

Diocesan Realignment Workbook

Blessed Sacrament Parish
Holyoke





About the Workbook

There are three sections of this workbook, each one equips priests and key parish leaders with essential data about:

- 1) The Diocese of Springfield
- 2) Your Region
- 3) Your parish

This workbook serves as a planning resource to support thoughtful reflection on the current strengths and future opportunities for ministry and evangelization within each planning area.

Diocesan Strategic Realignment Initiative Prayer



Heavenly Father, You have called your Church to proclaim the Gospel in every age and to be a living sign of your love in the world.

As we begin this journey of strategic realignment, fill us with the wisdom of your Holy Spirit. Help us to honor the rich history we cherish while remaining open to the new paths you are calling us to embrace. Grant our Bishop, pastors, deacons, parish leaders, and all the faithful hearts that are open to your guidance. Give us the humility to listen to one another with charity, the patience to discern carefully, and the courage to make decisions that will strengthen the mission of your Church for generations to come. May this process never be driven simply by buildings, budgets, or boundaries, but by a renewed commitment to healthier parishes commissioned to making disciples, celebrating the sacraments, serving those in need, and sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Help us to remember that the Church is not merely the places where we worship, but the people you have called together as the Body of Christ. Unite us in faith, preserve us in charity, and inspire us to become vibrant missionary disciples.

Through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of the Church, and under the patronage of Saint Michael the Archangel, protector of our Diocese, may all that we do give glory to you and lead others to your Son.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen.



Why Diocesan Realignment?

Many parishes were established or grew in a time when Christian values and assumptions were the norm. Faith was inherited and the Church held cultural influence.

There is no doubt that the culture around us, both in the United States and locally in the Diocese of Springfield, have changed. The mission, however, has not; it has always been to “go and make disciples.” (Matthew 28:19)

Diocesan Realignment Challenges



Our Goal for Realignment

DIOCESE OF SPRINGFIELD

One Church • One Mission • Many Communities

Growing as One Body in Christ

The diocese desires an educational, prayerful, and customized approach that best addresses the unique challenges facing each region within scope.

Vibrant Parishes

Fostering a vibrant parish experience

Mission over Maintenance

Working together to evangelize, catechize and engage others to grow in their relationship with Christ and strengthen our Church.

Sustainable Future

Strategic Realignment



Section One

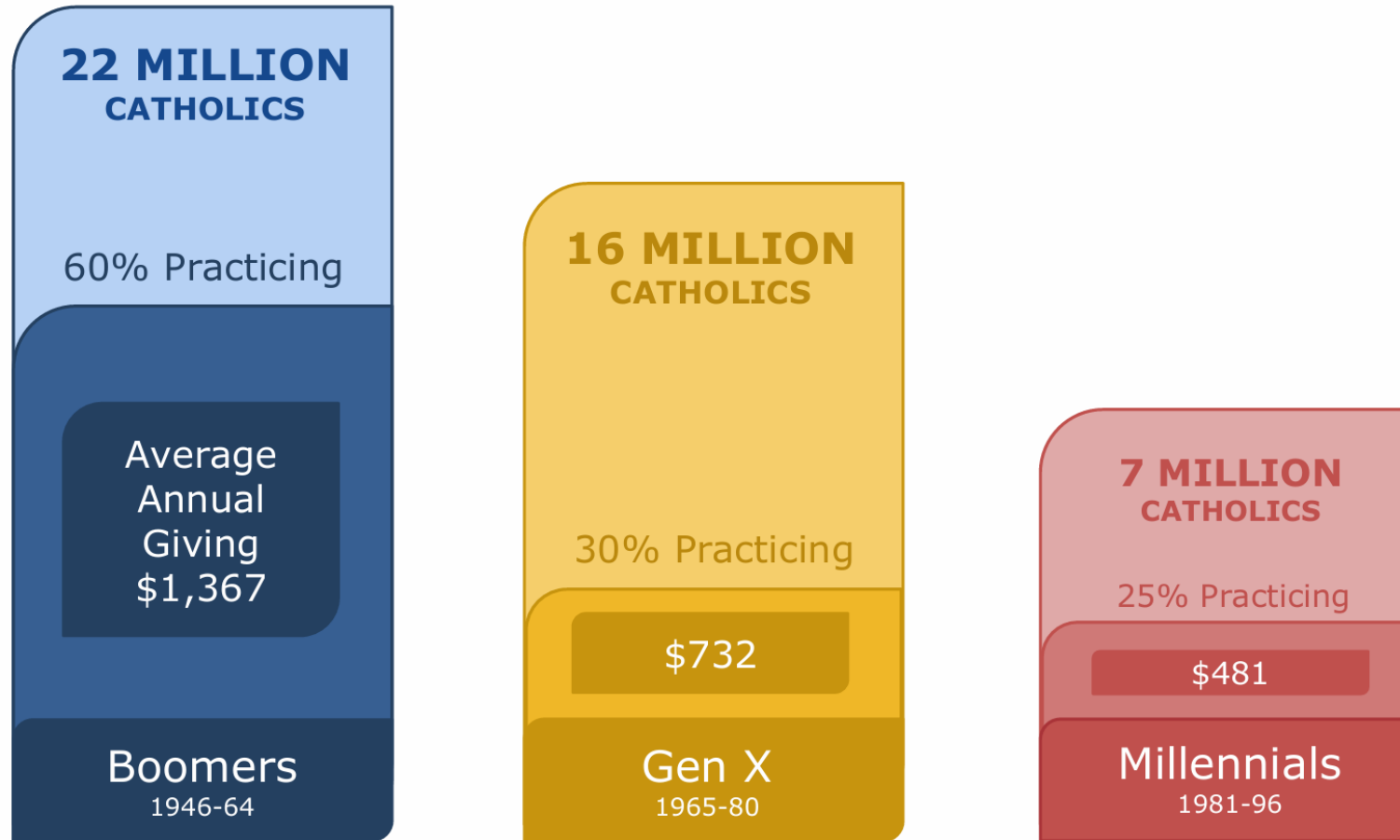
The Diocese of Springfield



About Our Diocese

- The Diocese of Springfield in Massachusetts comprises 76 parishes, 9 missions, and 2 chapels across the four western Massachusetts counties of Berkshire, Franklin, Hampden, and Hampshire, serving a mix of urban, suburban, and rural communities.
- The local Church has experienced a significant long-term decline in participation, reflecting broader demographic shifts, an aging Catholic population, and fewer younger Catholics replacing previous generations.
- Mass attendance has declined substantially over the past two decades. While attendance has shown some recovery following the COVID-19 pandemic, it remains well below historic levels across the Diocese.
- These trends have resulted in fewer parishioners supporting a parish structure largely established for a larger Catholic population, creating increasing pastoral, financial, and operational pressures.
- The Diocese is also facing a declining number of priests available for active parish ministry. There are currently 65 diocesan priests in active ministry, assisted by 15 foreign and religious-order priests. That number is expected to decrease considerably over the coming decade as priests retire and relatively few new priests are ordained.

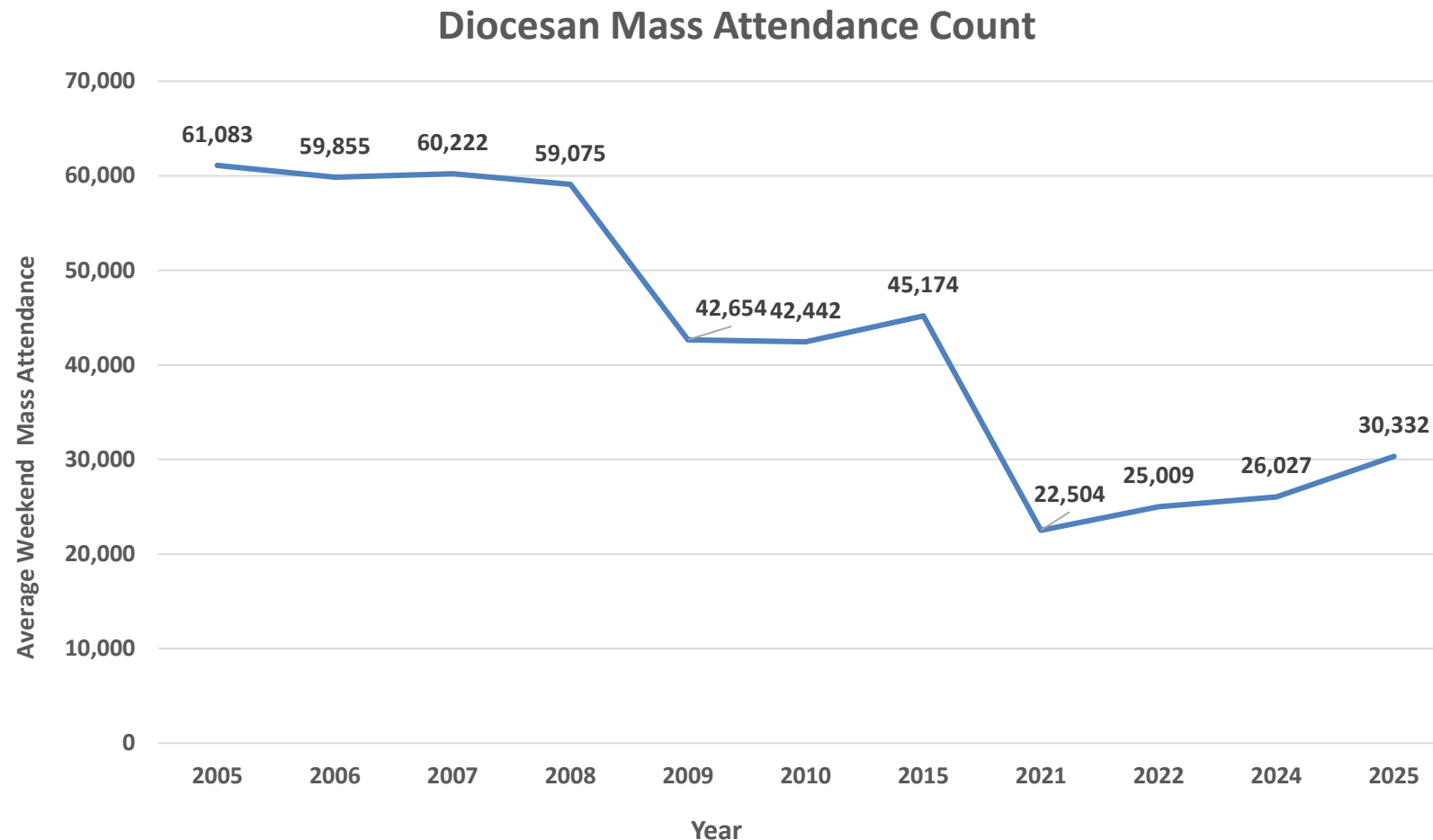
Nationally, Practice and Generosity are Declining with Each Generation



Source: Catholic Leadership Institute | CARA | Pew Research



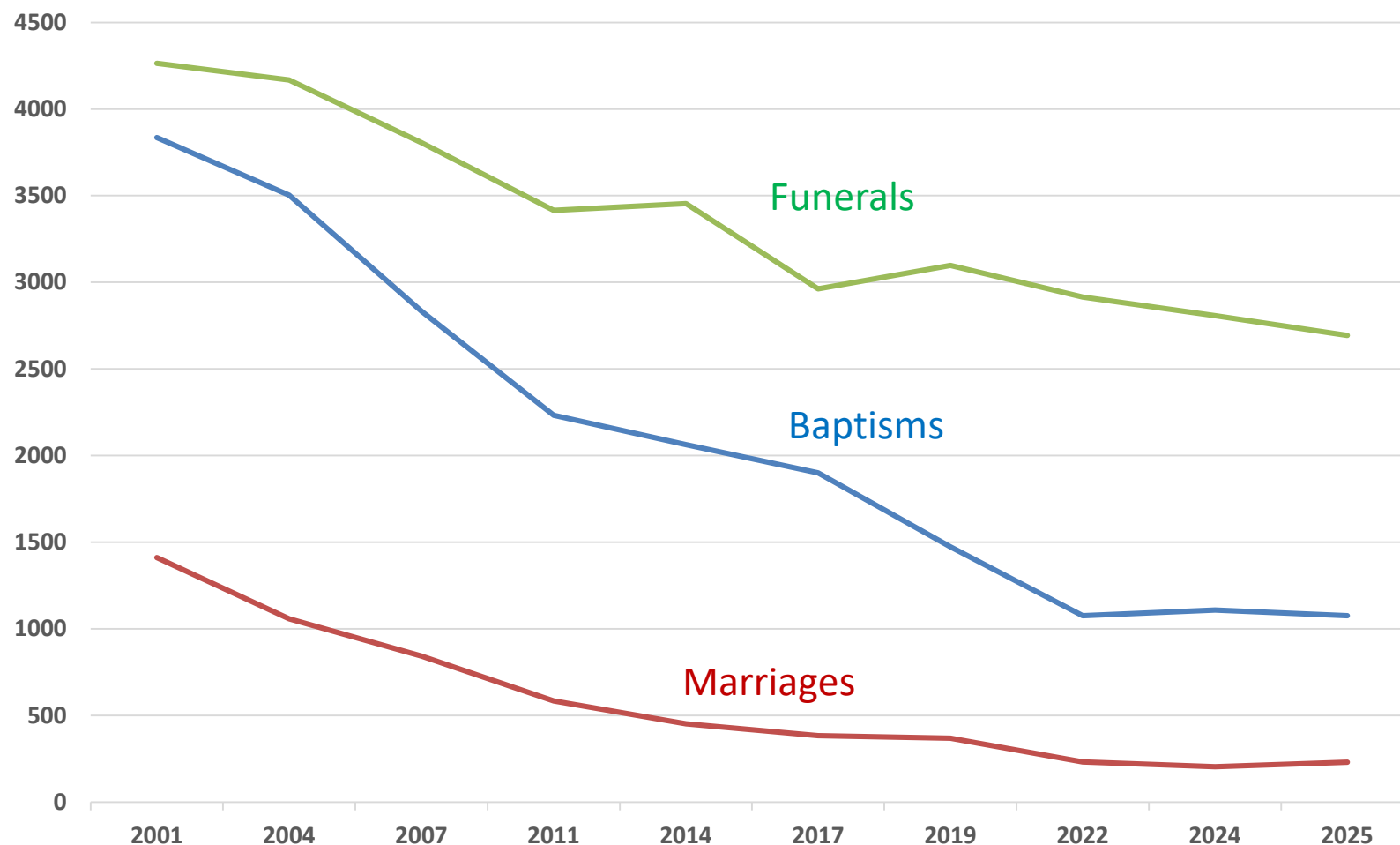
Regular Mass Attendance Continues to Decline



- **Mass attendance has declined by more than 30,000 people since 2005, falling from 61,083 to 30,332 in 2025 — a 50.3% decrease over 20 years.**
- The long-term decline is evident even before COVID:
 - 2005 → 2015:** down 15,909 (-26.0%)
 - 2015 → 2021:** down 22,670 (-50.2%)
 - 2021 → 2025:** up 7,828 (+34.8%)
- The Diocese has experienced a meaningful **post-COVID rebound**, with Mass attendance increasing from **22,504 in 2021 to 30,332 in 2025**.
- Most recently, attendance increased by **4,305 people from 2024 to 2025 — a 16.5% increase in a single year**.
- Despite this recovery, **2025 Mass attendance remains 32.9% below 2015 levels and 50.3% below 2005 levels**.
- Across the full 2005–2025 period, the decline equates to an average annual rate of approximately **3.4% per year**, underscoring that the Diocese's attendance challenge is a **long-term trend that predates the pandemic**.



Our Church is Growing Older, Not Younger

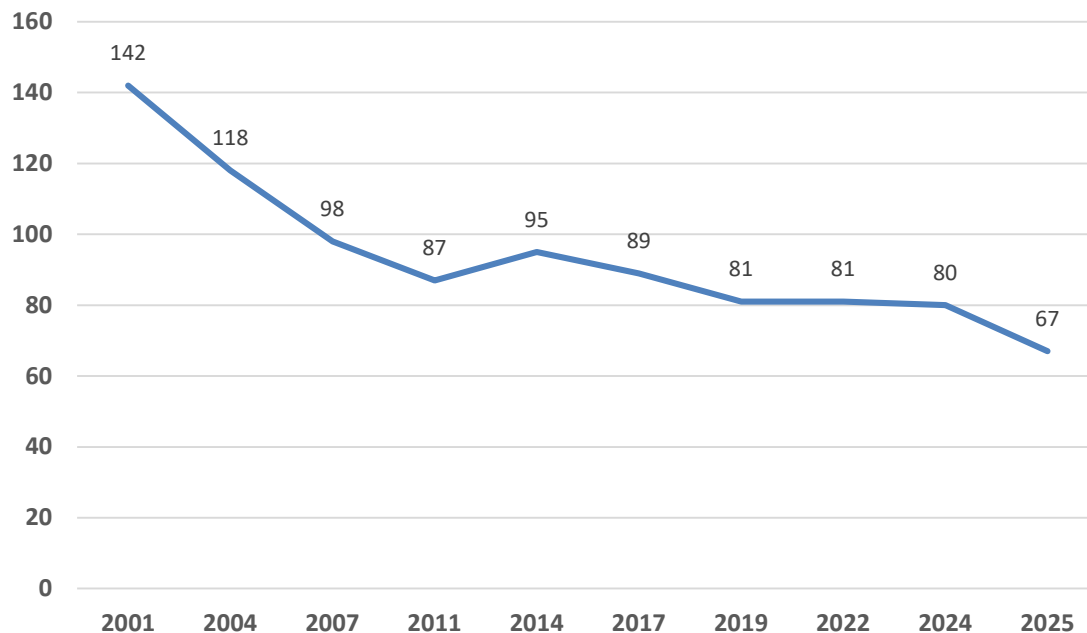


- **Infant baptisms have declined the most dramatically**, falling from roughly **3,800 in 2001 to just over 1,000 in 2025** — a decline of about **72%**. The decrease has been persistent across the period, signaling a significant contraction in the number of young families entering parish life sacramentally.
- **Marriages have declined even more sharply**, dropping from approximately **1,400 in 2001 to about 230 in 2025** — a decline of roughly **84%**. While there was a small increase from 2024 to 2025, marriages remain at only a fraction of their early-2000s level.
- **Funerals have declined more gradually**, falling from approximately **4,250 in 2001 to 2,700 in 2025** — a decrease of about **37%**. Compared with baptisms and marriages, funerals have remained relatively more stable, suggesting that sacramental activity in the Diocese is increasingly concentrated among an older Catholic population.

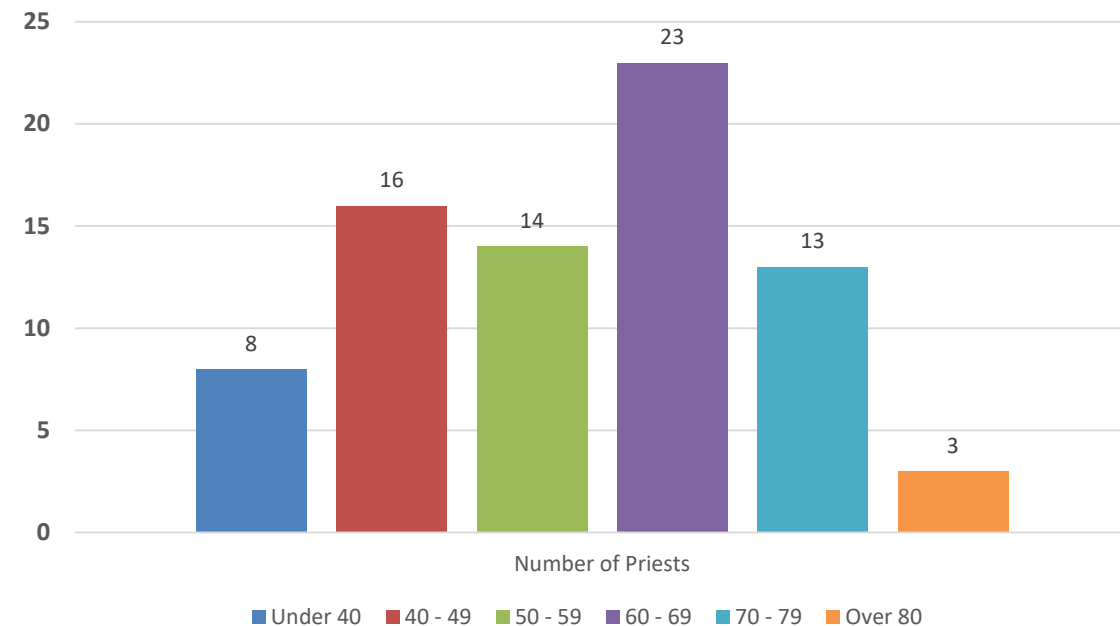


Projected Priest Supply Will Not Meet Demand

Active Diocesan Priests



Age Distribution of Priests



- 51% of the Diocese's priests are already eligible or will become eligible for retirement within the next 10 years.
- The pipeline of new priests is currently not sufficient to replace anticipated retirements. The Diocese currently has 5 seminarians, with just one priest ordained in the past five years.
- The Diocese must plan for fewer priests available for parish ministry, making it increasingly important to align parish structures and pastoral responsibilities with the number of priests realistically available to serve.

Discussion



- What stands out to you most from the diocesan data?
- Where do you see the greatest challenges and opportunities?
- What realities must any future model of parish life address?

Section Two

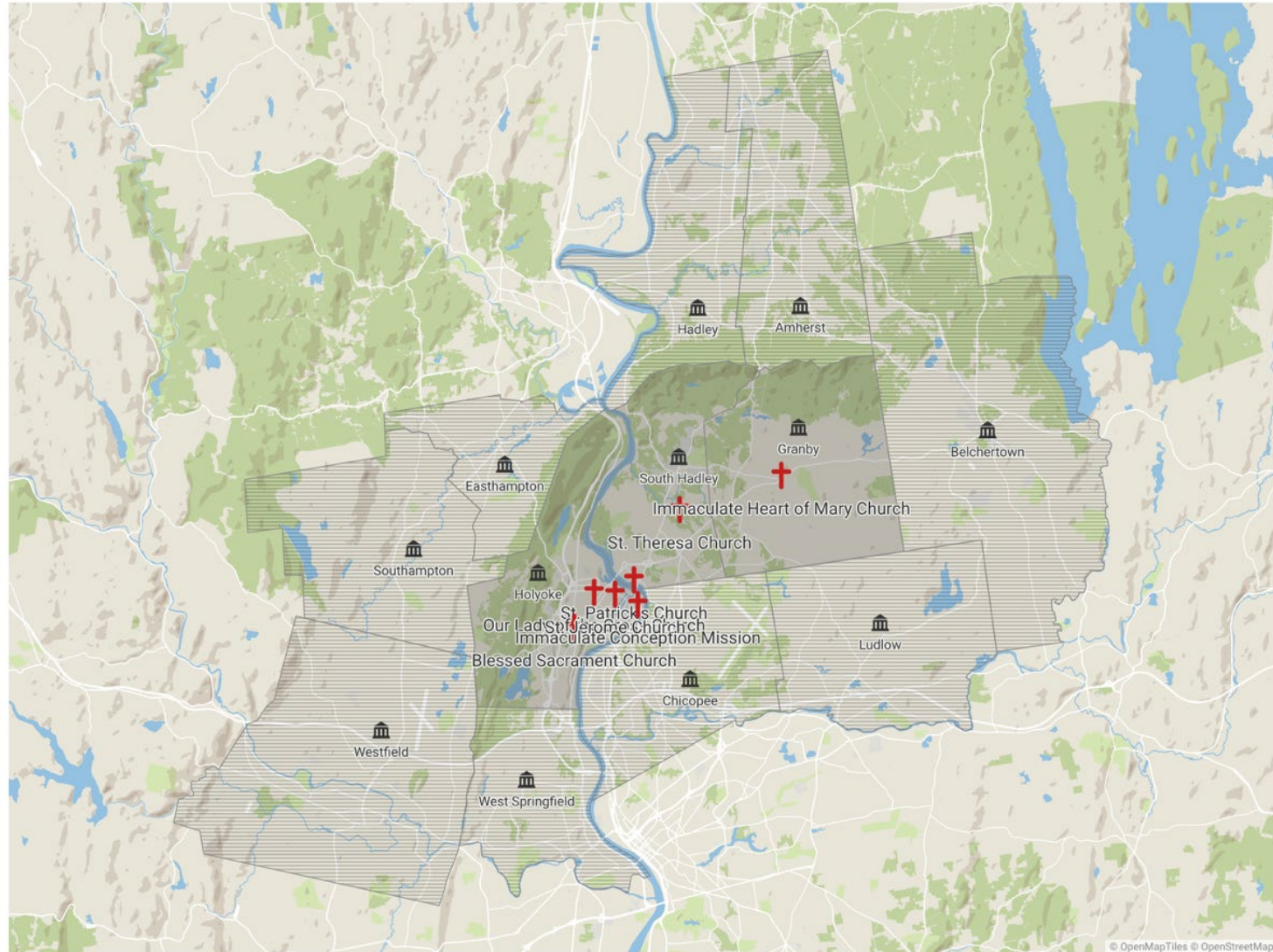
Region 6



About Our Region



Region 6





About Our Region – Region 6

- Region VI spans portions of Hampden and Hampshire counties and includes the communities of Holyoke, South Hadley, and Granby. The Connecticut River separates Holyoke from South Hadley and Granby.
- The region includes six parishes. Three parishes are concentrated in Holyoke, two parishes are located in South Hadley, and one parish is located in Granby.
- The region includes a mix of urban, suburban, and rural communities. Holyoke contains the greatest concentration of worship sites, while the South Hadley and Granby sites are more geographically dispersed.
- Region VI spans roughly 15 miles and approximately a 25- to 30-minute drive from end to end. River crossings and differences between the communities should be considered when evaluating parish relationships and travel.

Demographics – Population & Ethnicity



Parish	City/Town	Population Trend			Ethnicity			
		2010	2025	2035E	Black	White	Hispanic	Other
Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish	Granby	36,207	36,402	35,528	3%	82%	8%	7%
Blessed Sacrament Parish	Holyoke	128,813	127,764	122,914	3%	62%	30%	5%
Our Lady of the Cross Parish	Holyoke	128,813	127,764	122,914	3%	62%	30%	5%
St. Jerome Parish	Holyoke	128,813	127,764	122,914	3%	62%	30%	5%
St. Patrick Parish	South Hadley	121,026	119,524	115,004	3%	63%	28%	6%
St. Theresa of Lisieux Parish	South Hadley	85,704	84,652	81,370	3%	64%	29%	6%

- Population across Region VI remained relatively stable between 2010 and 2025 but is projected to decline through 2035.
- The Holyoke and South Hadley parish areas are projected to decrease by approximately 5% between 2010 and 2035. Granby is expected to remain more stable, declining by approximately 2%.
- Holyoke and South Hadley have significant Hispanic populations, representing approximately 28%–30% of residents. This is an important consideration for Spanish-language ministry and pastoral outreach.
- Granby is less ethnically diverse, with 82% of residents identifying as White and 8% as Hispanic.



Demographics – Age & Education

Parish	City/Town	Age Composition - 2025					BS/BA + Degree %	Avg HH Income
		<18	18-34	35-54	55-64	65+		
Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish	Granby	16%	25%	22%	14%	24%	43%	\$ 138
Blessed Sacrament Parish	Holyoke	19%	21%	24%	13%	23%	28%	\$ 95
Our Lady of the Cross Parish	Holyoke	19%	21%	24%	13%	23%	28%	\$ 96
St. Jerome Parish	Holyoke	19%	21%	24%	13%	23%	28%	\$ 97
St. Patrick Parish	South Hadley	19%	21%	24%	13%	23%	29%	\$ 96
St. Theresa of Lisieux Parish	South Hadley	19%	22%	24%	13%	22%	31%	\$ 100

- Region VI has a relatively balanced age distribution. Approximately 40%–41% of residents are under age 35, while 22%–24% are age 65 or older.
- Age composition is generally consistent across the parish areas, with Granby having a slightly smaller population under age 18 and a slightly larger young-adult population.
- Granby has notably higher educational attainment: 43% of adults hold a bachelor's degree or higher, compared with 28%–31% in the Holyoke and South Hadley parish areas.
- Average household income is also substantially higher in Granby at approximately \$138,000, compared with approximately \$95,000–\$100,000 across Holyoke and South Hadley.



Ministry – Sacramentals

Parish	City/Town	Mass Attendance			Infant Baptisms	Deaths	Baptisms/Deaths	Catholic Marriages
		2015	2025	% change				
Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish	Granby	338	171	-49%	3	11	0.3	-
Blessed Sacrament Parish	Holyoke	N/A	577	N/A	23	65	0.4	2
Our Lady of the Cross Parish	Holyoke	431	271	-37%	8	50	0.2	3
St. Jerome Parish	Holyoke	363	521	44%	45	77	0.6	5
St. Patrick Parish	South Hadley	742	484	-35%	15	68	0.2	-
St. Theresa of Lisieux Parish	South Hadley	238	209	-12%	5	40	0.1	-

- Mass attendance declined at four of the five parishes with comparable data, with the largest decreases at Immaculate Heart of Mary (-49%) and Our Lady of the Cross (-37%). St. Jerome is the notable exception, increasing 44%.
- Deaths substantially outpace infant baptisms at every parish, including St. Patrick (68 deaths vs. 15 baptisms) and St. Theresa of Lisieux (40 vs. 5), indicating an aging Catholic population across the region.
- Sacramental activity is concentrated in the Holyoke parishes, particularly St. Jerome with 45 baptisms and 5 marriages. Blessed Sacrament also recorded 23 baptisms, though historical attendance data is unavailable for comparison.



Parish Financials

Parish	City/Town	Collections			Change in Net Assets			Balance Sheet 6/30/25		
		2018	2025	% change	2023	2024	2025	Cash	Saving	Liabilities
Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish	Granby	251	209	-17%	(36)	374	14	20	391	281
Blessed Sacrament Parish	Holyoke	503	404	-20%	(20)	72	(161)	99	724	70
Our Lady of the Cross Parish	Holyoke	408	316	-23%	40	66	368	176	598	253
St. Jerome Parish	Holyoke	244	392	61%	346	470	1,035	228	9,913	169
St. Patrick Parish	South Hadley	468	469	0%	53	108	147	188	1,326	-
St. Theresa of Lisieux Parish	South Hadley	306	213	-30%	7	23	(71)	16	26	337

- Collections declined at four of the six parishes from 2018 to 2025, with the largest decreases at St. Theresa of Lisieux (-30%) and Our Lady of the Cross (-23%). St. Jerome stands out with a 61% increase in collections.
- 2025 operating results vary considerably, with St. Jerome (+\$1.03M) and Our Lady of the Cross (+\$368K) reporting the strongest positive changes in net assets, while Blessed Sacrament (-\$161K) and St. Theresa of Lisieux (-\$71K) reported deficits.
- Financial reserves are highly concentrated, particularly at St. Jerome with \$10M in savings. Other parishes have substantially smaller reserves, while St. Theresa of Lisieux has just \$26K in savings against \$337K in liabilities, indicating a comparatively constrained financial position.

**All financial figures are presented in thousands of dollars.*

Section Three

Our Parish



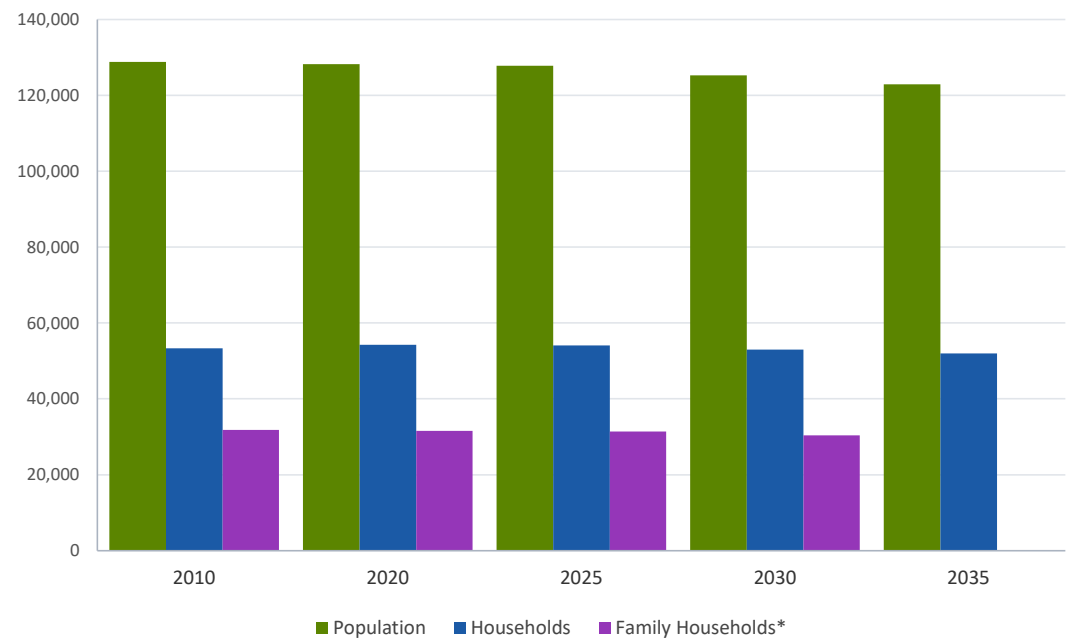
Parish Demographics

Data based on 5-mile radius from church building

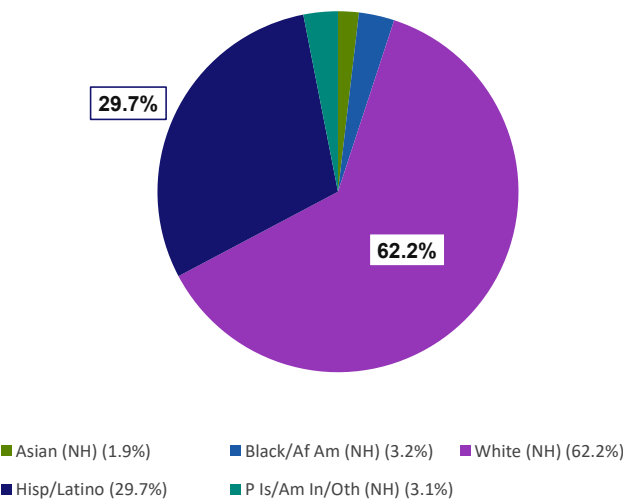
The general population of the area has decreased by 1,049 (0.81%) from 2010 to 2025. It is projected to decrease by 4,850 (3.80%) from 2025 to 2035.

In 2025, the area's largest racial/ethnic population is White (NH) (62.2%), followed by Hisp/Latino (29.7%), and Black/Af Am (NH) (3.2%).

Population, Household & Family Trends

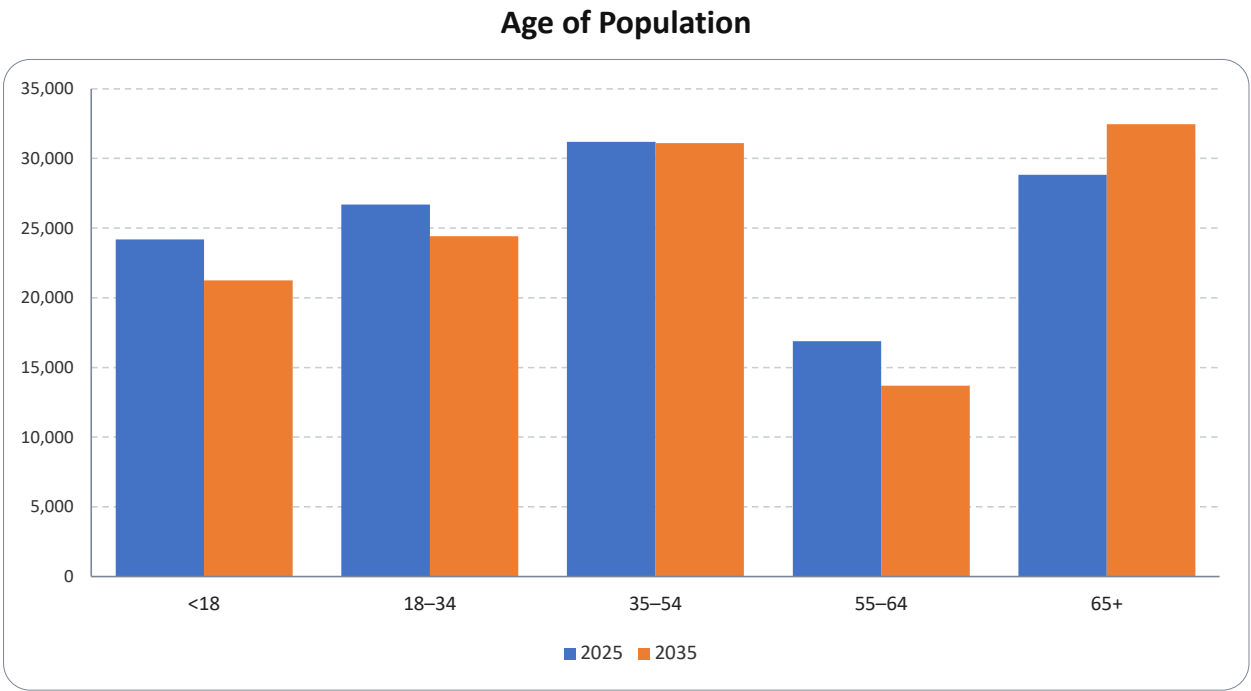


Current Year Racial/Ethnicity as Percentage of Pop (2025)



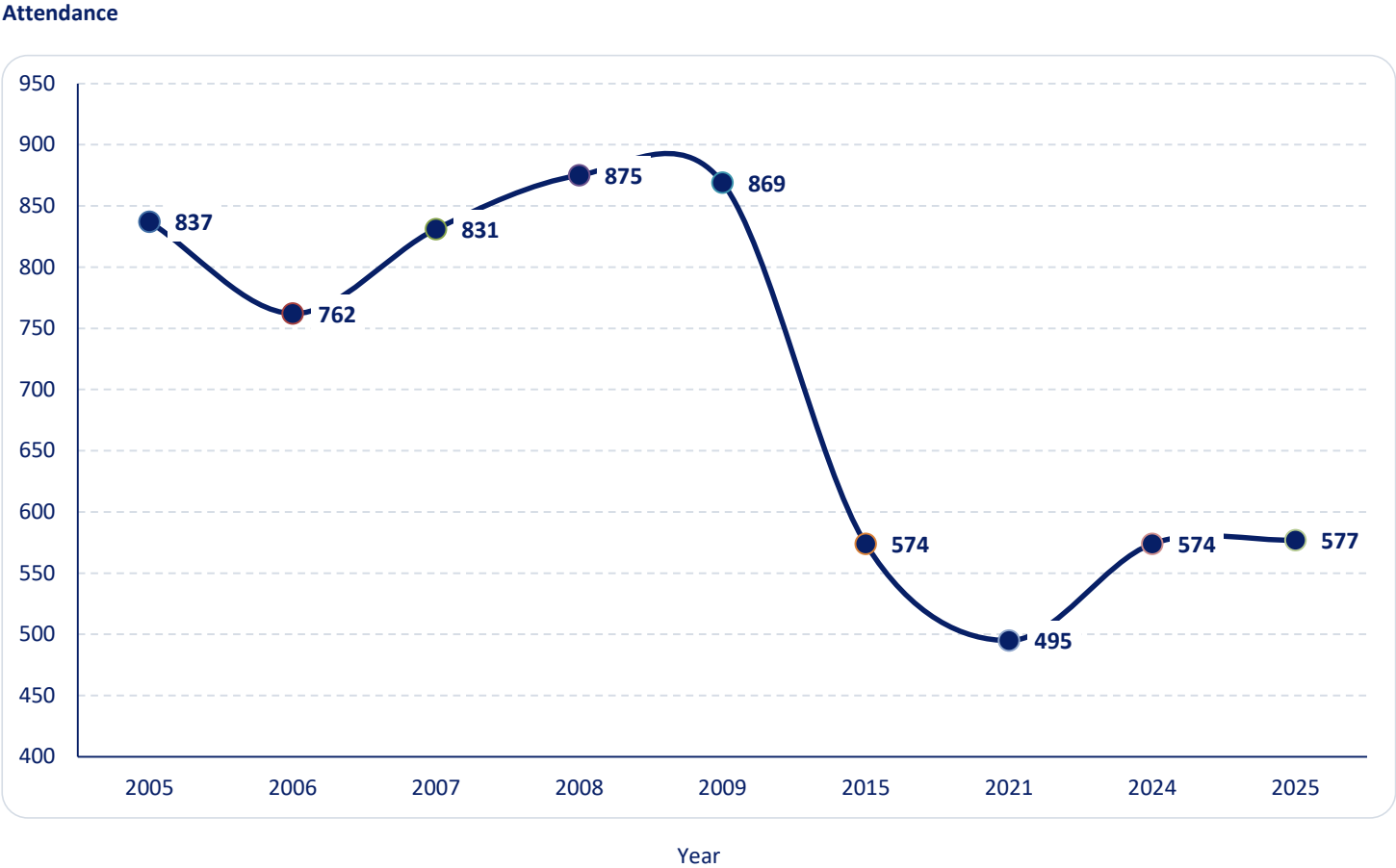
Parish Demographics

Data based on 5-mile radius from church building



- The area's population is projected to age slightly: the 65+ share shows a slight increase of 3.84 percentage points, while the school-aged share (ages 5–17) shows a slight decline of 1.13 percentage points from 2025 to 2035.
- The share of married adults is projected to show a slight decline of 1.03 percentage points, from 38.54% in 2020 to 37.51% in 2030. Married-couple households with children are projected to show a slight decline of 0.75 percentage points, from 46.29% to 45.54% between 2025 and 2030.
- The estimated current-year average household income is \$94,532. It is projected to increase by 17.96% to \$111,509 by 2030.
- In 2025, 28.18% of adults hold a bachelor's or graduate degree, compared with 46.69% statewide—18.51 percentage points lower.

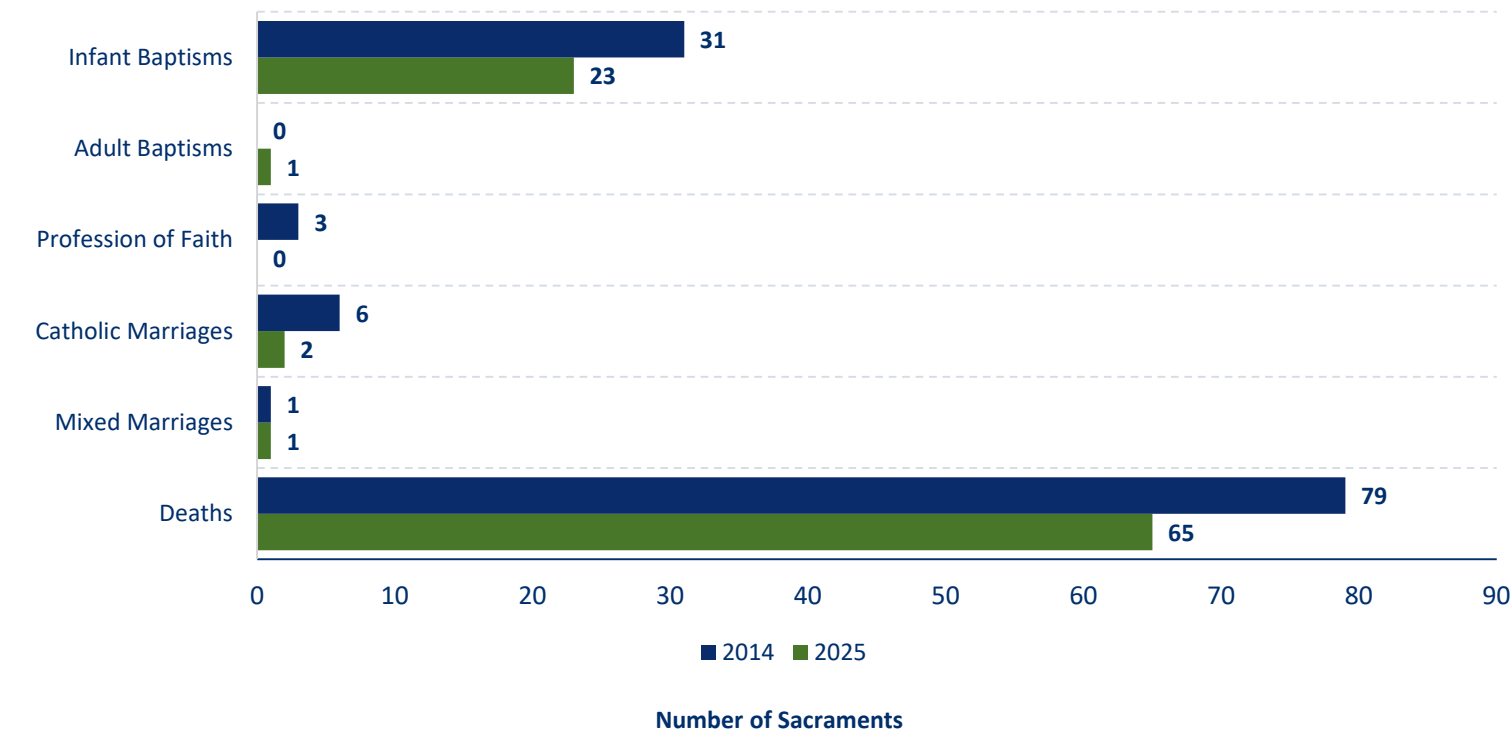
Mass Attendance Trends



- Average Mass attendance declined 31% from 837 (2005) to 577 (2025).
- Attendance reached a low of 495 in 2021 before recovering modestly.
- 2025 attendance is 69% of 2005 levels.
- Attendance increased 1% from 2024 to 2025.

Parish Sacramental Trends

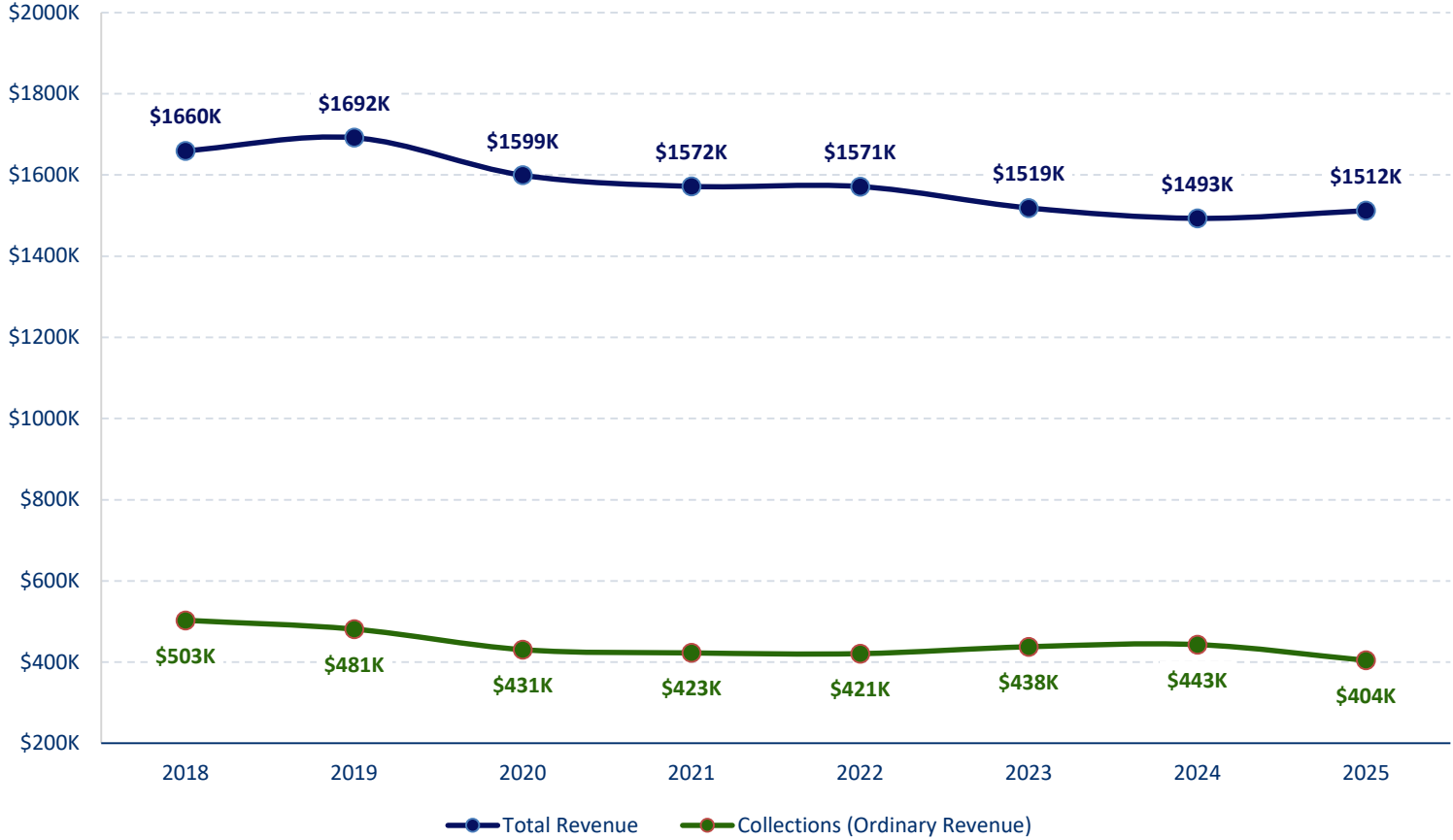
Comparison of sacramental activity in 2014 and 2025.



- Infant baptisms declined 26%: 31 (2014) to 23 (2025).
- 2025 deaths exceeded infant baptisms: 65 vs. 23.
- Catholic marriages averaged 3.0 per year.
- 2025: 1 adult baptism; 0 professions of faith.
- Chart uses like-for-like first and latest parish years.

Parish Financial Trends

Revenue (\$000s)



- Collections declined 20% from \$503K (2018) to \$404K (2025).

- Collections were relatively flat since 2020.

- **Note:** Total Revenue has been adjusted because school subsidies are recorded as parish income when funds are transferred from the parish to the school, which overstates actual parish revenue. School subsidies totaled **\$133,950 in 2024, \$287,625 in 2025, and \$307,000 in 2026.**

Financial Summary

Blessed Sacrament Parish, Holyoke

	2023	2024	2025
Collections (Ordinary Revenue)	\$437,841	\$443,051	\$404,291
Interest & Other Revenue	\$1,080,895	\$1,050,008	\$1,107,634
Total Revenue	\$1,518,736	\$1,493,059	\$1,511,926
Total Expenses	(\$1,582,777)	(\$1,557,040)	(\$1,719,417)
Change in Net Assets	(\$20,152)	\$72,146	(\$161,381)
Net Assets (Year End)	\$1,563,324	\$1,635,470	\$1,474,089

Balance Sheet

	2023	2024	2025
Operating Cash	\$5,053	\$15,507	\$118,137
Savings	\$894,588	\$1,018,391	\$724,310
Total Cash & Savings	\$899,641	\$1,033,897	\$842,447
Accounts Payable & Liabilities	\$94,116	\$92,052	\$69,672

- Collections (ordinary revenue) have remained relatively stable, averaging approximately \$428,000 annually over the past three fiscal years.
- Total revenue increased to \$1,511,926 in FY2025, a 1% increase over FY2024, driven primarily by Parish Subsidy and Beacon of Faith Parish Allotment.
- Cash and savings total \$842K as of June 30, 2025, a decrease of approximately \$191K from the prior year.
- Interest income increased between FY2024 and FY2025, changing from \$2.1K to \$3.7K.
- Recurring offertory collections represent 27% of total operating revenue in FY2025; interest and other revenue contributed \$1,107,634 to the year's operating revenue mix.



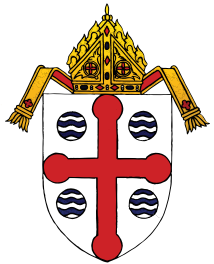
Discussion

- What strengths and challenges do you see across the region?
- What unique circumstances or relationships among parishes should we keep in mind?
- What realities should guide us as we begin developing potential models for this region?

Q&A



Next Steps



Next Steps

Nov 1st – 21st
Parish Listening
Sessions (Review
Models)

Nov 1st
Online Survey Open



THANK YOU!