		
"Other Asian" includes Hawaiian, Indonesian, Melanesian/Fijian		

Three in four respondents, however, say that their priest has "never" been insensitive to their group. Some frustration with access to priests was reported by a third of Chamorro / Micronesians, Vietnamese / Montagnard, and smaller API communities.

Asked if they received any particular training in preparation for their ministry to API Catholics, the vast majority of leaders said "no." They may come prepared with instruction in theology, pastoral care, multiculturalism, or other broadly applicable Catholic knowledge, but generally nothing specific to Asian or Pacific Island communities. Most report learning on and through their experiences in the role. An absence of training may lead to tensions with leaders. One Chinese leader relayed, for example, that "Our pastor will speak only to official Chinese and

do not care to learn our accents, not even on a conversational level” (LI001). Another multicultural director shares concern regarding some less-prepared pastors:

He’s a new pastor who does things differently and we’ve had those kinds of pastors. They mean well, but we need to find out why is it they have a different notion of integration because there’s some of them. And actually I’ve heard some of them say, “Well you chose to be in America. You have to behave like Americans.” (LI024)

She adds, however, that “There are fewer of those comments now, so I think we’re growing as a church. And I would say also that information that we get from USCCB is very important because we bring that back to our local communities and our dioceses. Like, for instance, in their cultural competence they’ve been working on as one of their last projects – those things. And clarifying stuff. There’s so much to talk about in terms of integration and ministry (LI024).

Ongoing training can be stifled by the lack of resources – a complaint leveled by many leaders in one-on-one leaders. Respondents commonly suggested a central clearinghouse of sorts, perhaps through the USCCB, with a wider set of translated materials sharable across dioceses. Particularly for dioceses with smaller numbers and/or limited financial capacity, this consolidation and sharing could go a long way toward meeting the needs of geographically dispersed API populations in the U.S.

All too often, API Catholics we spoke with suggested that they felt their parishes and dioceses did not hear them or even know they existed.

From statements such as, “We are sometimes the forgotten group” (FG001) to “We have no voice” (FG003), many people suggested that they felt that their concerns and needs were not recognized by those in positions of authority within the Church. Scores of survey respondents commented on the need for recognition (“My parish tends to focus almost exclusively on the Hispanics to the exclusion of everyone else”). Some feel that changing current ministries is less of a priority than simple acknowledgement: “I’m not sure ‘improvement’ or ‘creation’ is the way to go. Rather, ‘inclusion’ of Asian Catholics into mainstream life would be most appreciated.” Another observed that “I honestly have never encountered a ministry that serves Asian and Pacific Island Catholics, so promotion or simply creation of more would be beneficial.”

Some respondents explain API invisibility by pointing out that Asians and Pacific Island people tend to be quiet and reserved. One commented that “Asians are generally unassertive, which is often mistaken to be reserved.” A bishop assesses that “Very often, especially Asians have a kind of hierarchical notion and respect and they can be very sentimental to and so they won’t necessarily speak up. They have their opinions, but they won’t necessarily express them unless you ask” (LI003).

If this is the case, however, it points to a larger problem where more issue and concerns may not be getting expressed by these communities. “I think there’s a general sense that Asians are really quiet and meek, and if there is a problem, we’re not going to speak up. So to the extent that that’s true, you’re right. We do need to galvanize and speak up as to...” (FG003). However,

this struggle to be heard is not just an issue between Asian and Pacific Island communities and non-Asian and Pacific Island Church leadership but something that many second generation members described as problematic in their own communities and parishes.

Despite these persistent messages of invisibility among API Catholics we spoke with, most report feeling welcome in their diocese. Filipinos and Vietnamese are even a bit more likely to “somewhat” or “strongly” agree that they feel welcome in the diocese. Table 38 lists these responses.

Table 38

Felt Welcome in Diocese		
	<i>Strongly / Somewhat agree</i>	<i>Disagree/ DK</i>
Ethnicity		
Chamorro / Micronesian	74%	26%
Chinese / Taiwanese	76%	24%
Filipino	85%	15%
Indian	69%	31%
Korean	69%	31%
Vietnamese / Montagnard	80%	20%
Other Asian	74%	26%
MultiEthnic Asian	75%	26%
Total	78%	22%
Region		
Northeast	71%	29%
Midwest	74%	26%
South	80%	20%
West	79%	21%
Total	77%	23%
Involvement in API ministry		
Leader - involved in API ministry currently	83%	17%
Laity - not involved in API ministry	75%	25%
Total	78%	22%
Parish Ethnic/Racial Composition		
No one of R's ethnicity at parish	74%	26%
1 thru 79% of R's ethnicity at parish	80%	20%
80% - 100% of R's ethnicity at parish	73%	27%
Total	78%	22%

“Indian” includes those who identified as Knanaya, Syro-Malabar, Syro-Malankara

“Other Asian” includes Hawaiian, Indonesian, Melanesian/Fijian

Asian and Pacific Island communities we spoke with in focus groups stated that their ideal leadership was more diverse, more sensitive to their needs and capable of strong leadership with good management skills. “We need our voices and our concerns need to be heard at a higher

level like the USCCB and Diocese levels, and that would be a good start. That would be a good start because we have so many issues..." (FG009 Burmese). A Hmong leader shares in an interview his view:

I think we need somebody on the top to learn Hmong way of life and so they can help them more deeply, understand a little to be Hmong, but be Catholic. Otherwise, misunderstanding on things that Hmong are just a social – the top leaders would say that it's paganism. So that's many, some misunderstanding and their decision that are made by the top leaders. Like, we don't feel well-informed – with them being well-informed. I think we need somebody to learn Hmong culture (LI038).

Several others make similar arguments in the survey, writing things such as "[API Catholics] need to have their own priest, sister, and minister who know their language and understand them." More than four in ten respondents disagree that they have a role in decision making in their parish; a quarter "strongly agree" that they do.

Many believe that it was only majority in parishes and archdiocese that get heard. As one person explained, "There's some kind of tendency to the majority you know to be – let the minority tendency to forget." Continuing, they explained, "I wanted to work on that demographic information as part of this whole process, right, recording that back and having a true picture of the church, but at the same time, they're not letting the numbers dictate what you do. You have to pay attention to each individual group and to see what they need, utilizing their own local leadership and then also directing the Diocese itself to do the follow-up because in some places, there isn't an office for the ethnic group and in other places, there is but even if there is, then the other offices are hands off, and only this little place start to help all the you know and I don't mean... But I think a lot of times we don't integrate the mission into all the offices. We only say okay, there's an office [], and they handle this. There's an office for school, instead of all the offices working together to serve all the people within the Asian community. So we continue to have that sort of separate mentality, instead of a common vision" (FG008).

Sixteen percent of API Catholics disagree that they are well-integrated into the dioceses (see Table 39). This is not a majority, but stories of exclusion, invisibility, or even erasure do emerge as a common undercurrent to personal stories shared.

The concern that Asian and Pacific Island communities have with leadership is not just with the number of ethnic priest serving them, but all levels of diversity within the Church. Explaining this, one Vietnamese individual we spoke with stated, "Yeah, I think at the archdiocese level, I don't think it's just specific to Vietnamese only but multiculturally how do you identify the richness and uniqueness of each ethnic group and also to try to integrate that within the culture and how to make the best of both worlds. I think it's not just the Vietnamese that's having a challenge but the Hispanics and Filipinos and other ethnic groups are. I don't think, and maybe I'm not aware of, maybe the archdiocese should have a multicultural enrichment group, different cultures, so then they identify the challenges of each group, and I'm sure it's common themes, language, culture, the culture will be different, the language will be different but I think the overall theme and the challenges are pretty much the same across all culture groups" (FG007 Vietnamese). Online, one person suggested "The local Ordinary must actively participate in API activities, and intentionally encourage ministers as well as lay people from various API to work together ... to collaborate with the diocesan offices, etc."

The call for diversity and multicultural offices was present in nearly all communities we spoke with in focus groups. It was a particularly contentious issues with those we interviewed in Chicago where word had just spread that the Asian and Pacific Island Office was about to close for financial reasons despite the Hispanic Office remaining open. “What I’d like to propose is to continue the existence of the Office for Asian Catholics. That way we can assure that Asians, okay, will have full representation in the archdiocese. And the way I see it, okay, somebody mentioned to me about closing the office because of financial reasons. What I don’t understand is you know, why I think about last month or so, a new office for the Spanish group has been created. Okay, so why, why abolish the Asians?” (FG005).

Table 39

Agreement on API Being Well Integrated into Diocese					
	<i>Strongly agree</i>	<i>Somewhat agree</i>	<i>Somewhat disagree</i>	<i>Strongly disagree</i>	DK
Ethnicity					
Chamorro / Micronesian	42%	37%	5%	3%	13%
Chinese / Taiwanese	27%	41%	8%	8%	17%
Filipino	49%	33%	7%	3%	8%
Indian	35%	26%	9%	15%	14%
Korean	28%	29%	17%	7%	20%
Vietnamese / Montagnard	43%	33%	10%	5%	9%
Other Asian	39%	25%	10%	9%	18%
MultiEthnic Asian	35%	25%	19%	4%	17%
Total	39%	32%	10%	6%	13%
Region					
Northeast	35%	32%	10%	7%	15%
Midwest	30%	25%	15%	13%	17%
South	40%	33%	9%	5%	12%
West	43%	34%	9%	4%	11%
Total	39%	32%	10%	6%	13%
Involvement in API ministry					
Leader - involved in API ministry currently	41%	35%	12%	6%	6%
Laity - not involved in API ministry	39%	30%	8%	7%	16%
Total	39%	32%	10%	6%	12%
Parish Ethnic/Racial Composition					
No one of R's ethnicity at parish	33%	29%	12%	5%	22%
1 thru 79% of R's ethnicity at parish	41%	34%	9%	5%	12%
80% - 100% of R's ethnicity at parish	38%	28%	12%	10%	12%
Total	39%	32%	10%	6%	13%

“Indian” includes those who identified as Knanaya, Syro-Malabar, Syro-Malankara

“Other Asian” includes Hawaiian, Indonesian, Melanesian/Fijian

For some, these problems and a lack of diversity were rooted at the archdiocese level. For others, it was seen as a more universal problem. “I don’t have any issue with our diocese at all. I think the bigger issue is at the highest levels of the church hierarchy, I don’t think the leadership reflects where the Catholics are in the world. Still I think the leadership should reflect the population of the Catholics, and the fastest growth is in African, in Latin America, in Asia. That’s just not being reflected” (FG001).

Despite advocacy from within, few Bishops reflect API heritage. One bishop shares candidly that “I personally – and this is my conviction – the leadership of the USCCB have not recognized this, or the bishops themselves in their provinces, have not seen this as a need.” Another leader spoke with similar conviction to say that “We need more leadership, Korean American leadership in the church. We need Korean bishops. That’s all. That’s very important because Korean Americans, Asians Catholic population is a pretty good size in the US but we only have few bishops which, proportionally, it’s just not there. And the last Asian bishop appointed was many, many years ago. So, I think it’s a matter of justice” (LI006).

API Catholics appear to agree, with just 16 percent “very satisfied” with the Catholic Church’s promotion of Asian and Pacific Island bishops (see table 40 on the next page). More than four in ten are at least “somewhat” satisfied. Written comments echo the urgency of greater API representation among bishops. One person summarized that “There should be more Asian bishops chosen from the enormous pool of good and talented priests. Asian Americans should be represented in diocesan leadership and parish leadership.”

At the same time, many we spoke with suggested that a lack of diversity was only one part of the problem. “So it all comes down, like I mentioned earlier, the formation of becoming a priest now is not only more just to teach, preach, but also be a management leader, you know, it’s a lot more involved nowadays in order to run, you know, a corporation, a little corporation, it’s a lot more now than just only be able to preach well or teach well or you have to also be able to match well leadership skills, social skills, a lot more involved in the information so that’s something that our leader in the church now has to take into consideration, so it’s more like just only learning what the bible and then preach now but also really living their real life” (FG007 Vietnamese).

Across these responses, Asian and Pacific Islanders suggested that it was their responsibility to raise leaders within their own communities to help educate those who were not in their communities or ill-educated about their traditions. As one Burmese individual explained it, “We need to groom people, leaders from the same community to train these community leaders to rebuild and to help communities” (FG009 Burmese). Likewise, they see their own involvement as a major way to raise cultural sensitivity and more equitable representation across their archdioceses. “It’s also – it’s very important that we have – establish more cultural sensitivity to all groups. ...I think you know for me, I serve on the parish side, by the council. I think some other way that you can voice your opinions, share information and work together with other parish council. I think that’s a big multiethnic community group represented in one group to have leadership representative. I think that’s like a really – it also has to do with how the pastor using the advisor council. Sometimes if the pastor devalue the idea, the creation, the directions of [] that mean that’s meant to – if the pastor really value the idea, that the directions and how could it bring the parish to a different direction in a more positive light. Then it would help you know more of the parish along in a different light.” (FG008).

Table 40

How Satisfied Are You With the Catholic Church: Promoting Asian and Pacific Island Bishops					
	<i>Very Satisfied</i>	<i>Somewhat Satisfied</i>	<i>Only a Little Satisfied</i>	<i>Not At All Satisfied</i>	<i>No Opinion</i>
Ethnicity					
Chamorro / Micronesian	5%	31%	26%	3%	36%
Chinese / Taiwanese	10%	22%	21%	12%	35%
Filipino	17%	26%	18%	12%	26%
Indian	17%	32%	17%	7%	27%
Korean	11%	20%	12%	14%	44%
Vietnamese / Montagnard	17%	34%	22%	7%	20%
Other Asian	25%	27%	11%	10%	27%
MultiEthnic Asian	12%	26%	21%	16%	26%
Total	16%	27%	18%	11%	29%
Region					
Northeast	19%	27%	17%	13%	24%
Midwest	18%	30%	18%	11%	23%
South	16%	26%	20%	7%	30%
West	14%	26%	18%	11%	31%
Total	16%	27%	18%	10%	29%
Involvement in API ministry					
Leader - involved in API ministry currently	18%	29%	22%	12%	20%
Laity - not involved in API ministry	15%	26%	16%	10%	34%
Total	16%	27%	18%	11%	29%
Parish Ethnic/Racial Composition					
No one of R's ethnicity at parish	16%	23%	8%	13%	41%
1 thru 79% of R's ethnicity at parish	15%	28%	19%	11%	27%
80% - 100% of R's ethnicity at parish	17%	26%	22%	10%	25%
Total	16%	27%	18%	11%	29%

"Indian" includes those who identified as Knanaya, Syro-Malabar, Syro-Malankara

"Other Asian" includes Hawaiian, Indonesian, Melanesian/Fijian

API Catholics describe numerous efforts to reach out, identify, and build grassroots leadership from within their own communities. Some respondents reflected an over-reliance upon priests or other religious to carry out needed ministries. This adds a strain on resources, particularly when no priest or religious are available, when a priest is asked to do too much, or when a priest ministers to multiple communities. One Filipino diocesan leader describes the challenge of API laity first having to navigate stereotypes of API Catholics as secondary, rather than in the lead:

That they're secondary; that generally they're amiable people but not really capable of leadership. That, you know, either they do fine ministry but the only thing that they really want to do is send money back to the Philippines because they know that the United States pays well. A lot of dioceses do. So it's trying to calm that, that general kind of

mentality. Because of maybe some small experiences, some bishops have been burned by that. That they have gotten priests that that really was their only concern but didn't really have any intention to stay in the dioceses or give themselves to the people. So, I think that's part of it. (LI032).

A quarter of API respondents say that they have served on a parish council; nine percent indicate having served on a finance council. One in six API Catholics are “very satisfied” with the Catholic Church’s efforts to promote vocations among Asian and Pacific Island Americans (see Table 41).

Table 41

How Satisfied Are You With the Catholic Church: Targeting Vocations among Asian and Pacific Island Americans					
	<i>Very Satisfied</i>	<i>Somewhat Satisfied</i>	<i>Only a Little Satisfied</i>	<i>Not At All Satisfied</i>	<i>No Opinion</i>
Ethnicity					
Chamorro / Micronesian	8%	21%	31%	8%	33%
Chinese / Taiwanese	10%	27%	21%	11%	31%
Filipino	17%	29%	20%	11%	22%
Indian	20%	28%	22%	7%	24%
Korean	13%	23%	13%	13%	39%
Vietnamese / Montagnard	24%	38%	16%	4%	18%
Other Asian	25%	30%	14%	9%	23%
MultiEthnic Asian	11%	30%	22%	9%	28%
Total	17%	30%	19%	9%	25%
Region					
Northeast	17%	35%	21%	7%	21%
Midwest	18%	30%	20%	11%	22%
South	17%	30%	20%	8%	25%
West	18%	28%	17%	9%	28%
Total	17%	30%	19%	9%	25%
Involvement in API ministry					
Leader - involved in API ministry currently	19%	34%	23%	9%	15%
Laity - not involved in API ministry	16%	26%	17%	10%	31%
Total	17%	29%	19%	9%	25%
Parish Ethnic/Racial Composition					
No one of R's ethnicity at parish	18%	24%	13%	9%	38%
1 thru 79% of R's ethnicity at parish	16%	32%	20%	9%	23%
80% - 100% of R's ethnicity at parish	18%	27%	21%	11%	23%
Total	17%	30%	19%	9%	25%

“Indian” includes those who identified as Knanaya, Syro-Malabar, Syro-Malankara

“Other Asian” includes Hawaiian, Indonesian, Melanesian/Fijian

One Korean leader emphasizes the imperative of cultivating leadership among second and third generations of API Catholics, saying that “I want to bring, also, more the younger generation leadership here because, before I came the older first generation people pretty much had power here. When I came here I changed that because, there are more second, third generation people coming up and we need to include them in the community. So, it was like a subgroup within a group.” But successfully acquiring leadership positions may have mixed results, however, as one second generation Chinese youth minister explains:

“So prime example, they’ve been trying to recruit me to join this parish council... So finally I gave in. I said yes because I mean yes, I want to serve my parish community, but at the same time, I thought that this would be a good avenue for me to have somewhat of a direct influence as a voice for our youth because I’m one of the youth ministers on our core team. So in that sense, I feel like we’ve made good headway. We’ve made really good progress because I mean I’m going to speak and I’m going to be heard, okay, so one way or another I’m going you know so it’s... (FG012).

When we asked her how her insistence to be heard was received in her parish, she stated:

“By the pastor, really well... Okay, I mean he has shown overwhelming support for us, and he’s always had a love for youth which we are so blessed to have because without that advocacy, you know I mean we would not get anywhere but for other people, I mean they’ll just say – so I got to this point which is fantastic so it’s – I’m kind of being sent mixed signals because they were very adamant to get me on the council and in a leadership position, but as soon as I have an idea to offer to maybe make something more efficient or make something – just bring some – about some kind of change that is you know for the benefit of everybody, they say, “We’ll table that. We’ll talk about it in the next meeting.” I got the hand a lot. “We’ll table this. Talk about it later” (FG011 2nd generation Chinese).

Whether the issue is cultural, generational, administrative or both, leadership ranked as the second most pressing challenge to the communities we spoke to in focus groups, second only to generational issues.

Challenges

Most of the Asian and Pacific Island communities we spoke with stated that they lacked the resources they needed to live their faith to the fullest. From a desire to see a greater presence for their community online (FG010) or more bilingual materials (FG001) to physical aid for those in need within their community (FG009), the people we spoke with expressed a myriad of needs and wants to better serve their communities and grow their faith. However, beyond simply expressing a laundry list of everything under the sun, they grounded their discussions in a host of real, and in some cases dire challenges facing their communities.

Greatest among these concerns was maintaining their faith and cultural expressions of Catholicism across generations. Many first-generation Asian and Pacific Island community members, for example, stated that they were concerned that their children, the second generation, did not truly understand their heritage and where their parents came from or what they went through to get to the United States. As one Filipino we spoke with explained, “our children were born here, and that is a big challenge right now. Because our children have no idea what we went through...” (FG006 Filipino). Likewise, an Indian we spoke with stated, “...my personal experience is that I’ve been in this country 16 years, and what I have seen many people you know the first generation, they say you know back home we did this and we did that and it was like this. Now look at our children and when I have questioned them about it, the truth of the matter is that they have got Americanized. They have slowly changed some of their ways” (FG013 Indian).

However, as one individual we spoke with explained, this is not just a problem for Asians and members of Pacific communities but all immigrants. “I see that really with any immigrant group. I see that with the Hispanic ministry, and I see that – I’m sure the Filipinos have experienced that also. But just that immigrant experience of assimilation or retaining cultural identity and coming to terms with a generation that just doesn’t...” (FG001).

To be sure, the message about integration and cultural maintenance – or at least cultural separation – was not homogenous across respondents. One priest leading a Chinese mission, for example, echoes the sentiment that mainstreamed Americanization is the goal for future generations of API Catholics:

If you have anything to say it is for the first, maybe the second generations, we try to meet their needs because they are casting that mold in the past. But with the younger generations, encourage them to get on the mainstream of the American, younger generation. Don’t have a separate program for them. Why do you want to perpetuate the Chinese way of doing things in the United States? If they are like Chinese so much, go back to China. If you like Vietnamese so much, go back to Vietnam. You can be really Vietnam. That’s my feelings with the younger generations. Be good Americans. Be good Catholics in the American church, not have a separate church. You have a little bit of flavor of the other place, fine, wonderful ...but I would not say don’t have to separate – establish separate program. Beside they don’t have the human resources to do all that. (LI005)

As his last comment indicates, determining appropriate modes for meeting generational needs may be as much resource-driven as they are philosophically-driven. Another leader in a difference diocese, also leading a Chinese Catholic community struggles with this same issue both in terms of resources and divergent generational needs, saying, “We have our own church. But also we need to consider the second generation. If our own church may jeopardize their faith they may not have chance to communicate with other culture, English away and so, it always struggle for us, which one’s the best. Of course, this multi-cultural setting is good, also. ...The resource will be struggle, too” (LI014).

Learning “American ways,” on the other hand, can generate change and tension within single API communities, one Vietnamese priest describes:

I think the challenge for the first generation is mostly trying to reach out and learn from the American cultures. American cultures, American ways of worship. It is just the differences. I have seen a lot of, maybe sometimes comparisons. Like the way that we worship Mary, the way that American worship Mary. Or worshipping God, actually. Worshipping God or honoring Mary differently. I think the older generation might be somewhat more close minded than the younger generation. Challenging between two cultures, two languages, two ways of life under the same roof, in the same place of worship. That is very challenging. (LI035)

This puts Asian and Pacific Island Catholics in a difficult position, caught between the desire for Americanization and for seamless integration with native Asian cultures.

API Catholics articulate the problem as not just a matter of cultural knowledge or a passing on of tradition, but practice. Many first-generation individuals that we spoke with fear that their children do not value their faith, are no longer active Catholics or worse, have ceased to even identify as Catholics at all. “I think one area of concern that I had in our community is especially the young adults who may be outside the nest of the home, or I’ve had families and friends who are in tears, because their kids are no longer Catholic. They’ve left the faith. They’re not practicing. I think that’s one area of concern. I mean I’m sure it’s happening to the rest of the church mainstream. I know people in our area, that’s something that’s not addressed with the young adults” (FG001). Giving an even more personal example, one Filipino we spoke with explained, “I think it’s an emotion, because my experience right now, my children are now in their 30’s, late 30’s, early 40’s. I’ve got only two. But when they were growing up, we tried our best to inculcate our Catholic faith. Right after their confirmation and their CCD and whatever, said okay. But after college, I notice that they don’t practice faith anymore. And this is the challenge for us immigrants. How can the church help us to make them more aware that faith in life is important and our Catholic faith? That is the challenge right now” (FG006 Filipino).

Agreeing with him, another Filipino we spoke with in the same focus group stated, “I think one problem also is our younger generation, our kids that are living in two cultures. At home, they are Filipinos or Asians or Koreans, or anything. Outside they are Americans, because they have to adjust to the American way of life. So it’s hard for them, because they live in two cultures. If they become like adult 18 years old, there you are. You cannot control them anymore, because they follow the American culture of being independent. They don’t believe the parents

anymore. We are old fashioned. “That’s your country. Your country is your country,” so it’s really hard” (FG006 Filipino). Leaders confirmed this tension, seeing high levels of participation among the first generation but far less involvement among the second.

Every community we spoke to expressed high concern for their youth and subsequent generations. Close to all of the in-pew respondents (93 percent) agree that their parish should be more involved in welcoming young adult parishioners. From the Chinese and Filipinos to Koreans and Indians, to name a few, all suggested that this was perhaps the biggest challenge facing their communities. It is an immediate and pressing concern. Yet, they do not see the issue as just a matter of the youth becoming non-religious but also a fear of them switching religions. “We can’t just wait for them to eventually come back. A lot of them do, you know, maybe somebody is ill. They have some sort of disaster in the family, they went back to the church, 9/11 happened, church attendance goes up. But we can’t wait for that. We have to be a little bit proactive or more proactive in that respect... those of us who have made a living in the United States for a while need to reach out. Otherwise, the Catholic, the Chinese protestant groups welcome them in, so then they start to go to their church. So we have lost maybe half the population” (FG010 Chinese).

In some smaller communities, such as the Burmese, the issue appeared to be even more daunting given their refugee status. “They come from the camp. They know nothing. They just – they were baptized with their parents Catholic so they become Catholic, but they know nothing. So we need to teach them, too... I think for the Burmese youth, I think Burmese, young Burmese people feel the same challenges as American kids, Catholic American kids feel, their challenges that they can be faced with, but in addition to it, because the Burmese families are young or they’re new to the American culture... So that’s an added burden on them as well. So they are easier to be persuaded to another you know, to you know walk away from church, and that is the biggest challenge that Burmese parents are facing. They feel the same. They have the same issues that the American family has... But in addition to that, because of they are new to this culture, that makes it even harder for them” (FG009 Burmese).

Many express the situation as dire. As one Filipino we spoke with explained, “We going to die if we don’t do something about the young adults. We got to do something about the young adults. We’re gonna die... Because basically what we are, the generations that are here, you know, I mean, that’s it. We’re not going to increase more, the immigrants that are coming, you know, so it’s going to be basically the second generations that if you want to continue the Filipino traditions...” (FG005). Second generation immigrants themselves express this need, as one person wrote in the survey: “I would love to see programs and dialogues that pay attention to the experience of second-generation Americans and young immigrants, those of us who are bridging the generational gaps between our parents’ Catholicism vs. ours”

Just as the challenge of the youth is not unique to Asians and Pacific Island immigrants, neither is it unique to Asian and Pacific Island Catholics. It is, as one Indian pointed out, a problem facing all American Catholics. “That’s a total problem in Catholic Church itself, actually. You know that’s a problem everywhere in struggle to bring by the kids – impart the faith to the kids actually, children. That’s the toughest, toughest problem every parent will be facing, and it’s not an easy task actually... So for that is a problem faced by all Catholic or Christian parents actually you know, imparting their faith” (FG013 Indian). In understanding this broader problem, many also recognize that it is not just an issue for the youth but also for

parents. As one second-generation Chinese youth minister explained to us, “Well, and that’s where our culture comes in because we have – because in order for a youth ministry program to succeed, we need parental support and we need youth investment. When we lack parental support, in that they know this is good for their kids. Like they tell us, “Oh, yeah, we want our kids to go to church. We want them to be you know invested in their faith, blah, blah, blah.” But then when we invite them to come to our social events and our meetings they’ll say, “Oh, you know Shelly can’t come because she has to study for SAT’s, or her grades are a little low you know this week. She needs to stay home” (FG011 2nd generation Chinese).

A pastor of a shared white and Chinese parish suggests that parental encouragement toward economic success may be coming at the expense of faith development:

I think a lot of times parents, they like their Catholic faith and they try to pass it on to the kids, but the kids grew up and made money, get successful. And so sometimes the parents – well, I don’t want to make it sound – there are parents who really want their kids to be Catholic. A lot of times their kids became financially and economically – and education is there – they’re not that concerned with being Catholic. Their kids though, kind of left the faith and they kind of “Well, you know, they went to college, they got a degree from Harvard and Stanford.” So, I think sometimes when they’re pushing just for success, it’s made them want to be proud of the fact that they went to school and got a good job and make money. Church would be great because it’s meaningful. The subtle message is that what I really want to see from you is economical success (LI023).

Along these lines, a Filipino priest says plainly that “the parents have failed to transmit the message” (LI033).

At the same time, others we spoke to explained that parents may not know enough about their faith or have adequate resources to meet the challenge of faith retention among the youth. “Now that these my Filipino friends and their families are here, a lot of them are not catechized, because they do and just follow everything going on in the Philippines. And there’s this whole group of people community to remind you its Ash Wednesday. It’s Holy Week. We do the Stations of the Cross. We go to the devotions. So the challenge here is they don’t know the catechesis behind these motions and rituals in our sacraments. So in passing on the faith to the young people, they don’t necessarily have the catechesis, and then what happens is also the parents, because they forget that there is not that majority positive pressure to move and continue their children practicing the faith around them” (FG001). Explaining much the same sentiment, a Burmese individual we spoke with stated, “Because right now they are – some of the adults, the Catholic, the way they’re explaining is almost like we have no base and believe in Catholic, they are believing they are having blind faith in them but it will be better – even better if you understand Catholicism in a bit more de – you know in more depth. So that like the way they explain it like you know they go to communion. They don’t know why they’re taking communion. It’s just a tradition that they are doing it” (FG009).

Although most Asian and Pacific Island communities we spoke with stated their parishes have youth and adult CCD programs and Bible studies, these resources do not appear to be enough according to them. Seventy-three percent of in-pew respondents are at least somewhat interested in whole family catechesis and small faith communities. A Korean individual we spoke with explained, “So most of our population is towards about 50 to 78 old. So, we are

concerned. In order to get those young people, that's why we had ideas about making them the Korean school in those age groups to get involved" (FG003). These efforts have helped according to those we met with but a large part of the problem is resources and language. "So I could say one thing in the future about my young Catholic, current Catholic, especially Catholic – young Korean Catholic youth. They will be changing in culture in America because we cannot teach them in – about the Catholic in English" (FG008).

In many cases, the first generation of these communities do not understand the English Mass but their second generation speak English and not their parents' language. This makes it difficult for them to teach each other and communicate meaningfully (see FG003). Leaders' describe this as a source of disconnect within parishes and API Catholic communities. In other cases, communities simply need more resources to accomplish their programs, as a Laotian Catholic explains:

I would say in terms of a generation gap, I see that as the leaders in the Laotian Catholic, I also encountered a challenge to how could I really you know helping the children or younger really you know, really pick up Lao, right but at the same time, we don't have the resources. We don't have the class. Even though we have the space and resource, do we have the manpower to really maintain that? That's always you know because you're – for example, my time or the resource time is stretched to too many directions, work you know and church. So I think one is the language, maintain your own language... They can speak but they cannot write or they cannot read. So that's one issue. Also how could we really engage them into their presence attending, engage them in terms of if you – like him, even since – to high school to college he's been kind of a lay minister serving the priest, really you know involved with the process. How could we engage other youth, other older adults who also work weekends, I mean really engage them in to the process? I think that's also a challenge that I have and truly have piled into liturgy or you know making sure we also have language that really touch them, so that we engage them to be interested in engaging in the parish activity or in Mass" (FG008 Laotian).

In addition to finding the resources needed to accomplish these programs and bridge the growing gap between generations both linguistically and in terms of Catechesis, most of the Asian and Pacific Island communities we spoke with stated that they needed more ethnic priests and nuns to evangelize and serve their communities (see FG001; FG006; FG0012). One person commented in the survey that "A permanent priest is a desperately in need or we may not be able to survive, and subsequently, we will not be able to help out the new Chinese Catholics arrivals who cannot speak English well at all (some older ones never can), nor able to evangelize. This is how our Church is set up, a priest to celebrate Mass and to teach. Can't do it the other way round."

However, API Catholics do not just want any ethnic priest, but someone inspirational. This is especially true in mixed or multi-racial and ethnic parishes. "[The] priest has to be dynamic, has to come up with it and follow that program. If one parish can do it, then the other parish goes slack because that priest is not motivated, all for any other reason that should not [happen]..." (FG013 Indian). Continuing, the Indians we spoke with explained that they had bad experiences with their own ethnic priest in the past. Highlighting this, one person explained that if the new priest is not dynamic or fluent in English, people will leave. "I mean Father's English was perfect when he wrote in the magazine, but when he spoke and second of all, he was not an

orator by any standards but he loved hearing his voice and the Mass went on for one and a half hour. What youth want to come for Mass and sit there for one and a half hour? (FG013 Indian). According to this focus group, their parish lost three-quarters of their parishioners as a result of this problem.

Those in mixed or multi-racial and ethnic parishes also stated that they wanted more Masses offered in their native languages and greater acceptance and support for their various ethnic and cultural celebrations and practices. Some Indonesians described driving hours for adult formation and to receive sacraments. One Filipino we spoke with explained, “So I brought this idea to one church that was dying and wanted to have a Filipino Mass there or just maybe once a month or start having some other ethnic Masses in there, and they pretty much – and it’s so interesting that the person who is in a leadership role for that church decided that it’s – well, it’s pretty – she pretty much called and said that my idea was not a good idea and the church is still dying, but you can see that having a religious changes community will help and make the transition to grow but many people can’t see that...” (FG008 Filipino).

In some cases, people in these multi-racial and ethnic parishes want their own parishes. Agreeing with this sentiment, another Asian and Pacific Island individual we spoke with stated, “I think ethnic-centric parishes are so important, because if an immigrant doesn’t feel welcome in a church, they’re going to stop going. There’s no support structure here if they’re by themselves and new in this country to encourage them to continue going to Mass when they don’t understand anything” (FG003). And yet another person we spoke with requested, “If there is a Catholic – Filipino Catholic Church that can be built, that will be very helpful like in my own opinion. That will be very helpful” (FG004 Filipino). The desire for dedicated spaces is fueled also by distinctive needs of many first generation immigrants. One Korean pastor assesses that:

Because of their immigrant, they don’t have a good, they sometimes feel like they don’t belong here and because of the immigrant reality. Now it has changed a lot because many of them are settled, you know. But the immigrants go through a lot more. There’s a stress level. They have to work harder to achieve certain things. They had to give up a lot. So, that creates a lot of issues; family issues, marriage issues, parents, children, relationship, communication issues. So, those are challenges we have. Also, you have to do everything in bilingual all the time. So it’s kind of double work. (LI006)

A Filipino priest adds that some API Catholics’ transnational connections mean that they are working for not only themselves but for the betterment of their families abroad:

Younger Filipinos who are here – they’re still trying to establish themselves, better their lives, and better the lives of their family back home in the Philippines. They’re actually working for two or three families. Their own family, the family of their parents, and the spouse’s parents. So they’re really improving the lives of three families. So sometimes, time is really a luxury for many. It’s not something that they always have on their hands. (LI011)

While many we spoke with who did not feel they needed to establish ethnic parishes or those who did not explicitly ask for their own church, they did want greater representation within their parishes and archdiocese. One person suggested in the survey that challenges are best heard

through a listening process: “It will be helpful for particular local churches (a diocese of parish) to have a consultation with key pastoral leaders from among Asian and Pacific Islanders, to see what are the existing ministries or possibility for new ministry to better serve Asian and Pacific Island Catholics.” API Catholics want their collective voice to be heard and their needs and concerns acted on by a more sensitive leadership.

Beyond generational concerns, welcoming parishes, and understanding leaders, API Catholics also report needs that stem from the essentials of day-to-day life. Respondents wrote of myriad challenges related to language, integration, communication, discrimination, lack of support, cost of living, and professional development. Leaders spoke of health issues, housing issues, immigration challenges, and concerns surrounding human trafficking. Providing support for the poor and marginalized was identified as an area of needed additional support by nine in ten in-pew respondents, along with support for low-income families.

If API Catholics have received assistance for these and other social concerns, this is typically found outside the Catholic Church. Table 42 identifies the prevalence and source of assistance with a variety of issues.

Table 42

Assistance for Social Issues Inside and Outside the Catholic Church			
	<i>Assisted through the Catholic Church</i>	<i>Assisted, but not through the Church</i>	<i>Have not received assistance with this</i>
Has respondent received assistance for...			
Aid Upon Arrival	11%	13%	76%
Immigration Paper Work	10%	15%	75%
Health Care Access	9%	18%	73%
Emergency Aid	8%	10%	82%
Food Assistance	8%	9%	82%
Employment	7%	14%	80%
Housing	6%	12%	83%
Financial Aid	4%	12%	85%
Legal Aid	3%	11%	86%
Child Care	3%	9%	88%
In Abuse Situations	3%	6%	91%

“Indian” includes those who identified as Knanaya, Syro-Malabar, Syro-Malankara

“Other Asian” includes Hawaiian, Indonesian, Melanesian/Fijian

Aid related to arrival to the United States and immigration paperwork are the most common social needs met via the Catholic Church, though a slightly higher percentage of API Catholics seek help for these items outside the Church. Health care access is the most common area of assistance sought by respondents, but twice as many API Catholics go to non-Church sources as for Church sources to meet this need.

Eighty-two percent of parishioners responding to the in-pew survey agree at least “somewhat” that their parish should be more involved in providing assistance to immigrants. Vietnamese respondents and those who responded to the survey in a non-English language were most likely to “strongly” agree with the statement; U.S. born respondents and those in Filipino parishes were least likely to strongly agree with the need for greater involvement on this front. Most parishioners (83 percent) also agree at least “somewhat” that their parish should be more involved in providing pastoral care for refugees.

Considering broader areas of social justice, API Catholics indicate a fair amount of satisfaction with the Catholic Church’s support of issues like affirmative action, calling attention to problems in Asia and the Pacific Islands, and promoting racial integration in the Church (see Tables 43 through 45). That said, between a quarter and a third of respondents say that they are “only a little” or “not at all” satisfied with the Church’s efforts on these fronts.

Table 43

How Satisfied Are You With the Catholic Church: Supporting Issues like Affirmative Action					
	<i>Very Satisfied</i>	<i>Somewhat Satisfied</i>	<i>Only a Little Satisfied</i>	<i>Not At All Satisfied</i>	<i>No Opinion</i>
Ethnicity					
Chamorro / Micronesian	5%	26%	26%	3%	40%
Chinese / Taiwanese	10%	21%	22%	6%	41%
Filipino	15%	32%	15%	8%	30%
Indian	19%	25%	18%	4%	34%
Korean	8%	22%	11%	10%	49%
Vietnamese / Montagnard	16%	36%	18%	3%	27%
Other Asian	21%	31%	14%	3%	31%
MultiEthnic Asian	14%	29%	17%	9%	31%
Total	14%	29%	17%	6%	34%
Region					
Northeast	16%	29%	16%	7%	32%
Midwest	18%	31%	17%	6%	28%
South	14%	28%	17%	5%	36%
West	13%	28%	18%	7%	35%
Total	14%	29%	17%	6%	34%
Involvement in API ministry					
Leader - involved in API ministry currently	14%	33%	20%	6%	26%
Laity - not involved in API ministry	14%	26%	15%	6%	38%
Total	14%	29%	17%	6%	34%

“Indian” includes those who identified as Knanaya, Syro-Malabar, Syro-Malankara

“Other Asian” includes Hawaiian, Indonesian, Melanesian/Fijian

Most online respondents see room for more attention to problems in Asia and the Pacific Islands, as shown in Table 44. Three-quarters of respondents to the in-pew survey, moreover, agree at least somewhat that they would like more opportunities in their parish to provide help in other countries.

Table 44

How Satisfied Are You With the Catholic Church: Calling Attention to Problems in Asia and the Pacific Islands					
	<i>Very Satisfied</i>	<i>Somewhat Satisfied</i>	<i>Only a Little Satisfied</i>	<i>Not At All Satisfied</i>	<i>No Opinion</i>
Ethnicity					
Chamorro / Micronesian	5%	26%	24%	8%	37%
Chinese / Taiwanese	9%	21%	27%	14%	29%
Filipino	17%	31%	21%	13%	18%
Indian	16%	32%	18%	11%	23%
Korean	11%	23%	17%	9%	40%
Vietnamese / Montagnard	16%	34%	23%	11%	17%
Other Asian	26%	25%	16%	10%	23%
MultiEthnic Asian	14%	32%	19%	13%	21%
Total	15%	29%	21%	12%	23%
Region					
Northeast	17%	31%	19%	14%	20%
Midwest	16%	30%	20%	15%	19%
South	16%	26%	23%	10%	25%
West	14%	29%	22%	11%	25%
Total	15%	28%	21%	12%	24%
Involvement in API ministry					
Leader - involved in API ministry currently	14%	34%	24%	12%	16%
Laity - not involved in API ministry	16%	26%	19%	12%	28%
Total	15%	29%	21%	12%	24%

“Indian” includes those who identified as Knanaya, Syro-Malabar, Syro-Malankara

“Other Asian” includes Hawaiian, Indonesian, Melanesian/Fijian

Table 45

How Satisfied Are You With the Catholic Church: Promoting Racial Integration in the Church					
	<i>Very Satisfied</i>	<i>Somewhat Satisfied</i>	<i>Only a Little Satisfied</i>	<i>Not At All Satisfied</i>	<i>No Opinion</i>
Ethnicity					
Chamorro / Micronesian	13%	23%	18%	10%	36%
Chinese / Taiwanese	14%	28%	20%	11%	27%
Filipino	23%	31%	21%	7%	17%
Indian	20%	32%	16%	11%	21%
Korean	11%	18%	20%	13%	38%
Vietnamese / Montagnard	17%	38%	23%	5%	17%
Other Asian	28%	33%	13%	7%	19%
MultiEthnic Asian	12%	37%	19%	11%	20%
Total	19%	31%	20%	9%	22%
Region					
Northeast	18%	35%	17%	12%	17%
Midwest	19%	32%	21%	12%	16%
South	19%	31%	21%	5%	23%
West	18%	29%	19%	9%	26%
Total	19%	31%	20%	9%	22%
Involvement in API ministry					
Leader - involved in API ministry currently	20%	33%	25%	7%	15%
Laity - not involved in API ministry	18%	30%	17%	10%	26%
Total	19%	31%	20%	9%	22%

“Indian” includes those who identified as Knanaya, Syro-Malabar, Syro-Malankara

“Other Asian” includes Hawaiian, Indonesian, Melanesian/Fijian

Future

I find it very important to appreciate the fact that they're holding on to their faith in their new environment, and that they want to be part of the Church. They bring a great contribution, a spirituality to the church – and I think it's important to recognize that. It's very important to recognize that they're not a problem to be dealt with, but more of a contribution, and to incorporate them into the life of the parish that will bring something new, a new blood, a new life to the parish. So I think that's an important thing. I find a vibrancy, generally, within the community. They bring a lot of gifts and a lot of – overall a sense of joy and possibility. So I think that's, because to a great extent, they're not visible. There's a lot that's missed out, in terms of incorporating into the life of the Church. (LI004)

Despite the challenges Asian and Pacific Islanders have outlined, both within and outside their communities, most see their future as very bright. They are very concerned about their youth and subsequent generations but believe their faith will carry them through and God will provide the resources needed to inspire them and keep them in the Church. Although they see a need for greater diversity and more sensitive leadership, they also increasingly understand that their numbers are growing, both in the pew and the priesthood, and that collectively they represent an important part of the ongoing growth of the Catholic Church. They see themselves as the future of the Church, not out of dominance, but as an important part of a diverse Catholicism that is not near as beautiful without them.

An Indonesian we spoke with summarized this sentiment:

As the world becomes globalized, I think us Americans need to learn different cultures, that outside of United States is different and the fact that this country is built with a dream, but as immigrant countries that will embrace people from many different cultures and so if we can – I make a minimum metaphor of the faiths. Look at the flowers. What we bring ourselves is adjustment. A little flower that's white in color, smell good and that, but we don't want to make all the bouquet becomes all look alike. We let whatever culture that bring to that bouquet to become a nice arrangement of flowers, and yet here we don't want to become rose. We want to become still just adjustment but we can live together with others to make nicer and more beautiful (FG012 Indonesian).

Leaders likewise express a similar optimism for the future of API Catholics in the U.S. and U.S. Catholicism with API Catholics. The Catholic Church is doing many good things to encourage, incorporate, and empower API Catholics, evidenced by this priest's assessment of church growth:

And I don't think all those Filipino families that come over, I don't see them immediately abandoning their Catholicism particular with the good things that the church here is doing. Its dynamics, it's alive, I think it be different if they went up to the northeast to some of the other places where it's really struggling. Here we can't open churches fast enough. ...I don't see the Catholic community dropping off.

Another Filipino priest looks to the younger people in parishes as an indicator of a bright future:

I think the future looks good, looks bright. I see a lot of young people here in parishes. They are really well grounded in their faith and they have a lot of ideas. They just need to be heard. That's why I want them to embrace that leadership role. So that they can be heard. And I think it looks good. We just need to allow them to surface. (LI011)

Others emphasize continued Americanization among API Catholics as the way of the future. A Korean priest, for example, predicts “ordinary American parishes...only the ethnic background might be the difference but life situations are going to be very similar, too. So that’s a very positive side too” (LI039).

Getting to that bright future, nonetheless, involves a mindful attention to needed resources and ministry opportunities. A National Pastoral Plan comes with hope as well as strong cautions from multiple leaders about implementation. Many agree that the acknowledgment and visibility that the plan can bring are valuable (“There’s a need precisely to remind the church of our diversity but also of the richness that is there and not expressed. There’s a need for that, because the church becomes a great gift of diversity if we can really see it” (LI010). The primary concerns expressed by leaders to a National Pastoral Plan have to do with (a) diversity among API communities; (b) localization of the Church, whereby needs vary substantially across diocesan contexts; and especially (c) implementation of the plan such that it makes a real impact.

A diocesan multicultural director with decades of experience articulates this latter concern of implementation, in particular:

The National Pastoral Plan gives a lot of hope to many of the communities. But we need to pay attention to the implementation, because not all of the dioceses might welcome the implementation of the plan. They could get things like, ‘Oh, it’s like one of those things’ – it’s easy to do that. But not to seriously think about how that is going to impact the ministry and the lives of people. And I think our bishops also need to pay special attention to this and not consider it all as ‘one of those things’ again kind-of-thing. I like what the Hispanics and the Blacks have done. The Hispanics have the Encuentro and then the Blacks have the Congress. And they need from time to time – they need to keep crafting the vision and the goal that they have. And what I’ve found talking to them when I was at conferences in the past, they had one vision, and whether they were from the north or the south – either way, of the United States – they talked about one vision because they went through formation together. That is not true anymore with the Asian Pacific ministry. I hope that they’re going to bring it back. (LI024)

Some groups also express a self-sufficiency that would render a National Pastoral Plan unnecessary. Others extol the value of unity together in a larger, national whole – “Feeling like we have now all this solid goal, that now we are all in this together, giving our own flavor, at the same time, to making it a nice mix for everybody to share” (LI033).

Among the ministries to improve or create as a means of improving ministry to API Catholics, leaders suggest: newsletters, focused trainings, workshops, inclusion and announcements in local diocesan newspapers, chaplains, language-specific resources, ongoing leadership formation, family retreats, marriage preparation, cultural festivities for broad

audiences, invitations to community celebrations, ethnic/language documents beyond scripture, a central clearinghouse of data/information to share across dioceses, and cross-diocesan retreats for formation opportunities.

Sharing resources across the boundaries of dioceses emerged as a common theme: the USCCB and the Secretariat in particular can act as a clearinghouse for materials needed by widely dispersed API populations. Interviewees and focus group participants emphasized unrealized opportunities for collaboration across dioceses that could take the form of retreats, shared translations, or roving ministers. Some groups are so small that they cannot do this work alone, yet are in deep need of support, recognition, and inclusion (fearing cultural loss and conversion). One respondent wrote: “We may be a very vibrant community, but are kind of left in the dust compared to the Korean and Vietnamese communities, even though our faith is strong and our programs are great. We lack the help we need sometimes from the diocese.”

Leaders currently working with API Catholics in diverse capacities offered a number of practical suggestions for newcomers to ministry with Asian and Pacific Islanders. Most center on building in-person relationships and listening, as reflected in the advice relayed below:

Listen. And then realize that everything you're listening to cannot be exactly replicated in your position, in your diocese with the same amount of success. And that it's always good to just listen with an open mind to the Holy Spirit for you never know when a seed might be planted where you take something that is done successfully in one diocese and then just modify or tweak it to make it work in yours. And if it's the same as working with all of these parishes. I would love for all my parishes and missions to be all the same. It would make my life so much easier when I have to go and call the one person and get the one task done. This is how all the parishes operate, but it isn't. So you constantly have to realize that it may be the best way you practice, but it's not the best way they practice or the way they receive. (LI002).

Oh the first year, just go to all the Masses and eat all the food! (LI022)

Learn, learn, learn it. And know that cultural complexities, you can't learn it in a year. It takes a lot of time, and so you have to be very open-minded. You have to be very sensitive, culturally sensitive and so I'd say that's the key: learn the culture. Even me growing up in a Korean home, I was still raised in America. I still am learning the fine, the little idiosyncrasies of Korean mindset, and it's still – even ten years into this – working in the Korean community for ten years, I just – I'm still learning. So I think that real openness and sensitivity is really key. But more than anything, I think it's the delicate balance between just letting the people be, letting them blossom where they're planted, but also pushing them towards broader mindsets, towards more complex understanding of the broader reality. I'd say that they need that as well. The Koreans need pushing as well towards the broader setting. So while being sensitive, while being open, while being very appreciative and learning, if we can also very pastorally and sensitively really push the people towards kind of newer layers of maturity in their Catholic identity. (LI007).

What I would do is, first of all, understand and appreciate thoroughly your cultural gift, because if you don't know yourself... that's one of the purposes that we stand on par with anybody here. (LI033)

Don't be surprised if you see something you have never expected or imagine. There are some things that could be down the path – something you have never experienced in Korea. But so be prepared for something. (LI039)

I learned some things that I never heard or I knew from my culture and different cultures. I think reaching out to the leaders, visiting their communities, get to know them. The young people, trying to reach out the young people, the young adults. It is very difficult. It is a different generation. I try as much as I can to attend the functions. At the functions I learn about the culture and how they interact with each other. Get to know them. Invite them. Let them share about their struggles and challenges. Because we can't assume what we read is the same thing as what they experience. They are different. So, get to know the people. (LI027)

Listening, learning, openness, sensitivity, self-awareness, immersion, and a healthy appetite resonate among the suggestions offered by experienced leaders in a diversity of leadership positions and geographies.

Endnotes

¹ Though all were invited to participate, some API Catholic communities and local leaders expressed that they were not interested in participating. The most often rationale offered was that they felt that the USCCB could not or did not need to help them, given their own self-sustaining leadership structures.

² Refer to “Asian Pacific Islander Catholics in the United States: A Preliminary Report” for a detailed examination of the Asian and Pacific Island Catholic population, both in the United States as well as in Asia and the Pacific Islands.

³ Given that our survey was open to all participants, this sample may or may not accurately represent the breakdown of the entire API Catholic population in the United States. See the “Asian Pacific Islander Catholics in the United States: A Preliminary Report” for a more detailed estimate.

⁴ Service on pastoral council and finance council is included separately in the “Leadership and Representation” section.

⁵ Comparisons to Catholics overall come from *American Catholics in Transition* by William V. D’Antonio, Michele Dillon, and Mary L. Gautier (Rowman & Littlefield 20

Appendix I:

Guideline to In-pew Survey Tables

In-pew parish responses are displayed in tables according to the subgroups described below. Complete in-pew findings are reported in a separate report (“Topline Report for In-pew Surveys in Asian/Pacific Islander Catholic Parishes”).

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
<i>All Respondents:</i> Self-identifies as API Does not self-identify as API	Results for all respondents self-identifying as API and all self-identifying as another racial or ethnic background or not identifying any racial or ethnic background.			
<i>Parishioner API Background:</i> Filipino Vietnamese Korean Other or Unknown API group	Results based on the self-identified API race and ethnicity of the respondent—regardless of the parish community they are in. Thus, one could be a Filipino Catholic in a parish serving Japanese Catholics.			
<i>API Respondent Survey Language:</i> English Non-English	Results based on the language of the survey the API respondent used when responding in pew at one of the parishes.			
<i>API Respondent Place of Birth:</i> U.S.-born Foreign-born	Results based on the foreign or domestic birth place of an API respondent.			
<i>Parish Serves Community:</i> Filipino Vietnamese Korean Other or multiple API groups Not an API parish	Results based whether the parish serves one of three primary communities listed to the left, another API community or multiple API communities, or a non-API community.			
<i>API Respondent Within the Parish:</i> Majority API parishioners Plurality/minority API parishioners Few or None API	Results for API respondents based on the size of the API community in the parish. API parishioners may be the numerical majority or the largest plurality group. Or the parish could have no majority or large plurality group and be made up of a number of nearly equal sized groups (i.e., plurality groups). Or API parishioners could be a minority in the parish.			

Appendix II:

Topline Responses to the NSAPIC (Online Survey)



National Survey of Asian and Pacific Island Catholics
Summary of Topline Responses*

* Not an exhaustive summary; not listed in order asked

In what year were you born?

18-24 years old	10%
25 - 34	13%
35 - 44	18%
45 - 54	21%
55 - 64	23%
65 - 89	16%

What is your ethnicity? Select all that apply.
[See Table __ in the Full Report]

In what country were you born?
[See Table __ in the Full Report]

In general, do you primarily think of yourself as:

15%	An Asian American
27%	A [your ethnic group]
49%	A [your ethnic group] American
3%	An Asian
5%	An American
2%	Other (Please specify)

Do you speak a language other than English at home?
83% Yes 18% No

If yes, how well can you speak this language?
71% Very well 7% Just a little
22% Pretty well 0% Not at all

How well can you speak English?
68% Very well 4% Just a little
28% Pretty well <1% Not at all

Are you currently registered as a member of a Catholic parish?
88% Yes 8% No 4% Unsure

[If not born in U.S.] In what year did you first come to the United States on a permanent basis? Mean = 1987

Are you a citizen of the United States?
83% Yes 16% No
1% Prefer not to specify

What is your current marital status?
57% Married 4% Divorced
4% Widowed <1% Separated
24% Never Married
10% I am a religious sister, brother, or ordained priest

[If married] Is your current marriage validated by the Catholic Church?
91% Yes 8% No 2% Don't Know

If married, is your spouse of Asian or Pacific Island decent?
83% Yes 17% No

Have you ever dated or been romantically involved with a person who is...

	Yes	No	Don't Know
...not Catholic?	47%	50%	3%
...of another race?	42%	57%	1%

About how often do you do the following?

	Never	Less than once a year	Once or twice a year	Several times a year	Once a month	2-3 times a month	Weekly	Several times a week
Attend Mass (aside from weddings and funerals)	<1%	<1%	1%	3%	1%	6%	53%	36%
Participate in Confession or Reconciliation	5%	18%	27%	27%	13%	7%	3%	1%

How far is your present residence from your primary church or parish?
31% Fewer than 2 miles 9% 11-15 miles
31% 2-5 miles 5% 16-20 miles
17% 6-10 miles 7% More than 20 miles

About how long have you attended your current parish?
9% One year or less 24% 10-19 years
20% 2-4 years 29% 20 or more years
18% 5-9 years

On average, how many people attend the parish Mass that you regularly attend? Just your best estimate will do.

12%	Fewer than 100	5%	800-999
40%	100-299	5%	1000-1999
30%	300-799	4%	2000 or more

How often do you attend other churches, in addition to your home (primary) parish?

4%	Never	8%	Once a month
7%	Less than once a year	12%	2-3 times a month
15%	Once or twice a year	6%	Weekly
39%	Several times a year	9%	Several times a week

What are some of the reasons why you attend these other church communities? Check all that apply.

8%	More people like me
20%	Friends
17%	Priest/Pastor
39%	Convenience
46%	Special events or celebrations
13%	Programs or classes
19%	Sacraments (e.g. Reconciliation)
33%	Other

Please indicate the religious affiliation of your family members

	Atheist	Buddhist	Catholic	Hindu	Jewish	Muslim	Protestant	Other	Don't Know or Not Applicable
Father	4%	5%	78%	<1%	<1%	<1%	3%	3%	3%
Mother	1%	6%	82%	<1%	0%	<1%	3%	2%	1%
Spouse*	<1%	<1%	48%	<1%	<1%	<1%	2%	2%	<1%
Children*	<1%	<1%	56%	<1%	<1%	<1%	2%	1%	3%
Extended Family**	5%	9%	71%	<1%	1%	1%	13%	7%	8%

* Percentage taken from entire sample including non-married / those without children

** Percentage does not add up to 100 due to multiple choice selection

Did you grow up Catholic?

87%	Yes	13%	No
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[If not] In what religion were you raised?

<1%	Jewish
40%	Buddhist
15%	Protestant (Baptist, Presbyterian, etc.)
29%	Other (Please specify) _____

By your best estimate, how often did you attend religious services at age 12?

8%	Never	2%	Once a month
1%	Less than once a year	5%	2-3 times a month
2%	Once or twice a year	58%	Weekly
5%	Several times a year	19%	Several times/week

When you were growing up, how often did you attend religious education classes ("CCD")?

17%	Never	18%	Sometimes
8%	Rarely	58%	Very often

Did you receive any of your education in Catholic schools? Check all that apply.

42%	Grade school	30%	College or university
39%	High school		
33%	I did not attend any Catholic schools		

If attended Catholic schools, how much influence did attending Catholic school(s) have on your faith today?

3%	None	27%	A fair amount
12%	Only a little	58%	A lot

What was the location of your schooling?

	United States	Another (non-US) country	(Did not attend)
Grade school	32%	66%	2%
High school	38%	59%	3%
College or university	53%	41%	6%

Do/did any of your children attend (check all that apply):

27% Catholic grade school or high school
 7% Other religious or private schools
 2% Homeschool
 22% Religious education classes
 7% A Catholic college
 21% None of the above

About how often do you do the following outside of Mass?	Never	Only on certain occasions	Once a week or less	A few times a week	Once a day	Several times a day
Pray (apart from meals)	<1%	8%	5%	12%	26%	49%
Read the Bible	8%	26%	17%	17%	24%	9%
Pray before meals	5%	15%	3%	9%	12%	57%
Watch/listen to religious programs on radio, television	17%	33%	10%	18%	8%	14%
Visit Catholic websites	12%	33%	12%	17%	11%	14%
Read Catholic books, newspapers, magazines	10%	30%	20%	20%	9%	11%
Participate in religious services at work	51%	23%	6%	7%	6%	8%
Participate in religious services at home	22%	40%	11%	9%	9%	10%

Have you participated in any of the following religious activities in the last month? (Check all that apply)

41% Bible study or Catholic education classes (e.g. catechism, RCIA, etc.)
 25% choir practice or other music related programs
 54% parish social gathering like fellowships or potluck dinners
 55% praying the Rosary or a novena
 37% prayer group or other religious group affiliated with the parish
 28% prayer group or other small religious group not affiliated with the parish (e.g. in your neighborhood or at work)
 31% parish social outreach program or social ministry (e.g. St. Vincent DePaul, can food drive, etc.)

Are you currently involved in ministry to Asian and Pacific Island Catholics?

61% Yes
 39% No

Do you now serve, or have you ever served, in any of the following parish ministries? Check all that apply.

26% Parish Council 23% Music Minister
 9% Finance Council 23% Altar Server
 36% Eucharistic Minister (Extraordinary Minister of Communion)
 19% Greeter/Usher 37% Religious Educator
 21% None of the above

Have you had any of the following experiences? Check all that apply.

21% witnessed or personally received a miraculous physical healing
 23% had a vision or dream of religious significance
 45% felt guided by or protected by an angel
 47% called by God to do something
 14% interacted with or experienced the presence of an ancestral spirit (family member)
 52% taken a religious pilgrimage or visited a holy site or image of faith

Do you have an altar or religious shrine in your home?

69% Yes 31% No

How important is the Catholic Church to you personally?

<1% Not very important to me at all
 4% Somewhat important
 11% Quite important to me, but so are many other areas of my life
 41% Among the most important parts of my life
 44% The most important thing in my life

How important are the following things to you?	Very important	Somewhat important	Not very important	Not important at all
That you and your spouse share the same religious views	80%	14%	4%	1%
That your children have the same religion as you	82%	14%	3%	2%
That your children marry someone with the same religion as you	61%	27%	9%	3%
That your children marry someone of the same ethnicity as you	22%	28%	30%	20%
That your children marry someone of the same race (but not necessarily the same ethnicity) as you	16%	29%	32%	23%
That your children attend Catholic schools	33%	31%	26%	11%

How important are the following Catholic teachings to you?					
	Very important	Somewhat important	Not very important	Not important at all	No opinion
Catholic teachings that oppose the death penalty	56%	26%	9%	3%	5%
Catholic teachings that oppose same sex marriage	60%	17%	11%	9%	3%
Catholic teachings that promote the rights of workers	65%	26%	5%	1%	3%
Catholic teachings that oppose abortion	71%	16%	6%	4%	3%
Catholic teachings that oppose birth control	43%	27%	15%	12%	4%
Church positions on immigration reform	43%	33%	12%	6%	7%

As a Catholic, how important is each of the following to you?	Very important	Somewhat important	Not very important	Not important at all	No opinion
The sacraments, such as the Eucharist	92%	6%	<1%	<1%	<1%
Church teachings about Mary as the Mother of God	84%	13%	2%	<1%	<1%
Church involvement in activities directed toward social justice	66%	27%	4%	1%	2%
The teaching authority claimed by the Vatican	62%	26%	8%	1%	3%
A celibate male clergy	56%	22%	12%	7%	<1%
Having a regular daily prayer life	78%	18%	3%	<1%	<1%
Helping the poor	80%	19%	1%	<1%	<1%
Belief in Jesus' resurrection from the dead	91%	7%	1%	1%	<1%
Participating in devotions such as Eucharistic Adoration or praying the rosary	67%	24%	6%	1%	1%

Which one statement comes closest to your personal beliefs about the Bible?

20% The Bible is the actual word of God and is to be taken literally, word-for-word.
77% The Bible is the inspired word of God, but not everything in it should be taken literally, word-for-word.
1% The Bible is an ancient book of history and legends.
2% I don't know

How important is religion in your life?

<1% Not at all Important 8% Somewhat important
13% Important 78% Very important

Which of the following is most important to your sense of who you are?

5% Your ethnicity 6% Neither
34% Your religion
55% Both religion and ethnicity equally

Which statement comes closer to your own views, even if neither is exactly right? (Select one per line)			
38%	There is only ONE true way to interpret the teachings of Catholicism	62%	There is MORE than one true way to interpret the teachings of Catholicism
53%	Catholicism is the one, true faith leading to eternal life	47%	Many religions can lead to eternal life

Has your parish or diocese hosted (and have you participated) in any of the following within the past twelve months? Check all that apply.

	My parish/diocese has hosted	I have participated	Don't Know
A program focused on my ethnic or cultural group	35%	29%	35%
A program directed at immigrants, migrants, or refugees	24%	11%	48%
A multicultural Mass or celebration	48%	38%	21%
A class to learn English	16%	4%	53%
A class about the history or practice of Catholicism	36%	20%	34%
A program to discuss race relations in our society	10%	7%	58%
A program to discuss or learn about a religion other than my own	12%	8%	56%
Travel to a country to provide assistance to people in need	24%	7%	45%
A group specifically for women or for men	41%	13%	32%
A program focused on therapy and rehabilitation (e.g. for alcoholism)	19%	3%	53%
A program focused on issues of abuse or domestic violence	18%	5%	52%
A program focused on financial management	17%	5%	54%

How supportive is your parish church in integrating your ethnic or cultural religious experience into its worship services and programs? Select →

35% Very supportive
24% Supportive
15% Somewhat supportive
5% Not supportive at all
21% Don't know

For each please mark whether you basically agree or basically disagree.

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neither agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I prefer to pray in a non-English language.	23%	16%	36%	10%	15%
I prefer Mass in a non-English language.	20%	15%	39%	13%	14%
I prefer baptisms in a non-English language.	17%	13%	43%	12%	16%
I prefer confession/ reconciliation in a non-English language.	21%	12%	36%	14%	19%
I prefer confirmation in a non-English language.	16%	11%	41%	13%	17%
I would prefer matrimony/ holy orders in a non-English language.	18%	13%	40%	12%	17%
I would prefer to receive the anointing of the sick in a non-English language.	19%	13%	40%	11%	17%
I prefer funerals in a non-English language.	20%	14%	40%	10%	16%

For each please mark whether you basically agree or basically disagree.

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
I feel welcome in my parish.	65%	29%	4%	<1%	2%
Asian and Pacific Island Catholics are well integrated into my parish.	46%	32%	9%	4%	9%
I am satisfied with how frequently Mass in my native language is offered.	37%	20%	10%	12%	22%
Asian and Pacific Island Catholics are well integrated into my diocese.	39%	32%	10%	6%	13%
I feel welcome at diocesan events.	49%	29%	7%	3%	12%
Asian and Pacific Island Catholics should form parishes that minister specifically to them.	23%	28%	21%	17%	10%
I have a lot of confidence in the Catholic hierarchy.	44%	37%	11%	3%	6%

In the parish you attend (or have attended), how frequently have you felt the following:

	Always	Sometimes	Never
Uncomfortable because there were no other individuals of your race or ethnicity there	3%	24%	73%
People were unfriendly or avoided you because of your race or ethnicity	1%	21%	77%
People were reluctant to offer you a sign of peace or shake hands because of your race or ethnicity	2%	17%	82%
Pastor, church leaders, or priests were insensitive to issues important to your racial or ethnic group	3%	21%	76%
Frustrated by inflexible rectory hours or limited access to priests	4%	24%	72%

Overall, how satisfied are you with your parish church?

47% Very satisfied
 42% Satisfied
 6% Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
 4% Dissatisfied
 <1% Very dissatisfied

Whom do you look to as your primary source of guidance among Catholic leadership?

39% Your local bishop
 2% Bishops outside the US
 4% Bishops who share your ethnic and cultural background
 30% Priests who share your ethnic and cultural background
 2% Priests born outside the US
 24% None of the above

How satisfied are you with the Catholic Church in the following areas:

	Very Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Only a Little Satisfied	Not At All Satisfied	No Opinion
Emphasizing the importance of Asian and Pacific Island saints	21%	32%	16%	9%	23%
Promoting Asian and Pacific Island bishops	16%	27%	18%	11%	29%
Targeting vocations among Asian and Pacific Island Americans	17%	30%	19%	9%	25%
Supporting issues like affirmative action	14%	29%	17%	6%	34%
Calling attention to problems in Asia and the Pacific Islands	15%	29%	21%	12%	23%
Promoting racial integration in the Church	19%	31%	20%	9%	22%
Incorporating Asian and Pacific Island images of faith (e.g. Our Lady of Lavang or San Lorenzo)	20%	28%	16%	10%	27%

How supportive is your diocese in integrating your ethnic or cultural religious experience into its worship services and programs?

29% Very supportive 17% Somewhat supportive 20% Don't know
 29% Supportive 5% Not supportive at all

Have you ever been assisted with any of the following?

	Assisted through the Catholic Church	Assisted, but not through the Church	Have not received assistance with this
Processing immigration paperwork	10%	14%	76%
Healthcare or medical assistance	9%	18%	73%
Legal aid or court assistance	3%	11%	86%
Aid upon arrival to the United States	11%	13%	77%
Access to childcare	3%	9%	88%
Access to a food pantry / other welfare services	8%	9%	83%
Finding housing	6%	12%	83%
Employment assistance	7%	14%	83%
Financial services (e.g. opening up a checking account)	4%	12%	80%
Emergency assistance during a crisis	8%	10%	82%
Intervention related to abuse or domestic violence	3%	6%	91%

About how many hours per month, if any, do you volunteer?

	None	1-2 hours	3-4 hours	5-10 hours	11+ hours
For the community, through my parish	49%	22%	12%	9%	8%
For the community, not through my parish	44%	25%	14%	9%	9%
For my parish	30%	24%	16%	14%	16%

What is your gender?

49% Male 51% Female

Which of the following BEST describes the place where you now live?

31% A large city 4% A rural area
42% A suburb near a large city
23% A small city or town

In what zip code do you currently reside?

Northeast 11%
Midwest 18%
South 30%
West 41%

Have you sent any remittances (money or goods) to family, friends, or a local community in your or your mother/father's native country?

Yes - 59% among non-U.S. born / 45% among U.S. born
No - 41% among non-U.S. born / 55% among U.S. born

What is the highest level of education you have completed?

<1% 8th grade or less
1% 9th grade - 12th grade (no high school diploma)
3% High school graduate
12% Some college
3% Trade/technical/vocational training
36% College degree
44% Postgraduate work or degree