THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA

Post-retirement Religiosity among Migrating Northern Catholic Baby Boomers

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to the Faculty of the School of Theology and Religious Studies Of The Catholic University of America In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements For the Degree Doctor of Philosophy

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By

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Washington, D.C.

2011
Post-retirement Religiosity among Migrating Northern Catholic Baby Boomers

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In the United States Baby Boomers constitute a “lead cohort” due to their sheer size and influence on cultural, religious, and spiritual trends. As Boomers matriculate through the life-cycle, their attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors will likely continue to alter the national religious landscape. There is, however, no explicit research as to how this generation influences the religious scene as they leave the workforce, especially those who migrate to moderate climates throughout the United States and reestablish their faith in a new location. In order to gain insight into the Boomer’s changing religious practices, this dissertation isolates a single denomination (Roman Catholic), an age/situation specific cohort (retiring Baby Boomers), and unidirectional regional migration (north-to-south) to understand fluctuations in religious commitment. The dissertation focuses exclusively on the Diocese of Raleigh, NC where north-to-south migration undergirds the explosive growth of its Catholic population although Catholics still constitute a small minority of religious adherents in the region.

The study combines quantitative and qualitative methodologies to gauge effects of migration, recently acquired minority status, and life-cycle changes on Catholic Boomers’ religious commitment in the Diocese of Raleigh. Surveys were distributed to Catholics across six parishes in three distinct retiree-heavy regions. A subset of Baby Boomers was also interviewed about their experiences of Catholicism in the South.
Empirical results demonstrate increasing religious commitment among recent Catholic migrants; however, differences emerge between Boomers and other generational cohort-groups. Additionally, the impetus behind fluctuations in religiosity varies depending on the survey measure. Binomial logistic regression shows minority status has a direct, positive effect on bible reading and an inverse effect on Mass attendance. For Baby Boomers, the number of parish friends is the most powerful predictor of heightened religious commitment. Qualitative data supplement these findings.

A more intense religious environment across all faiths in the region also has a positive impact on the religious commitment of incoming Catholics. The spillover effect is most apparent in changes reported in the frequency of bible reading and Mass attendance. As Catholics who migrated to the region increased their religious commitment, they influence the most recent migrants to follow suit.
This dissertation by Christopher James Born fulfills the dissertation requirements for the doctoral degree in philosophy approved by William D. Dinges, Ph.D., as Director, and by Lucinda Nolan, Ph.D., and Raymond Studzinski, O.S.B, Ph.D., as Readers.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It is difficult to comprehend the myriad of selfless contributions which aided in
the completion of this dissertation. From the beginning of my studies, my dissertation
director, Bill Dinges, has been a tremendous instructor, mentor, motivator, and friend.
The generosity he displayed with his time, knowledge, and editorial skills has only been
rivaled by his enthusiastic pep-talks to “get ‘er done.” This project would not have been
completed without his guidance even as my family moved back and forth across the
country. My two other readers, Fr. Raymond Studzinski and Cindy Nolan, provided a
sharp eye and invaluable insights in addition to displaying tremendous patience as I
completed the project. They also contributed to shaping my approach toward the
intersection of psychology and religion and enhanced my skills as an instructor at the
collegiate level.

Other faculty members within the School of Theology and Religious Studies have
also contributed to my advancement as a scholar and educator. First, I want to thank
John Grabowski for picking up the phone in the summer of 2004. It was during this call
that he demonstrated great faith in my ability by offering the Johannes Quasten
Scholarship. Through courses and conversations, Charles Jones, William Barbieri, Sr.
Margaret Kelleher, Fr. James Wiseman, Fr. Patrick Granfield, and Karen Korol also
deserve credit in helping develop my scholarly abilities. My family is extremely grateful
for the funding provided by the Hubbard Fellowship during the dissertation process. This
generous financial assistance eased the typical burdens associated with data gathering and
dissertation writing.
Before arriving at The Catholic University of America, I spent two years studying Humanities at Xavier University under the tutelage of Richard Gruber. His interdisciplinary methodology taught me the wide array of subjects through which one can approach a particular subject. Along with Professor Gruber, Sr. Louise Akers, James Buchanan, John Getz, Michelle Brady, and Timothy Quinn re-ignited my passion for learning and provided the confidence and tools necessary to complete this dissertation.

I must also thank Mary Gautier and the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) for use of their data on Catholics from the 2008 Sacraments Today study. Additionally, Fr. Tom Gaunt – now the Executive Director of CARA – met with me on more than one occasion and kindly offered his insights on Catholicism in the region and on the construction and distribution of the survey itself.

This whole endeavor would not have been possible without the intelligent and lighthearted, stress-free gatherings with my classmates. Christine Brickman Bhutta and Janel Kragt Bakker freely shared their own experiences with me and helped me navigate the sometimes convoluted route of coursework, comps, proposals, and dissertation writing. They were beyond generous with their friendship and willingness to discuss a wide range of tangential topics over coffee, peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, or adult beverages. Along with Todd Scribner, these friends-turned-colleagues graciously withstood the onslaught of research proposals I doled out over time. They were instrumental in the formulation of this topic and methodological approach.

My office roommates, Fr. Jim Sabak and Alexandra Carroll, were wonderful distractions to the daily stresses of writing while teaching. I only wish I could package up some of the laughter to break out as a magical elixir on some rainy day in the future. I
already miss these cathartic sessions. Other old friends contributed to this project in ways known and unknown to them, especially Craig Bryant, Steve Krieger, Molly Thumann Bischoff, John Dillon, Andy Mayfield, Bill Faulkner, Todd Smith, Dirk Shadd, Jason Klocke, Tim Mangan, Dan Woodring, and Mike Bauer. They displayed great effort in trying to keep me grounded in the “real world” application of my research and to provide a check against esotericism. Most importantly, these characters taught me the art and value of storytelling.

As my wife, two sons, and I crisscrossed the nation during the writing of this dissertation, we encountered some amazing individuals. Michael and Monica Stadtlar and Jim and Cheryl Barnds were wonderful neighbors always asking how they could help. In addition to being great friends, the Stadtlers played the role of house hunter while Jim and Cheryl may still be suffering from long hours of stuffing survey envelopes. The neighborhood crew in Palo Alto, CA, especially Keren Robertson, Briggs Heaney, and Sarah Breitweser, provided additional hours of work time by selflessly occupying the boys with an assortment of fun-filled, outdoor activities. Keren’s interest in the topic and inspirational notes were thoughtful and effective reminders to keep pushing forward toward the finish line.

In addition to all the financial, emotional, and intellectual support my parents, Gerry and Kathy, have given me over the years and toward this project, I must also thank them for somehow instilling in me a love of learning and problem solving. Their unending willingness to care for the boys, regardless of our geographic location, directly contributed to productive work. I hope I can replicate to my own children their modeling of selflessness. My siblings, Gerry, Michelle, and Kevin, have inspired me in their own
unique ways by displaying “religion in action” and gently prodding me along toward finishing the project.

My in-laws also provided endless support in a variety of locales. My wife’s parents, Joe and Corinne Butera, not only helped inspire the project as they retired and moved to North Carolina, but they cheerfully cared for the children over lengthy intervals. My mother-in-law’s interest in the project made me feel, time and again, that my research was making a difference on the ground. My sister-in-law and her husband, Julie and Joe Lunich, repeatedly welcomed us into their home for extended stays, treated our children as their own, and allowed me time to push toward completion.

Mostly, I need to thank my wife, Lisa, and two boys, Collin and Keegan. Actually, a “thank you” is not nearly enough for all the support and encouragement they have shown and sacrifices they have made to see this project come to fruition. This journey began before the boys were born and through the seemingly countless moves, they never complained and quickly adapted into their new environments. My wife has supported us and put her own career goals on hold during this time. This dissertation is her work as much as it is my own. Even with the late nights, working weekends, and missed dinners, the unrelenting love they all shared is humbling. I am excited to see what the next stage in our lives will bring.

Finally, I was overwhelmed by the cooperation and support of the pastors and parishioners in the Diocese of Raleigh, NC. This project was built through their generosity. Residents welcomed me into their parishes, took time to complete the surveys, provided insightful feedback, and talked with me, often at length, about their experiences in the diocese. While I cannot thank them by name, I also need to recognize
the kindness of the pastors who took time to talk with me, show me around their facilities, and discuss the ongoing boom and associated challenges of Catholicism in the Diocese of Raleigh.

To all those who contributed to the completion of this project, I offer a deep and heartfelt, “Thank you! We did it!”
CHAPTER 1:
AN INTRODUCTION TO THE PROJECT: THE CHANGING DIOCESE OF RALEIGH

1.1. The Catholic Construction Boom

The Most Reverend Michael Burbidge, the current bishop of the Diocese of Raleigh, has been an incredibly busy man. Over the last six months of 2010, he has presided over ground breakings, dedicated new parish buildings, and blessed new church structures.¹ During this stretch of time, Bishop Burbidge travelled to St. Brendan the Navigator Church in Shallotte, NC to dedicate its recent expansion.² He then led a blessing for the opening of a new 15,000 square-foot activity center at St. Raphael the Archangel Catholic Church in Raleigh and also blessed the soil before a groundbreaking for a new church building at Saint Eugene parish in Wendell, NC doubling its capacity.

In October and November, Bishop Burbidge blessed the addition at St. Thomas More parish in Chapel Hill, which added 50,000 square-feet to the parish complex, and presided over the groundbreaking for a new church building at St. Mary’s in Mt. Olive, NC. In the final month of 2010, he blessed and dedicated a new Parish Administration

¹ The magazine published by the Diocese of Raleigh, NC Catholics, includes articles on new construction in the diocese. The new construction discussed in this section is covered in the September, October, and December 2010 issues along with the January/February 2011 issue of NC Catholics (http://www.nccatholic.org).

² The new construction doubled the church’s capacity from 500 to 1,200 worshippers, making it one of the largest churches in the diocese. Since its founding in 1983, St. Brendan has now outgrown two church buildings. Ten years ago, there were only 100 families in the parish. Now the parish is home to close to 4,000 families.
Building at St. Stanislaus in Castle Hayne, NC. The bishop’s travels will remain steady as the construction boom continues into 2011.

1.2. Room for Growth

As demonstrated by the ongoing capital improvements detailed above, the Catholic population in the Diocese of Raleigh has been expanding rapidly over the past three decades. One reason for the explosive growth rate actually stems from the historically small percentage of Catholics in the diocese. North Carolina was the last southern state without a Catholic diocese, a reality that did not change until 1924 with the formation of the Diocese of Raleigh. This delay was understandable considering there were only 6,483 Catholics in the state in 1926 (Powers 2003). By 1950, the number of Catholics in North Carolina increased to around 20,000. However, this still represented only one-half of 1 percent of the population. By 1972, there were enough Catholics in the state—around 70,000—to warrant the creation of a second diocese, the Diocese of Charlotte (Miller 1984; Powers 2003). Statewide, the number of Catholic adherents in 1980 increased to nearly 95,000 (Churches and Church Membership in the United States 1980).

In 1980 the number of registered Catholics in the Diocese of Raleigh, the focus of this study, was estimated to be around 45,000, which accounted for only 1.6 percent of

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3 There is now a Diocesan Home Mission Society (established by Bishop Burbidge in 2007) that assists in the construction of chapels and churches in the home mission areas in the diocese. The focus of the Home Mission Society is to build churches in regions that, due to financial constraints, cannot utilize the traditional methods, such as capital campaigns, bank loans, or parish savings (NC Catholics, January/February 2011).

4 Congregational “adherents” include all full members, their children, and others who regularly attend services or participate in the congregation.
the population in that region (Official Catholic Directory 1980). With each decade, the Catholic population boomed until, in 2008, it had quadrupled to over 200,000 or 4.8 percent of the regional population (Official Catholic Directory 2008).

What was the source of the rapid expansion of the Catholic faith in the region? Local conversions to the faith played a minimal role in the growth of Catholicism. Instead, the rise of Catholicism in the region was the result of migration from a variety of sources. For example, in rural areas of the Diocese of Raleigh, Catholic growth was due in large part to Latino and other foreign immigrants drawn to the agricultural and manufacturing industries (Powers 2003; Hill 1997).

In metropolitan areas, the “Research Triangle” in particular, the development of technological and commercial sectors and planned communities attracted many young, highly educated workers from outside the region (Logino et al. 2002; Powers 2003; Hill 1997). The majority of these transplants originated from northern and midwestern locales which have higher concentrations of Catholics than North Carolina (Kosmin and Keysar 2006). As the metropolitan regions grew in size, so did their service industries. This growth attracted Latino and other foreign immigrants to urban areas, which also contributed to Catholicism’s growth.

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5 In 1980 and 1985, adults officially joining the Catholic Church were referred to as “converts.” In other years, these individuals are categorized as “adult baptisms.” Between 1980 and 2008, the number of “adult baptisms” or “converts” averaged 261 people per year.

6 The “Research Triangle” is a geographical region around Raleigh which also includes Durham and Chapel Hill. The area is home to a number of medical and technology companies as well as North Carolina State University, Duke University, and University of North Carolina. See http://www.rtp.org for more information.
Finally, portions of the diocese have become popular retirement destinations, especially along the eastern coast. Middle and upper class retirees from the North and Midwest migrated to the region enticed by the milder climate, lower cost of living, social activities, numerous golf courses, and other amenities (Bradley et al. 2008; Clark and Hunter 1992; Duncombe et al. 2003; Logino et al. 2002; Walters 2002). Roughly 40 percent of these transplants self-identify as Catholic, so their influx has substantially altered the regional religious composition. As more migrants arrived, the number of Catholics steadily increased and there is no sign of this trend slowing in the immediate future.

This dissertation is a study focused exclusively on this final category of migrants to the Diocese of Raleigh, NC. More specifically, I concentrate on the most recent cohort-group of retirees, the Baby Boomer Generation, and investigate how a transition into the region impacts their Catholic faith.

1.3. The Value of the Study

In the United States, Baby Boomers have been dubbed a “lead cohort” due to their sheer size and influence on cultural, religious, and spiritual trends (Cimino and Latin 1998; Hoge et al. 1994; Roof 1993, 1999). As this group enters the next stage of the life cycle, their attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors will likely continue to alter the national religious landscape (Roof, 1993, 1999). There is, however, no explicit research as to how this generation is shaping the religious scene as they leave the workforce, especially those who move to communities in moderate climates throughout the United States and reestablish their faith in a new location.
In order to gain insight into the Boomer Generation and their changing religious practices this study isolates a single denomination (Roman Catholic), an age/situation specific cohort (retiring Baby Boomers), and unidirectional regional migration (north to south) to understand fluctuations in religious commitment. Additionally, this study provides further insight into how one group reacts when migrating from an area in which their religious tradition is dominant to an area in which that tradition is in the minority and tests whether a newly acquired minority status is an impetus for increased religious involvement.

In addition to life cycle changes such as retirement and migration, Catholic Boomers also find themselves in the midst of various theological and ecclesial transformations associated with the Second Vatican Council. At a time when the ecclesiological, theological, and spiritual implications of post-Vatican II Catholicism are still being contested, the Boomers are on the verge of supplanting the older generations as leaders in their parishes. During this transitional time, what does a more empowered laity—one of the emergent themes of Vatican II—mean for the future of the Catholic Church in America as Boomers retire, accumulate more free time, and move to areas where Catholics are in the minority and lay participation is necessitated due to the ongoing priest shortage?

Using the quantitative and qualitative data gathered in my research, I assess the current state of Boomer Catholicism in the Diocese of Raleigh, NC and detail expressed concerns for the future of the Catholic Church in this retirement destination. In addition to providing insights into how the life cycle, migration, minority status, and social
networks influence Catholic belief and practice, findings from this study should also be
helpful for Catholic dioceses and parish-planning organizations in retirement
destinations. As the parishes welcome Boomer migrants into their community, specific
challenges arise. To be successful, the parishes need to recognize and address the
specific needs of this unique, but robust, group of internal migrant American Catholics.

1.4. The Plan of the Study

On February 12, 2008, Kathleen Casey-Kirschling made history becoming the
first Baby Boomer to receive a Social Security retirement benefit payment (Social
Security Online 2008). Born one second after midnight January 1, 1946, she is
considered the first of a generational explosion of 77 million individuals. As with Ms.
Casey-Kirschling, many of the millions of Boomers soon to retire plan on migrating away
from northern and midwestern states toward more amenable climates filled with enticing
amenities. As these older adults move from one region to another, they carry their
religious sensibilities with them. However, many are confronted with new and disparate
religious environments from those to which they are accustomed. How, then, do these
individuals respond? How does their religious behavior change? For Catholics, in
particular, how do they embrace or express their faith in a region dominated by Baptists
and other more-conservative Christians? How do they adapt to the local religious
environment?

Chapter two introduces the unique religious environment in the United States and
the distinctive set of factors experienced by Catholic Baby Boomers who retire and
migrate into southern regions. The supply-side theory of religious change in the United
States is introduced along with opposing viewpoints. The theories attempt to explain why and how minority or low market share religious firms thrive in a competitive environment. While diocesan Catholics practicing their faith in a Baptist-dominant region fit the statistical designation of a religious minority, their perception of minority status is equally important. The chapter concludes with a discussion of Catholics as a “beleaguered minority” in southern regions and the impact this perception may have on religious commitment.

Chapter three considers the powerful impact the 1960s social and cultural change had on Baby Boomers’ religious development. In addition to the rise of the counterculture, Catholics during this era also experienced the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) in various ways, assimilated in varying degrees into mainstream culture, and contested over *Humanae Vitae* (1968). The lasting effects of these events are discussed in relation to previous generations. In addition to cultural changes, this chapter also addresses the life course changes encountered by the Boomer Generation and the impact these turning points may have on religious commitment. The chapter concludes with a discussion of competing theories behind the effects of regional migration on religious practice and belief.

The beginning of chapter four presents the typical migration patterns of Catholics to the region along with the statistical rise of Catholicism in the Diocese of Raleigh, NC over the last few decades. The chapter also outlines the exploratory study of the diocese including a brief description of and justification for the survey distribution methods. The remainder of the chapter establishes the generational cohort-groups and introduces a
portion of the empirical findings. The religious characteristics of the Boomer Generation are compared to previous generations. Additionally, the belief items measuring personal autonomy versus institutional support are compared across generations. As a way to investigate life cycle effects on religious behavior, the differences between working and retired Boomers are examined. The distinctions between native and migrant Catholics on religious measures are also introduced. The chapter concludes with an assessment of the correlation between educational attainment and religious commitment among the study’s respondents.

Chapter five includes further empirical findings, but focuses more intently on changes in religious commitment upon moving to the region. Changes in Mass attendance, giving, bible reading, and other variables are analyzed in order to assess the impact a regional move may have on beliefs and behaviors of older Catholics in the diocese. Further, the destination of the migration is taken into account. The correlation between religious minority status and religious commitment is measured on a number of variables. The chapter also examines how the perception of religious discrimination or bias influences the religious beliefs and behaviors of diocesan Catholics and concludes with an assessment of the power of social networks on Catholic religiosity in the region.

The final two chapters utilize the qualitative data gathered in the study to present a more integrated understanding of Catholics in the region. Catholics’ own faith stories are shared in order to enrich the analysis and compile a “thick description” of regional Catholicism. Respondents were asked about their experiences of Catholicism in the region, differences they have noticed, and why their religious behaviors may have
increased or decreased upon moving to the region. The responses are varied and arranged into thematic categories in chapter six. Additional themes gathered from the qualitative data are also explored.

Chapter seven continues the qualitative data analysis, but focuses primarily on the question of changes in religious behavior among Boomer Catholics. Common reasons for increases and decreases in religiosity emerge from the interviews and comments. In an effort to build a more comprehensive picture of Catholicism in the region, the remainder of chapter seven synthesizes the findings from the qualitative data with the empirical results. Topics addressed include the meteoric growth of Catholicism in the region, the influence of southern religiosity on new migrants, the power of social networks on commitment, and the role of minority status and religious discrimination in changing religiosity. The chapter concludes by revisiting the theories of religious change outlined earlier in the dissertation and assesses their level of predictive value for this case study of Boomer Catholics in the Diocese of Raleigh, NC.

With the vast number of Boomers on the verge of retirement and the massive influence this cohort-group has had on American religious culture, it is imperative to study how changes specific to this cohort (aging, retirement, migration) are impacting religious identity and religious change. This case study of Catholics in the Diocese of Raleigh is an entry point into these issues and to broader theoretical questions regarding changes in the American religious landscape in the coming decades.
2.1. Introduction

Walking down the cereal aisle in the grocery store, one is bombarded with a plethora of appealing options. Boxes call out and vie for further inspection. They compete against one another for the right to dive into the shopping cart trolling down the aisle. Some brands have their niches—touting “new and improved” healthy ingredients; others bask in their sugar-filled glow appealing to the younger cohorts, while still others remain staples that trace their history back generations.

There is a box of cereal for every taste, age group, and price range. So, which cereal to buy? Does one buy the fluffy cereal the kids will enjoy or focus on the brand with the healthiest contents and highest nutritional value? Does one buy the brand that their parents did out of habit, or seek out a new product recently emerging on the market? Does one succumb to the latest advertising campaign, or buy a brand recommended by a close friend? How does one decide?

On the surface, it may appear sacrilegious to compare deciding one’s religious affiliation to picking a box of cereal off the shelf, but valuable insights are to be gained in doing so. Competition, recommendations, advertising, and product innovations play into the vast cereal marketplace, but it is sometimes a challenge to accept that the same principles apply to the American religious marketplace. Applying these economic principles to religious bodies is necessary, however, to understand how religious belief has sustained itself in the United States despite the dynamics of modernization.
This chapter tells the story of how the interpretive framework for the proliferation of religious life in the United States has changed over the past half century. In the not too distant past, some sociologists gave religion in the United States its last rights. It was only a matter of time, they argued, before religious belief and practice would succumb to the inexorable forces of modernization; future studies, however, did not bear this out. Religion in the United States did not give way to its secular cousin. Instead, religiosity—as measured by belief in the divine, religious affiliation, and church membership—survived and has found new vigor. The account of how this change in mindset occurred and a review of the uniqueness of the national religious scene are essential prerequisites for delving into the beliefs and practices of a particular faith tradition and age cohort—Catholic Baby Boomers.

The Baby Boomer generation—77 million strong—is the largest and most prosperous generation in the history of the United States. The religious beliefs and behavior of this cohort have been the subject of numerous studies over the years, ranging from how they have altered denominational boundaries (Hoge et al. 1994) to their predilection for individualized spirituality (Roof 1993, 1999; Cimino and Lattin 2002). As this group moves along the life course, their religious sentiments and activities may continue to influence the national religious landscape (Roof 1993). There is, however, no explicit research as to how this generation is shaping the religious scene as they leave the workforce, especially those who move to communities in moderate climates throughout the United States and re-establish their faith in a new location.
Catholic Baby Boomers face unique challenges when retiring from the workforce and migrating to southern communities. Life cycle changes typically influence religious behavior (Dillon and Wink 2003a, 2003b, 2007; Firebaugh and Harley 1991; Fowler 1981; Roof and Johnson 1993; Stolzenberg et al. 1995; Wilhelm et al. 2007; Wink and Dillon 2003). Migration, as well, usually has an impact on religious commitment (Bibby 1997; Myers 2000; Stump 1984a, 1984b). If retirement and migration are experienced simultaneously, are changes in religious commitment exacerbated or mitigated? For Catholic Baby Boomers, social dislocation coupled with a loss of location-specific religious capital may result in a decrease in commitment levels. At the same time, an increase in free time, the desire to socialize, and Catholicism’s minority status in a regional environment characterized by higher levels of attendance, giving, and salience, may foster heightened religious participation.

The immense size of the cohort-group in the Catholic Church and its history as a culturally influential generation require an in-depth analysis into the fluctuations in religious behaviors linked to retirement and migration. Toward this goal, the project includes a case study of the religious attitudes and practices of retired Catholic Baby Boomers who have migrated to select southeastern parishes in the Diocese of Raleigh, North Carolina. While the study focuses more specifically on the retiree-dominated diocese, reviewing research concerning the national religious landscape in contemporary

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7 The methods by which the state of North Carolina was selected as well as the specific parishes in the Diocese of Raleigh are addressed in Appendix 1.
America assists in formulating hypotheses concerning the permutations in Catholics’ religious commitment upon post-retirement migration.

This chapter begins with the unique separation of church and state in the United States and the effect the separation has on religious commitment of the general population. The section then examines claims that disestablishment of a monopoly religion, state-sponsored faith, or withdrawal of government support for particular religion will, in the end, bring about the demise of religious belief in general. Accordingly, in a modern pluralistic situation, religions (and their worldviews) fiercely compete with one another and, ironically, assist in ushering in an era of secularization. This old paradigm introduced by A. Comte, E. Durkheim, M. Weber, K. Marx, S. Freud, and, more recently, by Thomas Luckmann, Peter Berger, and others envisioned religious demise on the horizon. The chapter then introduces those who caution Berger and his colleagues to not too quickly assume the end of religious belief and behavior. R. Stephen Warner (1993) outlines a new paradigm for understanding religious change in America and points to the sustainability of belief and practice over the previous one-hundred and fifty years. This new paradigm (the religious economies or rational choice model) argues that secularization theorists prematurely announced religion’s demise and that free market competition is the secret of religion’s vitality. Fluctuations in commitment levels are actually due to changes in the supply-side of religion—denominations and

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8 The religious vitality within the United States is not consistently replicated within European countries. The decreasing salience of religion in Western Europe (cf. World Values Survey) lends support to proponents of secularization theory. Concerning the United Kingdom, Bruce (2001) goes so far to claim that major British religious denominations will cease to exist in 2030 unless the long-stable trends of irreligion are reversed.
congregations. Disestablishment accompanied secularization which actually allowed religious firms to work freely and enthusiastically for resources and “customers.”

Following the secularization debate, which is far from over, the chapter explores the various strands of the new religious economies model outlined by Warner (1993). Even within the new paradigm, opinions differ over whether the supply-side (churches) or demand-side (individuals) of the equation contribute more toward affecting religious commitment. There is a discussion of how the various theorists measure “competition” and its influence on religious strength—government regulation, monopolies, pluralism, or market share. Next, the impact of low market share on religious commitment is examined. The conclusion is that minority religions in free market economies contain more committed members than those in the majority faiths. Three theories explaining these findings are discussed in reference to the situation of Baby Boomer Catholics when migrating from the North to the South. Finally, the chapter discusses the role of Catholics as a “beleaguered minority” in the United States in general, in the South, and specifically in the Diocese of Raleigh.

2.2. **Pluralism, Competition and the Sources of Religious Decline**

The First Amendment to the United States Constitution states in part:

> Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.

While arguments ensue over whether or not the United States is a “Christian nation” or was established upon “Christian principles,” the first amendment creates an environment in which any new or ancient religion can succeed if it can convince potential and
continuing members of its validity and acquire enough resources (time, money, and effort) to endure in the open market. As shoppers can easily switch from one brand of cereal to another, religious consumers are free to choose from a wide array of religious options.\(^9\) While there may be familial, economic, and social implications of joining a new religious group (or even forming a new religion altogether), and while initiation rites and membership requirements differ drastically from one tradition to the next, the Constitution protects individuals in expressing and exercising their beliefs.

Some researchers characterize the current American religious environment as a *market situation* of religion;\(^10\) however, the competitive environment is seen as a precursor to overall decline of religion in American society (Berger 1967; Bruce 2006).\(^11\) The American religious landscape is unique in that all religious groups compete with each other on equal footing. Additionally, *religious* interpretations compete with *non*-religious outlooks in attempting to “define the world” (Berger 1967: 137). Nationalism, individualism, sexual emancipation and other ideologies all fiercely compete for their presentation of reality—the way the world is constructed, maintained, and legitimized. In religiously non-monopolistic regions, such as the United States, the cacophony of voices clamoring for acceptance creates inconsistency and, eventually, individuals in these

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\(^9\) Ellison and Sherkat (1999: 366) claim there are over 2,100 religious groups in the United States.

\(^10\) Berger (1967: 138) uses the phrase “*market situation*.” The market model approach is traced back to Adam Smith and other economists when writing about the religious situation in the United States. Iannaccone (1991) bases his theory on a re-reading of Smith’s *Wealth of Nations*.

\(^11\) Secularization theory itself can be traced back to early sociologists Henri Saint-Simon and Auguste Comte, who argued that scientific advancement and the changing political cultures (basic elements of “modernity”) necessarily lead to declines in religious belief and behaviors. Later sociologists noted the role pluralism and free religious markets play in the advancement of the secular society.
regions face a crisis of definition. The religious interpretations of reality that, in the past, were merely authoritatively imposed on the masses and taken for granted, now have to be marketed, sold, and persuasive enough to justify their demands on resources, beliefs, and behaviors (Berger 1967; Wilson 1976).\textsuperscript{12} If religious teachings are to be accepted by consumers in a more modernized world, they must heed the advancements of secularization. As a result, theological teachings are “demystified” to the degree that they seek secular legitimation thus losing their taken-for-granted nature. To be relevant to the masses, religions may look outside their own historical contexts for validity of its teachings; otherwise, adherents must rely solely on their subjective consciousness–their faith–to be convinced that their belief is, in fact, true. In the end, religion is privatized to the degree that it becomes “true for them” but not true for others (Berger 1967; Bruce 2006; Luckmann 1970).\textsuperscript{13}

This pluralistic, competitive religious environment “plunges religion in to a crisis of credibility” (Berger 1967: 151). Religions, no longer possessing taken-for-granted status, compete equally with other religious and secular arguments for accepted explanations behind the structure of the world (Bruce 2006). As social majorities change and scientific discoveries are made, religions must incorporate the new discoveries or risk alienating their current and potential adherents. If religions are changeable, the

\textsuperscript{12} Bryan Wilson (1976) argues, in part, that religion is primarily found in the small, local “community” and is not pervasive throughout the larger structure of society; the demise of religion, then, is rooted in the decline of the community-centered manner of living throughout the world.

\textsuperscript{13} Bruce (2006: 424) states the consequence of religious privatization: “It is difficult to live in a world that treats as equally valid a large number of incompatible beliefs and that shies away from authoritative assertions without coming to question the existence of any one truth. We may continue to prefer our world view, but we find it hard to insist that what is true for us must also be true for everyone else.”
objectivity surrounding their explanation of reality becomes dubious. Following the argument of one of the early philosophers of religion, David Hume, as well as early sociologist Emile Durkheim, secularization proponents contend that in a religiously pluralistic environment, every religious claim undercuts all others (Berger 1967; Bruce 2006; Luckmann 1970; Tschannen 1991).

In the end, which religious world-view is to be trusted? Is it just a matter of personal preference? Undermining the “sacred canopy” of a society, pluralism and competition in a free market lead to the overall decline in the plausibility and legitimating power of religion in general. Further, the certainty with which one holds religious beliefs is undercut as the religious outlook is not routinely verified by the larger, modern, secularized culture. As a result, pluralism and religious competition in the free market, as found in the United States, contribute toward a situation where religion loses its explanatory power and persuasiveness over individual lives. Simply put, for secularization proponents, pluralism and free-market religious competition taken together invariably results in religious decline.

Berger later refined his 1967 claims concerning the inevitable march of secularization,14 but other theorists continue in his stead. Olivier Tschannen (1991: 396) investigates the nuances of prominent secularization hypotheses and constructs a general secularization paradigm into which the theories of Thomas Luckmann, Peter Berger, Bryan Wilson, David Martin, Richard Fenn, Talcott Parsons, and Robert Bellah can be

14 Peter Berger reassesses traditional secularization theory and his role in its formation. He readily admits, “As I see the evidence, the world, with some notable exceptions […], is as religious as it has ever been, and in some places is more religious than ever” (2001: 445).
Addressing the research, Tschannen (1991: 401) concludes that the emergence of religious pluralism is unmistakably linked to secularization:

As political authority ceases to reinforce the authority of religion, the monopoly of religion crumbles, giving way to a number of competing denominations. [...] As a result of the churches’ loss of social control, religious practice and affiliation decline.

The secularization proponents uniformly argue that the emergence of a free-market, religiously pluralistic, society, such as the one found in the United States, eventually leads to the demise of religious beliefs, practices, and affiliation. If this is, in fact, the case, how does one explain the high levels of religiosity over the last five decades and relatively steady level of religious affiliation in the United States?

2.3. **Pluralism, Competition and the Sources of Religious Sustainability**

Looking at the prevalence and sustainability of religion in the decades following the tumultuous 1960s, a cadre of skeptical scholars re-evaluated the validity of claims made by the various strands of secularization theory.¹⁶ Investigating the “death of God” literature, Glock and Stark (1965) could not find substantial evidence in the empirical data that would support secularization’s doomsday predictions for religion. They suggest that previous theories were based merely on qualitative judgments rather than quantitative ones. Demerath (1968) found after investigating previous studies of diverse

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¹⁵ Chaves (1991) and Bruce (1992) can be added to the cadre of researchers who do not support the new paradigm offered by Warner (1993). Marwell and Demerath (2003) cite the rise in those who report “no religious preference” in recent surveys as a clear sign of the secularization process.

¹⁶ Karel Dobbelarere (1981, 1984) breaks out three distinct types of secularization that has been found in previous literature: societal secularization, organizational secularization, and individual secularization. Stark and Finke (2000) make the same clarification.
religious measures that one cannot empirically confirm the demise of religion as predicted by the various theories of secularization. Hadden (1987: 587) sharply criticized secularization theory as merely a product of its time. He introduced long overdue challenges to an ironically “sacralized” theory that emphatically proclaimed “religion is in the midst of its final death throes.”

A turning point in the sociology of religion occurred in 1993 with R. Stephen Warner’s oft-cited article reflecting on the emergence of a new paradigm in accounting for the healthy state of religion in the United States. While Warner does not go as far as some who “propose dropping the term secularization from all theoretical discourse” (Stark and Iannaccone 1994: 231, italics in original), he does argue that “those who use the older [secularization] paradigm to interpret American religious organization—congregations, denominations, special purpose groups and more—face increasing interpretive difficulties and decreasing rhetorical confidence” (Warner 1993: 1045). Modernization—accompanied by rationalization, industrialization, urbanization, technical and scientific advancement—did not eliminate religion from our societies as predicted by secularization theory proponents. In fact, Warner (1993) recounts a daunting list of studies all demonstrating the healthy state of religion in the United States where modernization is in full force. A new explanatory model is needed to account for this robustness of religious life. The new paradigm, dubbed the religious “economies” or “markets” model employs concepts and language borrowed from the field of economics. In short, the theory argues the disestablishment of religion—moving from a religious monopoly to religious plurality—is not the precursor of religious decline, but is the central
key for religious vitality. Unlike the theories presented by secularization proponents, the religious economies model claims that free-market competition is necessary for religions to blossom.

In a religious free-market, religious organizations are not supported by the government and thus function similarly to firms in an economic free-market. Without state regulation, varying religious firms will arise in order to meet the divergent needs and preferences of religious consumers. It is not possible, Stark argues, for a single faith tradition to be both “at once worldly and otherworldly, strict and permissive, exclusive and inclusive, expressive and reserved” (1992: 262). Assuming that demand for the powerful rewards offered by religions have been and will remain stable, individuals in this environment have the freedom to choose which firm they support (religious mobilization). The churches must find a way to retain current members and

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17 Religious organizations recognized by the United States Treasury do not have to pay taxes on income or expenses.

18 Stark and McCann (1993: 113) argue that variability in religious preferences is “inherent in the human condition, stemming from such variables as social class, age, gender, health, and life experiences.” The authors pull this notion from Stark and Bainbridge (1987).

19 Iannaccone (1991) qualifies this strong assertion in noting the uniqueness of Catholicism and its ability to maintain diversity through the various religious orders. Additionally, unity and diversity coexist in the variability of Catholic parishes. Some parishes are more oriented toward otherworldly religious expressions, while others are more active in this-worldly, social justice affairs. Both “expressions” of Catholicism are equally valid. The same can be said about Catholic parishes being both expressive and reserved. Ellison (1995) compares the wide range of religious expressions different congregations in a Baptist “monopoly” can offer to the spectrum of flavors a monopoly soda manufacturer produces.

20 Stark and Bainbridge note: “Some common desires are so beyond direct, this-worldly satisfaction that only the gods can provide them. [...] So long as humans intensely seek certain rewards of great magnitude that remain unavailable through direct actions, they will be able to obtain credible compensators only from sources predicated on the supernatural” (1985: 7-8). Religions can offer both intangible, future rewards (i.e., salvation, enlightenment, etc.) and concrete, immediate ones (companionship, opportunities for networking, etc.). See Greeley (1972: 1, 16) for five functions of religion for individuals; these needs have not changed “since the late Ice Age.”
attract new ones. As Warner (1993: 1051) succinctly describes, “For churches, it was sink or swim.”

Find a way to attract business or close up shop. Gorski (2003: 113) defines the new interpretive model:

Where many firms compete in an open market without government interference, individual firms will have to behave entrepreneurially, the quality and selection of religious products will be higher and individual consumers will be more likely to find a religion which is to their liking and standards.

No longer able to take the loyalty of their “consumers” for granted, religious firms must be innovative and persuasive to secure a consistent stream of support.

As noted earlier, Berger (1967) also imagined the American religious environment as a market situation, but he determined that disestablishment and competition would lead to the demise of religious belief, not its endurance. The new paradigm Warner (1993) speaks of argues that disestablishment and competition are necessary to religious survival. In fact, Stark and Bainbridge (1985) argue that secularization (through disestablishment) is a necessary factor behind religious sustainability and growth. In the current model, firms need to compete with one other for members, individuals are free to choose, and new religious movements can fill in gaps in the market’s needs. Assuming religious demand in general has been and will remain stable because of the scarce, intangible rewards or “supernatural compensators” religions

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21 Martin E. Marty (1984: 169) suggests that religious organizations in the 18th century experienced this free-market system and needed to “adapt or die.”

22 New imagery emerged in the field to describe the new paradigm: free enterprise system, religious economies model, rational choice theory, and supply-side theory being just a sample. Later in this chapter, the author makes the distinction between the religious economies model and a subset of arguments under the umbrella of the religious economies model (see Sherkat and Ellison 1999: 378). For example, supply-side theory is not accepted by all theorists that agree with the validity of new paradigm (i.e., Olson and Sikkink 2004). This cohort offers a demand-side alternative. Others (i.e., Smith and Emerson [1998]) attempt to build on the supply-side theory promoted by Stark, Finke, and Iannaccone.
offer (i.e., salvation, immortality, enlightenment), the new paradigm attempts to explain changes in religious tendencies through variations on the supply-side of religion.\textsuperscript{23} Given the chance to operate freely, religious firms will become more enthusiastic in meeting the needs of potential adherents. As a result, measures of religiosity remain steady in the face of modernization.\textsuperscript{24}

\textbf{2.4. Pluralism and Religious Commitment}

While Warner (1993) introduces a new paradigm in the study of religion, this does not mean debate has subsided. In fact, substantial variance persists within the new paradigm. All variations do share the notion that religious vitality in the United States is a result of the free-market situation in which religious firms must compete with one another for a finite amount of resources.\textsuperscript{25} Deinstitutionalizing religious firms (a process of secularization) or moving beyond a government-supported religious monopoly introduces competition into the marketplace and religious groups must vie for adherents.

\textsuperscript{23} The religious economies model does allow for individual preferences to change over time which is explained by the large numbers of people changing their religious affiliation at some point in their lifetime (Roof and McKinney 1987). A 2008 study discovered that about half of all adults in the United States switched their religious affiliation at least once during their lives (Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life 2009b). Also, how much one participates in a particular religion can fluctuate based on the religion itself and the state of the individual (Hoge 1988). The key for the supply-side model of the new paradigm is that the suppliers of religion compete with one another to produce a commodity that is attractive to the consumers.

\textsuperscript{24} The debate over the progress of secularization and the future of religious belief is not over by any means. Steve Bruce (2006), for example, continues to stand by his assertion that secularization is irreversible unless the autonomy of the individual can somehow be curtailed. For a more detailed account of the proliferation of secularization in the modern era, see Steve Bruce, \textit{God Is Dead: Secularization in the West} (Oxford: Blackwell, 2002) and Bruce’s “The Poverty of Economism or the Social Limits on Maximizing,” in Ted Jelen, ed., \textit{Sacred Markets, Sacred Canopies: Essays on Religious Markets and Religious Pluralism} (Lanham, MD: Rowan and Littlefield, 2002).

\textsuperscript{25} See Warner (1993: 1055) for a brief introduction into the different strands within the new paradigm.
and resources, thus creating a pluralistic situation (Stark and Bainbridge 1985, 1987). The pluralistic situation alone is not enough; instead, as Finke and Stark (2003: 103) emphasize, “Religious pluralism (the presence of multiple suppliers) is important only insofar as it increases choices and competition.” Discussion ensues over how one should measure religious competition and which measure is the best predictor for religious vitality in a region: religious regulation and/or state sponsorship, rates of religious pluralism, or religious market share.

Economist and rational choice theorist Laurence Iannaccone (1991: 156) cites Adam Smith as forging the base of an “economic theory of religious institutions.” Iannaccone rediscovers Smith’s warning about the negative impact monopolies and government regulation can have on a nation’s level of religious commitment. To test Smith’s insights, Iannaccone examines seventeen Western, developed nations to investigate how government monopoly and/or regulation of religion dampens religiosity (as measured by church attendance and religious beliefs). Supporting Smith, Iannaccone discovers an inverse connection between religious vitality and the presence of state-regulated or monopolized church markets. Religious commitment is lower in nations that

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26 If the market is constrained in any way (via government, social caste system, political connections), pluralism is not a valid predictor for participation (Stark, Finke, and Iannaccone, 1995, 442). Ellison and Sherkat (1993) argue that not all religious decisions are complete free. Some African-Americans, for example, experience “semi-involuntary” religious options. There are socio-cultural pressures that limit options in these cases.
have either religious monopolies or state-sponsored institutions. Other studies validate Iannaccone’s assertions (Stark 1992; Stark and McCann 1993).27

In a simple religious monopoly, the one religion has little motivation to eliminate waste and faces minimal pressure to meet the needs of its members. In the end, supply-side theory hypothesizes, while it may be the only religious choice, membership and participation levels may decrease.28 One example of the simple monopoly is Medieval Catholicism in which there was little to no separation between church and state. Even though the vast majority of the population was nominally Catholic, it was not a time of uniform acceptance of religious tenets and widespread religious practice. Heresy, dissent, and irreligion were not uncommon (Finke and Stark 1988; Johnson 1976; Stark 1992; Stark and Bainbridge 1985; Stark and McCann 1993; Zaleski and Zech 1995).

27 Specifically, Stark and McCann reaffirm Iannaccone’s assertions: “The greater the pluralism, the higher the level of commitment of the average member to his or her religious preference” (1993: 114, italics in original).

28 Mormonism in the United States is a notable exception to this claim. Debate ensues over the anomaly and implications for the supply-side theory of religious economies. Opponents to rational choice theory argue that Mormon (and in some cases Catholic) exceptions assist in refuting supply-side theory. In the Mormon case, ethnic and religious homogeneity combined with concentric social ties result in added pressure to participate in the dominant religion, at least at minimum levels, to enjoy social benefits and heightened social status (Blau, Land, and Redding 1992; Phillips 1998). A religious monopoly, such as Mormonism in the intermountain West, would contribute to higher rates of commitment through providing social norms, sanctions for noncompliance, and higher religious expectations of co-religionists. On the other hand, rational choice and supply-side theorists note that the strictness can outweigh monopoly status. Mormonism is a putative monopoly in some regions and has higher rates of commitment in these regions, but it is unique in the sense that it is not a lazy monopoly (Stark and Finke 2004). The Mormon faith is relatively costly in its demands of members and in its cultural distinctiveness. Increased demands on member’s resources, such as time and money, eliminate free riders and increase the average overall levels of commitment (Iannaccone 1994). Additionally, Mormons have historically been an embattled cultural minority on a national scale, which has a positive impact on measures of religiosity (Finke and Stark 1989). Further, Mormons have one of the highest fertility rates of all major religious groups as well as a high rate of religious endogamy (Lehrer and Chiswick 1993). Religious homogeneity in the family predicts higher levels of religious socialization of youth which, in turn, impacts retention rates. Mormons have one of the highest retention rates of all major religious groups (Sherkat 2001; Smith and Sikkink 2003).
In addition to a simple monopoly as described above, some religious economies feature government sponsorship and funding of religious firms. In a regulated religious market, faiths which are not state-sponsored are, in effect, marginalized. Producers of the state-sponsored religion are then “insulated,” Iannaccone argues, “from competitive pressures and the preferences of those they ostensibly serve. As a result[,] to the extent that their remuneration is fixed, they will tend to provide suboptimal effort, and hence, suboptimal quality of services” (1991: 161). Perceived government involvement with religious teachings and the poor quality of religious goods offered by the state-supported religion can result in waning religious practice and commitment. Further, a state-sponsored or monopoly religion rarely meets all the religious or spiritual needs of a diverse population.

Iannaccone’s theory is supported by the study’s regression results. The measured level of pluralism in a nation significantly influences the rate of church attendance in that country (1991). Therefore, one can assume that religious economies play a significant part in determining levels of religious activity. The high levels of religious commitment in the United States shown in his results are not surprising; they result from the free-market, pluralistic, competitive environment of religious firms. The results also support the notion that attendance rates (for Protestants) decrease in situations of a state-sponsored, monopoly religion. Iannaccone observes, “The minimal levels of religious participation [attendance, prayer, and confidence in one’s church] in Scandinavian countries are consistent with their being monopolized by Protestant state religions”
These results demonstrate for Iannaccone that a national level of pluralism significantly contributes to the religious vitality of that nation.

2.5. Market Share and Religious Commitment

Iannaccone’s study empirically evaluates religious regulation at the national level and the impact of pluralism on religious practice. His methods and results bring significant concerns to the forefront; for example, is the national level the appropriate level to be measuring pluralism? Religious belief and activity is an expression of the local context and culture. There could be such a variation in religion from one region of a nation to the next such that it is entirely conceivable that different religions would not come in close contact with one another (Finke, Guest, and Stark 1996; Stark 1998; Stark and McCann 1993). A pluralistic environment exists on the national level, but religious firms must interact with one another for the pluralism to have an influence on commitment.

State sponsorship and regulation, levels of pluralism (as a proxy for competition), and market share of religious firms are all interrelated. In the religious economies model, demand for the intangible rewards that religion provides is assumed to be a constant. The

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29 Countries with a dominant Roman Catholic faith do not experience declines in religious practice. Iannaccone accounts for this anomaly by explaining the Roman Catholic Church’s mandated weekly attendance and the internal variability within Roman Catholicism found in different parishes—both of which may diminish the monopoly’s impact on religious practice.

30 In a subsequent article, Iannaccone suggests that the city is the appropriate geographic area. Counties are much too diverse and can hide smaller religious monopolies (Finke and Stark 1989, 1998).

31 Pluralism, defined as the number of religious firms prevalent in a particular religious economy, is most often approximated by the Herfindahl Index. The Herfindahl Index was developed by economists to determine the degree of market concentration in relationship to a particular good.
manner through which one achieves the rewards may change over time (accounting for changes in religious affiliation), but demand for “supernatural compensators” will remain steady. Because monopoly churches are inherently weak, disestablishment or deregulation result—over time—in a religiously pluralistic situation as found in the United States. In the absence of a monopoly religion, diverse religious firms emerge to meet the variations in preferences of the religious consumers (Finke and Stark 1988; Stark 1992; Stark, Finke, Iannaccone, 1995; Stark and Finke 2000a; Stark and McCann 1993; Zaleski and Zech 1995). To be clear, a pluralistic situation does not mean that all religious firms have an equal number of adherents. To accurately measure the impact a free-market religious economy has on commitment, the degree of pluralism alone is not an accurate measure to use. In fact, some studies assert that pluralism negatively impacts religious adherence (Blau, Land, and Redding 1992: Breault 1989a, 1989b; Land, Deane, and Blau 1991; Olson 1998; Olson and Hadaway 1999; Voas, Crockett, and Olson 2002). After a detailed review of previous studies of pluralism and its impact on religiosity, Chaves

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32 Olson goes so far as to argue, “North Americans are religious in spite of, not because of, religious pluralism” (1998, 761). Chaves and Cann (1992) critique Iannaccone’s (1991) results as misleading; they claim Iannaccone makes an argument based on religious subsidy or regulation, but uses empirical measures for religious pluralism in the sample nations. These two measures of religious markets, Chaves and Cann argue, are quite distinct and need to be treated as such. Breault (1989a, 1989b) attempts to replicate the Finke and Stark (1988) assertions that pluralism is positively connected to religious adherence. He notes that what their study really discovers is collinearity between religious diversity and the percent Catholic. In more urban areas where one would also find more pluralism and higher percentages of Catholics, the participation rates will be higher. The increased rates are due to the percentage of Catholics (as they attended more regularly than others in this time frame) and not the diversity itself. Breault (1989a) also notes that religious diversity will have differing effects on the religious participation of a region depending on the liberal-conservative proportion of religious adherents. Citing Kelley (1972), he notes that conservative denominations will be less susceptible than liberal (ecumenical) ones to the undermining influences of various religious competitors which result in decreasing levels of participation. Why Breault places Catholicism in the religiously conservative category with Mormons and Southern Baptists is not made clear in his study. Finke and Stark (1989) challenge Breault’s inclusion of Catholics in a conservative category alongside Mormons and Southern Baptists.
and Gorski (2001) concluded that the “empirical evidence does not support the claim that religious pluralism is positively associated with religious participation in any general sense” (262).\footnote{In fact, the authors conclude that only 12 percent of the 93 analyses run by various researchers (in 26 studies) accurately demonstrate a positive connection between pluralism and participation. While there may be a positive relationship found in individual studies, the principle does not hold in general, which is a key argument of rational choice proponents.} To account for the problems of using a strict measure of pluralism, researchers have come to prefer using a religious firm’s market share in a given region to determine how competition impacts levels of commitment (Chaves and Cann 1992; Hill and Olson 2009; Perl and Olson 2000; Olson 1999; Voas, Crockett, and Olson, 2002).\footnote{See Perl and Olson (2000: 27) for a comprehensive presentation of the various pitfalls of using a pluralism index instead of level of market share.}

The secularization paradigm, promoted by Luckmann, Berger, and Bruce among others, suggests that a religion is only as strong as its ability to persuade its members of its validity. The pluralistic situation ushered in with modernization puts plausibility structures in competition with one another and a secular alternative. Having competing explanations for how the world was brought into being, why the world is the way it is, and how one should behave actually weaken those very explanations. If all religions face inherent decline in a pluralistic situation, minority religions will face even more pressure to validate their beliefs when confronted with secular and more popular religious alternatives. It would seem nearly impossible for minority faiths to survive a pluralistic situation unless they completely reject the modern world and isolate their members from it. While this may have been the modus operandi of Christian Fundamentalists in the early parts of the twentieth century, isolation is not the optimum choice for religious
groups today, not even the most conservative ones (Marsden 2006). Looking at the prescriptions of the secularization paradigm and new research results, proponents of the new model theorize why minority religions (religions having low market shares in specific geographic regions) actually thrive in their situation and have more active and committed members.

The answer for why some religions have more committed and active members in areas with small market share is not to be found in the specific denominational qualities alone. It is true that, on average, conservative Christian denominations have more active and committed members than mainline denominations; however, the higher rate of commitment is more a function of the specific geographical context than it is of the denomination itself (Perl and Olson 2000; Stump 1984a; Stark and Finke 2004). For example, Catholicism is found all across the country, but commitment level among Catholics actually varies by region. What accounts for this? The religious landscape in the United States is not uniform (Carroll 2002; Gaustad 1962; Hill 1985; Kosmin and Keysar 2006, 2009; Zelinsky 1961). In the Northeast region, Catholics have the largest

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35 Marsden (2006) notes the changes in approach of American Christian Fundamentalism—one from isolation to engagement—stemming from the Religious Right and Moral Majority and forward. He reports: “The most striking feature of fundamentalism since the 1970s that distinguishes it from its forebears is its deep involvement in mainstream national politics” (232). Evangelical congregations associated with the National Association of Evangelicals became more involved in “this worldly” affairs around mid-century. For example, the NAE opened a strategic office in Washington, DC in 1943 with the intent of defending religious liberty and assisting mission agencies in dealing with the State Department (National Association of Evangelicals 2010).

36 Gaustad (1962) and Zelinsky (1961) developed a method of using geographical regions as a way of studying religion (Carroll 2002). The practice is still in use and appropriate for discussing the increasing numbers of Americans who migrate from one region to another and subsequent changes in religious behavior.
market share of any faith tradition at 54 percent of religious adherents. In the Southeast, Catholics have one of the lowest market shares of all the competing religions at just 15 percent. The old paradigm suggests that Catholics in the Northeast will have the highest levels of commitment. In the Northeast, plausibility structures should be upheld because more Catholics are present, the faith is more pervasive in the local culture, and fewer direct challenges are presented to the faith. In the Southeast, on the other hand, Catholics are outnumbered, face competing plausibility structures, and may be challenged in their beliefs by other religions. As a result, confidence in the theological and cosmological explanations Catholicism provides could be undermined. According to secularization theory, Catholics in this minority situation may react to these challenges by accepting the more prevalent explanations for the structure of the world or defecting from

37 Market share is figured differently than population share. The Catholic market share of religious adherents is calculated by “% Catholic adherents/total religious adherents.” The Catholic market share for the states considered to be the Northeast are: Massachusetts: 66%; New Hampshire: 66%; Connecticut: 59%; New Jersey: 57%; Vermont: 56%; Maine: 55%; New York: 53%; Pennsylvania: 45%. The total for the region: 54% (Religious Congregations and Membership in the United States, 2000). In a more recent assessment of religious composition of the United States, Kosmin and Keysar (2009) report a 36% Catholic population share in the Northeast region and a 17% Catholic population share in the South Atlantic division of the Southeast Region.

38 The Catholic market share of religious adherents for the states considered to be in the Southeast are: Louisiana: 36%; Florida: 32%; Virginia: 16%; Georgia: 7%; North Carolina: 7%; Arkansas: 6%; South Carolina: 5%; Tennessee: 5%; Mississippi: 5%; Alabama: 5%. The total for the region: 15% (Religious Congregations and Membership in the United States, 2000).

39 With the emergence of the sex abuse crisis in the Catholic Church and the hierarchy’s response to it, challenges to the Catholic Church and faith may have increased despite being the dominant religion. In addition to having Catholics question their own support of the Church in light of the findings, Catholics may also face more local and national criticism for supporting a religion enduring a series of scandalous discoveries and potential cover-ups. One can wonder if Catholics in regions less dominated by the faith, such as the Southeast, would receive more or less scrutiny as a result of the crisis. A 2002 Gallup Poll discovered that Catholic Mass attendance dropped in 2002 over 2001 and 2000. While Gallup does not cite the abuse scandal as a direct cause of the decline, the correlation is strong since Protestant attendance slightly increased during the same time frame. Further, the poll discovered that four out of ten Catholics are less likely to contribute money to the Church as a result of sexual abuse by priests (Newport 2002).
their religion altogether. Unfortunately for the old paradigm, empirical research does not support their claims. Instead, Catholics in the areas where they have lower levels of market share exhibit higher levels of commitment as measured by attendance (Olson 1998; Perl and Olson 2000), subscription to Catholic publications (Stark 1998; Stark and McCann 1993), giving (Perl and Olson 2000; Zaleski and Zech 1995), number of men entering the priesthood (Stark 1992, 1998; Stark and McCann 1993), and conversion rate (Stark 1998).40 These results hold even when controlling for individual traits such as age, gender, social class, and race (Stark and Finke 2004).

The fact that religions tend to have more committed members when faced with lower market shares is essential in assessing the fluctuations in religiosity of Roman Catholics who move from one geographic region of the country to another. Specifically, Roman Catholic retirees in the North and Northeast often choose to spend their golden years in more moderate climates and reconnect with their faith in a new location. What they find is a religious landscape that is drastically different from their home region.

2.6. The Committed Minority–How is this Possible?

Research in the religious economies model claims an inverse or negative relationship between market share and levels of commitment as measured by different indices.41 There is a lack of consensus, however, explaining why market share is inversely proportional to commitment levels. What is it about a smaller market share that

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40 Additionally, Catholic dioceses that are located in low Catholic population shares, engage in innovative activities more frequently as measured by rates of deacons, female religious leaders, and unordained religious leaders (Stark 1998).

leads members of those faiths to be more committed? Three different theories in the field address this question and are relevant to the focus of this study.

One theory suggests that leadership and congregants within denominations with smaller market shares expend more energy to attract new members and retain current ones. Because the argument focuses on the suppliers of religion as the causal factor in changes in commitment levels, it is called the supply-side argument. Low market share religious firms expend more energy than majority faiths—and their work pays off. In an environment with stiff competition, small market share religions, like others, realize that religion is an object of choice. They become more creative and more determined to secure the time, money, and effort of the congregants in the contentious area. More often than not their efforts are successful in acquiring more committed individuals with higher rates of attendance and giving (Finke and Stark 1992, 2003; Iannaccone 1991; Stark and Finke 2000b, 2004; Zaleski and Zech 1995).42

An example of the supply-side approach is offered by Stark and McCann (1993). They claim that the Catholic Church is adept at working in the competitive environment stemming from early minority experiences in American religious history. The Catholic Church’s “vigorous marketing efforts” over the years in the United States have contributed to notably higher commitment levels than of traditionally “Catholic” nations,

42 Iannaccone’s (1991) results show that Protestants have lower rates of church attendance in Protestant monopolies, but that Catholic attendance is largely independent of the competitive state. He cites two suggestions (consistent with the economic approach) for this anomaly: the inherent diversity within Catholicism can stimulate internal competition and the Roman Catholic Church does not hold as close of ties to national governments as some Protestant situations (170-1). Stark and Finke (2004), however, do attribute differences in Catholic levels of activity to variations in market share: “It is not variations in the demographic composition of Catholic populations that cause the immense regional and cross-national differences in Catholic piety, but the religious composition of the environment” (293).
especially in Latin America (Stark and McCann 1993: 121). The key to their hypothesis is that variation in commitment levels of individuals is directly tied to the exuberance, innovative energy, and determination of the religious firms. In the United States, the Catholic Church faces intense competition from two-thousand other religious organizations. In traditionally Catholic countries the Church encounters less hardship and need to market its wares. As a result, increased effort of denominational and parish leadership contributes to higher commitment levels in areas where the Church must innovate and compete for members (Stark 1992, 1998; Stark and McCann 1993). Driving this point home, Stark (1998) cites recent innovations Catholic dioceses have employed in areas where Catholics are in the minority. As the percentage of Catholics in a diocese decreases, the admission rates of deacons, female religious leaders, and unordained leaders (lay and religious) all increase. Stark asserts this policy is not merely a result of a priest shortage. In fact, small market share regions have higher rates of priests per 10,000 Catholics than larger market share regions. Employing alternative leadership practices is an innovation of the Catholic Church in America in response to more competitive religious environments.

43 Stark and McCann (1993) note that the Catholic Church was faced with the task of turning immigrants who were nominally Catholic into active parishioners supporting their parish through volunteering and tithing. Catholic parishes and churches imported the “revival meeting” in the 1830s, made popular by Protestant denominations, to attract new members and intensify commitment of current Catholics. Further, Catholic clergy were willing to move to the areas that needed them most. On the one hand, parishes provided havens for ethnic subcultures where new immigrants could keep their ethnic traditions; on the other hand, priests and parishes were able appeal to a range of ethnicities. The Catholic Church in the United States also built parallel social structures (schools, hospitals, etc.) to educate and socialize the youth and isolate Catholics from a potentially hostile Protestant environment (Finke and Stark 1992). See Chapter 4 in Finke and Stark (1992) for a more in-depth presentation of changes employed by American Catholic leadership to invigorate commitment levels of immigrating Catholics.
A second cohort of new paradigm researchers agrees with the hypothesis that market share is inversely proportional to levels of religious commitment in a given region, but they offer two essential corrections to the preceding supply-side model.\footnote{The visual model presented by Hill and Olson (2009: 632) of supply-side approach is: (1) religious competition $\rightarrow$ (2) religious supplier efforts $\rightarrow$ (3) member commitment levels. Hill and Olson do not question that (2) leads to (3) or that (1) leads to (3). They question whether (1) competition leads directly to (2) increased supplier effort.}

First, religious firms with low market shares do not\footnote{Hill and Olson (2009) measure whether religious firms that face more competition do, in fact, “try harder.” They measure efforts to recruit new members, offering of new services to current members, and clergy’s work hours (629).} exert more effort than others to attract and retain members (Olson and Sikkink 2004; Hill and Olson 2009).\footnote{Olson and Sikkink (2004, 4) measure leadership and congregational effort by (1) the number of pastoral calls that ministers make each year, and (2) the number of revivals held each year by a congregation.} There are traceable variations in denominational effort of clergy and congregation members, but the differences are not due to pluralism, competition, or low market share.\footnote{Olson and Sikkink (2004, 4) measure leadership and congregational effort by (1) the number of pastoral calls that ministers make each year, and (2) the number of revivals held each year by a congregation.} In contrast to the explanation provided by Stark (1998), the actions of Catholic laity in small market shares are not interpreted as innovations on the supply side of the religious economy equation. Instead, decisions by the laity to become deacons or lay leaders are indicators of more committed members—not more energetic firms—when faced with lower market shares (Hill and Olson 2009). The activism falls on the consumer (demand) side of the equation and in no way indicates that small market churches, as a whole, try harder.

If changes do not take place on the supply side of the religious economy, how is it that small market firms have more committed members? This brings us to a second critique of the supply-side model. Religious firms do not necessarily become more active
and energetic in competitive environments. Instead, changes in commitment occur because “small market share religions tend to more easily lose all but their most committed members and only the most committed potential members join such groups” (Olson and Sikkink 2004: 1). The end result is a group of highly committed members—a “faithful remnant.” This scenario is likely when the small market firm is located in a competitive environment consisting of close substitute religious firms (either the same denomination or similar) in geographical proximity (Olson and Sikkink, 2004; Hill and Olson, 2009). Facing stiffer competition and close substitutes, small market share firms endure higher rates of turnover than do more prevalent religions (Blau 1977; Olson 2008; Hill and Olson 2009).

New social movements work primarily and most efficiently through previously established social networks. Religious movements work in the same fashion.47 Members of minority religions may have fewer interactions with co-religionists. Additionally, their social network may contain more religious variability through co-workers, intermarriage, friendships, neighbors, or all of the above.48 Over time, in order to maintain religious homogeneity with their social networks, loosely connected church members may defect from the minority faith (Stark 1996, 1997). Because loosely connected religious adherents have higher odds of defecting, the process creates in the small market religion a

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48 Blum (1985) confirms Blau’s (1977) thesis and notes that “increasing heterogeneity increases the probability of intergroup [religious and ethnic] relations” despite an individual’s preference to only interact with religious or ethnic intragroup contacts (511).
“faithful remnant” or base of highly committed members who either construct a pseudo-enclave of co-religionists or are committed enough to resist the advances of other religious (or even secular) adherents. Through the increased turnover rate, small market firms lose their marginal members (who typically attend and contribute less) and become comprised of highly committed members who have higher levels of attendance and donate more money per capita (Olson 2008). Additionally, the majority religion(s) of a region offers more social acceptance and opportunities for social networking. This extrinsic type of religious expression–using religion as a means to an end–is witnessed in those with lower levels of commitment to their denomination (Allport and Ross 1967).

The above scenario is supported by research on religious switching. For the most part, individuals retain the religion in which they were raised (Finke and Stark 1992; Greeley 1989; Iannaccone 1990, 1994; Sherkat 1998; Sherkat and Wilson 1995; Stark and Finke 2004); however, if individuals do switch religions, it is typically to a religion that is “close to home” (Hadaway and Marler 1993; Sherkat and Wilson 1995; Sullins 1993). In other words, very rarely do religious switches involve radically changing one’s theology, ritual practice, or worldview. Setting up Christian denominations along a conservative-liberal spectrum, Sullins (1993) shows that the odds of one switching from a liberal mainline Christian denomination to a conservative, more sect-like, denomination are much lower than switching to denominations nearby along the spectrum. Olson and Sikkink (2004) use the rationale of “switching close to home” to suggest that minority

49 Taken from Olson (2008).

50 See Stark (1996) and his principle of cultural continuity in explaining why marginalized Hellenized Jews were the most common cohort of converts to the early Christian movement.
religions located in areas constituting close denominational substitutes are more in danger of losing members than religions that are more unique in their respective region. A multi-faith social network combined with the local presence of larger market share close substitutes significantly increases the likelihood that marginal members of low market share faiths will defect (Olson and Sikkink 2004). Again, the above situation results in a faithful remnant or strong base of highly committed members in the low market share religious firms. In this way, this cohort of researchers looks beyond the strict supply-side theories (congregations try harder in low market situations) to explain why market share is inversely proportional to commitment levels.

A third theory explaining how religious firms with low market shares sustain higher rates of committed members focuses on the perceived antagonism between the minority group and the surrounding culture. Using the example of American evangelicals, Smith et al. (1998) note that the movement is booming because the group perceives itself to be “embattled with forces that seem to oppose or threaten it” (89). American evangelicalism, they argue, “thrives on distinction, engagement, tension, conflict, and threat” (89, italics in original). The old secularization paradigm argues that the advent of modernization undermines religious belief and practice through religious pluralism, scientific advancement, rationalization, mass media, industrialization, and structural differentiation. Instead of allowing secularization dynamics to destroy their

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51 Smith et al. (1998: 87-88, 118) specifically note their intent of building on the supply-side thesis of Stark, Finke, and Iannaccone. The supply-side hypothesis works well in the case of evangelicals because the individual congregations (some reaching 20,000 members) are not bound by a governing body and can be swiftly innovative in appealing to new consumer demands. The main task of their argument, however, is to focus on the individual believers and their actions, not the organizational structures.
religious communities, evangelicals are strengthened by it. The evangelical movement builds strength through the perception of a threatened subculture. The subculture along with its cohesiveness and religious message become more fortified in the face of cultural opposition.

A sociological maxim, verified in numerous studies over the years, argues that external threats to a particular group promote internal cohesiveness of that group.\textsuperscript{52} Instead of disbanding, socio-cultural and religious groups become tighter when they face challenges from the outside. An “us versus them” mentality develops and the very group that is being challenged by outsiders grows in internal strength.\textsuperscript{53} This process has been witnessed in racial/ethnic minorities (Borhek 1970; Levine and Campbell 1972), extremist/terrorist groups (Iannaccone 2003; Jurgensmeyer 2000; Lawrence 1989), political organizations (Berman 1974; Markides and Cohn 1982; Stein 1976), and religious firms (Lawrence 1989; Smith et al. 1998).\textsuperscript{54} Researchers have used this theory to explain why Roman Catholics in the majority-Catholic Northeast have significantly lower rates of religious commitment (measured in a variety of ways) than minority Catholics living in majority-Protestant South (Hill and Olson 2009).\textsuperscript{55}

\textsuperscript{52} See Smith et al. (1998: 113-116) for an extensive list.

\textsuperscript{53} See Stein (1976) for a detailed review of studies testing group dynamics and measures of cohesion. From his extended research into intergroup conflict Sherif (1966: 81) concludes, “Conflict between two groups tends to produce an increase in solidarity within the groups.”

\textsuperscript{54} Moskalenko et al. (2006) investigate the changing strength of various group identifications (family, country, ethnicity, and religion) before and at two periods after the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on the United States.

\textsuperscript{55} Other researchers attribute the differences to a “spillover effect” of the religious culture in the South (Brewer et al. 2006; Hill and Olson 2009; Perl and Olson 2000; Smith, Sikkink, and Bailey 1998).
Smith et al.’s (1998) subcultural identity thesis revolves around two basic principles of the religious group. A religious group will be strong if (1) the adherents draw boundaries between themselves and the surrounding culture and (2) they engage the surrounding culture from which they distinguish themselves. First, the group needs to have an established collective identity. Instead of accommodating to a surrounding society, religious subcultures fortify themselves by drawing distinctions between themselves and relevant outgroups. Religious minorities constantly choose their faith as they are faced with a steady barrage of religious alternatives. In order to make this choice, clear boundary markers are needed regarding who is “in” and who is “out”.

Second, the religious group cannot be reclusive. In today’s media-driven world, maintaining complete separation from the surrounding culture in order to maintain a pre-modern worldview is difficult over long periods of time. With a few exceptions, such as the Amish, a cult or separatist enclave may sustain itself for several generations. However, it is unlikely to thrive in the same sense as the embattled, but engaged, evangelicals. In the case of the latter, the pluralistic cultural and religious environment creates substance and outgroups from which the evangelicals differentiate themselves. Small market share religious firms have more religious “material” to use to differentiate themselves from reference outgroups. Smith et al. (1998) make the case specifically for the strength and growth of American evangelicalism, but their thesis is applicable to other

is not necessarily that Catholics are emboldened by their minority status, but are urged to attend because the overall culture in the South is more religious in nature and more open to discussing religious affiliation, membership, and issues.
religious minority groups as well. American evangelicals feel embattled by the American cultural milieu just as a Catholic group may feel embattled in a Southern religious milieu.

Related to the subcultural identity thesis proposed by Smith et al. (1998) is a situation of minority faithful called “identity activation” (Hill and Olson 2009; Perl and Olson 2000). When minority religions face stigmatism or an uphill battle in defending their beliefs (i.e., Catholics in the South), they come to believe that their congregation “may not be able to sustain itself (and the services it provides) unless they give the congregation high levels of support (e.g., time and money)” (Hill and Olson 2009:644). Additionally, if members of small market share religions want to interact with co-religionists, they must work through the congregation since they are unlikely to encounter co-religionists in their other everyday activities.56 Similar to how immigrant churches functioned as a central gathering place for religious, cultural, educational, and social needs, small market share religious firms act as the nerve center for all needs of the congregants—religious and otherwise. As a result, attendance and participation in the church community will be higher than in places where co-religionists encounter one another on a frequent basis away from the congregation.57

56 While church attendance or parish participation is necessary, in general, to interact with co-religionists, this study tests the proposal with the collected respondents. Since many North Carolina Baby Boomer Catholics live in retirement developments, they may be more akin to functioning as an enclave with little interaction with other faiths and lots of interaction with members of their own faith. Also, the vast majority of Catholics in this sample are not in the work force; therefore, they do not encounter individuals of other faiths in a workplace. One approach in this study breaks down—by age—how many respondents have a majority of friends that are Catholics and investigates commitment levels based on number of friends in parish and Catholic. For a further discussion of this issue, see Olson (1989).

In the Diocese of Raleigh, NC only 4.8% of the population is Roman Catholic and registered with a parish (Official Catholic Directory 2008). If Catholics in the diocese want to encounter other Catholics and assert their collective identity, they must do so at the parish either during weekend Mass or other parish activities. The “subcultural identity” and “identity activation” theories suggest that participation levels via attendance and giving will be much higher for Catholics in the Diocese of Raleigh than elsewhere. This empirical and ethnographic study investigates the aforementioned hypotheses. Possessing a low market share in the region, do Catholics in the Diocese of Raleigh, NC exhibit greater rates of attendance and parish participation than in other parts of the country where Catholics are in the majority? If so, what are the reasons behind the variation?

2.7. The Catholic Minority in the South: An “Embattled” Minority?

With long standing religious pluralism in the United States and increasing interaction among people of different faiths are Catholics a “beleaguered” or “embattled” minority in the South? Many Catholics in the United States have accommodated to the “American Way of Life” and are not discernable from the general populace on most socio-political issues. Denominational boundaries are less apparent in the current

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58 This number is calculated utilizing the number of individuals registered at Catholic parishes in the Diocese divided by the total population of the counties in the Diocese. To be sure, not all those who identify as Catholic in survey data will be registered with a parish. As a result, the number of nominal Catholics in the region may be notably higher. The percentage of the population that is registered as a Catholic with a parish in the Diocese of Raleigh rose from 1.6% in 1980 to 4.8% in 2008 (Official Catholic Directory 1980, 2008).

59 Since the election of John F. Kennedy, the Catholic vote has become less discernable from the national average (Prendergast 1999). Catholic voting trends in the more recent 2000, 2004 and 2008
religious landscape as theological distinctiveness wanes and adherents move toward more personalized religion.\footnote{Wuthnow (1988) recounts the restructuring of American religion since World War II. Since the 1950s, denominationalism has been on the decline; at the same time, special purpose groups within the religions and congregations have been on the rise. Currently, the pertinent differentiations in American Christianity are not among the denominations, but between conservatives and liberals \textit{within} and \textit{across} the denominations.} Further, the postmodern milieu reduces proclamations of “objective truth” to mere metanarratives, which may be true for the individual or community making the pronouncement, but not universally binding or normative in any way.\footnote{See Dinges (1996). The emergence of a postmodern temperament in the United States has had substantial effects on religion and religious institutions. Dinges describes four noteworthy developments: decreasing salience of religious institutions; separation of religion from spirituality; inability to monitor the meaning of religious symbols; and a notable decrease in effective denominational boundaries.}

Despite the move toward postdenominationalism, increased personalized belief, and postmodern undermining of objectified truths, anti-Catholic sentiment is still palpable (Fogarty 2003; Jenkins 2003; Lockwood 2000; Martin 2000; Massa 2003; Perl and Bendyna 2002).\footnote{Fogarty (2003), Martin (2000), and Perl and Bendyna (2002) all provide brief histories of anti-Catholic sentiment in the United States. While understanding the history of anti-Catholic prejudice is worthwhile, the history itself is outside the scope of this project. For this project, only a more recent assessment of anti-Catholic bias is necessary to see how Catholics may perceive themselves as a “beleaguered minority,” especially in the Southeast.} Contemporary anti-Catholicism is less obvious—and less violent—than in the past, but insidiously seeps into American mainstream culture (Fogarty 2003). In the late 1940s, Paul Blanshard (1949) again raised the question of the compatibility of Catholicism and American democracy—this time in an even more intellectually
sophisticated way. Where does the American Catholic’s loyalty reside—with the Catholic Church in Rome or with their countrymen? This concern persists. In the 1970s, Greeley staunchly asserted the prevalence of anti-Catholic bias in the domain of higher education. His research also revealed that workplace discrimination against eastern and southern European Catholics was 40 percent more than discrimination against African Americans (Greeley 1977: 43). More recently, Greeley (1990) noted that one-fourth of Americans agree that Catholics do not think for themselves and merely follow the direction of Church leaders. Fogarty (2003) corroborates this misinformed belief: the hierarchical nature of the Catholic Church has been misconstrued as “authoritarian and opposed to freedom of thought” (42); a mindset in stark opposition to the prevailing rationalistic ethos. Catholics are occasionally maligned in films, television, and other popular culture outlets as unthinking followers of the pope in Rome. A derogatory stereotype of the Catholic Church perseveres in contemporary American society: the “authoritarian monolith” is comprised of harsh and predatory priests; promotes unnatural sexual standards and repressive behavior; and demands adherence to pre-modern doctrines (Steinfels 2000). The ongoing sex-abuse crisis in the Catholic Church has done nothing to quiet the hyperbolic critiques. Instead, the perceived attempts at covering up the

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63 Animated sitcoms such as *The Simpsons*, *South Park*, and *The Family Guy* have been denounced by the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights for promoting anti-Catholic sentiments. The Catholic League is a lay organization with no official connection to the institutional Church. See Martin (2000) for additional recent anti-Catholic cultural outbursts.

64 In January 2002, *The Boston Globe* reported on accusations of more than 130 people that former diocesan priest, John Geoghan, molested them. The article outlines the delay of Cardinal Bernard Law to take action in light of the accusations of molestation. Instead, Geoghan was moved to various positions in the diocese, some with direct contact with young boys. The scandal spread throughout the nation as victims reported previous sexual abuse and accused priests were pulled from their duties to face litigation.
misdeeds, moving accused priests from parish to parish, and evading accountability has only emboldened the critiques of the Catholic Church in the United States—by mainstream media, non-Catholics, and Catholics alike—as an “authoritarian monolith” out of touch with the modern era.65

Are American Catholics offended and threatened by these perceptions and occasional ribbing at their expense? Or has the Catholic ascent up the socio-economic ladder mitigated any ill-feeling at these mischaracterizations of their faith? One-third of self-identified Catholics feel there is an anti-Catholic bias in the United States (Perl and Bendyna 2002: 658).66 Further, 27 percent think “Hollywood” and producers of television entertainment are “hostile” toward American Catholics and 20 percent of those surveyed perceive news reporters and media as “hostile” toward the religious group (Perl and Bendyna 2002: 659). While not overwhelming, the perception of prejudice and ill-treatment persists among a segment of self-identified Catholics. The religious cohort-
group is unique, however, in perceiving hostility from both the liberal and conservative sociopolitical groups; although this may be a function of the wide range of political preferences found within American Catholicism (Perl and Bendyna 2002). 67

The focus of this project is on Catholics in the Southeast. It is evident that Catholics in this region are largely outnumbered by evangelical and mainline Protestant adherents. For example, in North Carolina, “Other Christians” make up 73 percent of those polled compared to only 9 percent Catholic (Kosmin and Keysar 2009). How do “other Christians” view Catholicism? In a 2005 national sample, 19 percent of white evangelical Protestants and 14 percent of mainline Protestants admitted to unfavorable opinions of Catholics (Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life 2006). 68 But, do unfavorable opinions of Catholics in the South translate into tangible animosity?

The empirical survey distributed for this project directly asked Catholics in the Diocese of Raleigh about their perception of being a religious minority. 69 Over half (54 percent) responded that they do perceive themselves as being in the religious minority. Of this group, 35 percent report that they have felt like an outsider or been treated

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67 Again, Wuthnow’s (1988) examination the American religious scene is pertinent. He outlines the decline the religious denomination at the expense of the rise of religious special interests groups and the conservative-liberal divide found within Christian denominations.

68 The question posed by pollsters: “Is your overall opinion of Catholics favorable, mostly favorable, mostly unfavorable, or very unfavorable?” The results above combine “mostly unfavorable” and “very unfavorable.” It is important to note that this poll was conducted after the intense publicity of the sexual abuse scandal in the Catholic Church. In 2002, the same type of question was posed to poll participants. Of those who self-identified as one of the Christian denominations, 10 percent had an unfavorable view of Catholics (Pew Research Center for the People and the Press 2002).

69 The survey question asked, “Do you feel like a religious minority living in North Carolina? In other words, do you feel that the number of Catholics is far less than the number of people belonging to other religions?”
differently because of their faith; nearly one-fourth (24 percent) of the total sample reports having been treated differently or excluded as a result of their Catholic faith. Latter chapters examine the impact this minority status, its perception, and religious bias may have upon Catholic commitment levels in the Diocese of Raleigh.

2.8. Conclusion

This chapter introduced the American religious landscape and the debate over the current state and future direction of religious vitality. The old secularization paradigm predicts that, as a result of modernizing influences, religion loses its institutional relevance and place in the lives of individuals. Pluralism—along with the advancements of modernization—results in decreasing levels of religious certitude, thus having a negative influence on religious behaviors and beliefs. All the competing ideologies (religious and secular) eventually undermine any objective notions of truth. The religious systems of legitimation lose their taken-for-granted status and the sacred canopy ultimately collapses.

The major problem with the old paradigm is that history failed to follow its prophecies, leading Peter Berger—a noted scholar of modernization—to correct his prediction. A new explanatory model emerged in the field to explain the robustness of American religious life. Warner (1993) outlines the new religious economies model which treats religious firms and religious adherents as involved in an exchange of goods. With the disestablishment of religion in the United States, producers freely compete for the consumers’ capital while consumers seek out producers to match their spiritual
preferences. The pluralistic, deregulated religious economy results in heightened levels of commitment and participation. Further studies question the impact of pluralism alone on vitality and commitment, but consensus builds on the assertion that small market share religions do experience more dedicated members. Competing hypotheses develop as to why this is the case.

Three theories explaining why and how low market share religious firms thrive in a competitive environment emerge. First, supply-side theory suggests that small market firms are energized by stiff competition. As a result they will innovate and expend more effort to maintain current members and attract new ones.

Second, Olson and his colleagues counter that small market firms do not “try harder”; nor do the changes that take place occur on the supply side. Rather, minority religions tend to lose their least committed members to the close-substitute majority faiths. This, in turn, creates a faithful remnant of highly committed and actively engaged congregants. Essentially, small market religious firms experience addition by subtraction—the loosely affiliated members defect, the committed ones remain thus increasing the average level of attendance and giving.

The third theory behind why and how a religious commitment is inversely proportional to market share is found in the “subcultural identity” and “identity activation” theses. Members of minority religions are brought closer together through distinction from and tension with the surrounding culture. Surrounded by other faiths, members of minority faiths step up their level of commitment to ensure sustainability. Further, they participate in church activities at higher rates in order to socialize and
cohere with co-religionists they are unlikely to encounter in everyday activities. In addition to being a minority in the Diocese of Raleigh, the majority of Catholics perceive themselves as such and one-quarter have experienced biases as a consequence their faith.

This empirical and ethnographic study examines these three hypotheses in relation to the attitudes and practices of Catholic Baby Boomers in the predominantly Protestant region comprising the Diocese of Raleigh, NC. The next chapter introduces the Baby Boomer Catholic cohort and additional factors that may influence changes in religious behavior upon retiring from the workforce and migrating south.
3.1. **Introduction**

To understand the present situation of religion in America and the beliefs of Baby Boomers, it is necessary to step back and investigate the generation’s formative years. The changes in American culture in the three decades in middle of the twentieth century (1940-1970) cannot be overemphasized. The nation emerged from the depression to fight a widely supported war effort to avenge a surprise attack and conquer a known evil. Hard work paid off with rising incomes, increased educational levels, and suburban dreams fulfilled. A wave of babies followed and as the Boomer generation aged, the idyllic era of the 1950s morphed into the social and cultural ferment of the 1960s. Traditional gender roles, race relations, social propriety, and authority all came under intense scrutiny. Controversial military action compounded the unrest. Religion hardly remained unscathed (Ahlstrom 2004).

This chapter briefly turns back to the 1960s to witness the influence the era may have had, in both the short term and long term, on religious belief and behavior of the Boomer generation. In addition to the rise of the counterculture, Catholics also experienced the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965), assimilation into mainstream culture, and the papal encyclical *Humanae Vitae* (1968). Subsequent chapters analyze empirical and ethnographic survey data in part to determine whether or not these events
have consequences for religious belief and participation of Euro-American Boomer Catholics even into late life.

In addition to the social and cultural influences the 1960s era may have had on religious belief and commitment, Boomers also encountered life course changes. Getting married, having children, raising a family, retiring from the workforce, and other normal events in the life course significantly impact measures of religiosity. As the Boomers have aged, it is important to investigate the impact aging may have on their religious practice. Do Boomers replicate the same religious trajectory of prior generations, or is the cohort-group unique in its adaptation of religiosity in advancing years?

Finally, one life course event, retirement from the workforce, is often associated with a voluntary move to regions of the nation with warmer climates and available amenities. With a regional move Catholic retirees in particular may enter a different religious environment. Do these newcomers adapt to the religious milieu of their new surroundings? This chapter explores the impact geographic mobility may have on measures of religious commitment.

3.2. The Boomers’ 1960s and Institutional Dissent

The 1950s has been described as an “age of faith” in the United States. Prosperity and affluence accompanied rising levels of religious commitment and institutional participation (Ahlstrom 2004; Hoge et al. 1994; Wuthnow 1998). Post-war American

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70 Ahlstrom (2004: 952) cites a survey from the *Yearbook of American Churches* to illustrate the pinnacle of church membership that occurred in 1960. In 1960, 69 percent of the total population belonged to a particular church; in 1950 the number was 55 percent. In 1970 the number fell back to 62.5 percent. A
culture reestablished the prominence of American institutions (religious and otherwise) as a way to overcome the insecurities ushered in by World War II and the advent of the atomic age. Suburban populations boomed as did the churches that were built to pastor to them. Herberg’s *Protestant Catholic Jew* (1955) outlined a “religion of the American Way of Life” that permeated 1950s culture. United against the Communist-atheist threat, Americans found an easily adoptable form of patriotism in religion. Religion, both personal and institutional, was promoted as a benefit for the individual and larger community (Herberg 1955). Then, as quickly as the “surge of piety” in the 1950s arose, the 1960s “decade of discontent” promptly halted much of the previous religious revival.

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1956 Gallup Poll reported that 80 percent of Americans belonged to a “house of worship” (Wuthnow 1998: 30).

71 Even President Eisenhower noted the importance of “religion-in-general” to the national identity: “Our nation makes no sense unless it is founded in a deeply religious faith—and I don’t care what it is” (Herberg 1955: 84).

72 In 1954, “under God” was added to the Pledge of Allegiance. In 1956, “In God We Trust” was printed on newly-minted currency.


74 An entire volume of the *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* was dedicated to the religious “crisis” of the 1960s. See *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 387, 1970. For a different view, see Ahlstrom (2004) who theorized that the religious maelstrom of the 1960s was a culmination of gradual social, philosophical, scientific, and religious transitions traced back to Galileo in the 17th century. It was only a matter of time before the “modern mind” refused to blindly accept religious explanations for the structure of the world without serious questioning. Specifically in the field of religion, he noted the impact of biblical criticism, religious historiography, and academic study of religion in forming the foundation of widespread religious transformation (institutional and personal) during the 1960s.
The 1960s was an era of social, political, and cultural ferment earmarked by events that could not be ignored.\(^{75}\) Wide-spread mass-media coverage of these events, through television in particular, elevated the impact the era had on mainstream American culture.\(^{76}\) Embracing the “freedom of choice” during this era, many in the Boomer generation refused to accept authoritative pronouncements without question. “Don’t trust anyone over thirty” became the mantra of a new wave of activists.\(^{77}\) The dissonance between the American idealism promoted by many of their superiors, and the plethora of social ills witnessed locally, nationally, and internationally, contributed to the distaste for institutional proclamations, religious or otherwise (Ahlstrom 2004; Bellah 1976; Glock 1976; Sherkat 1998).\(^{78}\) The perceived institutional hypocrisy left a bitter taste in the mouth of the younger idealists. Institutions that could not contribute to curing the social strife of the era became less influential in society.\(^{79}\) Further, no single, alternative, normative, interpretive model was convincingly articulated as a replacement (Glock

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\(^{75}\) Notable events of the era include: the Bay of Pigs, the Vietnam War, the assassination of President Kennedy, Dr. King’s “I have a Dream” speech, the Selma to Montgomery, AL march, and his subsequent assassination. The Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Space Race, the Equal Pay Act of 1963, the women’s liberation movement, and the sexual revolution were among the other elements of change and unrest.

\(^{76}\) Ahlstrom (1978: 20) consolidates the issues at the center of the 1960s unrest into five categories: (1) race and racism, (2) war and imperialism, (3) sex and sexism, (4) exploitation and environmentalism, and (5) government and the misuse of power.

\(^{77}\) The quote is attributed to Jack Weinberger, activist and leader of the Free Speech Movement at the University of California, Berkeley. The phrase has also been attributed to fellow activist, Jerry Rubin.

\(^{78}\) Bellah (1976: 333) expresses his surprise at the demise of institutional authority in the 60s decade: “Far more serious than any of the startling events of the decade was the massive erosion of the legitimacy of American institutions–business, government, education, the churches, the family–that set in particularly among young people.”

\(^{79}\) Ahlstrom observed, “The old foundations of national confidence, patriotic idealism, moral traditionalism, and even of historic Judeo-Christian theism, were awash” (1970b: 3; 2004: 1080).
1976); instead, personal experience became the dominant criterion through which previous pronouncements were judged. This new subjective and situational morality was a direct affront to the objective (and what were perceived as repressive) standards passed down by previous generations (Bellah 1976).  

Western biblical religion also came under intense scrutiny for teaching what some perceived as a Gospel filled with male chauvinism, racism, and intolerance (Ahlstrom 1978). Biblical criticism and a secular reading of the Gospels accompanied an emerging theology that ironically promoted the “death of God” in order to make Christianity relevant in the modern era. Churches, especially those in mainline denominations, continuing to embrace the traditional theological language in reference to God would experience problems of membership decline and institutional stability. Even mainstream religious circles witnessed a tendency to turn to the individual and advocacy of contextual ethics rather than embracing traditional, normative, religious rules (Ahlstrom 1978).

3.3. The Changing Religious Landscape under the Boomers’ Feet

Whether one looks back on the decade with nostalgia or cynicism, the “Age of Aquarius” had a tremendous short and long-term impact on religious belief and practice.

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for the Baby Boomer generation (Lattin 2003; Roof 1993, 1999; Sherkat 1998). The 1960s was not a turn away from religion per se, but from the western forms of institutionalized and highly rationalized faith. In the 1950s, public displays of religion, such as weekly church attendance, were an element of communal cohesion and identity (Wuthnow 1998). In the 1960s, this dynamic was replaced by more personal religious expressions, developed and expressed independently from religious institutions. While not all new religious expressions required abandoning one’s previously established faith, defections from organized religion did increase substantially in those coming of age during this period (Roof 1993). Temporary disaffiliation from institutional religion is an expected life course event; however, the rate at which Boomers defected greatly surpassed previous generations. Roof concludes that “the cultural reverberations of this tumultuous period clearly had an enormous impact on the youth’s estrangement from organized religion” (1993: 56). As modes of disseminating information through various media increased in speed, so did the spread of new religious and spiritual options from which the Boomers could explore and construct an individualized spiritual identity (Lattin 2003).

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82 Developmental psychologists and other researchers argue that experiences in the early years of one’s life, including youth and early adulthood, are the most critical in developing social awareness and attitudes. Religious belief and behavior fall into this category (Mannheim 1952; Schuman and Rodgers 2004; Schuman and Scott 1989).

83 According to Roof (1993), 56 percent of the Boomers least exposed to the counterculture disaffiliated from religion for a period of time. Those more involved with the social movements of the 1960s temporarily dropped out at a rate of 84 percent. Baby Boomers in Roof’s (1993) report are born between 1946 and 1962. The first wave had birth years 1946 to 1954; the second younger wave had years 1955 through 1962. Roof (1993) admits that the range of birth years for the Boomers and the attendant waves were chosen “somewhat arbitrarily” (266).
While the countercultural experience did not uniformly impact all those coming of age in the 1960s, the overall defection from organized religion at the time was remarkably high.\textsuperscript{84} The protests movements were primarily centered on college campuses and disproportionately involved more educated, upper-middle class sections of the population (Sherkat and Blocker 1994), yet data shows that the deleterious impact of the protest movements on institutional religious practice extended beyond the focal point on college campuses.\textsuperscript{85} Over 60 percent of the individuals in Roof’s survey dropped out of active religious involvement for two or more years regardless of demographics (1993: 55). Despite the fact that many in the Boomer generation were either not intricately involved in the protest movements, or still in grammar school during the 1960s, the social and political turmoil of the era had a widespread influence on the beliefs and behaviors of the entire generation (Bella 1976; Hastings and Hoge 1986; Roof 1993; Wuthow 1976). The cohort-group that emerged was clearly distinct from previous cohort-groups in their approach to religion; most notably in their growing aversion to western, rationalized, institutional, biblical religion and in their decreased rates of institutional religious participation (Bellah 1976; Roof 1993, 1999; Wuthnow 1976, 1998).

\textsuperscript{84} In surveying a cross-section of Boomers, Roof discovered that only half had experimented with marijuana, two-thirds attended a rock concert, and only 20 percent participated in a political march, rally, or demonstration. Only 13 percent participated in all three (1993: 34). Additionally, variation was prevalent in the demographic makeup between those engaged with the counterculture and those who were more on the outskirts.

\textsuperscript{85} Countercultural involvement was more prevalent in upper-middle-class sections of the population. Activists also tended to be better educated than non-participants. Upper-middle-class Americans attended college at a higher rate and college campuses served as the loci for anti-war, civil rights, student, and women activist contexts. See Sherkat and Blocker (1994: 824) for a list of studies supporting these claims. A further distinction: Protesters were also more likely to be Catholic or Jewish rather than mainline Protestant (Sherkat and Blocker 1994).
Not all researchers adhere to the idea that American religion changed drastically as a direct result of the turbulent 1960s (Sherkat and Blocker 1994; Sherkat 1998). Instead, some of these theorists note that Boomers who participated in countercultural activities were less likely at the outset to have conservative views on the Bible, and less likely to be members of a conservative religious group. The countercultural movement, residing solely on the margins of society, did not result in a seismic shift in religious attitudes and formation of new religious movements in the Boomer generation. Alternatively, traditional elements of socialization, such as parental influence and “cultural inertia,” were more influential on religious belief and practice than life course factors and countercultural participation (Bahr and Chadwick 1985; Bainbridge and Stark 1981; Finke and Stark 1992; Greeley 1972; Sherkat 1998). Further, without substantial institutional, supply-side support, this “new consciousness” was unable to sustain itself in the long run (Bainbridge and Stark 1981; Sherkat 1998).

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86 Basing their thesis on earlier research linking conservative Protestantism with obedience to authority (Ellison and Sherkat 1993), they discover an underrepresentation of individuals with more fundamentalist views on the Bible in the array of protesters (Sherkat and Blocker 1994). Demonstrators were more likely to be members of liberal religious groups. As a result, it is not surprising that former protesters in 1973 were more likely than non-protesters to be religiously unaffiliated and to have lower levels of religious participation. In short, Sherkat and Blocker (1994) refute the theory that there was a generation-wide withdraw from traditional religion. Instead, withdraw from traditional religion was isolated to those less connected to religious institutions in the first place.


88 Sherkat (1998) concedes that participation in the protest movements tended to have a significant negative effect on changes in Bible beliefs (between 1965 and 1973). Additionally, his data show an indirect negative effect of protest involvement on religious participation through the negative effect on Bible beliefs. As a point of clarity, one needs to keep in the mind the overrepresentation in the countercultural movement of Catholics, Jews, and liberal Protestants in comparison to conservative Protestants. Further, the changes were not culture-wide, but limited primarily to those participating in the counterculture.
Sherkat (1998) and others highlight the lack of institutional support for the new religious consciousness as evidence of its non-sustainability. However, this thesis does not take into account the internal transformations established religious institutions underwent during this era. The Catholic Church’s aggiornamento of the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) occurred during the early years of the counterculture and was billed as an updating of the Church and striving toward a less adversarial engagement with the modern era. At the same time, mainline Protestant denominational boundaries began to wither (Hoge et al. 1994; Wuthnow 1988) as secular mainstream culture influenced music, liturgical style, biblical criticism, and theology within these traditions. Scores of “new consciousness” institutions failed to emerge, but the most prevalent, established religious institutions needed to account for the changing socio-political and religious attitudes of the Boomer generation. In this sense, some of the changes in religious attitudes and practice as a result of the turbulent 1960s found support on the supply-side of the equation.

3.4. Catholic Boomers and the 1960s

Debate continues as to whether or not the tumultuous 1960s had a significant, lasting impact on religion in the United States. For the Boomer generation, it appears that any immediate impact may have dissipated over time as Boomers settled down and

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89 For example, Stark and Finke (1992) declare that the number of new religious movements and upstart cults in the 1960s–after careful analysis–is not dramatically more than the decade prior or the two decades following.

90 The introduction of female pastors can be interpreted as a direct effect of the women’s liberation movement on mainline Protestant theology.
started their own families.\textsuperscript{91} Also, the spiritual experimentation noted by Roof and others prevalent in this generation could have been happening \textit{within the confines} of their specific religious tradition. For example, Catholics experimenting with meditation did not necessarily have to abandon their religious identity in order to do so. At least, Catholics \textit{themselves} felt they did not have to abandon their self-identity when experimenting religiously and spiritually.\textsuperscript{92}

If Boomers in general had unique religious experiences due to the social and cultural milieu of the 1960s, Catholic Baby Boomers were impacted on three fronts—the chaotic countercultural movement of the 1960s, the Second Vatican Council, and the 1968 papal encyclical, \textit{Humanae Vitae}. With rising socioeconomic status, due in large part to VHA loans and the G.I. Bill established after World War II, and with the migration out the “Catholic ghettos” to suburbia, the Boomer generation of Catholics was raised in a much more integrated environment than early generations. Parallel Catholic institutions (schools, universities, hospitals, etc.) remained relatively strong, but Catholics and the Catholic faith became more accepted in mainstream culture, so much so that the nation elected a Roman Catholic, John F. Kennedy, to the presidency in 1960. As more Catholics enrolled in college, more were exposed to the counter-cultural movement typically centered in colleges and universities across the nation.

\textsuperscript{91} There is significant evidence connecting life cycle events such as marriage and childrearing to increases in religious affiliation and participation (Carroll and Roozen 1975; Dillon and Wink 2007; Roozen, McKinney and Thompson 1990; Sherkat 1998; Stolzenberg et al. 1995; Wilson and Sherkat 1994).

\textsuperscript{92} Roof (1999: 7) notes that religion and religious expression (especially among the Baby Boomers) has to do with \textit{personal meaning} and \textit{social belonging}. While an individual may be questing for an authentic experience of the divine and using a variety of means to do so (from their own tradition and others), they may be reluctant to drop their long held religious affiliation and cultural identifier.
The second momentous event during this era, possibly even more disruptive to Catholics’ traditional mores than the countercultural movement, was the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) called by Pope John XXIII. The Council was framed in large part as a “conversation” with the modern world taking into account the “signs of the times” (Doyle 1992). In addition to changes in the liturgy, including transitioning from Latin to the vernacular and the priest facing the congregation, Vatican II re-conceptualized the metaphor of the Church as the “people of God.” The laity, no longer merely observing the actions of the priest, were expected to actively participate in the liturgy. They too were the “the Church.” The theological notion of the Church as a monolithic, unchanging, authoritarian, perfect institution was being intentionally challenged and transformed. In its place, the Church was imaged more in tune with a pastoral, dialogical, evangelical, adaptive, pilgrim “people of God” (Bianchi 1970; Chinnici 2003; Ebaugh 1991). This radical change in the understanding of the nature of the Church ushered in a new conception of the individual’s role in that Church.

The third seismic event impacting American Catholics in the 1960s was Pope Paul VI’s 1968 papal encyclical, *Humanae Vitae*. In the wake of Vatican II, hope was building that the ecclesiastical authorities would take into account the voices of the laity.

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93 See, for example, *Gaudium et Spes*: “The Church has always had the duty of scrutinizing the signs of the times and of interpreting them in the light of the Gospel. Thus, in language intelligible to each generation, she can respond to the perennial questions which men ask about this present life and the life to come, and about the relationship of one to the other. We must therefore recognize and understand the world in which we live, its explanations, its longings, and its often dramatic characteristics” (§3). English excerpts of documents from the Second Vatican Council are taken from the Vatican’s website: http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council.

94 See *Lumen Gentium*, in particular §9–§17.

95 See *Gaudium et Spes*, §57 and *Ad Gentes*, §11.
as being part of the “People of God.” Before the release of the encyclical, a 1967 *Newsweek* poll found that 73 percent of American adult Catholics favored a change in the Church’s teaching on contraception (Tentler 2004: 229-30). In the end, contrary to recommendations submitted from a commission set up to study the Church’s teachings on birth control, the encyclical repeated the traditional moral stance against using any artificial measures to prevent procreation during sexual intercourse. Needless to say, this pronouncement was not well received by the American laity or by lower clergy. One cardinal-archbishop even suggested that the prohibitions against birth control in *Humanae Vitae* were “too late” as Catholic laity had already made up their mind on the contraception issue independent from the magisterium (Kaiser 1985: 5). Research data reflects the cardinal-archbishop’s suspicion. Prior to Vatican II, a 1955 study found that 30 percent of Catholic wives (aged 18-39) were either using means of artificial

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96 Bianchi (1970) argues that the objections to prohibitions on artificial birth control in *Humanae Vitae* “must be seen in the light of the expectations issuing from the renewed theology of Vatican II about church structure and authority” (33). Ebaugh (1991) agrees. Vatican II was responding to a progressive movement in the Church and, in the end, empowered laity as the “People of God.” In so doing, “the hierarchy threatened its own legitimation and justification. While the right to command still reside[d] in the hierarchy, the duty to obey [was] no longer granted legitimacy by many lay people in the Church” (Ebaugh 1991: 6). Social control over the laity by the hierarchy also weakened; the fear of excommunication was eviscerated. Instead, Catholic laity “internalized the meaning of People of God as a non-institutional, non-formally administered membership list and replaced it with a spirituality of personal piety” (Ebaugh 1991: 6). In the end, Catholics were successfully empowered by Vatican II, but in some respects to the detriment of the authority of the Catholic hierarchy as evidenced by the highly critical response to *Humanae Vitae* among lower clergy and Catholic laity (Tentler 2004).

97 *Humanae Vitae* states: “We are obliged once more to declare that the direct interruption of the generative process already begun and, above all, all direct abortion, even for therapeutic reasons, are to be absolutely excluded as lawful means of regulating the number of children. Equally to be condemned, as the magisterium of the Church has affirmed on many occasions, is direct sterilization, whether of the man or of the woman, whether permanent or temporary. Similarly excluded is any action which either before, at the moment of, or after sexual intercourse, is specifically intended to prevent procreation—whether as an end or as a means. […] Consequently, it is a serious error to think that a whole married life of otherwise normal relations can justify sexual intercourse which is deliberately contraceptive and so intrinsically wrong” (§14).
contraception forbidden by the magisterium or had in the past. In 1970, 68 percent of Catholic wives in child-bearing years were using artificial means of contraception (Tentler 2004: 220). Since the teaching on artificial birth control did not change, the huge jump can be interpreted as a refusal on the part of the laity of blind obedience to the hierarchical church. Fluctuation in institutional compliance was not limited to the laity. In anticipation of a change and in response to the pastoral needs of their parishioners, many of the lower clergy had already been advising their parishioners to consult their conscience about birth control usage (Greeley 2004; Kaiser 1985; Tentler 2004).98

The contentious response to *Humanae Vitae* among American Catholics and lower clergy alike demonstrated the decline in the power of moral persuasiveness held by the Catholic magisterium (Greeley 2004; Kaiser 1985; Tentler 2004). Without blind assent, Church pronouncements were weighed against the autonomous individual moral consciousness. The “radical erosion of clerical confidence” on part of the laity, especially the younger portion, in response to *Humanae Vitae* would significantly impact the future of the institutional Church and its role as moral authority (Tentler 2004: 4).

3.5. Measured Response of Catholic Boomers to the 1960s

In addition to the counterculture, how did these institutionally-driven events impact the Catholic Church as an organization and individual Catholics, especially Boomers, in their attitudes and behaviors? The radical and intentional re-imagination of the Catholic religious institution amidst the documents of Vatican II was received in a

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98 In fact, the percentage of priests who believed that birth control was always morally wrong dropped from 40 percent to 29 percent immediately after the encyclical, while the percentage of priests that left the decision to the conscience of the laity jumped from 22 percent to 32 percent (Greeley 2004).
positive light by two-thirds of American Catholics (Greeley, McCready, and McCourt 1976). The question arises, therefore, as to why weekly Mass attendance and other measures of Catholic devotion and orthodoxy plummeted in the years following the Council? Between 1963 and 1974 weekly Mass attendance dropped from 70 percent to 50 percent; monthly confession decreased from 38 percent to 17 percent; belief that sex before marriage is wrong dropped astoundingly from 74 percent to 35 percent; and the belief that contraception is always wrong fell from 56 percent to 16 percent (Greeley 2004; Greeley, McCready, and McCourt 1976).

The above figures are indisputable. Researchers uniformly recognize the decline of Catholic attendance and other commitment measures following the 1960s. The dispute revolves around the root cause of the decline.

Some commentators attribute the decline solely to the cultural transformations of the 1960s (Marty 1972), which included advancing secularization (Chaves 1989; Weigert and Thomas 1974). Others point to changes in Catholicism initiated through the Second Vatican Council. Kelley (1972), for example, argues that more ecumenical and less demanding faiths are ripe for decrease; the changes in the Church made it less distinctive from the surrounding culture and therefore weakened it. Further, more strict religious organizations are stronger because the people tend to value their religion in relationship

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99 Sixty-seven percent of respondents thought the changes instituted by the Second Vatican Council were for the better; only 17 percent responded that they were for the worse.
to how much it costs.\textsuperscript{100} Along with Iannaccone (1994), Finke and Stark (1992) argue that the liturgical changes adopted during Vatican II, such as switching from Latin to the vernacular and allowing for more modern musical styles, undermined Catholic distinctiveness. A short time later, the avoidance of meat on Friday, another distinctive demand placed upon Catholics, was repealed and replaced with a private act of penance.\textsuperscript{101} While Catholic distinctiveness waned, Vatican II and \textit{Humanae Vitae} reaffirmed the demand least acceptable to the Catholic population, such as the ban on artificial birth control.\textsuperscript{102} This “worst of both worlds” led to a significant decline in Catholic commitment after Vatican II (Iannaccone 1994: 1204).\textsuperscript{103}

Greeley (1979) looks beyond Vatican II and brings attention to the 1968 papal encyclical, \textit{Humanae Vitae}, as the cause for the decline in Catholic commitment. Citing the changes in attitude toward sex and the use of birth control, Greeley repeatedly asserts

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\item \textsuperscript{100} Iannaccone (1994) picks up on Kelley’s argument by noting that decreasing costs (financial and otherwise) of belonging to a religious organization induces individuals to free-ride off the contributions of others. Vatican II, while making it easier to be a Catholic because distinctive demands were lessened, actually weakened the organization because it demanded less of its members. Increasing costs of membership (to a point) screens out lukewarm or marginal members, increasing the average level of commitment.
\item \textsuperscript{101} Mary Douglas (1982) stresses the importance of abstention from meat on Fridays as an outward symbol of Catholic distinctiveness and solidarity.
\item \textsuperscript{102} Changing the teaching of the Church even on seemingly minor commands such as refraining from meat on Fridays, inadvertently brought other Catholic teachings under investigation by the laity. The change allowed Catholics to begin to think for themselves concerning such issues (D’Antonio et al. 1989). If eating meat on Friday was no longer a mortal sin, what else can be removed from this category?
\item \textsuperscript{103} Finke and Stark (1992) also use the cost/reward argument to explain the massive decrease in the number of Catholic religious after Vatican II. While the high costs of religious vocations remained the same (celibacy, loneliness, unpleasant assignments), the rewards associated with being a priest, brother, or nun (respect, empowerment, being “set apart” from the laity) decreased in the post-Vatican II era. Additionally, empowering the laity and including them in the “people of God” meant people could still serve God and the Church in their secular lives and time with their parish, but avoid the high cost of a religious vocation.
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Humanae Vitae was the tipping point after which Catholics no longer took the teaching authority of the Church as pertinent to their own lives. This initiated the emergence of a more selective Catholicism in the cohort-group of more progressive, mostly younger, participants.

Hoge (1986) disagrees with Greeley’s assertion about the detrimental role of Humanae Vitae on Catholic religious practice in the United States. Instead, the sexual revolution, women’s liberation movement, and the rise of a youthful subculture are more likely explanations for fluctuations in church attendance and orthodoxy. Additionally, pressure for change in the Church was building as Catholics assimilated into mainstream American culture. The “siege mentality” of Catholics prevalent in the earlier part of the century slowed down in the 1960s as increasing incomes and opportunities accompanied migration out of the immigrant-dominated inner city to the more affluent suburbs. As Catholics became more “mainstream” in their educational attainment and achieved more national power and authority (such as the election of a Catholic president), the plausibility structures of an immigrant-driven Catholicism became more untenable. The

104 Avery Dulles commented on the relationship between lay Catholics and the magisterium after Humanae Vitae: “Many Catholics have lost all interest in official ecclesiastical statements and do not expect any light from the magisterium on their real problems” (Kaiser 1985: 203-4).

105 Greeley (2004) summarizes Catholicism at the end of the 1960s and early 1970s: “In the confusion, disappointment, and anger that followed Paul VI’s Humanae Vitae (1968), laity and clergy embraced the principle of following one’s own conscience. It was this development, more than any other, that shattered the authority structure. […] It is further argued that [laity] cannot be good Catholics if they make such decisions [on birth control], but in fact they think they can” (56, my emphasis).

106 “Neither the Council nor Humanae Vitae are major explanations for the tumult of changes in the 1960s. The social pressures were very high, and the main effect of the Council was to open the gates and legitimize a general direction of change. Humanae Vitae had a modest impact on altering the flow” (Hoge 1986: 292).
result was inevitable: Catholics would increasingly conform to the prevalent religious attitudes and behavior of the American middle class. This included lower weekly attendance rates, more support for artificial contraception, and less legitimacy given to religious organizations and authority structures. Thus, changes in Catholic attitudes and behaviors during this era can be accounted for primarily through this assimilation model (Hoge 1986; Hoge et al. 1994; Moberg and Hoge 1986).

The decline in Catholic commitment is typically measured by noting the precarious dip in weekly Mass attendance and confession frequency; however, the number of Catholics in the United States and other measures of commitment failed to drop immediately following the 1960s. Catholics did not defect from the Church in massive numbers and the frequency of receiving the Eucharist actually increased 13 percent between 1963 and 1974 (Greeley, McCready, and McCourt 1976). The relationship between the laity and the institutional Church, however, changed dramatically. The majority of the long-term consequences of the era, especially in the religious formation of the Boomers, concerned the inability of the Church’s hierarchy to assert authority over the beliefs and practices of its members. Gone were the attitudes of

107 “[These] include a convergence of Catholic and Protestant birth rates; a convergence in attitudes about family planning and contraception; a convergence of political attitudes on many topics, including race relations, civil liberties, feminism, and nuclear weapons; a convergence of church attendance rates among the young adults; a lowering of perceived ecclesiastical authority to a posture similar to Protestantism; and a desire for more participatory church structures akin to the American voluntary association model” (Hoge 1986: 293).

108 Greeley (2004) is quick to note that Catholics did not leave the Church because they enjoy being Catholic. He claims, of the defections that did occur, one-third were unmarried Catholics who drifted away from the Church but who most likely will return upon starting families. Another third is equally distributed among the divorced and remarried and those who leave because of being married to a non-Catholic. A final third live in the Mountain and coastal West and can be attributed to a lack of Catholic schools in the region.
compliant obedience to Church authority. In a study of the Detroit area, Koller (1979) discovered that, between 1958 and 1971, Catholics increasingly felt the right to question official Church teaching.\textsuperscript{109} The acceptance of the right of the hierarchy to teach about birth control dropped from 54 percent in 1963 to only 32 percent in 1974 (Greeley, McCready, and McCourt 1976). Catholics, especially young ones, developed a new morality with an increasing emphasis on subjectivity, situational ethics, and pluralism (Bianchi 1970). In a survey of college freshman, the level of disapproval for behaviors considered risqué by Catholics in the past decreased significantly between 1961 and 1971.\textsuperscript{110} Overall, Catholics became more selective in their religious practices. While they continued to identify with the Church, they took the institution’s role as a teaching authority less seriously, especially when it came to sexual ethics and affirmations of Papal infallibility (Greeley 1979; Kaiser 1985; Roof and Johnson 1993).

A specific cause of the decline in Church attendance, orthodoxy, and commitment in the 1960s and early 1970s among Catholics cannot be entirely isolated; even so, the Church emerging from this era was dramatically different than the institution in the 1950s. As Baby Boomers came of age, Euro-American Catholics were assimilating into

\textsuperscript{109} Moberg and Hoge (1986) see the intellectual autonomy trend cooling off a bit in their 1982 survey of college students. Moral behavior also skewed back slightly toward more traditional positions of a 1961 survey. While attitudes may have swayed back, the differences over time reinforce the notion that there was (and may be still be) very distinctive religious attitudes and behaviors in the majority of the Catholic Boomer generation.

\textsuperscript{110} In a survey of college freshmen at Marquette University over different time frames, disapproval of Catholics dating non-Catholics (with intent to marry) fell from 82 percent in men and 86 percent in women in 1961 to 7 percent in men and 6 percent in women in 1971; disapproval of heavy drinking to the point of inebriation fell from 88 percent in men and 93 percent in women in 1961 to 40 percent in men and 47 percent in women in 1971; and disapproval of “heavy necking with a steady date” fell from 92 percent in men and 98 percent in women in 1961 to 18 percent in men and 32 percent in women in 1971 (Moberg and Hoge 1986).
mainstream American culture. Simultaneously, the Church was re-imagining itself as the “People of God” while continuing a ban on artificial birth control. A new morality emerged among Catholics as individuals emphasized their intellectual independence from the normative pronouncements of their hierarchical institutional. In terms of belief, an institutional conception of the Catholic faith was replaced by a more individualist one (Williams and Davidson 1996). Many Americans wanted to be religious on their own terms, and most Euro-American Boomer Catholics appeared to be no different. The 1960s counterculture, Vatican II’s progressive theology, resistance to *Humanae Vitae*, and assimilation into the American, Protestant-dominated, mainstream all contributed to the emergence of a new expression of Catholicism manifest in the Baby Boomer generation. With the immense size of this cohort-group along with the educational and financial power they were gaining within mainstream culture, it is no surprise that the Baby Boomer expression of the faith came to be the dominant one moving toward the end of the 20th century.

3.6. **The Religious Life Cycle**

Baby Boomers are less likely to be tied to institutional religion and are more prone to “spiritual seeking” and personal faith development outside traditional orthodoxy (Bellah et al. 1985; Fuller 2001; Hoge et al. 1994; McNamara 1985; Roof 1993, 1999; Roof and McKinney 1987). The differences between the Boomer cohort-group and older generations are quite apparent, but will the Boomers come to mirror older

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111 Confidence in organized religion dropped dramatically in the Boomer population from the 1970s to 2002. In the 1970s, 30 percent of Boomers had a great deal of confidence in the people running religious institutions; this number dropped to 13 percent of Boomers surveyed in 2002 (AARP 2002).
generations as they age and retire from the workforce? Or, are the differences so rooted in the cohort-group that Boomers will not duplicate previous generations’ changes in religious practices as they age?\textsuperscript{112}

Tracking religious change in the United States over a period of time is a challenging enterprise. First, religious commitment is multidimensional (Ingersoll-Dayton et al. 2002; Glock and Stark 1965; Kellstedt 1993; Lenski 1961; Mockabee et al. 2001). The various dimensions of religion, such as affiliation, public worship attendance, orthodox religious beliefs, and religious salience may not equally rise or fall as individuals progress through the life course (Ingersoll-Dayton et al. 2002). Attendance at church services may fall while the frequency and intensity of prayer increases along with a deeper understanding of one’s faith. The various dimensions demonstrate different trajectories over time.

Second, there is no single, universal religious trajectory over the life cycle (Ingersoll-Dayton et al. 2002; McCullough et al. 2005).\textsuperscript{113} Different life experiences (religious socialization, cultural heritage, education, marriage status, presence of children, etc.) can influence religiosity positively or negatively. Even the same life experience,


\textsuperscript{113} For example, Ingersoll-Dayton et al. (2002) discover four distinct religious trajectories in their study: increasing, stable, decreasing, and curvilinear.
such as the death of a spouse, can have varying influences on the religious practices of
individuals.\textsuperscript{114}

Third, as one cohort-group ages and dies off, they are being replaced by a younger
cohort-group. If the aggregate population is becoming less religious, for example, is the
decline due to the youngest cohort-group being less religious than their predecessors,
individuals themselves becoming less religious, individuals not becoming more religious
as they age, or the result of secularization influences affecting all groups equally?\textsuperscript{115}
Dillon and Wink (2007) report on an impressive longitudinal study of Americans and
changes in their religious activities and attitudes over sixty-five years from adolescence
to old age.\textsuperscript{116} Confirming earlier studies demonstrating the positive relationship between
aging and religiosity (Argue et al. 1999; Firebaugh and Harley 1991; Hout and Greeley
1987; McFadden 1999; Miller and Nakamura 1996; Ploch and Hastings 1994), Dillon
and Wink (2007) discover a significant increase in religiousness from late-middle to late

\textsuperscript{114} Ingersoll-Dayton et al. (2002) discovered that adverse life events can contribute both to an
increase and decrease in religious practices. Albrecht and Cornwall (1989) suggest positive life events
contribute to increased religiosity and negative life events are associated with decreases in religious
commitment.

\textsuperscript{115} Based on 2001 ARIS results (American Religious Identification Survey), Kosmin and Keysar
(2006: 76-7) discover that Catholicism has a younger age structure with 35 percent of Catholic males and
30 percent of Catholic between 18-34 years of age. These figures take into account all ethnicities and may
be reflective of the changing demographics within American Catholicism.

\textsuperscript{116} The study, which was established by the Institute of Human Development (IHD), tracks
individuals born in two cohort-groups. The first cohort-group was born in 1920-1921 and the second
cohort-group was born in 1928-1929. The sample began with 319 respondents from various neighborhoods
in Oakland, CA bordering Berkeley. By the last phase of interviews, the sample was down to 184
respondents. While the sample does not included Baby Boomers, it is instructive to track and assess the
overall life cycle changes in religious behaviors and attitudes.
adulthood, or from one’s fifties into their seventies (see also Miller and Nakamura 1996).117 This increase holds regardless of gender or denomination.

The extensive time frame of Dillon and Wink’s (2007) study provides an additional key finding not uncovered in other short-term research: late-adulthood religious activity increases, but generally only back to the level achieved in early-adulthood.118 Additionally, the high level of religiousness in late-adulthood still falls short of the reported religious activity in adolescence. The biggest dip in religious practice typically occurs in early and middle-adulthood when children leave the home and the necessity of religious socialization has passed. This is also followed by increased attention paid to career, community, and leisure activities (Dillon and Wink 2007; Ingersoll-Dayton 2002; Roof 1999; Sherkat and Wilson 1995).119 Again, these findings hold across gender and religious tradition.120

117 As individuals age beyond seventy, it becomes more challenging to accurately gauge religious commitment as health problems may prevent religious activity such as attendance and parish involvement (Dillon and Wink 2007; Miller and Nakamura 1996).

118 Having school-age children positively influences church involvement in early-adulthood after individuals may have drifted away during their college years (Carroll and Roozen 1975; Dillon and Wink 2007; Ingersoll-Dayton et al. 2002; Ploch and Hastings 1994; Roof 1993, 1999; Roof and Johnson 1993; Roozen, McKinney and Thompson 1990; Stolzenberg et al. 1995).

119 See also Hoge et al. (1994), Sandomirsky and Wilson (1990), and Uecker et al. (2007). In a dissenting study of married individuals, Argue et al. (1999) find the greatest increase in religiosity—operationalized by salience of religious belief in daily life—among American Catholics is during early adulthood, independent of life course events such as having children. Further, Catholic religiosity increased with age at a higher rate than other faith traditions. The age effects were mitigated by negative period effects in the 1980s. The period effect disappeared between 1988 and 1992, the final year of the study.

120 It is no surprise that religious practices and attitudes change from adolescence, adulthood, and into late adulthood. Noted psychologist, James Fowler (1981), formulated a typology of the stages of faith through which an individual may progress during their lifetime. As people age, Fowler theorizes, religious belief moves from a more concrete type of faith toward a more contemplative approach able to incorporate paradoxes experienced in everyday life. Granted, not all individuals move through all six stages of the faith...
3.7. **Life Cycle, Cohort, and Period Effects on Religious Behavior**

The life cycle argument for religious change—that people become more religious as they get older—is not without criticism. Others argue that cohort-groups and their social, economic, and religious attitudes are solidified by experiences of the world during their formative years (Mannheim 1952; Ryder 1965; Walrath 1987; Williams and Davidson 1996). Because different generations have different experiences during these years, and these events continue to influence individuals’ interpretive framework indefinitely, cohort-groups develop their own unique orientations. In the end, “in important respects, [cohorts] never grow up to take on the same perspectives their elders hold” (Walrath 1987: 35). Citing cohort-effects as the thrust behind religious change in America means that differences in commitment levels among the generations will remain throughout the life cycle. For example, if Baby Boomers display lower levels of religious commitment than their parents’ generation, the gap will remain even as the Boomers move into retirement and late adulthood. A period effect, the countercultural movement...
of the 1960s, may have even widened the gap between the religious commitment levels of the Boomers and their parents’ generation (Roozen 1993).  

In addition to life cycle and cohort effects, period effects may also factor into influencing religious practice over time. Social changes, including secularizing influences or the rise of a counterculture, may impact religious behavior across all generations in ways not accounted for by the life cycle or cohort effects arguments (Chaves 1989, 1991). For Chaves (1989, 1991) the relatively stable church attendance rate in the United States is actually the result of contraposing forces of secularization and religious revival. Arguing against Hout and Greeley’s (1987) assertions that the plunge in Catholic Mass attendance ended in 1975, Chaves (1989) claims Catholics’ church attendance continued to decline into the 1980s. The continued decline in the Catholic Church, evidence of secularization, is offset by a slight period effect increase in Protestant church attendance, giving an illusion of overall stability. Hout and Greeley (1990) respond that Chaves (1989) only tracks cohorts for ten to fourteen years in his analysis, therefore long-term changes in attendance patterns by cohort and age may be overlooked.  

While still allowing for period effects on attendance (Humanae Vitae in Greeley’s case), others make the case that life course effects have the strongest influence on religious behavior (Argue et al. 1999; Firebaugh and Harley 1991; Roof 1999). Instead

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122 Roozen (1993: 31) compares the church attendance rates of the various cohort-groups over time and notes, “One result of the religious transition of the sixties, therefore, appears to be the creation of an enduring stratification of religious expression by age.”

123 Hout and Greeley (1987) used forty-five years of General Social Survey data for their analysis.
of counteracting forces of secularization and revival within groups (period effects), the reason behind the stability of church attendance in the United States over time is more obvious: “the same lifecycle effects [are] repeated in one birth cohort after another” (Firebaugh and Harley 1991: 488). After examining twenty years of General Social Survey data, Ploch and Hastings (1994) also did not find any evidence of period or cohort effects on the increases in public religious participation with age; the increases were influenced solely by the life course.

Miller and Nakamura (1996) offer still one more explanation for the stability of church attendance from 1965 to 1988. Religious activity, as measured by church attendance, increases with age; however, various cohort-groups have different starting points. With the massive size of the Boomers, if this group has the same starting point and increases its religious behaviors as Boomers age at the same rate as the older generations they are replacing, an observable increase in church attendance would be evident. However, an observable increase is not found in the data. To explain the observed stability in overall church attendance rates, Miller and Nakamura (1996) show that increases in religious practice are evident as individuals pass through the life cycle. However, more recent cohort-groups—beginning with the 1937-1940 birth-year cohort-group—attended church in their youth on average at a lesser rate than previous generations. As the older, more committed generations are replaced by the younger, less committed Boomer generation, a decrease in church attendance would be expected.

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124 Miller and Nakamura (1996: 280) constructed a Bayesian Cohort Analysis for church attendance testing period effects, cohort effects, and life cycle (age) effects on religious activity. In their model, the period effects are weak and inconsistent; both cohort and life cycle effects are strong.
Nevertheless, although less committed than previous cohort-groups at the outset, the Boomers are still experiencing an increase in church attendance as they age, offsetting any expected overall decline in attendance rates (Miller and Nakamura 1996; Roozen, McKinney, and Thompson 1990).

The life cycle (age) effects, cohort effects, and period effects all have some input into religious changes. Most studies of the changes in religious practice in the United States allow for at least some effect of age on commitment. Additionally, studies demonstrate that Catholics (women in particular) increase religious participation as they begin having children, drop off as children grow up, and then return to their previous level in late adulthood. In a study including 129 in-depth interviews with older adults, Ingersoll-Dayton et al. (2002) discovered that having more time to be “reflective,” along with decreasing family responsibilities in retirement years, led to increases in religiosity. Further, recognition of one’s own mortality can lead to an increase in the salience of religion in one’s life (Dillon and Wink 2003b; Stark and Bainbridge 1987).

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125 Iannaccone’s (1990) theory concerning religious capital would also support an increase in church attendance over the life course.

126 One respondent explained why he attends church and studies the Bible more often now upon retiring: “My priorities have changed…my time is not divided” (Ingersoll-Dayton 2002: 64). See also Atchley (1997a) and Dillon and Wink (2003b).

127 There is a tremendous amount of research on the link between religion and health in late-life. See Koenig et al. (2001) and Pargament (1997) for an exhaustive analysis of the topic. While religious activity and belief may have positive influences on health outcomes in older adults, the relationship is outside the scope of this project.
3.8. Life Cycle and Cohort Effects in American Catholics

Cohort effects do play a role in assessing methods of religious expression for American Catholics. Boomer Catholics are less committed and religiously involved than earlier birth cohort-groups (D’Antonio 2005; D’Antonio et al. 2007; Welch 1993).\(^{128}\) Davidson et al. (1997) reaffirm the “generations” approach by demonstrating the distinctions in religious attitudes and practices among Catholics in the Pre-Vatican II, Vatican II, and Post-Vatican II cohort-groups. In response to their research, Davidson et al. (1997: 117-8) conclude:

Pre-Vatican II Catholics tended to embrace conceptions of faith and morality which are consistent with conventional Church teachings; post-Vatican II Catholics expressed understandings of faith and morality that reflect an emphasis on individual choice and a decreased emphasis on what the Church prescribes. Those belonging to the middle cohort described views of faith and morality that are consistent with conventional Church teachings, as well as those that are dissonant with Church teachings.

Even though Vatican II Catholics—a group coinciding with Baby Boomers—are not as orthodox or as involved with the parish as the Pre-Vatican II cohort-group, life cycle effects of aging and retirement still have a significant positive influence on their church attendance (Argue et al. 1999; Hartnagel and Klug 1990; Hout and Greeley 1987).\(^{129}\)

However, a glance at Mass attendance rates among Catholics from 1987 to 2005 reveals a slight decline among the Vatican II Generation (D’Antonio 2005; D’Antonio et al. 2007; Welch 1993).

\(^{128}\) Welch (1993) discovered that Boomer Catholics give less, attend Mass less, and have lower frequency of traditional religious rituals (e.g., Stations of the Cross, Novenas).

\(^{129}\) Ploch and Hastings (1994) discover that the frequency of church attendance for Catholics increases with age up to age 60 (in the 1972 General Social Survey) or up to 70 (in the 1991 GSS). After this time, frequency of church attendance declines. Theories for the decline may include ailing health or inability to travel to Mass locations.
al. 2007). In 1987, weekly Mass attendance for the Vatican II Generation (1941-1960) was 40 percent. The Vatican II Generation at this point in time was between 27 and 46 years of age and right in the middle of the child-rearing years. In 1993 and 1999, the Vatican II Generation reported weekly Mass attendance at 42 percent, a slight increase. In 1999, the generation ranged from 39 to 58 years of age. The surface-level stability may be the result of the older portion of the cohort-group decreasing their religious activity as children moved out (see citations above) and the younger portion of the generation continuing to increase activity in response to their family roles. In the most recent 2005 edition of the survey (D’Antonio 2005), however, the percent of weekly Mass attendance in the Vatican II Generation dropped noticeably to 35 percent. If Boomer Catholics, as other groups, are supposed to increase their religious commitment as they age, what can explain the 7 percent drop in six years?

In 2005, the Vatican II Generation ranged from 45 to 64 years old. The drop in religious commitment during this era in the life course may lend support to the theory the biggest dip in religious practice occurs between early-adulthood and middle-adulthood when children leave the home (Dillon and Wink 2007; Ingersoll-Dayton 2002; Roof 1999; Sherkat and Wilson 1995). This dip is then accompanied by a slight rise in religious activity in late adulthood, often characterized by retirement from the workforce. As Boomer/Vatican II Catholics age and more time becomes available in retirement (AARP 2004), they may become more attached to their parishes resulting in higher levels

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130 Similar to the Vatican II generation, the Pre-Vatican II generation experienced the same rise in the 1990s in weekly Mass attendance only to fall back down in 2005. The Pre-Vatican II generation’s rates: 58 percent (1987), 63 percent (1993), 64 percent (1999), and 60 percent (2005) (D’Antonio 2005).
of attendance (Iannaccone 1990). Further, whatever negative lingering impact the
counterculture may have had on Boomer Catholic Mass attendance may have eventually
dissipated. What was once viewed as an indelible cohort effect on Baby Boomer’s
religious activity may have merely been a period effect causing a temporary depression in
public religious expression (Ploch and Hastings 1994).

3.9. Geographic Mobility in the Baby Boomer Cohort

Roughly half of Baby Boomer households are on course to accumulate enough
wealth to maintain, or even increase, their standard of living during retirement
(Congressional Budget Office 2003, 2004; Korczyk 2008). For many, retirement from
the workforce is also accompanied by willfully relocating to planned communities
dispersed throughout the southern half of the United States. In short, many retired
workers leave their communities, pick up, and move with the intent of enjoying their

\[ \text{131} \text{ In 2004, 68 percent of Boomers expected to have “plenty of leisure time” in their retirement. Additionally, 51 percent expected to dedicate time to volunteering activities which may include church volunteering (AARP 2004).} \]

\[ \text{132} \text{ Roof (1999) cites a Gallup study to claim that Baby Boomers’ religiosity did not increase as they aged (53). However, he makes his claim based on the results of Boomers in middle-adulthood. Dillon and Wink (2007) account for this dip in measures of religiosity due to children leaving the household. In late adulthood, the levels rise again.} \]

\[ \text{133} \text{ When speaking of migrants, geographic mobility, or migrating individuals, this paper is only referring to individuals who move within the United States. Individuals immigrating from outside the United States may seek out ethno-religious groups to help ease assimilation, find employment, support cultural rituals, and other reasons not covered in this analysis.} \]

\[ \text{134} \text{ Note that these figures were determined in 2004, prior to the current economic downturn.} \]
sunset years to the fullest. 135 This trend shows no signs of weakening (Longino and Bradley 2003: 904). For example, over 2 million residents over the age of sixty had moved in the five years preceding the 2000 U.S. Census. This was a 9 percent increase over the 1990 estimate (Longino and Bradley 2003: 905). In the next two decades, this number is expected to continue to rise. Even if the proportion of migrants slightly decreases in the immediate future, with the pending retirement of the massive Baby Boomer cohort, the “numbers of older migrants will increase precipitously for two census decades” (Longino and Bradley 2003: 907). Of those who do decide to migrate later in life, the pattern is most often north-to-south. 136

3.9.1 Migration and Decreasing Religious Commitment 137

Moving as a life-event is not an unusual occurrence. Moving, however, from one region to another that is culturally and religiously distinctive can have a significant impact, positive or negative, on beliefs and behaviors in the new location. The direction

135 In 2006, the AARP surveyed 800 sixty year-olds. Thirty percent of respondents are planning some type of move in “the next few years” (AARP 2006).

136 A table in the 2000 U.S. Census highlights the trend of north to south migration of those over the age of 60 prior to the 2000 U.S. Census. In raw numbers of those over 60 for the five years leading up to the 2000 census, North Carolina had 74,937 immigrants while losing 40,647 outmigrants for a net gain of 34,290 new residents over the age sixty. This ranks North Carolina third in the net gain of immigrants. The U.S. Census data examined above does not include the Baby Boomer cohort. This does not mean, however, that the findings are not educational or cannot be utilized. For the purpose of this project, the essential takeaway from the 2000 U.S. Census is the increasing rate in which the older northern population is picking up and moving to southern destinations and the likelihood that the trend will continue with more and more Baby Boomers reaching retirement age—with theorists arguing that it will. Even if the percentage of retired northerners remains steady and does not increase, with the size of the Baby Boomer cohort, the raw numbers will still increase dramatically. Reasons for such a move are varied and differ from individual to individual. At this time, it is more pertinent to leave the reasons for the move aside.

137 For example, Harvey Cox (1965) theorizes: “Let us admit at once that high mobility does play havoc with traditional religion. It separates people from the holy place. It mixes them with neighbors whose gods have different names and who worship them in different ways” (47).
of the influence of geographic mobility on religious behavior is under debate. Some studies claim that geographically mobile people have depressed rates of church attendance when compared to non-movers (Bainbridge 1990; Stark and Bainbridge 1985; Welch and Baltzell 1984; Wuthnow and Christiano 1979). Other studies present evidence that mobility alone does not impact behavior. Instead, the religious environment into which one moves has more influence on religious commitment than mobility (Bibby 1997; Brewer et al. 2006; Hill 1985; Perl and Olson 2000; Stump 1984a, Smith, Sikkink, and Baily 1998). Still others claim that religiously committed individuals are less likely to move away from their communities than unaffiliated or less committed individuals (Lenski 1961; Myers 2000).138

Wuthnow and Christiano (1979) examined the influence of residential mobility on church attendance on white Catholics and white Protestants in the United States. Their data demonstrate that recently migrating Catholics are less likely to attend weekly Mass than established residents.139 Additionally, there is a direct relationship between the number of years living in one’s home and the rate of Catholic Mass attendance. The longer one has lived in one’s home, the more often Mass is attended.140 The relationship is most striking in Catholics over thirty years of age. Catholics who are over thirty years-

138 Myers (2000) argues that individuals with a large investment in location-specific religious capital may be less likely to migrate away from the religious community. As a result, migrating individuals are disproportionately less religious than those who do not migrate. The disproportion may result in erroneous conclusions that migrating alone causes decreasing levels of religious commitment.

139 Among white Protestants, the relationship between years of residence in the community and church attendance exists, but is not nearly as strong as it is in white Catholics.

140 As with the number of years in the community, a relationship between years in one’s home and church attendance exists with white Protestants, but is not nearly as robust as the relationship found among white Catholics (Wuthnow and Christiano 1979).
old and who have lived in their home more than twenty years attend Mass weekly at a 48 percent rate. Comparably, Catholics over thirty years-old who have lived in their current home only one to two years attend weekly at a 20 percent rate. In lieu of these surprising results, the authors conclude that Catholics must be more connected to the communal aspects of the faith than previously thought.\textsuperscript{141}

What are the reasons behind the decrease in Mass attendance among the geographically mobile? In reference to Wuthnow and Christiano’s (1979) analysis, subsequent studies suggest that any disruption of social attachments and relations, such as those experienced in a move, reduces the probability that one will attend church frequently (Bainbridge 1990; Stark and Bainbridge 1985; Stark and Finke 2000; Welch and Baltzell 1984). Calling the phenomenon by different names–integration-disruption hypothesis (Welch and Baltzell 1984), social bond theory (Bainbridge 1990), dislocation (Stump 1984a), location-specific religious capital (Myers 2000)–researchers point to the importance of social relationships in maintaining religious commitment.\textsuperscript{142}

Testing Wuthnow and Christiano’s (1979) theory, Welch and Baltzell (1984) employ a more sophisticated analysis in an attempt to isolate migration as the root cause of decreased religious commitment. They find that geographical mobility alone is not

\textsuperscript{141} The results surprised the authors because of the universal nature of the Catholic Church and Catholic Mass.

\textsuperscript{142} Earlier studies found that a move from rural areas to urban regions is linked to a turn away from religious practice (Beers and Hefflin 1944; Giffin 1962; Goldschmidt 1944; Jitodi 1964; Lenski 1961; Powles 1964). The conclusion drawn from the data is that the city church may replicate the religious functions of rural religious communities, but could not reproduce the additional social and community-enhancing functions (Killian 1953). This conclusion is contrary to Holt’s (1940) “culture shock” thesis which predicts a move from a rural region to an urban area will result in increased religious involvement, albeit more sectarian in nature.
responsible for changes in religious commitment; rather, the decrease in commitment among mobile respondents is mitigated through measures of social integration.

Neighborhood acquaintance networks transmit norms shared by the community (Tittle 1977; Welch and Baltzell 1984). These informal relationships serve to reinforce conventional behavior that maintains social norms. Violation of the norms by newcomers may result in implicit or explicit sanctions (Welch and Baltzell 1984). Mobility negatively impacts the communal bonds that may induce church attendance.143

Stark and Bainbridge (1985) also point to the breakdown of social connections as a reason behind lower attendance rates in migrating individuals. They argue that, “Migration severs the bonds that hold people to a religious organization, producing a kind of religious vacuum” (322).144 Individuals moving into a new town are not immediately welcomed into a church. The lag time between the move and finding a new parish or congregation may result in a short-term dip in church attendance, but can also contribute to a more long-term decrease. In a pluralistic religious landscape, the first wave of social ties in a new location may not be of the same religious affiliation (Stark and Bainbridge 1985; Stark and Finke 2000). The lack of strong social ties with co-religionists in the new location may prevent reinforcement of religious activities. Finally, without the ability to track migrating individuals, churches in the new location (of the same

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143 Since ties to the community “are channels through which normative control over religious participation is maintained, […] anything that might weaken or disrupt these bonds probably would also weaken the impetus for norm-following and eventually be reflected in low levels of church attendance” (Welch and Baltzell: 80).

144 Also see Bainbridge (1990).
denomination) may not be aware of the presence of newcomers to welcome them and, thereby, overtly and covertly influence church attendance (Bibby 1997).

3.9.2. Migration and Increasing Religious Commitment

While one cadre of scholars argues that geographic mobility has a significant negative effect on religious commitment (Bainbridge 1990; Stark and Bainbridge 1985; Welch and Baltzell 1984; Wuthnow and Christiano 1979), another group focuses on the destination of migrants before coming to any definitive conclusion (Bibby 1997; Hill 1985; Perl and Olson 2000; Stump 1984a, Smith, Sikkink, and Baily 1998). In short, moves to a more religious environment than the place of origin is positively linked to heightened religious activities, while moves to less religious environments negatively impacts religious commitment. The new religious environment—if it is a stronger one—has more impact on measures of commitment than the loss of social ties or influential social networks.

Wuthnow and Christiano (1979) discovered that the South has the highest rate of religious participation as measured through church attendance.145 Forty-six percent of respondents in the South attend services on a weekly basis compared with 30 percent in the West, 41 percent in the East, and 45 percent in the Midwest (268). In this study,

145 It is generally accepted that respondents in the southern United States report higher levels of religious commitment operationalized by church attendance, strength of faith, bible reading, and other measures. While the states that make up the “South” and “Southeast” may change from study to study, the notion that the southern United States is more religious is not a contentious one. For support, see Smith, Sikkink, and Bailey (1998) and the General Social Survey 1972-2008 dataset. For an analysis of the regional differences in Catholic commitment, see Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (2008), D’Antonio et al. (2007), and The Gallup Organization (2005).
Catholics who migrated south from the Northeast and Midwest attend Mass weekly at a higher rate than those who remain in the original regions.\footnote{There is a concern about the small number of respondents fitting these regional categories in the Wuthnow and Christiano (1979) study. In order to have enough respondents to analyze the results, Catholics from the Midwest and Northeast were lumped together into one category. Only 18 respondents from these regions moved south and only 15 moved west. These small numbers require that conclusions drawn from the Wuthnow and Christiano (1979) study need to be done so with hesitation.}

In contrast to the dislocation model presented above (also known as integration-disruption hypothesis), Stump (1984a) argues in support of an adaptation model: regardless of the religious landscape of the destination, migrants “will tend to conform to their new cultural surroundings” (293).\footnote{Due to data restrictions, Wuthnow and Christiano (1979), Stump (1984b), and Smith, Sikkink, and Bailey (1998) used the place of residence at age 16 and the place of residence at the time of the survey to determine “movers” from “non-movers.”} The religious differences between the regions are hard to ignore (Hill 1985). Stump (1984a) allows that dislocation may happen in the short-run immediately after a move, but eventually the migrants will adapt their own religious commitment levels to those of the immediate cultural surroundings. The fluctuations in religious commitment work both ways—a move from a more religious environment, such as the South, to a less religious environment, such as the West, results in a long-term decrease of religious practice.\footnote{As a result of individuals adapting to their distinct religious environments, regional variation in religious commitment levels will remain intact (Hill 1985; Stump 1984b). See also Hurlbert (1989) for a test of southern cultural distinctiveness including religious and moral attitudes.}

Smith, Sikkink, and Bailey (1998) find support for Stump’s (1984a) adaptation thesis.\footnote{Smith, Sikkink, and Bailey (1998) create a dummy variable to place all respondents into two categories, “southerner” or “non-southerner.”} Their results demonstrate that southerners who move out of the South have lower levels of attendance and salience of their faith than southerners who remain. Also,
the southerners who move come to resemble the non-southerners in other regions into which they move. Reciprocally, non-southerners who move to the South come to resemble southerners in their attendance patterns and strength of faith. Finally, non-southerners who move to the South attend more frequently and report their faith is more important than non-southerners who did not move. The authors conclude that the higher commitment levels of the South “rub off” on those who move there (Smith, Sikkink, and Bailey 1998: 501) regardless of the religious tradition.

Perl and Olson (2000) investigate previous research claiming an inverse relationship between market share and religious commitment. In doing so, they wonder if the previous conclusions are actually a spurious by-product of other contextual factors. More specifically, when studies involving Catholics show a significant relationship between market share and levels of giving (Zaleski and Zech 1995), the researchers do not take into account the local levels of religiosity where Catholic market share is at its lowest, namely in the South. As a result, the studies may overlook the effect the dominant culture, which is more religious than elsewhere, has on commitment levels regardless of denominational affiliation.\(^{150}\) Perl and Olson (2000) ultimately conclude that spillover effects, while possible, do not overtake the impact market share has on

\(^{150}\) Perl and Olson (2000: 13) argue, “The high expectations that conservative Protestants hold for their own members’ commitment levels may ‘spillover’ to others living in the same community but belonging to other denominations.”
commitment; on the other hand, Brewer et al. (2006) report that regional spillover does impact giving in ELCA congregations in the South.151

3.10. Conclusion

The first wave of Catholic Baby Boomers came of age during the tumultuous 1960s. During and after this era, religious practice in the United States changed significantly both outside and within the established religious denominations. And while not applicable to all Boomers, the cohort-group spearheaded the transition from a prevailing spirituality of dwelling to a spirituality of seeking (Wuthnow 1998; see also Fuller 2001; Roof 1993, 1999).152 In simplistic terms, the spirituality of dwelling or habitation is primarily focused on institutional religious connections and its boundaries, universal truths, and timeless, sacred rituals.153 The latter, the spirituality of seeking or negotiation, focuses more on a search of “sacred moments that reinforce their conviction that the divine exists” (Wuthnow 1998: 4). According to Wuthnow (1998), the seekers, or spiritual entrepreneurs, build their spirituality from the bottom up using a variety of religious and personal sources. This self-exploration is intimately personal; the truths

151 Brewer et al. (2006: 394) discover that “a larger Catholic presence in the county depresses giving per member in ELCA congregations. Alternatively, a greater evangelical Protestant market share in the county increases ELCA giving per member.”

152 The change in religious and spiritual understanding did not necessarily require one to abandon their denominational affiliation altogether. Changes from a spirituality of dwelling to a spirituality of seeking could occur within denominational boundaries. The key is that the Boomer generation as a whole embodied the change in understanding between the individual and the organizational church.

153 Fuller (2001) argues that the spiritual-seeker mentality has been overtly present in American religious history, but cultural changes in the 1960s allowed the “spiritual, but not religious” person to move from the margins to the forefront of American culture. In 2001, 20 percent of the population aspired to be “spiritual, but not religious” (155).
discovered are not universal, but merely true for the individuals pursuing them. This seeker spirituality was caricatured by Bellah et al. (1985: 221, 235) in the person of Sheila Larson whose self-described “Sheliaism” is composed of an intentionally personalized faith independent from external religious authority. Sheila has plenty of company in her spiritual entrepreneurship among Boomers across the denominational spectrum.  

Similar to the large numbers of believers in other mainline religious groups, a significant portion of Euro-American Boomer Catholics eschewed traditional, institutional-centered understanding of their faith in favor of a more personal, intentionally constructed faith. Further, Boomer Catholics were not immune to the countercultural influences and weakening of religious and secular institutional authority. The Second Vatican Council and *Humanae Vitae* compounded the problem of declining faith in the institutional Church by empowering the laity to be the “Body of Christ” and, at the same time, reasserting controversial sexual ethical norms. The normative claims of official Church authorities fell on the deaf ears of a laity increasingly assimilated into mainstream American culture. Moral requirements perceived as unreasonable and contrary to the lived experiences of many Catholic couples combined with an

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154 The 1978 Gallup poll cited by Bellah et al. notes that 80 percent of Americans agreed with the statement that “an individual should arrive at his or her own religious beliefs independent of any churches or synagogues” (1985: 228).

155 A new understanding of one’s Catholic faith does not require abandoning the institutional Church altogether. Instead, the “new understanding” may entail a new relationship an individual has with their Catholic faith and their role in the institutional Church. In some cases, the new role of the individual is not merely an arbitrary one at odds with the institutional Church, but legitimated through a re-interpretation of ecclesiology resulting from Vatican II.
empowered, fully assimilated laity, declining Church authority, and an emerging seeker mentality, ushered in new era of American Catholicism.

As they age, retire and face their own mortality, will Boomer Catholics follow previous cohort-groups in increasing their religious practice? Will they compress the gap in attendance and orthodoxy between themselves and their parents as they move into late adulthood, or will the seeker mentality hinder strong institutional ties?

In addition, the impact of geographical mobility on Boomer Catholics and their religious commitment needs to take into account the loss of location-specific religious capital and a move into a new religious environment. The Southeast, being more religious in general than other regions, may increase the levels of religious practice for those who move into the region regardless of their denomination. In addition to being a minority faith tradition with a small market share, Baby Boomer Catholics’ religiosity may be positively influenced by the high levels of religious commitment across the Diocese of Raleigh, the regional focus of this study.

In order to test the above assertions concerning the religious lives of Baby Boomer Catholics, the study now turns to the survey responses of nearly 2,000 Catholics residing in retirement regions of the Diocese of Raleigh, NC. This dissertation hypothesizes that Boomer Catholics in the survey follow previous generations and become more religious as they progress through the later stages of the life cycle (vis-à-vis mass attendance and parish participation), but they also retain their cohort-group distinctiveness in reference to how their religion is practiced and their level of institutional orthodoxy.
Subsequent chapters also address the hypothesis that regional migration influences religious commitment. Does migration as an isolated event contribute to a rise or fall in religious commitment or is it the region to which an individual moves that is more influential? Catholic Boomers moving north-to-south encounter a more intense local religious environment (as measured by aspects of commitment) that may have spill-over effects on their own religious decisions.

In addition to the more religious environment in the South compared to other regions of the country, Boomer Catholics migrating to the region find themselves situated in a minority faith. The impact of this perception of religious minority status and low Catholic market share in the South on religious belief and behavior of Catholic Boomers in the survey will also be investigated in the following chapters.
4.1. Introduction

Driving the 75 miles along U.S. Route 17 from Wilmington, North Carolina to Myrtle Beach, South Carolina billboards flow one after the other touting the glorious lifestyles offered by the various residential communities competing for the most recent wave of retirees. Alluring images of the “young-old”\textsuperscript{156} playing golf, strolling through quaint shopping districts, or relaxing at the beach draw attention away from the bulldozers and new-home construction sites tucked behind the tree-line of the four lane highway. The bulldozers are evidence of the current population boom prevalent in coastal regions of eastern North Carolina. The population of Brunswick County, running along the Atlantic Ocean from Wilmington to the South Carolina border, grew 47 percent between 2000 and 2009 (North Carolina Office of State Budget and Management 2009).\textsuperscript{157} Forty-five percent of the growth in the county over this timeframe is the result of net migration, or individuals moving into the region.\textsuperscript{158}

What accounts for the recent in-migrant boom in Brunswick County? Unlike other metropolitan regions in the state experiencing significant population increases due

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{156} The classification of the “young-old” is used in commercial and retirement-advertising literature to characterize individuals who may be retired from the workforce, but are still very active in their lifestyles (Duncombe et al. 2003).

\textsuperscript{157} Of the growth amount, only 2 percent can be accounted for through “natural growth.” Natural growth is determined by subtracting all natural deaths from natural births in the area. Brunswick County does not include the city of Wilmington or other major urban centers.

\textsuperscript{158} Net migration is determined by the estimated number of individuals moving into the county subtracted by the estimated number of individuals moving out of the county.
\end{footnotesize}
to job transfers (i.e., Charlotte and Raleigh), Brunswick County does not contain a major metropolitan area.\textsuperscript{159} The increase in population in Brunswick County is due primarily to non-institutionalized, later-life Americans migrating to the region from out of state (North Carolina Division of Aging and Adult Services 2008).\textsuperscript{160} The coastal counties in North Carolina are attractive to older Americans as a retirement destination because of the lower cost-of-living compared to the national average, amenable weather, proximity to the coast, recreational opportunities, social and entertainment options, presence of established health services, and lower crime rates (Bradley et al. 2008; Clark and Hunter 1992; Duncombe et al. 2003; Longino and Fox 1995; Longino et al. 2002; Walters 2002).\textsuperscript{161} The draw the available amenities in eastern North Carolina have had on the tail end of the Silent Generation (1925-1942) should continue to attract Baby Boomers contemplating a post-retirement move.\textsuperscript{162}

\footnotesize
\textsuperscript{159} The city of Wilmington, NC borders the county to the north.
\textsuperscript{160} A 2008 report, \textit{Aging North Carolina}, reviews the pending demographic shift in the state and specifically in its eastern-most counties along the coast: “The eight counties with more than 200 percent growth can be divided into two very different categories. Union, Wake, Johnston, and Hoke are experiencing rapid growth in their overall population as expanding parts of metropolitan areas, and they will remain relatively ‘young’ (the proportion of their population projected to be over 65 is lower than that of the state as a whole.) The remaining four counties—Brunswick, Camden, Currituck, and Dare [the latter three counties are all in the ‘Outer Banks’ region]—by contrast, are projected to see disproportionate growth in their aging population. Brunswick and Dare, in particular, are projected to have substantially higher percentages of older adults (26.4 percent and 24.1 percent respectively), compared to 17.7 percent for the state as a whole” (North Carolina Division of Aging and Adult Services 2008: 2). The report also cites one reason for the population boom in the state is due to the “large number of older adults with higher incomes […] retiring in some western and coastal counties and other counties with attractions to specific groups of older adults (e.g., golf courses)” (3).
\textsuperscript{161} The cost-of-living for Brunswick County is notably lower than the 2009 national average (www.city-data.com). The other three counties where parishes in the study are located also have significantly lower costs-of-living than the 2009 national average.
\textsuperscript{162} The \textit{North Carolina Study Commission on Aging} (2006) cites a 2006 Office of State Budget and Management report that predicts an increase of 121 percent in North Carolina residents over the age of 65 in 2030.
Migrants to North Carolina are disproportionately from the Northeast and Midwest regions of the United States (Longino and Bradley 2003). With regard to religious affiliation, the New England region and Midwest are both heavily Catholic, while North Carolina has extremely low numbers of Catholic affiliates by comparison (Kosmin and Keysar 2009). The Diocese of Raleigh has an even lower number of registered Catholics, 4.8 percent of the population, than Northeastern and Midwestern regions (Official Catholic Directory 2008). However, the 4.8 percent of registered Catholics in the diocese is a significant gain from the 1.6 percent of the population in 1980 (Official Catholic Directory 1980). Further examination of the Official Catholic Directories over the past thirty years shows that the prolific gains in Catholic market share in the Diocese of Raleigh are not due to new baptisms or conversions, but to migrations from outside the Diocese. The substantial increase in the number of Catholics (affiliated and registered) in the Diocese of Raleigh and North Carolina and the pattern of retiree migration to the area from the North both justify the use of the Diocese of Raleigh, NC as a case-study for exploring the impact of migration on post-retirement Catholics.

The rest of this chapter is dedicated to outlining the exploratory study, establishing the Boomer cohort-group, and presenting some of the initial findings. Specifically, the characteristics of the Catholic Boomers in the Diocese of Raleigh vis-à-vis religious behaviors and beliefs will be highlighted and measured against prior generations of Catholics. The belief items across generations will also be examined for

\[163\] For example, in 2008 only 9 percent of the population in North Carolina self-identified as Catholic, an increase from 6 percent in 1990. In New England and Midwest states, the percentage of Catholic affiliates is much higher. Thirty-six percent of respondents from states that comprise New England (CT, MA, ME, NH, RI, and VT) and 24 percent of respondents from the Midwest (IL, IN, MI, OH, WI) self-identify as Catholic (Kosmin and Keysar 2009).
levels of personal autonomy versus institutional support. As more and more Boomers retire from the workforce, examining how life-course changes may impact their religious activities is imperative. Differences between working and retired Boomers regarding religious behavior and belief will be presented.\textsuperscript{164} Religious commitment measures comparing migrant Catholics and Catholics native to North Carolina will also be introduced. Finally, the correlation between educational attainment and measures of religious commitment will be analyzed. Subsequent chapters further analyze the link between north-to-south migration, low market share, and religious minority status on changes in religious belief and behavior in the Catholic Baby Boomer cohort-group.

4.2. Survey Distribution Method

The rapid increase in the number of Catholics in the Diocese of Raleigh, NC, many of whom are Boomer retirees who migrated recently from the North, provides an opportunity to explore the impact this move can have on individual religious commitment. It is also an opportunity to investigate the impact of moving from an area of high Catholic market share to low Catholic market share on religiosity and examine the extent, if any, of northern influence on Catholic parish dynamics in the South. While observing parishes at the organizational level is educational and is an essential element of the case study, the parishioners themselves needed to be polled to determine the extent moving, retiring, and being a religious minority can have on religious practice and beliefs among the Boomer cohort-group.

\textsuperscript{164} Retirement from the workforce is typically accompanied by an additional allotment of leisure time. Many respondents report the desire to use this available time for volunteer work within the parish and with other local volunteer organizations.
In the fall of 2008, letters were sent out to fourteen parishes and two mission parishes in three geographically distinct regions of the Diocese of Raleigh requesting participation in a study examining the explosive growth and changing complexion of Catholicism in the area. The targeted regions all contain high percentages of retired and older parishioners compared to other counties in the diocese. In the end, six parishes from three geographically distinct regions of the Diocese of Raleigh were included in the study.165

In all, 3,172 surveys were distributed either by hand or by mail in the spring and summer of 2009. Of the distributed surveys, 1,941 surveys were returned via mail. The overall response rate for the study is 61 percent. In addition to completing the survey, respondents were asked if they had any additional comments about their experiences of Catholicism in the South. Finally, potential respondents were asked about their willingness to participate in follow-up interviews. Twenty-three percent (n=717) of respondents included their contact information for potential follow-up interviews.

The first method of survey distribution occurred in four parishes after weekend Mass on three consecutive weekends in May and June of 2009. In all but one case, the pastor or principal investigator made an announcement concerning the study and availability of surveys to the attendees during Mass. Parishioners were invited to take a survey upon exiting the Church. If the investigator was not present, surveys were available in marked boxes. In some cases, volunteers assisted the investigator with

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165 The two mission parishes were eliminated due to their small, fluctuating size. Two parishes declined the invitation to participate in the study. Remaining parishes were eliminated due to their geographical proximity to other parishes already committed to participating in the study.
distributing surveys to attendees. The survey included a stamped, addressed envelope for return. The response rate utilizing the personal distribution method was 73 percent.

The second method of survey distribution occurred by mail. In two parishes where the roll was made available to the investigator, surveys were mailed out to all registered parishioners. The survey included a stamped, addressed envelope for return. The response rate incorporating this method was 43 percent.

The impetus behind multiple distribution methods is two-fold. First, per conversations with Diocese of Raleigh pastors, some individuals and couples who attend Mass on a weekly basis are not officially registered with the parish.166 Distributing the surveys at the back of church following weekend Mass allows for these individuals to be included in the study. Second, only 26 percent of self-identified Catholics attend Mass on a weekly basis (or more), which means roughly 31 percent of affiliated Catholics are at Mass on any given week (CARA 2008).167 As a result, a substantial number of Catholics may not be in attendance at Mass during a given week (or three weeks in succession). To include individuals who may not be in attendance, surveys in two parishes were mailed to individuals on the parish roll.

166 Pastors have noted that some couples or individuals attend Mass nearly every week but are reluctant to officially join the parish roll. The reasons for their refusal to join the parish are varied. Some potential parishioners have complained that as the Catholic population increases, the parish grows, and the need for added space becomes paramount; the result is “another capital campaign asking for money” (conversation with pastor). Other unregistered attendees have noted that they are still “officially” members of their parish in their place of origin. It is emotionally challenging to relinquish membership at the parish where their children were raised (survey responses). An additional reason for not registering with a parish upon moving is that individuals prefer to continue to “shop around” and do not want to be tied to a particular parish. This reason is more common in regions where there are multiple Catholic parishes within a reasonable driving distance (survey responses).

167 Surveys seeking religious service attendance typically must account for over-reporting by respondents. Because the Center for Research in the Apostolate survey is self-administered, the investigators feel they drastically decrease the social desirability factor in over-reporting attendance, giving, going to confession, and other measures of commitment (CARA 2008).
Without a doubt, there is a potential bias in measures such as commitment and regularity of attendance in the group who received the surveys after attending Mass. In the majority of the analyses that follow, the two groups are parsed out into distinct cohorts. Where applicable, statistically significant differences are noted between the two groups (distributed and mailed).

4.3. The Baby Boomers–The Making of a Cohort-group

The United States Census Bureau classifies anyone born in the United States between the years 1946 and 1964 as a Baby Boomer using the numerical increase in population in the post-war era as their justification. Some demographers and researchers take issue with the Census Bureau’s designation especially when discussing the social and cultural impact of the cohort-group. In place of the Census Bureau’s range of 1946 to 1964, this paper follows Strauss and Howe (1991) and the Center for Research in the Apostolate (2008) in using the year of birth range of 1943 to 1960 to define the Baby Boomer Generation. Strauss and Howe (1991: 48-49) base their generational breakdown on shared experiences and peer personalities of the cohort-groups and not merely population numbers. In making cohort groupings, CARA (2008: 16) uses a corresponding birth year range of 1943-1960 but focuses less on the influence of the Boom Generation on culture. Instead, they use this range because the cohort-group came of age during and immediately after historical shifts in Catholic practice and self-understanding—the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965).168

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168 From this point on, the designations “Vatican II Generation” and the “Boomer Generation” are used interchangeably.
Generations, such as the Boomers or Gen X, encounter historical events approximately at the same phase of the life cycle. As a result, epochal events shape the various cohort-groups in different ways (Mannheim 1952; Ryder 1965). The impact of a significant or epoch defining event on a cohort-group continues to shape the group as they move through the life cycle and, in turn, influences the generation’s leadership and parental styles (Strauss and Howe 1991). Although a generation is made up of individuals of different genders, races, nationalities, education levels, workforce placement, and socio-economic statuses, each generation, through experiencing events at similar life stages, develops a distinctive peer personality or “set of collective behavioral traits and attitudes that later expresses itself throughout a generation’s life cycle trajectory” (Strauss and Howe 1991: 32).

As with reporting survey results, attributing personality traits to an entire generation should be done with caution. The peer-personality approach points to generalized trends and is not intended to describe each individual. As a result, ascribing a peer-personality for a generation spanning eighteen years is not accomplished without complications. Consider the following events America experienced in 1969: the first humans walked on the moon; 250,000 marched on Washington in protest of the Vietnam War; even more people (400,000) descended on a New York farm to celebrate the Woodstock Music and Art Fair; Sesame Street debuted on PBS; the draft lottery for military service was reinstituted for the first time since World War II; Richard M. Nixon

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169 For example, “The same cataclysm that a 10-year old finds terrifying, a 30-year old may find empowering, a 50-yeard old calming, and a 70-year old inspiring” (Strauss and Howe: 48).

170 See also Mannheim (1952), Ryder (1965), and Schuman and Scott (1989).
was inaugurated as the thirty-seventh president; the Charles Mason Family cult murders shocked the nation; and civil and gay rights protests were on the rise. During these events of 1969, the oldest Boomers were twenty-five years old while the youngest were only eight years old. To assume that these events impacted the Boomer generation in some monolithic way is brushing too broad of a stroke.\textsuperscript{171} We need to be sure to recognize, as Strauss and Howe (1991: 59) do, that “like most other social categories—religion, political party, income, occupation, race—generations can be imprecise at the boundaries.” Nonetheless, despite the inexactness of the endeavor, generations do vary substantially from one another and can be discussed as a collectivity (Manheim 1952; Roof 1993; Ryder 1965; Schuman and Scott 1989; Strauss and Howe 1991).

4.3.1. A Generation Split—Two Waves of Baby Boomers

This paper utilizes the date range shared by Strauss and Howe (1991) and CARA to determine range of the Boomer cohort-group, but also makes a further dichotomization of the Boomers into a first wave and second wave. Parenting styles have a significant influence on subsequent generations. The first sub-group of Boomers (“victory” and “hello” babies) was born almost exclusively to parents of the G.I. Generation (1901-1924). Boomers in the second wave, babies of the conformist 1950s, were born primarily to parents from the immediately preceding Silent Generation (1925-1942). This second wave came of age in a less protective environment with much more freedom. They also

\textsuperscript{171} For example, did the institution of the draft lottery impact eight year-olds the same way as twenty-five year-olds? Conscription ended in 1972 (the Draft in 1973), when the youngest of the Boomer Generation were still only eleven to twelve years old.
fared worse in educational aptitude and self-destructive behavior (Strauss and Howe 1991: 304).

Further, the experiences of the older Boomers are quite distinct from those of the younger group (Roof 1993: 34-35). The older group *witnessed first hand*, and in many cases *contributed to*, the social, political, and cultural shifts in the decade. Direct experience of catalytic events during youth and early adulthood tend to have a deeper and more enduring impact on individuals and their social and political attitudes later in life (Mannheim 1952; Schuman and Scott 1989). The younger Boomer group, not necessarily being directly and immediately aware of changes in society, was born into this new world and had to adapt to it.

The next three motives behind splitting the larger Boomer cohort-group into smaller waves are specifically related to possible changes in religious behaviors. First, those on the older end of the Boomer spectrum are closer to retirement age, if not already retired. Retirement from the workforce, along with potential geographical migration, can impact religious behaviors and attitudes as free time increases as well as the desire to connect with others in a similar age range. The younger wave is, for the most part, still in

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172 Schuman and Scott (1989: 359-60) support earlier research in noting, “The generational character created by the events a cohort experiences during its youth is assumed to exert an important, even decisive, influence on the later attitudes and actions of its members.” Their study finds that age is the strongest predictor (over gender, education, and race) in assessing which national and world events are reported as the “most important” over the previous 50 years. Schuman and Scott (1989: 378) conclude, “The importance of adolescence and early adulthood can be seen […] to emerge out of the conjunction of several life course factors: first, the low salience for most people of events that occurred prior to their own lifetime, or even prior to their near-intellectual maturity in adolescence; second, the openness of adolescents and young adults to events and influences from outside the home and neighborhood; and third, the importance of the first political and social events that people encounter for shaping their later views of the political and social world, so that subsequent events seldom seem as significant as those encountered earlier.” They also note: “When a large part of the Vietnam generation remembers the Vietnam period as one of distrust and division, this is a collective memory in the more general sense of being collectively created and collectively held, and it probably has more general import for future actions by members of that generation” (378).
the workforce—a fact that has its own implications on religious behaviors. Second, those who are parents in the second wave of Boomers have a different relationship with religious organizations than their older counterparts. In some cases, parents with school-age children are more connected to religious organizations than “empty nesters” whose children have moved out of the house temporarily or permanently. Finally, in specifically considering Catholic Baby Boomers, the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) may have distinctive influences (immediate and residual) on the two waves. The oldest of the cohort-group were twenty-one years of age at the closing of the council, while the youngest were only four years old. Having been raised in the pre-Vatican II Catholic Church and witnessing the incorporation of substantial changes in theology and ritual may have a different impact on one’s relationship with the Church than a younger Catholic who cannot recall the Latin Rite Mass.

Taking into account the above justifications for splitting the Boomers into two waves, this study uses the year-of-birth range of 1943-1951 for the first wave and 1952-1960 for the second wave. The youngest of the first wave of Boomers would have been fourteen years old (or very close to it) at the close of the Second Vatican Council in 1965.\textsuperscript{173}

\textsuperscript{173} The Second Vatican Council closed on November 21, 1965. While it took time for some of the theological changes to make their way throughout the global Church, other changes were noticed more immediately. The most visible impact of the Second Vatican Council included the changes in the Catholic Mass. \textit{Sacrosanctum Concilium} (Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy) was promulgated by Pope Paul VI on December 4, 1963.
4.4. Descriptive Statistics

Of the 3,172 self-administered surveys distributed throughout the three regions of the Diocese of Raleigh, 1,941 were returned with an overall response rate of 61 percent. Nearly the entire sample self-identified as Catholic (99 percent) and identified their race as white (97 percent). As with most surveys concerning religion, there is a significant gender bias with respect to the completion of the survey (The Gallup Organization 2005; Smith et al. 2011 [General Social Survey 2008]; Sax, Gilmartin, and Bryant 2003). Sixty-three percent of the total sample is female, leaving only 37 percent of male respondents. While there is no statistically significant difference in frequency of Mass attendance between the two genders, significant differences do exist in other religious measures, such as salience and questions of orthodoxy and religious attitudes. Gender differences in religious belief and behavior are well established (Miller and Stark 2002; Walter and Davie 1998).174 As a result, the empirical survey data is weighted using the male to female ratio of the general population of the four counties in which the parishes are located. The Boomer respondents are also biased toward females–66 percent female to 34 percent male. When the Boomer cohort-group is analyzed individually, the sample is weighted to match the ratio of males to females of the Boomer population in the four counties where the parishes are located.175

Survey respondents are spread out over five generational cohort-groups as seen in Table 4.1. The average birth-year is 1945, making the average respondent 65 years old in

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174 While the differences between men and women in religious measures are widely accepted, there is ongoing debate in explaining these differences.

175 The weighting utilizes the county data from the U.S. Census Data, State and County Quick Facts (2008).
2010. By comparison, the median age for the four counties in which the six parishes are located is estimated at 39 years old (U.S. Census Bureau 2008).\textsuperscript{176} CARA’s 2008 nationwide survey of over 1,000 Catholics reports a median age of 47. The median age of the few respondents in the CARA study residing in North Carolina (n=15) is 43 years old.

Table 4.1. Age Groups of All Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Cohort-group</th>
<th>Year of Birth</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>G.I. Generation</td>
<td>1901-24</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silent Generation</td>
<td>1925-42</td>
<td>834</td>
<td>43.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baby Boomer Generation</td>
<td>1943-60</td>
<td>760</td>
<td>39.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wave 1 (1943-51)</td>
<td></td>
<td>545</td>
<td>28.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wave 2 (1952-60)</td>
<td></td>
<td>215</td>
<td>11.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13\textsuperscript{th} Gen/Generation X</td>
<td>1961-81</td>
<td>251</td>
<td>13.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Millennial Generation</td>
<td>1982+</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avg. year of birth: 1945.4</td>
<td></td>
<td>1922</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As noted in Table 4.1, nearly 900 respondents (46 percent) come from the two generations preceding the Baby Boomers while 760 respondents (40 percent) fall into the Boomer cohort-group. The Boomer cohort-group is further broken down into two waves of respondents with 545 (28 percent of the total) in the first, older wave of Boomers (1943-1951) and 215 (11 percent of the total) in the second, younger wave (1952-1960). Considering only Boomer respondents, 72 percent fall into the first, older wave while only 28 percent of Boomers are classified in the second, younger wave.

Over 60 percent of the total sample report that they are retired (57 percent) or semi-retired (5 percent) from the workforce. Ninety-two percent of the G.I. Generation

\textsuperscript{176} The higher median age of survey respondents is expected given that younger Catholics may not be individually registered with parishes and are, instead, included in their parents’ registration.
and 85 percent of the Silent Generation are fully retired from the workforce.\textsuperscript{177} Not surprisingly, this rate dips when considering the two waves of Boomers. The oldest Boomers are just now entering the retirement phase of the life cycle.\textsuperscript{178} Those born in 1943 turn 67 years old in 2010, while the youngest Boomers are still firmly implanted in the workforce. Fifty-eight percent of the first wave of Catholic Baby Boomers and merely 9 percent of the second wave are fully retired at the time of the survey. In the first, older wave of Boomers an additional 7 percent of respondents consider themselves semi-retired while only an additional 4 percent of the second wave of younger Catholic Boomers consider themselves semi-retired.

In future analyses, I follow CARA (2008) in combining the two oldest generations (G.I. and Silent) into the Pre-Vatican II cohort-group (born before 1942). The Baby Boomer Generation (1943-1960) is also known as the Vatican II cohort-group. Anyone born after 1961 will fall into the Post-Vatican II cohort-group.

4.5. Retired Migrants and the Northern Influx

In addition to examining the impact retirement may have on religious activities of the Baby Boomers, this study also investigates the role later-life migration may have in changes in religious commitment. The survey results corroborate the regional growth

\textsuperscript{177} An additional 6 percent of the Silent Generation is semi-retired. In the two oldest generations, 3 percent of respondents classify themselves as “homemakers” or not employed outside the home.

\textsuperscript{178} The average age at which workers have claimed Social Security Benefits—an indication of retirement—has remained steady since 1985 at 63 ½ years old (Korczyk 2004). The earliest age workers can begin receiving Social Security benefits is 62 years of age, but full retirement benefits are not enacted until age 65 or later depending on birth year. For those born between 1943 and 1954, full retirement benefits begin at 66 years of age (Social Security Online 2010). There may be a financial benefit to delaying retirement up until age 70 (Social Security Online 2010). Individuals can retire from the workforce before 62 if they so choose (i.e., with individual pension or savings plans such as a 401K), but non-disabled workers cannot receive government benefits without penalty until 62 years old.
trends noted in U.S. Census data and the North Carolina Office of Budget and Management (see also Longino and Bradley 2003; North Carolina Office of Budget and Management 2009). In the distributed survey, respondents were asked, “Are you a “native” to North Carolina or a “transplant” from another state/country?” Only 5 percent answered that they are native to North Carolina, while 93 percent responded that they are transplants to the region.\textsuperscript{179}

The majority of previous research investigating the relationship between mobility and changes in religious practice is limited to a variable that asks respondents if they currently live in the same residence as they did when they were sixteen years old (i.e., MOBILE16 in the General Social Survey). These datasets are limited in that they cannot allow the researcher to determine the difference between a recent move from a move that happened decades ago (Smith, Sikkink, and Bailey 1998; Stump 1984b; Wuthnow and Christiano 1979). For the purposes of this project, knowing when an individual moved to the region is as important as the fact that they moved in the first place. Individuals who moved to the region as children could report themselves as “transplants” but may have been entirely socialized into the distinctive southern culture by the time they were adults potentially masking substantial differences in religiosity between natives and transplants.

To account for the potential oversight of differences between natives and transplants, respondents who claim they are transplants are then asked in the survey to

\textsuperscript{179} An additional 1 percent marked the “other” option. In explaining the “other” designation, most of these respondents report that they grew up in North Carolina, left for a while and moved back, were part of military families, or only live in the region part of the year. Due to rounding, percentages may not add up to 100 percent.
estimate the number of years since their move to North Carolina.\footnote{Concerning the time frame in which their move to North Carolina occurred, respondents were asked to choose from one of the following options: (a) within the past year; (b) 1-2 years ago; (c) 3-4 years ago; (d) 5-6 years ago; (e) 7-10 years ago; (f) 10-15 years ago; (g) more than 15 years ago; (h) not applicable—I am “native to North Carolina.”} Forty-one percent of transplants moved to North Carolina within the last six years, 32 percent of transplants moved seven to fifteen years ago, and 26 percent of transplants moved to the area more than fifteen years ago. When considering only Boomers in the sample (1943-1960), 53 percent of Boomer transplants moved to North Carolina within the last 6 years while less than one-fourth (22 percent) of the transplants moved to the state over 15 years ago.

Nearly half (42 percent) of the retired or semi-retired individuals in the total sample moved to North Carolina in the past 6 years with another third moving to the state less than 15 years ago.\footnote{Of all retired/semi-retired respondents in the total sample, 75 percent moved to North Carolina in the last 15 years.} Boomer retirees have moved into the region even more recently at a higher rate. Nearly two-thirds (64 percent) of retired/semi-retired Boomers \textit{have moved to North Carolina within the last 6 years.}\footnote{The percentage of retired Boomers who moved recently to the state does not change significantly when taking into account the two waves of Boomers. This finding stems from the fact that so few Boomers in the younger wave report they are retired or semi-retired.} Only 10 percent of retired/semi-retired Boomers moved to North Carolina more than 15 years ago. This sample of Catholics reflects the demographic trends reported in the U.S. Census and North Carolina Office of Budget and Management. Retirees, especially in the coastal counties, are a major source of the population boom in the region.

Retirees migrating to the coastal regions have become a main source of the population boom, but \textit{from where} are retirees migrating? This study tests anecdotal input...
concerning the massive influx of northerners to the Diocese of Raleigh along with data from the U.S. Census, North Carolina Office of Budget and Management, and the North Carolina Division of Aging and Adult Services. When considering the entire sample of transplants, seven of the top ten states sending people to North Carolina are located in the North. Table 4.2 lists the top ten states from which respondents migrated to North Carolina.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State of Origin</th>
<th>All Transplants (%)</th>
<th>State of Origin</th>
<th>Transplants moving less than 15 years ago (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. NY</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>1. NY</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. NJ</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2. VA</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. VA</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3. NJ</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. PA</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4. PA</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. OH</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5. MD</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. MD</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6. OH</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. CT</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7. CT</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. MA</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8. FL</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. FL</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9. MA</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. CA</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10. CA</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above tables consider the entire sample of transplants and those migrating less than fifteen years ago. In this case, the order of the top ten states of origin changes, but the top ten remain the same. Again, seven of the top ten out-migrant states are located in the North. The tri-state area of New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania is the origin of 42 percent of the Catholic transplants in the entire sample and 40 percent of those migrating less than fifteen years ago.

Examining comments made on returned surveys, a notable number of transplants who are from Virginia are actually from the District of Columbia region of Northern Virginia. The District of Columbia region is more “northern” in its politics and social attitudes than other parts of Virginia.

---

183 Examing comments made on returned surveys, a notable number of transplants who are from Virginia are actually from the District of Columbia region of Northern Virginia. The District of Columbia region is more “northern” in its politics and social attitudes than other parts of Virginia.
Not all transplants to North Carolina have moved as a result of post-retirement migration. It is conceivable that many of the respondents listed in Table 4.2 moved for work-related reasons. Table 4.3 isolates retired or semi-retired respondents who transplanted to North Carolina and then examines only those retired/semi-retired transplants moving to North Carolina in the last decade and a half. The results in Table 4.3 are similar to those in Table 4.2. Forty-five percent of the retired/semi-retired transplants came from the tri-state region of New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. Again, seven of the top ten states all are located in the northern United States.

Table 4.3. Region of Origin—Top 10 States for Retired/Semi-retired Transplants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State of Origin</th>
<th>Retired/Semi-retired Transplants (%)</th>
<th>State of Origin</th>
<th>Retired/Semi-retired moving less than 15 years ago (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. NY</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>1. NY</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. NJ</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2. PA</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. VA</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3. OH</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. PA</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4. VA</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. OH</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5. NJ</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. MD</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6. MD</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. CT</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7. FL</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. MA</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8. MA</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. FL</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9. CT</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. CA</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9. GA</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.3 also demonstrates, although to a lesser extent, that the vast majority of retired respondents who recently migrated to North Carolina are from the North; thirty-five percent are from the tri-state area of New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania.

The final analysis regarding state of origin includes retired/semi-retired Baby Boomers who migrated to North Carolina. Unsurprisingly, retired Boomers as a cohort-group follow the same north-to-south migration pattern as the overall sample.
Table 4.4. Region of Origin–Top 10 States for Retired Boomer Transplants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State of Origin</th>
<th>Retired/Semi-retired Boomer Transplants (%)</th>
<th>State of Origin</th>
<th>Retired/Semi-retired Boomers moving less than 15 years ago (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. NY</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>1. NY</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. NJ</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2. NJ</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. VA</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>3. VA</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. PA</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4. MD</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. MD</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5. PA</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. CT</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6. OH</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. OH</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6. CT</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. MA</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8. MI</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. MI</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8. NH</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. NH</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8. CA</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In all, 73 percent of retired/semi-retired Boomer transplants moving to North Carolina in the last 15 years hail from the northern region which includes the following states: Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Vermont. The data demonstrates that the majority of Catholics in the parishes used in this study are retirees descending from northern states.

4.6. The Three B’s: Belonging, Behavior, and Belief

The study of religion in the 1960s and 1970s began examining religious commitment through multiple dimensions of religious belief and practice. Denominational affiliation and church attendance, traditional measures of commitment, were not enough to capture the variability of religious expression. Researchers

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As Table 4.4 demonstrates, an additional 16 percent claim Virginia as their state of origin. The majority of the population in Virginia resides in northern Virginia close to the Maryland and District of Columbia borders. Even if half of the past residents of Virginia are included, the total of north-to-south migrants rises above 80 percent.
discovered that scoring high on one measure of religiosity (i.e., attendance) did not
guarantee scoring high on all other measures (i.e. orthodoxy).\textsuperscript{185} While consensus has
not been reached as to which religious dimensions hold the most predictive power for
other behavioral and attitudinal variables, there is general agreement that religiosity
should be understood as a multi-dimensional phenomenon.\textsuperscript{186}

When measuring religious commitment, some contemporary researchers take into
account three distinctive elements under which most religious survey items fall:
belonging, behavior, and belief (Kellstedt et al. 1996; Mockabee et al. 2001). A survey
respondent may identify their religious affiliation and thus “belong” to that particular
group, but affiliation alone is not necessarily indicative of commitment (Steensland at al.
2000). Other survey items poll specific religious behaviors, such as attendance at public
worship services or frequency of prayer, which are more illustrative of the individual’s
level of commitment. Investigations concerning religious beliefs allow researchers to
measure levels of orthodoxy in relation to the professed denominational affiliation.
Utilizing the three B’s–belonging, behavior, and belief–promotes a more sophisticated
assessment of religious commitment than utilizing one measure alone.

\textsuperscript{185} During this period, theorists identified many different dimensions of religiosity (Fukuyama
1961; Lenski 1961; Glock and Stark 1965; King 1967; King and Hunt 1969; Verbit 1970). See Roof
(1979) for an outline.

\textsuperscript{186} Mueller (1980) is a notable exception. Himmelfarb (1975) places the many distinctive
dimensions of religiosity under two broader types of religious orientation: a behavior component and an
ideational component.
4.6.1. Religious Behaviors: Constancy or Fluctuation?

In order to measure the religious commitment of Catholic Boomers specifically and in relation to previous generations, this project utilizes a multidimensional approach. As noted, nearly all respondents (99 percent) self-identify as Catholic. So, if distinctions exist between Boomer Catholics in the survey and other generations, they will reside in survey items addressing religious behaviors and professed beliefs. Weekly Mass attendance is the most widely used behavior measure of Catholic religious commitment. For Catholics, weekly Mass attendance is mandatory. The First Precept of the Church simply states: “You shall attend Mass on Sundays and on holy days of obligation and rest from servile labor” (Catechism of the Catholic Church 1994: §2042). Additionally, the public expression of one’s faith through a shared liturgical celebration demonstrates at least some level of connection to the local parish or organizational church. According to a 2008 CARA poll, 23 percent of self-identified American Catholics attend Mass weekly or more often, with 34 percent attending Mass “almost every week” or more often (CARA 2008). The 2005 Gallup study of American Catholics initiated by D’Antonio et al. (2007) found that 34 percent of respondents claim they attend Mass at least once a week with 51 percent attending two to three times a month or more. The Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life reports even higher numbers of weekly attendance at religious services. The 2008 U.S. Religious Landscape Survey data shows that 42 percent of self-identified Catholics attend religious services once a week or more often (Pew Forum on
Mass attendance rates will vary from survey to survey, but it is currently accepted that less than half of American Catholics attend Mass on a weekly basis.

The rate of weekly Mass attendance resulting from the survey responses connected with this study are significantly higher than the national averages for Catholics reported by CARA, Gallup, and the Pew Forum. In this study, 86 percent of respondents attest to attending Mass weekly or more. A remarkable 94 percent attend Mass two to three times a month or more. When considering the whole sample in this study, it is not surprising that the attendance rates are significantly higher than other polls. The majority of the surveys were distributed over three weeks at the back of church after weekend Mass. This means that in order to receive a survey, the respondents attended Mass at least once during those three consecutive weeks. In an attempt to mitigate the attendance bias, a portion of surveys were mailed to all registered parishioners in two of the six parishes. When taking into account only the surveys that were mailed to registered

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187 While the 19 point range in weekly attendance found in the three polls is noticeable, there may be reasons for such discrepancy. First, the Pew Forum poll asks about attendance of “religious services” while Gallup and CARA’s wording specifically defines Mass attendance. In the Pew Forum poll, Catholics may include other events held during the week at parishes (i.e., bible reading, faith sharing, social events, etc.) as a religious service and respond as such. Second, researchers have argued that church attendance figures are significantly inflated as a result of social desirability, weather, time of recording, and other factors (Hadaway et al. 1993; Hout and Greeley 1998; Iannaccone and Everton 2004; Smith 1998; Woodberry 1998). Both the Gallup poll and Pew Forum surveys were performed over the phone. CARA’s 2008 poll attempts to mitigate attendance over-reporting by utilizing self-administered surveys. This method may decrease the conscious or subconscious desire to please the survey administrator by reporting socially-desirable answers to Mass attendance questions. Finally, compared to the Pew Forum poll, Gallup’s and CARA’s survey includes an additional option between “weekly” and “once or twice a month.” The additional option in the CARA survey picked by 11 percent of respondents, “almost every week,” is comparable to the 16 percent of Gallup respondents selecting “two to three times a month.” This additional middle option may provide a safe grey area for those who cannot choose between “weekly” and “once or twice a month” as in the Pew Forum poll. Again, social desirability factors may be relevant here.

188 The question reads: “Aside from weddings and funerals, about how often do you attend Mass?”
parishioners (and returned), 73 percent of respondents attend Mass weekly or more often. By comparison, the 2008 CARA study also includes a sub-set of self-identified Catholics who are also registered with a Catholic parish. The weekly attendance rate is higher with this sub-group compared to the entire CARA sample. Table 4.5 compares the Mass attendance rates of the CARA national sample of self-identified, registered Catholics with individuals in this study registered with a parish who received (and returned) the survey by mail.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>“Aside from weddings and funerals, about how often do you attend Mass?”</th>
<th>Less than almost every week/less than 2-3 times a month (%)</th>
<th>Almost every week/2-3 times a month (%)</th>
<th>Weekly or more often (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009 Diocese of Raleigh (mailed sample)</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>73.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008 CARA (National sample)</td>
<td>45.2</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>38.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The respondents from the Diocese of Raleigh have a higher rate of attendance than the national average. However, the parishes and individuals selected to participate in this study were not a random sample. The parishes were selected due to the growth rate of their surrounding region—growth that is primarily the result of an influx of northern retirees. In addition, older Catholics have a higher attendance rate than younger generations. As a result, it may be better to compare age cohort-groups across the surveys.

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189 A bias toward higher rates of attendance may still exist even when the surveys were mailed to registered parishioners. Those individuals whose religion means more to them may be more likely to return the survey in the first place.

190 In discussions of Mass attendance rates, “weekly” Mass attendance includes both “weekly” and “more often than weekly” response categories.
Across each age cohort-group, respondents in the Diocese of Raleigh surpass the CARA national average. The oldest respondents in the Diocese of Raleigh (born 1901-1942) attend Mass weekly 88 percent of the time compared to 60 percent in the CARA sample. Boomers in the Diocese of Raleigh also attend Mass weekly at a significantly higher rate than the CARA national sample—71 percent to 40 percent.\textsuperscript{191}

As noted, Boomers attend Mass less regularly than previous generations in both the national CARA sample and in the sample taken from retirement destinations in the Diocese of Raleigh. Is the discrepancy a function of fewer Boomers being retired from the workforce, or a generational-wide difference?\textsuperscript{192}

The correlation between employment status and Mass attendance for the entire sample is statistically significant as a strong positive relationship (.224, p< .01).\textsuperscript{193} Individuals who are retired or semi-retired are more likely to attend Mass weekly or more often. Taking into account only retired/semi-retired respondents in the Diocese of

\textsuperscript{191} The youngest respondents do attend less than their older counterparts in both the Diocese of Raleigh sample and the national sample. Similar to the other age-groups, the Diocese of Raleigh sample has a higher rate of weekly Mass attendance than the CARA national sample (43 percent to 25 percent). For a more detailed comparison of attendance rates, see Table A.1 in Appendix 2.

\textsuperscript{192} It is no surprise that retired or semi-retired respondents attend Mass with more frequency than those who are still in the workforce. Of the total sample, 92 percent of retired or semi-retired respondents attend Mass on a weekly basis. By comparison, 76 percent of respondents working full-time or part-time report that they attend Mass on a weekly basis.

\textsuperscript{193} The correlation is much stronger in the sample that received the mailed surveys (.377, p<.01) than those who received the surveys after Mass (.114, p<.01). This does not come as a surprise since the overall Mass attendance rate is higher in the sub-group that received the surveys after Mass. A test for significance is made against a null hypothesis asserting that there is no systematic relationship between the variables being tested. The alpha value of “p” reports the significance level of the relationship between the variables. A significance value less than .05 means that the relationship happens by mere chance less than 5 percent of the time. A significance value of .001 means that the relationship would happen by chance less that .1 percent of the time.
Raleigh sample, the discrepancy in Mass attendance shrinks across the generations.\textsuperscript{194} While the rate of weekly (or more often) Mass attendance differs slightly in retirees across age-groups, the difference is marginally significant (p=.05). Retired/semi-retired respondents in the Pre-Vatican II cohort-group (1901-1942)–comprised of both G.I. and Silent generations–attend Mass weekly at a 93 percent rate. The retired/semi-retired respondents from the Vatican II cohort-group (1943-1960), which includes both waves of Boomers, attend weekly Mass at a slightly lower rate of 89 percent.

A large portion of the surveys were distributed in the back of Mass, so the real difference in attendance rates may be overlooked due to the large attendance bias. Considering only retired/semi-retired respondents who received the survey via mail (n=310) may be more instructive. The results, however, are similar to the full sample. In this sub-group, 89 percent of retired/semi-retired Pre-Vatican II respondents attend Mass weekly or more often while 82 percent of the retired/semi-retired Vatican II respondents attend Mass at the same rate. Unlike the previous measures, the difference between the cohort-groups is not statistically significant (p=.15).

While retirement status is related to Mass attendance in the full sample, how do the two variables relate for Boomers? As Boomers move out of the workforce, can we expect their Mass attendance rate to increase? To answer this question, we first need to examine the difference in attendance rates between Boomers still in the workforce and those already retired. Table 4.6 presents these results.

\textsuperscript{194} Only three respondents from the Post-Vatican II (1961+) age-group report being retired or semi-retired.
Table 4.6. Mass Attendance Rate of Boomers/Vatican II Generation (1943-1960)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>“Aside from weddings and funerals, about how often do you attend Mass?”</th>
<th>Less than almost every week/less than 2-3 times/month (%)</th>
<th>Almost every week/2-3 times a month (%)</th>
<th>Weekly or more often (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Boomers in full sample (n=677)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working full/part-time</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>82.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retired/semi-retired</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>88.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Distributed after Mass (n=526)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working full/part-time</td>
<td>.5</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>91.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retired/semi-retired</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>90.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mailed to parishioners (n=151)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working full/part-time</td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>20.9</td>
<td>60.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retired/semi-retired</td>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>83.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p<.05; ** p<.01.

As shown in Table 4.6, retirement status is linked to rates of attendance in the overall sample of Boomers.\(^{195}\) However, when taking into account the distribution method, the significance only remains for Boomer respondents who received and returned the survey by mail.

Digging one level further, the Boomers can be broken out into two waves: the older wave (1943-1951) and the younger wave (1952-1960). For the older wave in the full sample, the rate of Mass attendance between retired and working respondents is almost identical (90 percent to 89 percent). The younger wave has, understandably, less retired/semi-retired respondents, but the difference in Mass attendance between retired and working respondents is stark. Working respondents in the younger wave report an 80 percent weekly Mass attendance rate, while retired individuals in the younger wave attend Mass weekly 96 percent of the time. While the effect of retirement status on attendance will be analyzed more in depth in the following chapter, an initial foray into the data does suggest that as Boomers retire, their Mass attendance will increase.

\(^{195}\) Additionally, in all Boomers, the Pearson correlation between employment status and Mass attendance rate is statistically significant at the p<.05 level.
Mass Attendance on Holy Days of Obligations differs significantly across generations in the Diocese of Raleigh sample. Nearly 70 percent of Pre-Vatican II respondents attend Holy Days of Obligation with regularity as opposed to only 52 percent of the Vatican II/Boomer Generation. Workforce status, however, does not play into attendance on Holy Days in either generation.\textsuperscript{196}

Frequency of bible reading is steady between the Pre-Vatican II and Vatican II/Boomer age groups. Twenty percent of Pre-Vatican II respondents in the full sample read the bible two-to-three times a month or more outside of Mass compared to 22 percent of Vatican II/Boomer respondents. What is most surprising, however, is that respondents working full or part-time in both age-groups read the bible with more frequency than respondents who are retired/semi-retired.\textsuperscript{197} For example, 22 percent of working Boomers, compared to only 18 percent of retired/semi-retired Boomers, read the Bible outside of Mass two-to-three times a month or more.\textsuperscript{198} The discrepancy between the two groups is even starker at the other end of the spectrum. When asked how often they had read the bible outside of Mass in the past year, 66 percent of retired/semi-retired

\textsuperscript{196} Fifty-three percent of retired/semi-retired Boomers attends Mass “regularly” on Holy Days of Obligation as opposed to 51 percent of those working full or part-time.

\textsuperscript{197} This finding is statistically significantly for both Pre-Vatican II and Vatican II/Boomer groups at p< .01.

\textsuperscript{198} This finding is statistically significantly at p< .01. The difference in frequency of bible reading between working and retired Boomers may be driven by the youngest wave of Boomers, most of whom are still in the workforce. Twenty-six percent of the younger Boomers (1952-1960) read the bible outside of Mass two-to-three times per month or more compared to only 21 percent of older Boomers (1943-1951). Forty percent of the older Boomers had not read the bible at all in the past year outside of Mass compared to only 29 percent of the younger wave of Boomers.
Boomers responded “never” or “once or twice,” while 53 percent of working Boomers responded in the same fashion.  

4.6.2. Religious Behaviors: Discussion

The survey results demonstrate that workforce status is correlated with differences in religious behavior. As expected, the frequency of Mass attendance is higher in retired Boomers than non-retired Boomers. The gap between the two groups is most noticeable in the sub-sample of respondents who received the survey via mail. Conversations with respondents reveal that retired individuals do have more time available during the week to take care of errands or chores that, in the past, had been pushed to the weekend where attending Mass became less of a priority. Other retired respondents also noted that without co-workers with which to socialize, they utilize the parish community as a means of interacting with fellow Catholics along with developing and maintaining friendships. The data reflects these sentiments. When asked how many local friends are also members of their current parish, retired Boomers report significantly more parish friends than Boomers still in the workforce. An additional item asks respondents to assess the statement, “My parish is an important part of my life.” Seventy-nine percent of retired

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199 This finding is statistically significantly at p < .01.

200 The question asks: “About how many of your local friends are members of your current parish?” One-quarter of retired Boomers say that at least half their local friends are members of their current parish. Only 17 percent of working Boomers make the same claim. The finding is statistically significant at the p<.05 level. Retired Boomers also have more Catholic friends than working Boomers. Thirty-seven percent of retired Boomers claim at least half their local friends are Catholic, compared to only 28 percent of working Boomers. The finding is not statistically significant, but does come close (p=.133).
individuals agree (either strongly or somewhat) compared to 73 percent of working individuals.201

Additional measures of religious behavior reveal statistically significant differences between retired/semi-retired and working Boomers. Retired Boomers volunteer more often than working Boomers for both parish-sponsored volunteer activities and non-parish-sponsored volunteer activities. Again, the idea that retired Boomers have more time available may help explain the discrepancy.

Other results, however, defy initial expectations. If retirees do have more time on their hands, what can be made of the noticeable difference between the retired and working groups of Boomers regarding frequency of bible reading? Will Boomers who retire also retire their bibles as well? One factor may be the role Vatican II played in changing the perception of Catholics with regard to scripture. The younger wave of Boomers read the bible with more frequency than the older wave. This is true even when breaking out the sub-group of working Boomers. At the time of the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965), older Boomers (1943-1951) would have been around high-school age. When asked about the religious formation of their youth, older Boomers typically recalled the Baltimore Catechism, while younger Boomers more often discussed the implementation of Vatican II. One older-wave Boomer (born in 1947) remarked that she had never been taught how to read the bible as a youth. It was not until she was in small faith groups as an adult that she developed a habit for reading scripture. However, her husband (born in 1946) noted that he never developed a habit for reading scripture since

201 This finding is statistically significant at p<.05.
it was never taught (by parents or through school) during his faith formation. In light of these remarks, one can assume that it may have taken time for the effects of Vatican II to take root in the religious education of the Catholic laity. The older Boomers may have been raised in a religious environment where bible reading was not widely practiced and the lack of doing so carries into later-life.

Yet, the above discussion does not explain all the variance regarding the frequency of bible reading. Older Boomers do read the bible less than younger Boomers. But, even within the older wave, retired Boomers read the bible with significantly less frequency than working Boomers. What can account for this gap? One possible explanation notes that retired Boomers have more friends that are Catholic. Working Boomers may encounter non-Catholic (but still Christian) co-workers and maintain friendships with these individuals. Taking into account the religious demographics of the region, the vast majority of individuals are Protestant (Kosmin and Keysar 2006, 2009). Protestants, in general, read the bible with more frequency than Catholics (Bader et al. 2006; Baylor University 2007). As a result, more interaction with Protestants among working Catholic Boomers may lead to a spillover effect of an increased level of bible reading.

In addition to the Protestant influence, survey results reveal additional support for the spillover effect from other Catholics with regard to frequency of bible reading. Catholics native to North Carolina read the bible with much more frequency than transplants. Thirty-three percent of native Catholics read the bible outside of Mass two-
to-three times a month or more. Only 20 percent of Catholics who moved to the region read the bible with the same frequency.\footnote{The finding is statistically significant at \(p<.001\).}

When reviewing the religious demographics of the region, the discrepancy between natives and transplants is not surprising. What is surprising is the difference that emerges across the three transplant sub-groups. The first sub-group is composed of migrants arriving in North Carolina more than fifteen years ago. The second sub-group contains respondents moving to North Carolina seven to fifteen years ago. The third sub-group is made up of transplants moving to North Carolina within the last six years. Of the first sub-group arriving in North Carolina at least fifteen years ago, 55 percent read the bible only one or two times or less outside of Mass over the past year. Compare this finding to the third sub-group. Sixty-three percent of the most recent transplants (six years or less) read the bible outside of Mass with the same infrequency. The middle group, moving from seven to fifteen years ago, falls in between the other two categories of transplants.\footnote{The finding is statistically significant at \(p<.05\). A national study shows that 69 percent of self-identified Catholics read the bible less than twice a year (Baylor University 2007). It is surprising that neither the 2005 Gallup Poll of Catholics nor CARA’s 2008 study, \textit{Sacraments Today}, ask questions about the frequency of bible reading. What does this omission say about the value Catholics place on reading scripture?}

From this initial analysis, it appears that Catholic migrants pick up the habit of bible reading over time in their new, more Protestant, environment. The spillover effect will be examined in more detail in the next chapter.
4.6.3. Religious Beliefs: Orthodoxy or Individualism?

In determining religious commitment, researchers use a variety of survey measures. An individual may register high on one measure of religious commitment, such as frequency of Mass attendance, while scoring low on another measure, such as orthodoxy of belief. It is essential, then, to take into account the multidimensionality of religiosity when assessing the religious commitment of Catholic Boomers. The survey associated with the study of Catholics in the Diocese of Raleigh incorporated a number of questions addressing religious beliefs. Even at first glance, Catholic Boomers differ significantly from previous generations on many of the belief measures. Some differences can be viewed as a Boomer preference toward individual autonomy over institutional orthodoxy while other distinctions may stem from the impact of the theological reimagining emerging from Vatican II.²⁰⁴

Theologically, Catholic Boomers in the sample differ from earlier generations in their interpretation of scripture, belief in Jesus as the only way to salvation, and the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist. Catholic Boomers are less literal in their interpretation of Scripture than previous generations, more accepting of other faiths as valid paths to salvation, and more supportive of the symbolic (as opposed to literal) presence of Jesus in Eucharist.²⁰⁵

²⁰⁴ CARA’s Sacraments Today (2008) reports similar findings: “Knowledge of Church teachings and obligations is usually higher among older Catholics, but knowledge of the Bible is typically greater among younger generations. Agreement with Church teachings is, again, often relatively high among the oldest Catholics, the Pre-Vatican II Generation (born before 1943). […] Agreement with Church teaching is typically lowest among the generation of Catholics associated with Vatican II (born between 1943 and 1960) and among Post-Vatican II Generation Catholics (born 1961 to 1981) though this too depends on the teaching in question” (2).

²⁰⁵ All items are statistically significant at p<.05.
Statistically significant generational differences are also found in survey items addressing religious belief and personal autonomy. Substantial discrepancy is found across the items measuring the role of the Church in forming one’s conscience, obedience to Church teaching, the infallibility of the Pope, adhering to the belief that the Catholic Church is the one true Church, and the teaching on apostolic succession. In each case, Catholic Boomers fall on the side that can be considered less accepting of institutional authority and more in favor of deferring to personal experience.

Table 4.7 clearly demonstrates the uniqueness of the Boomer generation with regard to their level of support for the institutional Catholic Church. While the majority of Boomers do look to the Church to help decide what is morally permissible, the level of assent does not reach the level of previous generations. Even less agree with the notion that one should adhere to Catholic teaching even when the individual does not understand the prescription. Only 40 percent of Boomers strongly agree that the Catholic Church is the one true Church.206

206 Measures of religious orthodoxy are positively associated with level of attendance at Mass (CARA 2008). Because this sample of Catholics in the Diocese of Raleigh attends Mass at a very high rate compared to the national average, we can expect proportionally high levels of agreement on orthodoxy questions. Yet, even with the high level of attendance across the board, the differences between the Boomers and prior generations are quite apparent. There are significant differences on some survey items within the Boomer Generation between those who received the survey at the back of church and those who received the survey via mail. This is true for other generations as well.
Table 4.7. Measures of Institutional Orthodoxy by Generation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Agree (%)</th>
<th>Somewhat agree</th>
<th>Neither</th>
<th>Somewhat disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;In deciding what is morally acceptable, I look to Catholic Church teachings and statements made by the Pope and Bishops to form my conscience.&quot;*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Vatican II</td>
<td>35.2</td>
<td>42.4</td>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vatican II/Boomer</td>
<td>25.9</td>
<td>45.2</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;It’s important to obey Church teachings even if I don't understand them&quot;***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Vatican II</td>
<td>29.5</td>
<td>35.7</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>13.7</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vatican II/Boomer</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>38.0</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>20.3</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;The Catholic Church is the one true Church.&quot;***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Vatican II</td>
<td>54.9</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vatican II/Boomer</td>
<td>40.4</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>9.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p<.05; ***p<.001.

As noted earlier, the survey results reveal some substantial differences in religious behavior between working and retired Catholics in the Diocese of Raleigh. The belief items, however, do not follow the same pattern. When considering working versus

207 There is a significant difference between working and retired Boomers on the survey item seeking level of support for the importance of obeying Church teaching even when they are not understood (p<.10). The significance, however, stems from the difference between the groups in the “strongly agree” and “somewhat agree” responses. If these answer categories are consolidated, the statistical significance disappears. If the two levels of agreement were consolidated, 56 percent of working Boomers and 57 percent of retired Boomers agree with the statement that it important to obey Church teaching even when the individual does not understand them.  

retired respondents together and within each larger age-group (Pre-Vatican II and Vatican II/Boomer), there is no significant difference concerning institutional support or personal religious development. For example, there is no noticeable difference between the employment status groups with regard to the statement, “I can be a good Catholic without going to Mass every Sunday.” Further, there is little discrepancy between the employment groups regarding the influence of the Church in forming one’s conscience and belief in the Catholic Church as the one true Church.207
Two other survey items can be understood as measuring institutional support among Boomer Catholics. One question asks the respondent’s level of agreement with the statement, “I can be a good Catholic without going to Mass every Sunday.” It is not surprising that generational distinctions emerge on this measure. The Vatican II/Boomer Generation is much more likely to agree with this statement than previous generations. Twenty-one percent of Vatican II/Boomers “strongly agree” that one can be a good Catholic without going to Sunday Mass compared to only 11 percent in the Pre-Vatican II age group. Further, 29 percent of the oldest Catholics “strongly disagree” with the statement compared to only 24 percent of Boomers.

The difference between Boomers and older respondents may simply be a factor of higher Mass attendance rates in the oldest respondents. The level of weekly attendance rates is strongly correlated with the level of agreement to the statement, “I can be a good Catholic without going to Mass every Sunday.” More frequent Mass attendees are less likely to agree, “strongly” or “somewhat”, with the notion that one can be a good Catholic without attending weekly Mass. As a result, it is beneficial to examine sub-groups with identical attendance rates across the two age-groups.

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208 The finding is statistically significant at p<.001.

209 The Pre-Vatican II Generation responses to the statement are as follows: 11 percent “strongly agree”; 28 percent “somewhat agree”; 11 percent “neither agree nor disagree”; 20 percent “somewhat disagree”; 29 percent “strongly disagree.” The Vatican II/Boomer Generation responses to the statement are as follows: 21 percent “strongly agree”; 28 percent “somewhat agree”; 9 percent “neither agree nor disagree”; 19 percent “somewhat disagree”; 23 percent “strongly disagree.”

210 The correlation is statistically significant at p<.001.

211 In the total sample, only 13 percent of the weekly Mass attendees “strongly agree” with the statement. By comparison, 42 percent of respondents who attend two-to-three times a month and 41
The oldest respondents who attend weekly or more can be compared to the Boomers who attend weekly or weekly or more on their level of support with the statement, “I can be a good Catholic without going to Mass every Sunday.” The gap in agreement between the generations still exists. Thirty-six percent of the Pre-Vatican II group of weekly attendees agrees with the statement with only 9 percent answering that they “strongly agree.” By contrast, 45 percent of weekly attendees in the Vatican II/Boomer age category support the notion with 16 percent noting that they “strongly agree.”

Even though Sunday Mass attendance is mandated by the First precept of the Church, more Vatican II/Boomer Catholics than not feel that Mass attendance is not a necessary activity in order to be a good Catholic.

A final series of survey items address the level of personal autonomy preferred by respondents regarding specific moral scenarios. The question asks, “In your opinion, is this following behavior always morally wrong, wrong except under certain circumstances, or is it entirely up to the individual?” The scenarios addressed are included in Table 4.8.

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212 This finding is statistically significant at p<.001.
Table 4.8. Moral Behavior Attitudes by Generation

In your opinion, is this following behavior always morally wrong, wrong except under certain circumstances, or is it entirely up to the individual?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Entirely up to the individual</th>
<th>Wrong except under certain conditions</th>
<th>Always morally wrong</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Use of condoms or birth control pills to prevent pregnancy.&quot;***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Vatican II</td>
<td>53.0</td>
<td>26.3</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vatican II/Boomer</td>
<td>71.7</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Premarital sex.&quot;***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Vatican II</td>
<td>27.3</td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>56.7</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vatican II/Boomer</td>
<td>51.2</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>34.3</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Termination of a pregnancy by having an abortion.&quot;***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Vatican II</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>28.2</td>
<td>62.4</td>
<td>.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vatican II/Boomer</td>
<td>16.3</td>
<td>32.9</td>
<td>49.7</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Engaging in homosexual acts.&quot;***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Vatican II</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>69.0</td>
<td>9.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vatican II/Boomer</td>
<td>31.5</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>54.7</td>
<td>10.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

***p<.001

Each scenario in Table 4.8 illustrates the stark contrast between the Vatican II/Boomer Generation and the oldest Catholics in the survey. In each case, Boomers are more supportive of the individual making the decision than prior generations. When considering the use of artificial birth control, only 10 percent of Boomers claim that it is always morally wrong. The majority of Boomers think pre-marital sex is entirely up to the individual conscience even when the official Church teaching on the matter is clear.

As with other questions concerning respondents’ attitudes or beliefs, these scenarios are strongly correlated with the rate of Mass attendance.213 The higher the rate of Mass attendance the less likely the respondent will assert the decision is entirely up to the individual. It is important to note, then, that the generational differences remain (and remain statistically significant) when Mass attendance sub-groups are compared across

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213 The correlation is statistically significant at p<.001.
the generational groups. Weekly-attending Boomers are still significantly more likely than their older counterparts to support the notion that the moral decision in question is entirely up to the individual.

4.6.4. Religious Beliefs: Discussion

Previous research has shown that Catholic Boomers tend to prefer a more personalized, autonomous faith rather than simply falling in line with institutional orthodoxy (D’Antonio et al. 2007; D’Antonio et al. 2001; Ebaugh 1991; Lattin 2003; Roof 1993, 1999; Roof and McKinney 1987). This attitude is apparent when taking into account moral decisions such as artificial birth control and premarital sex. Instead of deferring to the Church’s teaching on a particular issue, Boomers prefer the moral independence in consulting their own conscience. The survey results support this claim, especially when Boomers are compared to prior generations. And, on some measures, such as artificial birth control and premarital sex, Boomers are even more supportive of the individual’s role in moral decisions than the youngest generation of respondents.214 Additionally, the Boomer preference for a more self-constructed belief system remains even though the respondents in the Diocese of Raleigh sample attend Mass with much more frequency than the national sample.

Boomers are active in the parishes and with more and more Boomers approaching retirement, the activity level may go up. Boomers in the sample do feel connected to

214 The Post-Vatican II Generation (1961+) reflects Pre-Vatican II respondents in their attitude toward the use of artificial birth control: 17 percent of both groups argue it is “always morally wrong.” On attitudes toward pre-marital sex, Post-Vatican II respondents do not replicate the oldest group’s level of moral reprehensibility, but are significantly less supportive of the individuals’ conscience compared to Boomers.
their parish through the friends they have and by noting that their parish is an important part of their lives,\textsuperscript{215} but 49 percent of Boomers also note that they can be a good Catholic without going to Mass every Sunday. The Boomers’ attachment to their parish does not appear to result in coinciding orthodoxy of belief or support for the institutional Church as a whole. Conversations with pastors and parishioners in the Diocese also reflect this sentiment. The respondents feel connected to their local parish, but not the institutional Church. Many respondents have reacted negatively to perceived interferences by the Diocesan offices in recent years. They feel that the local parishes know what is best for their parishioners and that pronouncements coming from the Raleigh offices are attempts to force conformity.

The Boomers do not appear to be following their older co-religionists when it comes to moral issues or Catholic orthodoxy. The retired Boomers resemble Boomers still part of the workforce on measures of orthodoxy and level of personal autonomy concerning moral issues. When compared to working Boomers, retired Boomers have higher levels of parish participation as measured by Mass attendance, parish-sponsored volunteer activities, and committee or administration work at the parish. As more Boomers retire, it is reasonable to assume that the overall level of parishioner involvement will remain the same if not increase. More involvement typically results in stronger parishes even if the religious discipline of the Boomers remains more individually constructed and framed more by personal experience rather than Catholic orthodoxy.

\textsuperscript{215} Seventy-three percent of Boomers agree that their parish is “an important part of my life.” Thirty-eight strongly agreed with the statement. Retired Boomers have more friends in the parish than working Boomers.
4.7. Educational Attainment and Religious Commitment

Previous studies have demonstrated a correlation between levels of formal educational attainment with measures of religious commitment. There is no consensus, however, on the direction of the correlation. On the one hand, theorists contend that educational attainment is linked with decreased levels of religious salience and orthodoxy (Roof 1978). One explanation offered echoes the traditional secularization thesis. As individuals become more familiar with science, the world, other religions, other cultures, etc., the plausibility of their religious worldview is undermined (Berger 1967; Luckmann 1967). Further, the rational thinking achieved at higher levels of learning may lead one to question any categorical religious pronouncements and the institutions making these claims. In the end, intellectual achievement and autonomy is perceived as being incompatible with religious belief, and to some degree, religious behavior.

On the other hand, empirical studies have also demonstrated that educational attainment has a positive effect on measures of religious commitment, particularly church membership and attendance (Gallup Poll 1968; Lazerwitz 1961). For example, college graduates and post-graduate individuals are much more likely to have a congregational membership than individuals with less than a high-school education (Kosmin and Keysar 2016).

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216 To complicate matters further, other studies did not find any evidence linking educational attainment with religious organization participation or attendance on the individual level (Hoge 1979; Hoge and Roozen 1979). However, the median educational level of a community surrounding a congregation did have a positive significant correlation with membership growth and church attendance (Roof et al. 1979; Thompson, Carroll, and Hoge 1993). In addition to an individual’s demographics influencing church attendance, contextual factors can play a significant role as well.
The linear relationship between education and congregational membership is more apparent when considering only Catholic respondents. Seventy-one percent of Catholic college graduate/post-graduate respondents are members of a Catholic parish compared to only 46 percent of respondents receiving a high-school education or less (Kosmin and Keysar 2006, 186). Becker and Hofmeister (2001) discovered a statistically significant positive correlation between possessing a college degree and church attendance. Additionally, recent General Social Surveys reveal similar findings among Catholics with regard to educational attainment and rate of Mass attendance. Higher educational attainment among Catholics positively correlates with frequency of Mass attendance.

As it turns out, the relationship between educational attainment and religiosity is neither simple nor unidirectional. Additionally, the impact education may have on an individual’s religious beliefs and behaviors may not be permanent. A decrease in commitment may be temporary as one navigates through the life course. Further, educational attainment may interact with other variables (i.e., marital status or income level) which may influence measures of commitment. For the purpose this project, I only address respondents in the Pre-Vatican II and Vatican II/Boomer cohort-groups. Older

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217 While there may be extrinsic reasons for belonging to a religious congregation (Allport and Ross 1967; Hoge and Roozen 1979; Roof 1978), the finding that higher education is not linked to institutional apostasy is important.

218 For this analysis, I consolidated the 2000-2008 General Social Surveys into one data file and isolated respondents who self-identified as Catholic. The educational categories were set to “less than a high school graduate,” “high school graduate,” “some college,” “bachelor’s degree,” and “graduate or professional degree.” Catholic respondents with a B.A. have the highest rate of weekly or more Mass attendance (37 percent) followed by respondents with a graduate degree (33 percent), high school graduates (29 percent), some college (27 percent), and, finally, respondents with less than a high school diploma (19 percent). The full chart can be found in Appendix 2.
respondents are more likely to have completed their educational pursuits. Additionally, past studies have shown that educational attainment can influence both religious behaviors and beliefs, but in opposite directions. As a result, two dimensions of religiosity, behaviors and beliefs, are investigated.

According to a national poll, 26 percent of Catholics in the United States are college graduates (Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life 2008a). By comparison, 60 percent of the Diocese of Raleigh sample reported being at least a college graduate. If the sample is broken down by cohort-group, 52 percent of Pre-Vatican II respondents reported graduating college (or higher) while 64 percent of Vatican II/Boomer respondents received a college degree (or higher).

Among the oldest two cohort-groups in the Diocese of Raleigh survey, Pre-Vatican II and Vatican II/Boomer Generations, there is no significant correlation between educational attainment and Mass attendance. Among the entire sample of Pre-Vatican II and Vatican II/Boomer respondents, 89 percent of college graduates (or higher) attend Mass weekly compared to 91 percent of those with less than a college degree. Among Pre-Vatican II and Vatican II/Boomer respondents who received the survey by mail, 79

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219 Thirty-three percent of the total sample responded they were a college graduate. Twenty-eight percent of the sample reported they had earned a post-graduate degree.

220 The average level of educational attainment in the Diocese of Raleigh sample is expected to be higher than the national sample for two reasons. First, respondents to the survey are almost exclusively of Caucasian ethnicity. The racial composition of Catholics in the United States is much more diverse. Hispanic/Latino(a) constitute anywhere from 15 percent (D’Antonio et al. 2007) to 24 percent (CARA 2008), and up to 29 percent of the nation’s Catholics (Kosmin and Keysar 2006; Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life 2008a). Caucasians have a higher average level of educational attainment than Latino(a)s in the United States, so a higher Caucasian population in the sample may result in a higher median level of education (United States Census Bureau 2010). Second, respondents in this study have a higher average age than a national sample. Older respondents have had more time to complete college and post-graduate degrees.
percent of college graduates (or higher) attend Mass weekly compared to 83 percent of those with less than a college degree. The difference is a bit larger between categories in this sub-group, but the difference is not statistically significant. If we consider only the Vatican II/Boomer Generation, level of educational attainment has virtually no relationship to Mass attendance–86 percent of college graduates (or higher) attend weekly compared to 85 percent of respondents with less than a college degree.

In these two oldest cohort-groups, there is also very little difference between college graduates (or higher) and others concerning the frequency of Bible reading. Twenty-two percent of college graduates (or higher) reported reading the Bible two-to-three times a month or more compared to 20 percent of individuals with less than a college degree.

A statistically significant difference between the two educational attainment groups does emerge when considering frequency of Mass attendance on Holy Days of Obligation. In the two oldest cohort-groups, 60 percent of college graduates (or higher) reported that they regularly attend Mass on Holy Days of Obligation compared with 65 percent with less than a college degree.\textsuperscript{221}

The difference between the educational subgroups concerning Mass attendance on Holy Days of Obligation may reflect the substantial difference discovered between the groups on measures addressing institutional support and Catholic orthodoxy. Pre-Vatican II and Vatican II/Boomer respondents with a college degree are compared to individuals without a college degree on survey items addressing Catholic orthodoxy and institutional

\textsuperscript{221} This finding is statistically significant at p<.05.
support. In nearly every case, statistically significant differences emerged between college-educated and less-than-college-educated respondents. College graduates were less certain than their counterparts in their belief in God and the assertion that Jesus is the Son of God as opposed to one of many messengers or prophets. Additionally, college graduates expressed significantly more doubts than their counterparts in believing that “Jesus was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary,” “Mary, the Mother of God, was immaculately conceived without original sin,” “Jesus rose from the dead and ascended to heaven,” and “Christ will come again at the end of time to judge the living and the dead.”

With regard to salvation, college graduates are much more supportive of an inclusivist approach. Sixty-one percent of college graduates, compared to only 43 percent of non-graduates, supported the belief that Jesus Christ is “one way to salvation, but there are other ways [to salvation] as well.”

Educational level also negatively correlates with professed institutional support of the Catholic Church. More educated individuals express less certainty in apostolic succession and less certainty in professing the Catholic Church as the one true Church. Additionally, there is less agreement among college-educated respondents that the parish is an important part of their lives. Substantial differences are also found on items concerning the availability of the priesthood to married men, and married and celibate women. Seventy-seven percent of college educated respondents, compared to 70 percent of their counterparts, agreed (strongly or somewhat) that it would be a good thing to

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222 See Appendix 4 for exact wording of survey questions and available responses.

223 These findings are statistically significant at p<.01.
allow married men to be ordained as priests. The disagreement between the two groups became more apparent when the issue of women in the priesthood was addressed. Fifty percent of college graduates agreed that it would be a good thing if celibate women could be ordained, compared to 40 percent of non-college educated respondents. The largest discrepancy was found when considering married women as priests. Forty-seven percent of college graduates agreed (strongly or somewhat) that ordaining married women would be a good thing for the Church while only 34 percent of their counterparts agreed.224

Consistent with theories arguing for a “new voluntarism” emerging in American mainline religion, the most educated Catholic respondents in the Diocese of Raleigh support an individualistic, autonomous approach to conscience formation and moral action (Roof and McKinney 1987). There is significantly less support among the college educated respondents, compared to less-than-college educated, to obey Church teachings even when the individual does not understand the reasoning. When considering specific moral questions, college-educated respondents defer to the individual’s conscience more consistently than their counterparts. Table 4.9 illustrates the significant differences between levels of educational attainment with regard to individual moral independence. In each moral scenario, college-educated individuals defer to the individual more so than their counterparts. In some cases, such as abortion and premarital sex, the difference in “entirely up to the individual” is small, but in these cases the college-educated respondents allow for more ambiguity than their counterparts. Individuals with less than

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224 These findings are statistically significant at p<.001.
a college degree are more likely to answer that the decision is “always morally wrong” without taking into account varying circumstances.

Table 4.9. Moral Behavior Attitudes by Highest Grade Completed

In your opinion, is this following behavior always morally wrong, wrong except under certain circumstances, or is it entirely up to the individual?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Entirely up to the individual</th>
<th>Wrong except under certain conditions</th>
<th>Always morally wrong</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Use of condoms or birth control pills to prevent pregnancy.”*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not receive college degree</td>
<td>59.4</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>16.0</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College degree and higher</td>
<td>64.3</td>
<td>20.1</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Premarital sex.”***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not receive college degree</td>
<td>37.4</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>51.9</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College degree and higher</td>
<td>39.6</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>42.6</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Termination of a pregnancy by having an abortion.”**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not receive college degree</td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>26.0</td>
<td>60.9</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College degree and higher</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>32.9</td>
<td>53.1</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Engaging in homosexual acts.”***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not receive college degree</td>
<td>21.8</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>65.5</td>
<td>10.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College degree and higher</td>
<td>28.9</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>57.0</td>
<td>10.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p<.10; **p<.05; ***p<.001

4.7.1. Educational Attainment and Religious Commitment: Discussion

Supportive of previous research, educational attainment influences religious commitment, but does so only on measures of orthodoxy of belief and institutional support. Neither Mass attendance nor frequency of Bible reading differs between the two

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225 Only respondents falling into the Pre-Vatican II and Vatican II/Boomer Generations are considered.
groups. However, significant variations emerge concerning certainty of belief on doctrinal issues. In each case, higher educational attainment correlates with less support for orthodox beliefs.\textsuperscript{226} Going against current Catholic teaching, higher educated individuals also reported greater support for the ordination of married men and celibate and married women. Finally, when moral scenarios are presented, the college-educated respondents deferred to the individual conscience at a greater rate than those without college degrees.

4.8. Conclusion

This chapter introduces the construction, distribution, and initial findings of the survey. On the whole, respondents from the Diocese of Raleigh score very high on items measuring religious commitment. The rate of Mass attendance is astounding even with the bias resulting from the survey distribution method. Even the sub-group of respondents that received the survey by mail, the most comparable group to other studies, also scored higher on measures of commitment than national samples. When compared to CARA’s 2008 national study of parish-registered Catholics, the Diocese of Raleigh respondents reported significantly higher Mass attendance rates across all age groups.

Retired respondents attend Mass with more frequency than those in the workforce. This finding is true for all age-groups. It comes as no surprise as retired respondents note that there is more time for domestic responsibilities and other errands.

\textsuperscript{226} Christian and specifically Catholic scholars have presented the nuances of an inclusivist position with regard to salvation and defended the stance as being consistent with Catholic teaching. As a result, an inclusivist position, especially “in-spite-of inclusivism” should not be taken as affront to Catholic orthodoxy. It is, however, a more liberal understanding of the necessity of Christ for the salvation. See Jones (2005) for an outline of the various theological positions regarding Christian soteriology.
during the week. Further, retired individuals in particular utilize the parish for socializing as well as for worship. The frequency of bible reading, however, does not follow the same pattern. In general, working respondents read the bible with greater frequency than retired individuals. Additionally, the longer a respondent has lived in North Carolina, the more likely they are to read the bible with higher frequency. The potential spillover effect of a more religious South will be studied in greater detail in the next chapter.

As more Boomers move into retirement, and if they follow the current pattern, they may become more active in the parish and attend Mass with more frequency. In this regard, they may approach the high level of attendance found in prior generations. However, the same cannot be said with regard to religious belief. There is little distinction between retired and working Boomers with regard to orthodoxy or institutional commitment. Instead, the survey results corroborate what other studies have demonstrated about the Boomer Generation: they prefer a more individualistic, self-constructed faith. Boomers, especially those with college degrees, continue to prefer autonomy when it comes to moral decision-making, especially when it comes to artificial birth control and premarital sex. The immediate displeasure with and disregard for *Humanae Vitae* expressed by Boomers decades ago has continued through the life cycle. Furthermore, these belief tendencies do not appear to change when individuals retire.

Educational attainment among Pre-Vatican II and Vatican II/Boomer respondents also emerged as a strong predictor of orthodoxy of belief, institutional support, and personal autonomy concerning moral decisions.
The next chapter uses more in-depth statistical analyses to investigate the impact a recent move may have on religious commitment items. Additionally, the minority status of Catholics in the South will be examined to discover if individual minority status or collective small market share contribute to higher levels of religiosity.
5.1. Introduction

After attending Mass the morning of Ash Wednesday, a couple was eating lunch in a local restaurant. They could sense some perplexed stares, but were unsure as to their justification. Finally, a stranger approached the couple and asked, “Do y’all know you got something on your forehead?” Additional probing questions followed the couple throughout the day. “Is a copy machine broken?” “Did you fall over?” Apparently unfamiliar with the Catholic ritual on Ash Wednesday, fellow North Carolinians expressed curiosity in attempting to identify the source of the black spots on the couple’s heads. Their experience was not unique in a region dominated by Protestant (mostly Baptist) Christianity.

Catholicism is expanding in the region, however. As more and more northerners descend into eastern North Carolina for jobs or retirement, they are bringing their religion, most often Catholicism, with them. The proportion of registered Catholics in the eastern half of the state has risen from 2.4 percent to 4.8 percent over the last 17 years (Official Catholic Directory 1990, 2008).\textsuperscript{227} The trend is expected to continue as more northern Catholic Baby Boomers retire and move south to enjoy their golden years among the region’s many amenities.

\textsuperscript{227} The Diocese of Raleigh is composed of the eastern half of the state, from Raleigh to the Atlantic coast. Additionally, this figure computes Catholics registered at a parish. It does not include individuals who self-identify as Catholic, but are not officially registered with a parish.
The migratory event alone may significantly impact newcomers’ religious practices. Social dislocation theory predicts that a move away from established networks may adversely impact religious involvement (Bainbridge 1990; Myers 2000; Sherkat 1993; Stark and Bainbridge 1985; Stark and Finke 2000a; Stump 1984b; Welch and Baltzell 1984). To determine the potential impact a move may have on religiosity, this chapter investigates changes in Mass attendance, giving, bible reading, and attitudes toward changing qualifications for priesthood among older residents new to the region.

A move away from previously established networks cannot be examined in isolation. The destination of the migratory event also has to be taken into account. Toward this end, adaptation and spillover theories are tested in this study. These theories argue that individuals moving into a highly religious environment from a less religious one will increase their religious activities to match the new environment (Bibby 1997; Brewer et al. 2006; Hill 1985; Perl and Olson 2000; Smith, Sikkink, and Baily 1998; Stump 1984a).228 Not only do newly arriving Catholics in the Diocese of Raleigh find themselves in a more religious environment, they also find themselves in the religious minority. This minority status, along with perceived mistreatment as a result of their minority faith, may also influence religious commitment.

The chapter continues with an assessment of the power of Catholic social networks and concludes with a binary logistic regression analysis identifying the relative impact previously discussed variables have on religious commitment measures of

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228 Adaptation theory also argues that an individual’s religious commitment will be negatively impacted if moving from an area of higher religiosity to a region of lower religiosity (Stump 1984a).
Catholics in general, and Catholic Baby Boomers in particular, in the Diocese of Raleigh, NC.

5.2. Migration and Religious Commitment

The vast majority of survey respondents are not native to North Carolina. Only 5 percent of the total sample (n=105) reported being native to the area. The proportion of native to non-native respondents is steady across the three survey regions. By far, the youngest respondents (Post-Vatican II Generation) are the most likely to be native to North Carolina (14 percent) with the oldest respondents (Pre-Vatican II Generation) being the least likely (3 percent). Six percent of the Boomer/Vatican II Generation is native to North Carolina.

Survey results support the findings in the *Official Catholic Directory* demonstrating the explosive growth of Catholicism in the Diocese of Raleigh. Table 5.1 presents the migration time frame of respondents not native to North Carolina. Forty-two percent of non-native Catholics in the sample moved to North Carolina in the past six years. Thirty-seven percent moved to North Carolina between seven and fifteen years, while only 16 percent moved to the state more than fifteen years ago. Considering only non-native Vatican II/Boomer Catholics, 54 percent moved to North Carolina in the past six years.
Table 5.1. Migration Time Frame of Non-Native Respondents (in percent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Cohort-group</th>
<th>Moved to NC less than 6 years ago</th>
<th>Moved to NC 7-15 years ago</th>
<th>Moved to NC more than 15 years ago</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Vatican II Generation</td>
<td>30.5</td>
<td>36.6</td>
<td>33.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boomer/Vatican II Generation</td>
<td>53.8</td>
<td>23.8</td>
<td>22.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-Vatican II Generation</td>
<td>47.0</td>
<td>36.9</td>
<td>16.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>42.0</td>
<td>31.7</td>
<td>26.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Vatican II/Baby Boomer respondents are the most likely to have recently moved to North Carolina. Retirement is the strongest driving force behind the migration activity. Sixty-five percent of retired/semi-retired Boomers moved to North Carolina in the past six years compared to only 39 percent of working Boomers. Additionally, among migrating Boomers there is a strong positive correlation between being retired/semi-retired and having moved to North Carolina in the past six years (r=.368). This correlation is non-existent among the oldest respondents.

Among Vatican II/Boomer migrants there is also a strong positive correlation between moving to North Carolina in the last six years and frequency of attendance at Mass. The most recent Vatican II/Boomer migrants have the highest frequency of Mass attendance. Of the Vatican II/Boomer respondents who migrated to North Carolina in the past 6 years, ninety percent attend Mass weekly or more compared to 77 percent of Boomers moving into North Carolina seven to twelve years ago, and only 74 percent of Boomers moving more than fifteen years ago.\(^{229}\)

\(^{229}\) This finding is statistically significant at p<.001.
Recent Boomer migrants are more likely to be retired than working and Boomer retirees attend with more frequency than working Boomers. But this does not explain the difference in attendance between recent migrants and their counterparts. In fact, regardless of employment status, recently migrated Boomers attend Mass with more frequency than Boomers arriving in North Carolina more than six years ago.

At first glance, social dislocation does not necessarily decrease Boomers’ religious commitment when measured by Mass attendance. In fact, quite the opposite may be occurring. The dislocation experienced by migrants may push Boomers toward their new parishes in order to re-establish the social networks disrupted by a regional move. Respondents were asked, “Is your current number of parish friends less, more, or the same as in your previous parish?” Forty-three percent of Pre-Vatican II and Vatican II/Boomer respondents migrating south in the past six years reported that they have less friends in their current parish than in their former parish. Thirty-two percent of respondents who migrated seven to fifteen years ago made the same claim.\(^{230}\) This is to be expected. Established social networks are not easily replaced as it takes time to build up these relationships. Transplants arriving in the region more than six years ago have had time to replenish their parish-specific friendships. Recent transplants exhibited a higher rate of Mass attendance than their counterparts. What can account for this? One explanation offered for the discrepancy can be pulled from respondents’ comments and interviews. Some migrants to the area noted that they quickly turned to their local parish

\(^{230}\) This question may be an imperfect measure since the previous parish may have also been in North Carolina. Given the imperfect nature of the question, the results can still contribute to the notion that social dislocation can actually have a positive effect on religious commitment.
upon arriving to meet like-minded people. The data here supports this view. Newly arriving Catholics could turn to their new parish, and attend Mass more often, in an effort to seek out new social networks and friendships to replace the old ones severed by the move into the Diocese of Raleigh.

Respondents were also asked directly about changes since moving to North Carolina in their Mass attendance, parish participation, financial contributions, Bible reading, and prayer outside of Mass. Every measure increased in activity upon moving to North Carolina. For example, 22 percent of respondents receiving the survey by hand reported a substantial (16 percent) or slight (6 percent) increase in Mass attendance upon moving to North Carolina. Only 5 percent reported a substantial or slight decrease.231

Because respondents receiving the surveys by hand have an extremely high average rate of Mass attendance, it may be more instructive to examine individuals receiving the survey via mail in isolation. The increase in Mass attendance is nearly as high among respondents in this sub-group—20 percent reported a substantial (12 percent) or slight (8 percent) in attendance. Fourteen percent reported a substantial (8 percent) or slight (6 percent) decrease in Mass attendance upon moving to North Carolina.

231 Past studies have challenged the accuracy of retrospective changes in attitudes and behavior (Dawes and Kagan 1988; Markus 1986; Pearson, Ross, and Dawes 1992). The studies discovered that when individuals think a change in behavior or attitude has or should have taken place, they tend to distort the past in a manner compatible with the perceived change (Dawes and Kagan 1988). The reverse may also be true (Collins et al. 1985; Pearson, Ross, and Dawes 1992). Individuals, often subconsciously, reconstruct consistency in beliefs and behaviors over time when change is quite apparent. Markus (1986) discovered that older adults tend to project more consistent attitudes over time than younger adults. Given the tendency in older adults toward consistency of belief and behavior over time, we would expect to see little change in Pre-Vatican II and Vatican II cohort-groups on the included measures. While “remained the same” is the response given most often in each measure, it is important to note the significant differences between those who increased their activities and those who decreased their activities upon moving to North Carolina. The findings in this section are corroborated by additional empirical analyses and respondent interviews.
Changes in parish participation mirror the changes in attendance. In the sub-group receiving the surveys by hand, 37 percent of respondents increased their participation in parish-sponsored events compared to 25 percent who decreased their level of activity. The increase is not as stark in the other sub-group. Thirty-three percent increased their participation in parish-sponsored events while 30 percent decreased their participation. Some respondents made a point in noting they would participate in more parish events if they lived closer to their parish. However, reported drive-time to the parish does not statistically factor into parish participation levels.

In addition to Mass attendance, parish support may also be assessed by changes in respondents’ financial contributions. The most noticeable change in commitment among respondents moving to North Carolina is their increased financial support. Fifty-three percent of respondents receiving the survey at the back of church after Mass reported an increase in monetary contributions to the parish–17 percent substantially increased their contributions, 35 percent slightly increased their contributions.\textsuperscript{232} Eleven percent decreased their monetary contributions to the parish–only 3 percent significantly–after moving to North Carolina. The same increase in monetary support holds among respondents receiving the survey through the mail per their listing on the parish roll. Fifty two percent significantly (15 percent) or slightly (37 percent) increased their financial contributions.

\textsuperscript{232} Due to rounding, individual figures may not add up to total percentage.
monetary support of the parish upon moving to the state. Only 12 percent reported a decrease in financial funding.\footnote{233}{The changes in financial support do not appear to be driven solely by the most recent influx of migrants. Of the respondents moving to North Carolina in the past six years, thirteen percent substantially increased their contributions upon arrival and 26 percent slightly increased monetary support. Eighteen percent decreased monetary support. By comparison, 26 percent of respondents moving more than fifteen years ago significantly increased and 32 percent slightly increased parish monetary support upon arriving in North Carolina. Many plausible explanations can account for the difference among migrant sub-groups. The most important finding remains that, across sub-groups, significantly more people increased than decreased their level of parish financial support upon moving to North Carolina.}

The previous chapter analyzed the frequency of bible reading by years the respondent has lived in North Carolina. It clearly showed the positive linear relationship between time spent in North Carolina and frequency of Bible reading. The additional series of questions directly asks respondents about changes in their own behavior upon moving to North Carolina. Migrants reported substantial increases in the frequency of Bible reading. Twenty-seven percent of respondents receiving surveys by hand and 26 percent of respondents receiving surveys by mail reported a substantial or slight increase in Bible reading. Eight percent of the former sub-group and 14 percent of the latter reported a slight or significant decline, with the majority in both sub-groups having no change.

The rise in religious practice among migrants also extends to the frequency of prayer outside of Mass. The increase in frequency of prayer is identical across both sub-groups. Thirty-eight percent of respondents significantly (21 percent) or slightly (17 percent) increased their frequency of prayer after moving to North Carolina. Only two percent of respondents receiving the survey by hand decreased their frequency of prayer,
while 6 percent of respondents receiving the mailed survey decreased their frequency of prayer.

Variation in religious belief and behavior over time may be a function of changes in the life cycle. If an individual moved to North Carolina decades ago, a reported increase in Mass attendance and prayer may be a factor of respondents moving into retirement as opposed to moving to a new religious environment. It is informative, then, to examine the most recent migrants in isolation. The following illustration, Chart 5.1, includes individuals in either the Pre-Vatican II or Vatican II/Boomer cohort-groups who moved to North Carolina in the past six years.\textsuperscript{234}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Religious Practice</th>
<th>Pre-Vatican II</th>
<th>Vatican II/Boomer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mass Attendance</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parish Participation</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parish Contributions</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bible Reading</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prayer</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{chart5.1.png}
\caption{Chart 5.1. Changes (in percent) in Religious Practice upon Moving to NC}
\end{figure}

Among recent migrants, Mass attendance remained relatively steady. Three out of every four new residents did not change their frequency of Mass attendance. The individuals who did change upon moving to North Carolina increased their frequency of Mass

\textsuperscript{234} Including Post-Vatican II respondents in the calculation alters the categorical distribution by 2 percentage points at most. The most notable difference is that Pre-Vatican II respondents moving to North Carolina in the past six years significantly increased their Mass attendance more than other generations.
Sixty-five percent of the most recent migrants reported being retired or semi-retired. The increase in attendance, then, may be a result of more free time, a desire to make new friends, or connect with fellow Catholics.

The highest frequency of instability is found in recent migrants’ parish participation. Roughly one-third of respondents decreased their participation, one-third maintained their level of participation, and one-third increased their participation. On the one hand, this finding supports dislocation theory associated with regional migration. As people move to a new region, the loss of an established social network and religious capital may negatively impact parish involvement. On the other hand, social dislocation and the loss of established social networks may actually prompt individuals to become more involved in the parish in an attempt to quickly rebuild the lost networks. The increase in participation may also be a function, again, of an increase in free time individuals experience upon retiring.

Parish contributions increased more than they decreased among the most recent migrants. Another contributing factor to the increase in parish contributions may be the explosive growth of Catholicism in the diocese. Five of the six parishes involved in the study had either recently built an addition onto their current church or were in the process of building or planning an additional wing. The various capital campaigns associated

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235 Of Pre-Vatican II and Vatican II/Boomer respondents reporting an increase in Mass attendance upon moving to North Carolina in the past six years, 89 percent now attend Mass weekly or more often. Eleven percent increased their Mass attendance, but still fall short of attending weekly.

236 Unfortunately, the survey data does not determine whether the individual moved to North Carolina before or after retirement. Follow-up interviews attempt to establish a deeper understanding of the reasons behind changes in religious behavior in recent migrants.
with the new construction may have been a contributing factor to the increase in parish contributions. In fact, a number of respondents complained they were growing weary of the continual request for expansion funds.

Recent migrants also increased their frequency of bible reading outside of Mass. The previous chapter established a linear relationship among migrants between frequency of bible reading and time spent living in North Carolina. The above finding corroborates the discovery that new residents increase the frequency with which they read the bible. A higher rate of Protestants in the South, along with a higher level of bible reading among native Catholics, may contribute to the increased practice.

Nearly one-third of new residents increased their frequency of prayer outside of Mass upon arriving in North Carolina. A minimal number reported a decrease in prayer. Native North Carolina Catholics pray at a slightly higher rate than migrants, but the difference is not statistically significant. Frequency of prayer reaches its height among the oldest respondents, but again the difference is not statistically significant. Prayer frequency among Pre-Vatican II and Vatican II/Boomer respondents is higher among retirees than those still in the workforce.²³⁷ Spillover effects may be active with regard to prayer as well as bible reading. The South in general and North Carolina in particular constitute the top nine states with regard to frequency of prayer (Pew Forum 2007).²³⁸

²³⁷ The difference is marginally significant at p=.08.

²³⁸ Sixty-eight percent of North Carolinians pray at least once a day compared to 56 percent of respondents from Pennsylvania, 51 percent from New Jersey, and 49 percent from New York. The tri-state region is the state of origination for 40 percent of all transplants moving less than 15 years ago. See “How Religious Is Your State?” from the 2007 U.S. Religious Landscape Survey for more information (http://pewforum.org/How-Religious-Is-Your-State-.aspx).
As with bible reading, it is plausible that high regional rates of prayer has a measurable effect on newcomers regardless of denomination.

5.3. Migration and Religious Belief

While a tentative correlation between migration and changes in religious behavior did emerge from the data, there is less evidence that regional migration impacts religious belief. Any difference in religious belief between migrant sub-groups is more likely a function of cohort-effect. Sixty percent of the most recent migrants—those moving to North Carolina in the past six years—fall into the Vatican II/Boomer Generation. Only 36 percent of respondents in the other two migrant sub-categories—moving to North Carolina seven to fifteen years ago and moving to the state more than fifteen years ago—are part of the Vatican II/Boomer Generation. As a result, the substantial differences among the migrant sub-groups concerning their religious beliefs should be examined. One particular survey item of interest regards respondents’ attitudes toward changing the qualifications of priesthood.

In each case, the most recent migrants are more supportive of changes in qualifications for the priesthood than their counterparts. In order to rule out the life cycle and cohort-effect on attitudes, we will examine transplants from the Vatican II/Boomer Generation in isolation. Surprisingly, the differences across migrant sub-

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239 The survey asks respondent to identify their level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements: “It would be a good thing if priests who have married were allowed to return to active ministry,” “It would be a good thing if married men were allowed to be ordained as priests,” “It would be a good thing if celibate women were allowed to be ordained as priests,” and “It would be a good thing if married women were allowed to be ordained as priests.” In each case, the most recent transplants have less disagreement and more agreement than the other two transplant sub-groups. The findings are statistically significant at p<.05.
groups remain even when isolating the Boomer Generation. For two of the four survey
items, there is a statistically significant inverse linear relationship between support for
changes in the priesthood and time residing in North Carolina. The longer an individual
has lived in North Carolina, the less likely the individual supports allowing celibate or
married women into the priesthood.

When Boomers were asked to identify their level of agreement with the statement,
“It would be a good thing if celibate women were allowed to be ordained as priests,” 51
percent of the most recent Boomer migrants agreed (29 percent strongly agreed, 22
percent somewhat agreed). Forty-seven percent of Boomers who moved to North
Carolina seven to fifteen year ago agreed while only 32 percent of Boomers living in
North Carolina more than fifteen years ago were in agreement.240 Additionally, when
asked about married women in the priesthood, the most recent transplants were the most
supportive at 49 percent agreeing either strongly (29 percent) or somewhat (19 percent).
While 48 percent of Boomers moving seven to fifteen years ago also agree that it would
be a good idea to allow married women to be priests, there is stronger opposition to the
notion in this sub-group.241 The strongest opposition to and least amount of support for
married women entering the priesthood is found among the most tenured Boomer
transplants, moving to the state more than fifteen years ago.242

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240 The finding is statistically significant at p<.01.

241 Thirty-three percent of the middle group strongly disagreed with the notion of allowing married
women to be priests, while 26 percent of the most recent transplants had such strong opposition.

242 The finding approaches statistical significance at p=.07.
While there is little difference across migrant groups concerning most religious beliefs, more traditional views concerning changes to the priesthood positively correlated with years lived in North Carolina. This is the case even when the Boomers are examined in isolation to account for potential cohort and life cycle effects on attitudes. Along with the frequency of bible reading, there appears to be a regional effect on religious attitudes pertaining to the priesthood. There is much more opposition to changes in the priesthood among native Catholics than transplants. This attitude may be spilling over into transplants as these individuals become socialized into southern culture.

5.4. The Catholic Minority Effect

The South has been considered the most religiously committed region in the United States as measured through traditional survey items such as salience of religious belief, church attendance, prayer, and frequency of Bible reading (Hill 1985; Smith, Sikkink, and Bailey 1998; Wuthnow and Christiano 1979).\textsuperscript{243} The “Bible Belt,” running from south-eastern Virginia west across to southern Missouri and down through central Texas, is designated as such because of the dominance of the Baptist tradition and traditional prevalence of fundamentalist views (Anderson 1995). Mainline Protestant denominations are not well represented in this region and Catholicism even less so.\textsuperscript{244}

\textsuperscript{243} Southern Catholics have been shown to be more committed than their northern and northeastern counterparts (CARA 2008; The Gallup Organization 2005).

\textsuperscript{244} Anderson and Friend (1995: 1) went so far as to claim that “Catholics in the Bible Belt South are all but invisible.”
While in the minority, the mainline Protestants and Catholics in the “Bible Belt” are more committed than their co-religionists in other regions.

The majority of Catholic transplants arriving in North Carolina are from outside the “Bible Belt.” In most cases, the Catholic migrant is from an area where Catholicism is prevalent, if not the majority religion. Such is not the case in North Carolina. Catholics moving to the region find themselves in the religious minority, in a culture dominantly Protestant, and with few Catholic parishes from which to choose. Does this religious minority status have any effect on religious behavior or belief? Does the smaller religious market share and dominant Protestant culture prompt Catholics to be more active in their faith? Do Catholics feel the need to validate their beliefs when confronted with the majority alternatives?

As pointed out in the second chapter, Catholics are in the minority in the Diocese of Raleigh. The impact of such status may be mitigated, however, by retirement communities or Catholic-saturated neighborhoods that function much like a religious enclave. In this situation, one could statistically be in the religious minority, but not be aware of or affected by their minority status. It is important, then, to ask individuals if they perceive themselves to be a religious minority. More than half of the entire sample (54 percent) perceives themselves as being in the religious minority. Additionally, one in four respondents (24 percent) reported feeling like an outsider or being treated differently because of their faith. Native North Carolinians are more likely to report

245 Men are more likely to identify as a religious minority, but women are significantly more likely to have experienced bias because of their faith.
having felt like a religious minority (61 percent) than transplants (54 percent) although the difference is not statistically significant. By a wide margin, the youngest generations perceived their minority status the most often (75 percent) with the oldest respondents the least likely (48 percent). 246 Forty-nine percent of retired/semi-retired individuals identify themselves in the minority while 63 percent of working individuals make the same claim. 247

In the overall sample, perceived minority status has a statistically significant correlation with Mass attendance, but the influence is small. Additionally, the correlation between perceived minority status and weekly Mass attendance is a negative one. An individual who reported awareness of being in the religious minority is less likely to attend Mass on a weekly basis. In the overall sample, younger individuals were more likely to report minority status and less likely to attend weekly. We should focus on the other generations in isolation to test the consistency of the negative correlation between minority status and Mass attendance.

The respondents should also be broken out into those who received the survey at the back of church after Mass and those who received the survey through the mail. The average frequency of Mass attendance is so high in the former sub-group that differences between respondents perceiving minority status and those who do not may be overlooked. The latter group’s Mass attendance rate is more varied. In this sub-group, respondents who reported their minority status attend Mass weekly at a slightly higher frequency.

246 This finding is statistically significant at p<.001.

247 This finding is statistically significant at p<.001.
rate (82 percent) than individuals not aware of their status (79 percent). The difference, however, is not statistically significant. When considering only Vatican II/Boomer respondents who received the survey by mail, the gap between the two groups widens but still does not meet statistical significance. Seventy-three percent of this sub-group aware of their minority status reported attending Mass weekly or more compared 63 percent who were not aware.

The youngest respondents, then, appear to drive the negative correlation between perceived minority status and weekly Mass attendance in the overall sample. Among the older generations in the study, the correlation between perceived minority status and Mass attendance is positive, but not statistically significant.

In addition to Mass attendance, other survey items assess religious commitment. For the entire sample, there is no significant correlation between minority perception and religious commitment on items measuring religious salience, religious guidance, and frequency of Mass attendance on Holy Days of Obligation. The frequency of bible reading is also not affected by perception of minority status in the entire sample or within the generational cohort-groups.

The predictive value of perceived minority status on religious salience did emerge as statistically significant when isolating Vatican II/Boomer respondents. Religious minority perception does not predict religious guidance or Mass attendance on Holy Days of Obligation among Boomer respondents.\footnote{While it is not statistically significant, Boomers with a minority perception attend Mass on Holy Days with more regularity than their counterparts.} Boomers reporting minority status place
more importance on their faith than those not reporting a perception of minority status. Eighty-two percent of Boomers perceiving religious minority consider their religion “very important” in their lives while 73 percent of Boomers who do not perceive being in a religious minority place the same emphasis on their religion. The difference between the groups is primarily driven by Boomers who are not yet retired. Boomers still in the workforce are more likely to report being in the religious minority. Additionally, the impact of religious minority on religious salience is stronger in working Boomers. It is also the case that Boomers who consider their faith to be “very important” in their lives are more aware of being in the religious minority. This relationship is not statistically significant within the other two generational cohort-groups.

The survey also asks respondents, “Living as a Catholic in the South, have you ever felt like an outsider or been treated differently because of your faith?” Twenty-four percent confirmed this sentiment, while 69 percent denied having the experience, and 7 percent had no opinion or were unsure. For the entire sample, there is a significant negative correlation between being perceived differently because of one’s faith and frequency of Mass attendance (r = −.125, p < .01). Again, the youngest cohort-group may

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249 This finding is statistically significant at p < .01. A large majority of respondents in the survey place a lot of importance on faith in their lives. Recall that the rate of Mass attendance in the sample is very high, a variable that correlates strongly with religious salience.

250 Eighty-four percent of working Boomers reporting being in the religious minority assert their religion is “very important” in their lives while 71 percent of working Boomers not aware of a religious minority place the same emphasis on their religious faith.

251 This finding is statistically significant at p < .01.

252 The question does not ask if they had been adversely treated because of their faith, but the vast majority of comments accompanying the survey item remarked about negative treatment due to their faith.
be driving the negative correlation for the entire sample. Forty-eight percent of Post-Vatican II respondents reported being treated differently because of their faith. Only 28 percent of Vatican II/Boomers and 17 percent of Pre-Vatican II respondents confirmed being treated differently. The youngest generation has the lowest level of Mass attendance, a factor which may drive the negative correlation.

When the generational cohort-groups are examined in isolation, the correlation remains statistically significant only in the Vatican II/Boomer cohort-group. Again, the correlation is a negative one. Respondents who had been treated differently because of their faith are more likely to have reported a lower level of weekly Mass attendance (81 percent) than those who have not been treated differently (88 percent). The Pre-Vatican II Generation follows the same pattern (59 percent to 64 percent), but the difference is not statistically significant.

Being treated differently because of one’s faith has a robust negative impact on the frequency of Mass attendance when isolating respondents receiving the survey by mail. Respondents treated differently because of their faith in this sub-group attend Mass weekly or more only 64 percent of the time. Eighty percent of respondents not treated differently attend Mass weekly or more often.

As with the perception of religious minority, perception of religious bias can be measured against religious salience, religious guidance, and Mass attendance on Holy Days of Obligation. When considering the entire sample, there is no relationship

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253 This finding is statistically significant at p<.05.

254 This finding is statistically significant at p<.001.
between perception of religious bias and salience nor attendance at Mass on Holy Days. However, a statistically significant relationship does emerge between perception of religious bias and religious guidance. Those who report being treated differently due to their faith also allow for their faith to provide more guidance in the day-to-day lives.\textsuperscript{255}

Among Boomers only, the perception of religious discrimination correlates with religious salience and religious guidance, but not with attendance at Mass on Holy Days. Eighty-four percent of Boomers reporting religious bias agree that their religion is “very important” to them, while 75 percent of Boomers not reporting discrimination make the same claim about the salience of their faith. As with religious minority perception, the salience of Boomers’ faith appears to influence their perception of religious bias in the first place.\textsuperscript{256}

Reported discrimination among Boomers has a small effect on the amount of guidance their religion provides. Fifty-four percent of Boomers reporting religious bias allow that their religion also provides “a great deal” of guidance for day-to-day life. Slightly fewer, 46 percent, of Boomers not reporting religious bias assert religion provides “a great deal” of guidance.\textsuperscript{257} Additionally, Boomers who use their religious belief for a “great deal of guidance” are more likely to report being discriminated against because of their faith.

\textsuperscript{255} This finding is statistically significant at $p<.05$.

\textsuperscript{256} Twenty-nine percent of Boomers reporting religion is “very important” in their lives report religious discrimination compared to only 20 percent of Boomers who fall below this highest category of salience. The finding is statistically significant at $p<.05$.

\textsuperscript{257} This finding approaches statistical significance at $p=.052$. 
Being treated differently because of one’s faith also has a noticeable impact on the frequency of bible reading among respondents in the entire sample. Respondents treated differently because of their faith read the bible with much more frequency than their counterparts. This finding, however, is not driven by the youngest respondents. Instead, the variation is greatest in the Pre-Vatican II Generation closely followed by the Vatican II/Boomer Generation. Table 5.2 illustrates the effect discrimination or religious bias may have on bible reading.

### Table 5.2. Bible Reading by Being Treated Differently Due to Faith (in percent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age cohort-group</th>
<th>Treated different?</th>
<th>Frequency of bible reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Never-1-2 times per year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Vatican II*</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>36.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>61.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vatican II*</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>47.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>62.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p<.001.

Recognition that one has been treated different because of one’s faith is associated with a higher frequency of bible reading. Among Pre-Vatican II respondents, 32 percent of those reporting some discrimination read the bible at least 2-3 times per month, while only 16 percent of their counterparts read the bible with the same frequency. The same pattern is discovered in the Vatican II/Boomer Generation. Thirty-eight percent of respondents who reported being treated differently read the bible at least two to three times per week compared to only 19 percent of respondents not reporting biased experiences. The difference between the yes-no groups is even more visible on the other end of the bible reading spectrum. Being treated differently because of one’s faith seems
to encourage bible reading at least to some degree. There is a 25 point difference in the “Never–1-2 times per year” category among the Pre-Vatican II respondents and a 15 point discrepancy among Boomers.

What is it about being treated differently that results in statistically significant higher levels of bible reading? To answer this question, we will turn to the characteristics of the individuals who reported biased treatment. Among the Pre-Vatican and Vatican II/Boomer Generations, the longer one has lived in North Carolina, the more likely they have experienced being treated differently because of their faith. Among the oldest two cohort-groups, there is also a correlation between being in the workforce and reporting being treated differently due to their Catholicism. In the last chapter, we saw that being in the workforce positively correlates with frequency of bible reading. Additionally, the previous chapter noted a positive correlation between time in North Carolina and frequency of bible reading. Among Vatican II/Boomer respondents, there is also a significant relationship between experiencing religious discrimination and the number of local Catholic friends and local friends who are also parish members. Fewer local Catholic friends or fewer friends in the parish increase the likelihood an individual reported religious bias. The reverse is also true. The more Catholic and parish friends a respondent has, they less likely they are to report experiencing religious discrimination in North Carolina.

It makes sense that being around co-religionists decreases the chance one has experienced religious bias in the North Carolina. What is more difficult to interpret is the

258 These findings are statistically significant at p<.05.
finding that being treated differently because of one’s faith correlates in different
directions depending upon the religious activity. On the one hand, the frequency of Mass
attendance is significantly lower in those who have been treated differently than those
who have not. On the other hand, the frequency of bible reading is significantly higher in
those respondents reporting an experience of religious bias. Merely recognizing that one
is in the religious minority has little impact on Mass attendance and bible reading, and
what little effect emerges does not meet statistical significance. It appears, then, that the
individual must have a tangible experience of being treated differently due to their faith
to have an impact (both positively and negatively) on religious behaviors such as Mass
attendance and bible reading. The predictive power of minority status and religious bias
on the Mass attendance and bible reading will be assessed more in depth later in the
chapter.

In addition to Mass attendance and bible reading, minority status and experience
of religious discrimination correlates with a range of belief variables. For example,
minority and religious bias respondents are more opposed than their counterparts to
allowing married men, married women, and celibate women into the priesthood.\textsuperscript{259} They
are more likely than their counterparts to look to the Pope, Bishops, and Church teachings
in forming their moral conscience and obey Church teachings when not fully
understood.\textsuperscript{260} Additionally, respondents who reported being in the religious minority
and those experiencing being treated differently because of their faith expressed more

\textsuperscript{259} These findings are statistically significant at p<.05.

\textsuperscript{260} These findings are statistically significant at p<.01.
agreement that the Catholic Church is the one true Church than their counterparts, who did not have such experiences. 261

5.5. Becoming the Minority: Perception as the Dependent Variable

The above analysis uses minority status and perception of religious discrimination as an independent predictor variable on a range of behavior and belief items. The analysis attempts to answer how minority status or the perception of discrimination affects a range of beliefs and behaviors. It is also instructive to investigate minority and bias perception as the dependent variable. It may be the case that individuals perceived themselves to be in the religious minority or reported religious bias as a consequence of embracing more traditional, orthodox Catholic theological positions in a Protestant-saturated environment.

For example, 63 percent of people who strongly disagree with allowing married women to be ordained priests also perceive themselves in the religious minority. Fifty-four percent of people in strong agreement with the change reported minority perception. 262 Differences in religious attitudes are also apparent with regard to respondents being treated differently because of their faith. Twenty-six percent who are strongly opposed to married women being ordained reported religious bias compared to 18 percent of respondents strongly supporting ordination of married women.

261 This finding is statistically significant at p<.01.

262 This finding is statistically significant at p<.05.
Binary logistic regression analysis can also be employed to discover the impact of particular beliefs on minority status perception and discrimination. Some orthodox beliefs come close to statistical significance in predicting minority status perception among Pre-Vatican II and Vatican II/Boomer respondents. For example, never having doubted the statement, “Mary, the Mother of God, was immaculately conceived without original sin,” approaches statistical significance (p=.105). Strong agreement with the notion that the Catholic Church is the one true Church and the principle of divine succession both achieve statistical significance (p<.05) in predicting whether or not the respondents perceived themselves as a religious minority. Holding these distinctively Catholic teachings in a highly Protestant environment appears to contribute to a minority perception.

5.6. The Power of Social Networks

Minority status does not appear to have substantial influence on the commitment level of Catholics in the Diocese of Raleigh. However, perceiving religious discrimination projects a negative impact on Mass attendance. Individuals with more local friends who are Catholic or in their parish are less likely to report feeling in the minority and less likely to report being discriminated against. Also, the percentages of local Catholic and parish friends are strongly correlated with frequency of Mass
attendance. The following charts (5.2 and 5.3) present the effect of a Catholic social network on Mass attendance rates of respondents receiving the survey by mail.\(^{263}\)

Chart 5.2. Percent of Catholic Local Friends and Bivariate Attendance Frequency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Attends Mass weekly</th>
<th>Does not attend Mass weekly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>About 1/4</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>About 1/2</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>About 3/4 to all</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chart 5.3. Percent of Local Friends in Parish and Bivariate Attendance Frequency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Attends Mass weekly</th>
<th>Does not attend Mass weekly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>About 1/4</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>About 1/2</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>About 3/4 to all</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the rate of local Catholic friends increases, the more likely the respondent attends Mass at a weekly rate. The same can be said regarding the number of local friends attending the same parish. The positive, linear relationship remains even when isolating the Vatican II/Boomer generation. In fact, the predictive power of the number of Catholic and parish friends increases when considering Boomers alone.

\(^{263}\) The findings are statistically significant at p<.001. Also, the correlation between the variables are relatively high (r=.282 for Catholic friends and r=.285 for parish friends).
Social networks comprised of co-religionists can function as behavior maintenance mechanisms. In addition to attending Mass to socialize with friends, the friends in the parish may “keep tabs” on the behaviors of other members (Iannaccone 1994; Smith et al. 1998; Tittle 1977; Welch and Baltzell 1984).\textsuperscript{264} As expected, there is a correlation between years living in North Carolina and the number of Catholic friends and friends who are in the same parish.\textsuperscript{265} Even the most recent transplants become quickly socialized into Catholic life when moving into the diocese. One-third of the most recent transplants (moving to North Carolina within the last 6 years) reported that at least half of their local friends are Catholic. The biggest jump occurs from respondents moving to North Carolina in the past six years to respondents who moved to the state between seven and fifteen years ago.\textsuperscript{266}

In addition to having an impact on Mass attendance, having local Catholic friends and friends in one’s parish positively correlates with volunteering through parish programs, participating in parish upkeep, attending parish sponsored prayer meetings, and parish committee work.\textsuperscript{267} The more Catholic and parish friends one has, the more likely they will participate more fully in their parish life in addition to attending Mass.

\textsuperscript{264} In particular, see Ellison and George (1994), Iannaccone (1994), and Smith et al. (1998) on the persuasive power of social networks comprised of co-religionists.

\textsuperscript{265} The correlation was tested using the three previously studied categories of Catholic transplants: moving to North Carolina less than six years ago, moving to North Carolina between seven and fifteen years ago, and moving to North Carolina more than fifteen years ago. The difference among the migrant groups remains strong and statistically significant when retirement status is taken into account and when Boomers are analyzed in isolation.

\textsuperscript{266} After the initial jump, the number of Catholic friends and friends in the parish flatten out.

\textsuperscript{267} These findings are statistically significant at $p<.01$. 
This finding comes as no surprise, but illustrates the importance for parishes to foster friendships among participants as it leads to an increase in multiple modes of participation.

The number of local Catholic friends or friends in the parish does not appear to have an effect on attitudes regarding changes in the qualifications for priestly ordination. So, the behavior maintenance effect may be in play when considering Mass attendance and parish participation, but it does not bring Catholics into a consistent, theologically orthodox view. Additionally, the number of local Catholic and parish friends has little, if any, influence on other belief measures, such as the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist, necessity of Christ for salvation, or lack of doubts in the teaching on apostolic succession. In essence, social networks comprised of co-religionists may influence respondents’ public and private religious behaviors, but has little power over their personal beliefs and attitudes.

5.7. New Religious Environments: Commitment Adjustments

The potential effect a more religious environment in the Diocese of Raleigh has on religious commitment has been addressed in the second and third chapters. The survey data provides support for the spillover and adaptation theories. Upon arriving in North Carolina, transplants have increased their rate of Mass attendance, frequency of bible reading, and religious giving. What can explain the variation? The increase in Mass attendance may be a consequence of retirees moving to the region with, assumedly, more free time. However, bible reading did not increase among retirees. As an
explanation, the fourth chapter noted that respondents still in the workforce interact more frequently with non-Catholic Christians, who tend to read the bible more often. To be able to converse with non-Catholic Christians about religious issues, working Catholics may increase the frequency with which they read the Bible. In this sense, the new, more religious, environment is directly impacting migrants to the region, although retired migrants may be impacted to a lesser degree.

If retiring from the workforce has its own repercussions for religious commitment, such as an increase in Mass attendance, parish participation, and volunteering, it is better to isolate working respondents in the sample to gauge the effect a recent move to the region may have on Mass attendance and other commitment measures. Non-retired respondents (which includes homemakers, students, unemployed, and working respondents) having moved to North Carolina in the past six years also reported an increase in Mass attendance upon arriving. Twenty-eight percent of recently arriving, non-retired respondents reported an increase in their Mass attendance (17 percent significantly, 11 percent slightly). Only 9 percent reported a decrease of any sort. Even the youngest respondents reported an increase in Mass attendance.

Although the difference shrinks, the pattern also stands for recently arriving, non-retired respondents who received the surveys through the mail. Twenty-six percent of these respondents reported an increase in Mass attendance compared to 16 percent
reporting a decrease.\textsuperscript{268} Are Catholics, even non-retired ones, reaching out to the parishes to re-establish the social and familial networks they may have left? Or is the increase the function of a more religious environment in the South? Interviews were conducted and reported on in the following chapter to develop a more nuanced understanding of changes in religious practices upon arriving in a new and—in the majority of cases—more religious region.\textsuperscript{269}

5.8. The Influences on Mass Attendance

In order to test the predictive power of observed variables on Mass attendance, a binominal logistic regression was employed with the frequency of Mass attendance as the dependent variable. Initially, respondents were given a range of Mass attendance options. For this analysis, responses were recoded into a bivariate dummy variable (ATTENDYN) which breaks respondents down into “Attends Mass weekly or more” or “Does not attend Mass weekly.” The analysis was performed on data gathered from respondents receiving the survey by mail. Respondents receiving the survey by hand reported an extremely high percentage of weekly Mass attendance. There is less value in running regression analyses where there is little disparity in the dependent variable (Pallant 2005). As a result, regression analyses investigating predictors of Mass

\textsuperscript{268} Interestingly, when non-retired individuals are included in the sample receiving the survey by mail, those arriving in North Carolina between seven and fifteen years reported a decrease in Mass attendance upon arriving (30 percent decrease to 26 percent increase).

\textsuperscript{269} There is no noticeable difference in Mass attendance change among respondents migrating from the collection of northern and northeastern states as opposed to elsewhere in the country. The collection of northern and northeastern states includes CT, DE, MA, MD, ME, MI, NH, NJ, NY, OH, PA, RI, and VT. Sixty-eight percent of transplants migrated from this collection of states.
attendance will only use respondents receiving the survey by mail where the disparity between the categories is greater. A second analysis isolates Vatican II/Boomers from the rest of the respondents.

The logistic regression included three models as seen in Table 5.3. The first model tested the hypothesis that social network composition has a strong impact on religious activity. Additionally, the first model assessed the impact perceived religious discrimination and perceived minority status may have on frequency of Mass attendance. The variables analyzed in the first model included how many local friends are in the respondent’s parish (FRDPAR3), perception of religious discrimination (RELOUT2), and perception of religious minority (RELMIN3).

The second model tested the hypothesis that migration disrupts valuable social and familial networks with a corresponding detrimental effect on religious behaviors in a respondent’s new region. Although social dislocation may occur, the desire to reach out and rebuild the networks which were disrupted by a move may be a more appropriate predictor of attendance frequency. Additionally, the model tested whether perception of a distinctive, southern Catholicism influences commitment measured by attendance. The impact of marital status is also addressed. The variables introduced in the second model include the timing of one’s migration (MIGRATE), the importance of one’s parish in

\[\text{270 Respondents were classified on a sliding scale starting with native respondents and ending with respondents moving to NC less than six years ago: (0) native to North Carolina; (1) moved to North Carolina more than fifteen years ago; (2) moved to North Carolina between seven and fifteen years ago; (3) moved to North Carolina six years ago or less.}\]
the respondent’s life (CHURIMPR), whether Catholicism in the South is different than in the North (CATDIFF3), and the respondent’s marital status (MARITAL3). 

Table 5.3. Logistic Regression Predicting Weekly Mass Attendance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FRDPAR3</td>
<td>1.056</td>
<td>2.875*</td>
<td>(.17)</td>
<td>0.940</td>
<td>2.560*</td>
<td>(.20)</td>
<td>0.929</td>
<td>2.532*</td>
<td>(.22)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RELOUT2</td>
<td>-0.897</td>
<td>0.408**</td>
<td>(.26)</td>
<td>-1.359</td>
<td>0.257*</td>
<td>(.33)</td>
<td>-0.886</td>
<td>0.412**</td>
<td>(.38)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RELMIN3</td>
<td>0.147</td>
<td>1.159</td>
<td>(.15)</td>
<td>0.201</td>
<td>1.222</td>
<td>(.17)</td>
<td>0.290</td>
<td>1.337</td>
<td>(.19)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MIGRATE</td>
<td>-0.181</td>
<td>0.834</td>
<td>(.15)</td>
<td>-0.181</td>
<td>0.834</td>
<td>(.15)</td>
<td>-0.077</td>
<td>0.926</td>
<td>(.17)</td>
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<tr>
<td>CHURIMPR</td>
<td>1.074</td>
<td>2.926*</td>
<td>(.13)</td>
<td>1.074</td>
<td>2.926*</td>
<td>(.13)</td>
<td>1.108</td>
<td>3.028*</td>
<td>(.14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CATDIFF3</td>
<td>-0.023</td>
<td>0.978</td>
<td>(.16)</td>
<td>-0.023</td>
<td>0.978</td>
<td>(.16)</td>
<td>0.143</td>
<td>1.153</td>
<td>(.18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MARITAL3</td>
<td>0.011</td>
<td>1.011</td>
<td>(.34)</td>
<td>0.011</td>
<td>1.011</td>
<td>(.34)</td>
<td>-0.711</td>
<td>0.491+</td>
<td>(.41)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.349</td>
<td>0.705</td>
<td>(.33)</td>
<td>-0.349</td>
<td>0.705</td>
<td>(.33)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RETIRED</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.883</td>
<td>2.418***</td>
<td>(.44)</td>
<td>0.883</td>
<td>2.418***</td>
<td>(.44)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEX2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.079</td>
<td>1.082</td>
<td>(.30)</td>
<td>0.079</td>
<td>1.082</td>
<td>(.30)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.050</td>
<td>1.051*</td>
<td>(.02)</td>
<td>0.050</td>
<td>1.051*</td>
<td>(.02)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=454

+p<.10; ***p<.05; **p<.01; *p<.001

The third and final model added the control variables to the analysis. A dichotomous dummy variable (GRADE2) distinguished respondents who have received a bachelor’s degree from those who have not. Employment status was included through a dichotomous dummy variable (RETIRED) with those who are not retired/semi-retired and retired/semi-retired placed into the two categories. Finally, gender (SEX2) and age (AGE) were included in the analysis. The respondent’s age was determined by subtracting the birth year from the current year.

271 A dummy variable was created with divorced, separated, and not married collapsed into one category. The other two categories include married respondents and widowed respondents. There is a substantial statistically significant difference among these three marital groups. Widows and widowers, by far, attend Mass with the greatest frequency. Additionally, married respondents with a Catholic spouse attend substantially more often than respondents in religiously heterogeneous marriages. However, including this variable (CATSPOUS) in the logistic regression model would needlessly eliminate single, divorced, and widowed respondents from the analysis.
The first model tested for the impact of friends in the parish, religious bias perception, and religious minority perception on weekly Mass attendance frequency. The model itself is statistically significant (p<.001) and explains between 12 percent and 18 percent of the variation in the dependent variable (ATTENDYN).\textsuperscript{272} The number of local friends who are also in the parish is significantly related to Mass attendance. For every one standard deviation increase in the parish friends item (FRDPAR3), the odds of being a frequent Mass attendee increase over two and a half times. The opposite is true considering the perception of being treated differently because of one’s faith. Responding in the affirmative to this item decreases the odds of attending Mass weekly by a factor of .41. In this model, then, the perception of religious discrimination has a negative effect on the frequency of Mass attendance. The perception of religious minority, however, does not have a significant direct effect, positively or negatively, on the frequency of Mass attendance.

The second model added more independent variables to the analysis of attendance frequency. The only additionally significant variable emerging is the importance individuals place on their parish. This makes sense considering that attending Mass is a public display of that feeling. The first two variables remained significant in this model. The timing of one’s migration does not appear to have an impact attendance frequency in

\textsuperscript{272} The logistic regression model is statistically significant (p<.001), which means the independent variables added to the model have a better chance of predicting the correct outcome on the dependent variable than mere chance. The Cox and Snell $R^2$ value and Nagelkerke $R^2$ value are used to determine the range of variance explained by the model.
this subset of Catholics. The second model is statistically significant (p<.001) and explains between 29 percent and 42 percent of the variance on the dependent variable.

When control variables were added in the third model, the first two independent variables retained a strong significant impact on attendance frequency. Having local friends in the parish increases the odds of weekly Mass attendance, while reporting religious bias decreases the odds the respondent attends frequently. The strength remains even when age, working status, gender, and education are entered as controls. Two control variables, reported retirement status and age, predict weekly Mass attendance. Retired individuals are more likely to attend weekly and for each year of age the odds of being a weekly Mass attendee increase by a factor 1.051. The third model retained statistically significance and explained between 37 percent and 54 percent of the variation on the dependent variable.

5.9. The Influences on Mass Attendance: What Makes Boomers Go to Church?

Some predictors for weekly attendance at Mass may apply to the entire range of respondents, but what variables are effective in predicting Mass attendance for Boomers in particular? The same binary logistic regression analysis was run using the same three explanatory models, but this time Baby Boomers were isolated from the other cohort-groups.273 Table 5.4. presents the findings.

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273 Appendix 2 contains the analysis including both Pre-Vatican II and Vatican II/Boomers excluding the youngest generations (Table A.3). When the two oldest cohort-groups are combined (n=368), friends in the parish, perception of religious discrimination, importance of parish to the respondent, and retirement status were all statistically significant predictors of the dependent variable, weekly Mass attendance. As with the analysis including all generations, experiencing different treatment because of one’s faith negatively impacted attendance frequency, this time by a factor of .287.
Table 5.4. Logistic Regression Predicting Weekly Mass Attendance (Boomers)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FRDPAR3</td>
<td>1.717</td>
<td>5.568*</td>
<td>(.38)</td>
<td>2.433</td>
<td>11.398*</td>
<td>(.68)</td>
<td>1.969</td>
<td>7.166**</td>
<td>(.68)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RELOUT2</td>
<td>-0.623</td>
<td>0.536</td>
<td>(.47)</td>
<td>-1.700</td>
<td>0.183***</td>
<td>(.49)</td>
<td>-1.507</td>
<td>0.221</td>
<td>(1.01)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RELMIN3</td>
<td>0.358</td>
<td>1.430</td>
<td>(.27)</td>
<td>0.906</td>
<td>2.474***</td>
<td>(.45)</td>
<td>0.764</td>
<td>2.148</td>
<td>(.51)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MIGRATE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.098</td>
<td>1.103</td>
<td>(.32)</td>
<td>-0.184</td>
<td>0.832</td>
<td>(.39)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHURIMPR</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.956</td>
<td>7.069*</td>
<td>(.40)</td>
<td>2.131</td>
<td>8.425*</td>
<td>(.43)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CATDIFF3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.102</td>
<td>0.903</td>
<td>(.36)</td>
<td>-0.092</td>
<td>0.912</td>
<td>(.43)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MARITAL3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.223</td>
<td>0.800</td>
<td>(.86)</td>
<td>0.289</td>
<td>1.335</td>
<td>(.98)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRADE2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.707</td>
<td>2.028</td>
<td>(.76)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RETIRED</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.274</td>
<td>3.575</td>
<td>(.88)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEX2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-1.148</td>
<td>0.317</td>
<td>(.77)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.112</td>
<td>1.119</td>
<td>(.07)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

+p<.10; ***p<.05; **p<.01; *p<.001

Throughout the analysis, the models retained statistical significance (p<.001) and the variance explained by the predictor variables in the third model ranged from 53 percent to 75 percent. For Boomers, the first model followed roughly the same pattern as with all age-groups included, except the perception of religious bias is not statistically significant. Another difference emerged, however, in the second model. Perceived minority status (RELMIN3) became statistically significant as a predictor for frequency of Mass attendance. The odds ratio of this variable explains that as one moves from not perceiving religious minority status (0) to not sure (1) or moving from not sure (1) to perceiving minority status (2), the odds of being a frequent Mass attendee increase by a factor of 2.474. In the third model, however, this variable lost significance again. The same pattern occurred with perceived religious bias in the second model. The predictor

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274 The variable addressing religious minority perception may lose its statistical significance in the third model as a result of introducing RETIRED into the analysis. Being retired has a strong, negative correlation with perceiving religious minority.
variable became significant (and powerful), but then lost the significance when controls were added.

As noted, the third model introduced control variables in the binary logistic regression analysis. In doing so, the perception of religious minority status lost statistical significance, but the odds ratio remained relatively high. The same can be said about perception of being treated differently (RELOUT2). The predictor variable was no longer statistically significant, but the odds ratio, in this case, remained very low. After introducing controls, the only remaining statistically significant predictors for Boomers weekly Mass attendance were the number of local friends also in the parish (FRDPAR3) and agreement that the parish is an important part of the respondent’s life (CHURIMPR). Age was not statistically significant in the model. There was much less variance in age in this analysis since only Boomers were being investigated, but the lack of significance means that older Boomers are not more likely than younger Boomers to be attending Mass weekly. While the odds ratio was very high for retirement status (RETIRED), the variable did not show up as statistically significant in the third model when other controls were taken into account. The smaller sample size (n=149) in this analysis may account for the lack of statistical significance even though the odds ratio remained high (Pallant 2005).

In additional analysis of the data, having a Catholic spouse emerged as a strong predictor of frequency of Mass attendance across all age groups. Seventy-two percent of respondents who received the survey by mail reported having a Catholic spouse. The vast majority of the non-Catholic spouses were identified as various Protestant
denominations. Respondents who received the survey by mail who reported a Catholic spouse attend weekly Mass at an 80 percent rate, while married respondents with a non-Catholic spouse attend weekly only 55 percent of the time. In addition to having local friends in the parish, it appears a religiously homogenous marriage is important for weekly Mass attendance. This finding is also true when Baby Boomers are examined in isolation.275

5.10. Spillover Effects: Migration and Bible Reading

As American residents continue to move throughout the United States, some researchers theorize that regional religious distinctions will subside (Glenn and Simmons 1967; Herberg 1955). On the other hand, adaptation and spillover theories suggest that regional distinctions will continue because newcomers tend to adapt their level of religious commitment to the prevailing local culture (Hill 1985; Perl and Olson 2000; Stump 1984a). Therefore, a high level of religious activity in a particular regional environment may have spillover effects on incoming migrants regardless of denominational affiliation.

This debate has already been addressed by presenting the difference in bible reading between migrants who have been in North Carolina for some time and the most recently arriving migrants.276 The change in bible reading can also be assessed across the

275 Vatican II/Boomer respondents receiving the survey by mail who have a Catholic spouse attend Mass weekly at a rate of 77 percent compared to 59 percent of respondents in the same group with a non-Catholic spouse. This finding is statistically significant at p<.05.

276 Among migrants moving in the past six years, those arriving from the block of northern and northeastern states increased their bible reading more (24 percent) upon moving to North Carolina than
three migrant groups. When asked whether they had changed their frequency of bible reading after moving to North Carolina, the most tenured residents reported the highest rate of increase while the most recent migrants reported the lowest rate of increase.²⁷⁷

What is the source of this change in religious activity? In an attempt to discover the reason behind the discrepancy across migrant groups in bible reading frequency, I employed binary logistic regression analysis using the frequency of bible reading as the dependent variable. The results are presented in Table 5.5 and 5.6 below. The latter table isolates Baby Boomers for analysis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th>Model 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MIGRATE</td>
<td>-0.240</td>
<td>0.787** (.08)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FRDCAT3</td>
<td>0.274</td>
<td>1.316* (.08)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RELOUT2</td>
<td>0.546</td>
<td>1.726** (.17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RELMIN3</td>
<td>-0.063</td>
<td>0.939 (.08)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CATDIFF2</td>
<td>0.295</td>
<td>1.344 (.15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RETIRED</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRADE2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEX2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MARITAL3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=932
+p<.10; ***p<.05; **p<.01; *p<.001

migrants from all the other states (18 percent). The difference, however, is not statistically significant (p=.196). The percentage gap is similar (25 percent to 19 percent) when only considering Baby Boomer migrants in the last six years.

²⁷⁷ Thirty-five percent of respondents in the entire sample arriving more than fifteen years ago reported an increase in their frequency of bible reading after moving to North Carolina. Only 22 percent of the most recent migrants – arriving six years or less ago – reported an increase in bible reading. The finding is statistically significant at p<.05. The increase emerged despite the earlier finding that retirees actually read the bible less than individuals in the workforce.
The frequency of bible reading was recoded into a bivariate dummy variable (BIBLE2). The question asks, “Outside of religious services, how often have you read the Bible in the past year?” The potential answers were recoded into “once or twice a year” or less (0) and “several times in the past year” and more often (1). Independent variables were then added to the analysis in the first model to determine their predictive value on the dependent variable. The second model adds controls to the analysis. Throughout the analysis, the models retained statistical significance (p<.001) and the variance explained by the predictor variables in the second model ranges from 7 percent to 9 percent.

Although addressed earlier in the dissertation, the adaptation and spillover hypotheses are further tested by determining the predictive power of the timing of a move to North Carolina (MIGRATE) on the frequency of bible reading. The results find more support for the hypotheses. The longer one has been a resident of North Carolina (MIGRATE), the more likely they read the bible several times a year or more. The flip side is also true. The more recently a respondent has moved to North Carolina, the less

---

278 Testing the whole sample, 57 percent of respondents read the bible once or twice a year or less (0) and 43 percent read the bible several times a year or more often (1). The distribution of respondents on the dummy variable regarding bible reading is almost identical between the two survey distribution methods. As a result, both methods are included in this analysis.

279 The strongest predictor of more frequent bible reading resides in the survey item addressing the respondent’s view of the bible. A literal interpretation of the bible (13 percent of the total sample) is the strongest predictor of frequency with which one reads the bible. This variable, however, does not test the hypotheses concerning minority effect, adaptation and spillover, migration, or social networks. An interesting tangential investigation should examine biblical interpretation as a dependent variable on migration timing to determine if biblical attitudes change upon arriving in North Carolina.
likely they read the bible several times a year or more. The variable retained its significance even when controls were added in the second model.

While the impact of perceived minority status on bible reading was not significant (RELMIN3), the perception of being treated differently because of one’s faith (RELOUT2) continued as a strong indicator of more frequent bible reading by a factor of 1.636. Again, this significance held when control variables were added in the second model. It appears then, again, that perception of minority status is not enough to alter behavior. However, a tangible experience of religious discrimination does seem to influence religiosity. In the case of bible reading, unlike Mass attendance, the religious activity increases. Being treated differently because of one’s faith has a detrimental effect on Mass attendance but a positive effect on bible reading. This paradox will be investigated further through interviews and respondent comments reported in the next chapter.

Much like the effect of parish friends on the frequency of Mass attendance, the percentage of local friends who are Catholic is a sturdy indicator of more frequent bible reading outside of Mass. Having Catholic friends not only impacts Mass attendance, but can positively influence other measures of commitment as well.

Retirement status (RETIRED) and age (AGE) are the only demographic controls shown to have an effect on bible reading. Confirming earlier results, a retired respondent is less likely, by a factor of .437, to be a frequent reader of the bible. The respondent’s age emerged as statistically significant. It is not, however, a powerful predictor of bible reading frequency because of the small odds ratio value. In fact, when comparing
generational cohort-groups on the frequency of bible reading, the Vatican II/Boomer Generation falls in the middle. The oldest respondents are less likely than Vatican II/Boomer respondents to read the bible outside of Mass several times a year or more. Additionally, Vatican II/Boomer respondents are less likely than the youngest group, Post-Vatican II respondents, to read the bible outside of Mass several times a year or more.

The Vatican II/Boomer Generation was isolated for analysis in Table 5.6. Throughout the analysis, the models retained statistical significance (p<.05) and the variance explained by the predictor variables in the second model ranged from 7 percent to 9 percent.

Table 5.6. Logistic Regression Predicting Frequency of Bible Reading (Boomers)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th>Model 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MIGRATE</td>
<td>-0.179</td>
<td>0.836</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FRDCAT3</td>
<td>0.220</td>
<td>1.246+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RELOUT2</td>
<td>0.548</td>
<td>1.729***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RELMIN3</td>
<td>-0.112</td>
<td>0.894</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CATDIFF2</td>
<td>0.008</td>
<td>1.008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RETIRED</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRADE2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEX2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MARITAL3</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=379
+p<.10; ***p<.05; **p<.01; *p<.001

The logistic regression investigating the frequency of bible reading among Boomers differed notably from the whole sample. For Boomers, the timing of a move into North Carolina (MIGRATE) did not predict frequency of bible reading. Additionally, age was
not a significant predictor variable.\textsuperscript{280} Similar to the results of the entire sample, the percentage of local friends who are Catholic (FRDCAT3) and perception of religious bias (RELOUT2) were both positively associated with being a more frequent reader of the bible. Also, being retired (RETIRED) tended to have an adverse impact on bible reading. Single, separated, and divorced respondents were more likely to be frequent bible readers than married and widowed respondents (MARITAL3).

Crosstab and correlation analysis of the Vatican II/Boomer Generation showed a robust, statistically significant relationship between respondents’ timing of migration and frequency of bible reading. Binary logistic regression analysis, however, failed to identify migration timing as a statistically significant predictor of bible reading. What accounts for the difference? It may be the case that including other variables into the equation suppresses the predictive power of migration timing on bible reading in the model. For example, Boomer respondents moving to North Carolina more than fifteen years ago (MIGRATE) have fewer friends who are Catholic (FRDCAT3), but still have high levels of bible reading. Because less recent migration (more than fifteen years) and fewer Catholic friends predict opposite effects on bible reading when considered in isolation, inclusion of both variables in the model weakens the effect each variable may have by itself on bible reading.\textsuperscript{281}

\textsuperscript{280} The non-significance of AGE is not surprising given the much smaller range of ages when only analyzing the Vatican II/Boomer Generation.

\textsuperscript{281} For example, when MIGRATE is run by itself on Boomers, the predictor variable is significant (p<.05) with an odds ratio of 0.774. This means that the longer one has lived in North Carolina, the more likely the respondent classifies as a frequent bible reader. Additionally, when linear regression analysis is performed with bible reading frequency as the dependent variable (BIBFRQ) and migration timing is the
Discussion and Conclusion

This chapter examined the impact a migratory event may have on religious behavior and belief among Catholics in the Diocese of Raleigh, NC. A regional move often includes breaking away from established social and familial networks. While the most recent migrants (6 years ago or less) have fewer friends in their current parish than their former parish, the disruption does not appear to have any negative impact on religious activities.\footnote{Forty-five percent of respondents moving to North Carolina less than 6 years ago reported having fewer friends in their current parish than in their former parish. Twenty-three percent reported having more, while 32 percent claimed their number of friends remained about the same. It is assumed that the former parish is not in the Diocese. This assumption is also the reason why only the most recent migrants are analyzed for this measure.} In fact, the lack of local friends appears to drive people toward participating more in their new parishes. Crosstabs showed that the most recent transplants, Boomers and others, tend to attend Mass with the highest frequency, but logistic regression analysis did not find a significant relationship between the variables. However, logistic regression analysis did find retirement status as a significant predictor of Mass attendance. So, if Baby Boomers move south upon retirement they may be more likely to attend Mass, but it appears it is a function of their retirement and not a regional move per se.\footnote{While binary logistic regression in Table 5.4 shows that the more recent arrivals are more likely to attend Mass weekly than transplants here for a longer amount of time, the predictive value is not statistically significant.} In addition to being retired, the most powerful predictors for frequency of Mass attendance included the number of friends a respondent reported in the parish and the relative importance of their parish to their lives. While new respondents arrive
with few friends in the parish, they build up these connections quickly and the parish becomes more central to their lives, all the while, having a positive effect on Mass attendance and parish participation.

Catholic transplants, the majority of whom are from a more Catholic northern or northeastern region, arrive into an environment dominated by Protestants. Being part of the religious minority may have repercussions for religious behavior and beliefs. The youngest Catholics were the most likely to perceive minority status, which may be the direct result of the high employment rate of younger respondents. In the workforce, an individual may have less control with whom he or she interacts. Considering there is a much greater chance of interacting with non-Catholics than Catholics in the workforce, the perception of the minority status may be enhanced. The data backs up this theory. Retired respondents reported less minority perception than working respondents even within the Vatican II/Boomer age cohort-group. Regardless, the minority effect on attendance is negligible and not statistically significant.284

Perception of being treated differently because of one’s faith, however, is substantially influential on religious activities. Acknowledgement of religious bias has a strong negative effect on the frequency of Mass attendance. In the binary logistic regression analysis, the robust negative effect holds for all ages but falls under statistical

284 Respondents perceiving religious minority status in the Diocese of Raleigh tend to have more conservative attitudes or more orthodox beliefs on a number of survey items. Specifically, the beliefs are identifiable as Catholic instead of Christian beliefs (i.e., Jesus Christ was born of the Virgin Mary, and the principle of divine succession of the Pope and Bishops). It is doubtful that being in the minority caused such beliefs. Instead, the individuals may have become aware of their minority status through holding and expressing such attitudes and beliefs in a less-Catholic South. In future studies, logistic regression can be employed using perceived minority status as the dependent variable.
significance for the Vatican II/Boomer Generation. Even though the predictive power of religious bias on Mass attendance falls below statistical significance for Boomers, the negative effect shown by the odds ratio is substantial. There is little evidence for perceived minority effect on religious commitment. However, if individuals have experienced being treated differently as a result of their (minority) faith, changes in religious activities emerge. This experience has a robust, significant inverse effect on weekly Mass attendance, yet maintains a strong, significant positive effect on the frequency of bible reading. Examining respondents’ comments and follow-up interviews may provide insight into this paradox.

Migration, by itself, does not appear to have a direct effect on an increase in attendance and participation. It does, however, have an indirect effect. Migration, especially among Boomers and older cohorts, may be related to retirement. Retirement has a direct, positive effect on attendance. Additionally, migration disrupts social networks. Migrants, especially Boomers and older respondents, arrive with fewer Catholic and parish friends. Generally speaking, this number increases in a relatively short amount of time.\(^{285}\) As the number of parish friends increases, so does the rate of Mass attendance and parish participation. At this point, there is little support in the

\(^{285}\) Data supports this claim. When asked how many local friends are also in their parish, 38 percent of respondents moving in the past year replied “none.” As the number of years in the diocese increases the value of the “none” response decreases. Note the trend: considering respondents moving to the region one to two years ago, 33 percent answered “none;” considering respondents moving three to four years ago, 30 percent answered “none;” considering respondents moving five to six years ago, 25 percent answered “none;” and of those respondents moving seven to ten years ago, 20 percent answered “none.” This finding is statistically significant at p<.05. The same numerical trend emerges with the question concerning how many local friends who are also Catholic, however the finding is not statistically significant. The number of respondents who answer “none” drops quickly from 23 percent of people moving in the past year to 12 percent of respondents moving five to six years ago.
empirical data among Catholics in the Diocese of Raleigh that social dislocation
interrupts religious commitment among transplants to any significant degree. In fact, the
dislocation may drive new arrivals to their parishes to make new friends, which, in turn,
increases Mass attendance and participation.

Crosstabs and binary logistic regression analysis show that migration does have a
significant, positive effect on frequency of bible reading in the entire sample, but falls
below the significance level when Boomers are examined in isolation. These
investigations provide some support for a spillover or adaptation theory. Over time, the
transplants increase their bible reading frequency. With Boomers, however, the effect of
more time spent in the Diocese of Raleigh may be offset by their pending or current
retirement. While the time spent living in the diocese positively correlates with more
frequent bible reading, being retired works in the opposite direction. Retirement is a
robust, significant predictor of less frequent bible reading among the entire sample and
Boomers in isolation. This finding stands even when controls are added to the model.

Also, the number of Catholic friends positively correlates with more frequent
bible reading. As the “percentage of friends who are Catholic” increases, so does the
likelihood the respondent reads the bible more frequently than those with fewer Catholic
friends. One possible scenario involves a Boomer or older respondent who retires and
moves to the Diocese of Raleigh. Moving upon retirement and being a new transplant
(typically from the North or Northeast), they have a relatively low level of bible reading.
Over time the transplant is exposed to higher levels of religiosity, specifically bible
reading, in southern religious culture. They are also interacting and becoming friends
with more tenured North Carolina Catholics. The more tenured Catholics have a higher frequency of bible reading than newcomers. In the end, the new transplant can be affected by (1) the more religious, and more bible-centered southern religious culture, and (2) more Catholic friends who read the bible more often than recent transplants. In this scenario, the spillover or adaption effect occurs on two fronts: co-religionists with more frequent bible reading and other Protestant residents who tend to read the bible with more frequency than Catholics. While a hypothetical situation, the data supports this scenario. In the end, the spillover and adaption theories are reinforced by the data results. Additionally, the spillover and adaptation theories work in concert with theories arguing for the strong influence social networks have on religious commitment. When newly arriving Catholics become acquaintances or friends with frequent bible readers (Catholic and non-Catholic), they mimic the practice and become frequent readers themselves.

Additional measures of religious commitment and religious attitudes also have a significant, linear relationship with time spent in the Diocese of Raleigh. Religious giving increases the longer one has lived in the diocese, which makes sense. A new transplant may be reluctant to contribute at a high rate until they feel comfortable in a parish. The different attitudes toward women being ordained may also be explained by adaptation or spillover theory. Even within the Boomer cohort-group, the strongest opposition to and least amount of support for married women entering the priesthood resided in Boomer transplants moving to North Carolina more than fifteen years ago. As spillover and adaptation explain, Boomers’ attitudes may be syncing over time with their neighbors’.
The conclusions drawn from the empirical data presented in this chapter will be tested in the following chapters using two forms of accumulated ethnographic data. Toward this end, detailed findings garnered from respondent comments and thirty-six follow-up interviews will be presented. Pastors and staff were also interviewed. Finally, parish websites, publications, and weekly bulletins were studied to assess parish outreach, bible study group offerings, and volunteer opportunities.
CHAPTER 6:
THE BURGEONING ROSARY BELT:
A QUALITATIVE APPROACH TO RELIGIOSITY IN THE DIOCESE OF RALEIGH

6.1. Introduction

A burgeoning parish located in a coastal community in the Diocese of Raleigh recently welcomed an influx of northerners into its ranks. Sometimes affectionately, sometimes sarcastically, the parish has been dubbed “Little New York” by churchgoers and regional Catholics. In addition to the playful geographic moniker, the parish has seen its older population multiply. One Boomer respondent went so far as to describe this parish as “seventy-year olds taking care of eighty year-olds.”286 These colorful references to Catholicism in the region enhance our understanding of it. The empirical data revealed a significant higher average age of the parishioners in the diocese, although it is hard to get a full feel for the day-in, day-out experiences and perceptions of local Catholics without talking to them.

In addition to validating the empirical findings of the study, follow-up interviews, respondent comments, and parish bulletin reviews provided a more comprehensive understanding of trends in Catholicism in the Diocese of Raleigh. For example, the widespread concern for the future of the Catholic Church in the diocese revealed by interviews did not emerge in the empirical findings. An analysis of comments and

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286 The comments were recorded from the anonymous surveys between September 25, 2009 and January 5, 2010. All the recorded comments are attached to a unique identification number in the data set, which allows the researcher to identify respondents’ demographic information and other pertinent data. Roughly one-third of the 1,941 respondents wrote comments for recording. It would be overly cumbersome in the text to identify each quotation with a pseudonym. If requested, the full demographic data of each respondent quotation can be provided. The anonymous follow-up interviews took place between August, 2010 and January, 2011.
interviews also exposed a subtle, but palpable, tension between more conservative, traditional Catholics and more liberal, progressive ones who prefer livelier music, more community focus, and continued incorporation of lay involvement in the parish. The survey instrument alone was not capable of revealing these tensions among Catholics in the diocese. This chapter goes beyond the empirical data to highlight the perceptions, feelings, anecdotes of Catholics in the Diocese of Raleigh.

6.2. The Value of Qualitative Analysis

There are limitations in drawing conclusions based solely on quantitative data analysis. While regression analysis attempts to discover the predictive power of some variables on others, the process fails to fully uncover the motivation behind respondents’ actions. To understand Catholicism in the Diocese of Raleigh thoroughly, we need to embark on a “thick” description of the religious environment. In short, we need to visit the Catholic parishes and talk to the Catholic parishioners in the region. Their descriptions of their own religious reality provide additional insight supplementing the empirical data.

For example, one retired Boomer from Michigan moved to the Diocese of Raleigh seven years ago. His insight into the intricacies of Catholicism in the diocese introduces elements not revealed in a typical quantitative study. When asked about the nature of Catholicism in the region as opposed to elsewhere, he stated:

Catholicism in NC is largely a transplanted religious culture, not unlike that of the European immigrants who created the urban parishes of the North. The paucity of parochial schools tends to water down the Catholic culture. Possibly because we are a minority, southern Catholics tend to be quite ecumenical. I see more
cooperation among the various denominations to meet community needs. The scarcity of priests forces parishioners to assume responsibilities often handled by religious up North. While this tends to create more parish ‘ownership’ it also begs the question ‘What happens in the future?’ Importing priests, as was done in the last century, is not a good answer.

This respondent provides a more thorough description of the transformation of Catholicism in the diocese. The notion that Catholics need to be more ecumenical and parishioners need to be more involved in running the parish provides a backdrop for the empirical finding noted earlier that Catholic migrants tend to increase their parish participation upon arriving in the diocese. Combining quantitative, empirical findings with qualitative data emanating from local Catholics contributes to a more complete picture of Catholic practice in the region. 287

6.3. Initial Findings–Retaining Southern Distinctiveness

The dissertation has already noted that Catholics in the Diocese of Raleigh tend to be non-native, older, and religiously more committed than elsewhere in the country. To unveil further differences, one question on the distributed survey explicitly asks how, if at all, Catholicism in the South differs from elsewhere in the country. One-third of respondents agreed that Catholicism is noticeably different in South as compared to their experiences elsewhere. 288 If the respondent answered in the affirmative, space was

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287 Appendix 3 includes a note on the value of qualitative analysis and details the qualitative data gathering method employed in this study.

288 The question asks: “In your experience, have you felt that Catholicism in the South is different than Catholicism as you formerly experienced the faith?” Thirty-three percent responded in the affirmative, 54 percent reported no difference, and 12 percent were unsure or had no opinion on the matter. The youngest respondents were the most likely to note that Catholicism in the South is noticeably different than elsewhere.
provided to report their impression of these differences. Slightly less than one-third of all respondents wrote comments in this section. Additionally, space was made available at the conclusion of the survey for users to convey any further insights into the nature of Catholicism in the Diocese of Raleigh. Roughly one-fourth of all respondents provided additional comments concerning their perception. Finally, phone interviews with willing respondents inquired further about the nature of the differences in Catholicism between regions, if any were perceived.

Respondents’ comments covered an enormous range of topics from the reaction, or lack thereof, of the American Catholic Church to the priest sex abuse crisis to the commencement invitation extended to President Barack Obama by the University of Notre Dame. Other comments were quite personal in nature. Some recounted their own fall away from the Catholic Church or how they have been transformed by a return to the faith of their youth. Others took an opportunity to air their grievances against a particular priest, current parish, fellow parishioners, Catholic theological teachings, or the perceived racism of southern Catholics. Still others pleaded for my help in addressing the priest shortage, bringing a Catholic high school to Wilmington, or informing the Bishop’s office of the need for an additional Catholic parish in the diocese.

Despite the diverse nature of the open-ended comments, four themes were cited most often in describing the uniqueness of Catholicism in the region. For purpose of presentation, these overarching typologies are broken down into their contraposing positions, both of which find at least some support among the recorded comments.
The first overarching typological division, *social attitudes*, consolidates remarks addressing the warmth or friendliness (or lack thereof) experienced by newcomers in diocesan parishes. The second theme, *conservative/liberal divide*, addresses the differing perceptions along a liberal/conservative scale of religious practices and attitudes felt among parishioners in the Diocese of Raleigh. The third, *religious activities*, brings together comments pertaining to the number, frequency, and strength of religious, social, and community outreach programs in the region. Finally, the fourth collection of comments, *religious commitment level*, examines commentaries pertaining to the level of religious commitment perceived in the Diocese as compared to other regions in the nation.

In addition to these four major typological divisions containing within them competing outlooks, four other motifs emerged from the respondents’ commentaries and personal conversations. First, there was a palpable level of anxiety for the future of the Catholic Church in the Diocese of Raleigh. The dearth of programs for children, young adults, and young families worry older respondents that the future of the Catholic parishes will be lured away by energetic Protestant and non-denominational congregations.

Second, a noteworthy number of respondents qualified any complaints (and some compliments) as pertaining not to regional Catholicism in general, but to their specific priest or parish. Some concluded that the success or failure, or at least the personality, of each parish resided in the pastor alone. Catholicism, then, does not differ by region, but by the various priests and staffs that occupy parishes in that region.
Third, comments from surveys and interviews recognized the reality of Catholicism’s minority status and the impact a smaller market share may have on belief and practice in the Diocese of Raleigh and other southern regions.

Finally, commentaries often referred to the substantial regional differences in religiosity, both in general and specifically within Catholicism. These responses are explored to investigate the potential spillover effect the southern religious environment may have on Catholic practice.

6.3.1. **Social Attitudes–Warming Up in the South**

The ongoing existence of a distinctive “southern hospitality” has been under investigation by ethnographers, sociologists, and cultural commentators (Anderson 1995; Degler 1977; Friend 1995; McPherson 2003; Peacock 2002). Despite the recent questioning, some researchers do delineate a particular cultural ethos prevalent in southern regions (Anderson 1995; Hill 1980). While not all southerners are hospitable by nature, the culture of the South “survives in the form of a strong preference for ‘personal’ relations” and reciprocal civility (Anderson 1995: 16). As such, southern culture can be understood primarily as somewhat oppositional to the more impersonal, bureaucratic North.  

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289 In addition to his own research, Anderson (1995: 16) summarizes earlier ethnographic work in describing the South as a distinctive culture: “This sacralization of society, together with the inward turn of Christian spirituality, underwrote not only the mythos of Southern exceptionalism as a ‘special society,’ but also fostered the cultural stress on personal relations and dealings from the stereotypical forms of ‘good manners’ to a general preference for avoiding interpersonal conflict and an emphasis on preserving ‘community’ as comity.”
The majority of survey respondents commenting on this issue insist that for the most part, people, including Catholics, are friendlier in the South than in other regions of the country. One older, female respondent summarized her southern Catholic experience simply as: “It’s warmer, friendlier, more personable.” She is not alone in her assessment. In describing Catholicism in the region, common responses included: “Warmer church community,” “More intimate; closer parish community,” “Closer relationships and more welcoming in the South,” “Friendlier parishioners,” and “More laid back and welcoming.” The overwhelming majority of comments concerning this theme preferred the hospitality of the southern region. Their experience of southern Catholicism was described as more open, more inclusive, more family-like, and more community-centered than elsewhere.

What are the reasons for the inclusiveness prevalent in the Diocese of Raleigh? Is it a reflection of southern manners or a more intent focus on community? Some reactions highlighted the fact that the majority of Catholics in the region are transplants; therefore, local Catholics congeal by virtue of enduring similar experiences in regards to the lack of ongoing, firmly established social networks. The responses reflected the idea that more people, having less established relationships in the diocese, are open to developing new friendships. There is a concerted effort among recently arriving migrants to reestablish the networks weakened or forgone by moving into the region.

Essentially, southern Catholics are more open and welcoming because more and more people are moving to the region. In fact, the welcoming individuals may have been recent transplants themselves. An older, established transplant from Connecticut wrote,
“Our parish is friendly and more active due to the large number of people who moved here from other places.” This sentiment stretches across demographics. One younger, recent transplant noted, “The parish is smaller, a more eclectic group of people from many different backgrounds and cultures, and much more friendly and personable.”

The common element emerging from comments and interviews recalled the Catholic experience in the Diocese of Raleigh to be a pleasant one. People were warm, inviting, accepting, inclusive, and community-centered. Some respondents suggested the warmness was a function of a constant in-stream of newcomers to the area. Another portion of respondents suggested the friendly nature of Catholicism in the Diocese was a function of the plethora of time available to the large mass of retired members. One Boomer from Pennsylvania noted that at her parish, “a majority of the families are retired northerners. They are more relaxed, friendlier, etc.” She continued making a distinction between her Catholic experience in the Diocese of Raleigh and back home: “In Pennsylvania, people that attended the same mass as you would not say hello to you if they saw you 10 minutes later at brunch or the grocery store.” Another retired Boomer transplant pointed to the stresses associated with working life: “In the North, [there is a] busy/rushed schedule, […] impersonal. Here, happiness–glad to be here, desire to help others/Search for deeper understanding.” Retirement may afford new parishioners the time and energy to get involved and invite others to be involved as well.

The ongoing migratory activity into the region from the North, especially among retired Catholics, raises awareness among the parishioners, priests, and parish staff to be

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290 One parish, once a month, lists the names of the newest parish members in the bulletin.
on the lookout for newcomers. There appears to be an intentional effort to invite recent arrivals into parish activities and the community. For example, a Post-Vatican II recent transplant from Virginia recalled, “More members were friends and tried to make you feel welcomed and not just a stranger to the church.” The majority of comments recognized and appreciated this intentional effort by Catholics in the region to welcome newcomers and include them in parish and social activities. One parish has monthly welcoming and registration events required for new membership in the parish.291

Not all comments, however, reflected a “warm and friendly” Catholic experience in the Diocese compared to elsewhere. In fact, some newly arriving Catholics pointed to the transitory experience as disruptive of the community aspect of Catholic parishes. One respondent described their local experience: “Less community [than elsewhere]. Everyone is from somewhere else. We did not grow up here.” These respondents reported a cold, indifferent setting where newcomers were not welcomed by the established “cliques.” A Boomer who moved from Illinois three to four years ago described her new parish as: “Impersonal; not inclusive of those not ‘born’ in area; seems to be a small group of parishioners who are ‘in’ and the rest of us are not included despite efforts to ‘join’.” Another recent Boomer transplant from Michigan described her new parish as, “Cold, materialistic, and unfriendly.”

The negative comments, although infrequent, may be a reflection of high standards placed upon the newly adopted parishes and new co-parishioners by recent

291 Interestingly, the two parishes receiving the most complaints from respondents about not receiving a proper welcome to the community have very little in their bulletins as far as welcoming new parishioners.
migrants. Recent arrivals expected to be warmly received in their new region and expected a significant effort on the part of the priest and fellow parishioners to reach out to them. When this was not perceived to be the case, they felt unwelcome. Two young families moving to the diocese recently noted that they were never contacted by anyone in the parish after joining. Another respondent from Ohio complained that while they received a small ovation at their first Mass, “there has been no one who asked us who we are or invited us to anything or has spoken to us—and we’ve attended for 10 months now.”

Respondents unhappy with their welcome in parishes in the diocese typically place the responsibility on the priest and the parish administration. One Boomer who moved to the diocese less than two years ago was upset at the lack of parish outreach: “[The] Parish priest plays an important role of welcoming members into a parish. I currently feel unknown, abandoned, and of no value in my church, but I attend because my Catholicism is bigger than the people.” Comparing his new parish to his old one, an older respondent noted: “Northern priests (VA) were friendlier, more concerned with parishioners, did more to have us help the church, would visit the home, came and asked for our help in projects (which we gave); they were part of the family.” Another recent arrival from Pennsylvania missed the warmth of her former parish, “In this particular parish, the pastor does not exude the same warmth as other parishes’ priests which I have experienced. At times, his sermons are more politically driven. I miss the friendliness of former parishes of the North.” Another respondent was embarrassed to tell others where she went to church because the parish was not welcoming to newcomers whereas local non-Catholics speak glowingly of their community-focused congregation.
The negative comments, while a minority opinion, are not insignificant and should not be overlooked. In fact, they may uncover a reason to be wary for the future of Catholicism in the region. These comments prompt the question: how many people not included in the survey were so turned off by the lack of a welcoming attitude that they eventually stopped participating? The survey was unable to reach Catholics no longer attending Mass or who were no longer registered on a parish roll to ask them why they ceased being involved. The above anxiety, while real, may be mitigated by the fact that the vast majority of negative comments concerning lack of friendliness and warmth were isolated to only two of the six parishes in the study. In particular, there were two pastors that received the bulk of the criticism about their lack of warmth, rigidity, and unwelcoming attitude. The pastors serve as the representative of the parish and many respondents conflated the two.

Some respondents reported frustration at the few parishes (and pastors) from which to choose in the Diocese of Raleigh. Northerners, in particular, are more accustomed to having an array of parishes and, more importantly, pastors to choose from in order to match their conservative/traditional or progressive/liberal liturgical, theological, and socio/political preferences. Parishes in the Diocese of Raleigh are about twenty minutes apart from one another, which is much greater on average than in most northern and midwestern regions.\(^{292}\) Although geographical proximity should be the initial determining factor for parish affiliation, many respondents reported feeling

\(^{292}\) Recorded from a conversation with the pastor from a parish included in the study (May 10, 2009).
hampered by the inability to “shop around” for a parish and pastor with which they feel comfortable. Some respondents, unwilling or unable to drive to the next closest parish, reported feeling trapped in their current parish. Some of the negative comments directed at pastors revealed this frustration. A younger transplant embracing more progressive theological teachings may feel quite unwelcome in, and at odds with, a parish headed by a theologically conservative pastor. Because “parish shopping” is less of a possibility due to the distance between parishes, there is little recourse for the progressive respondent to take except to complain about the parish and pastor or decrease their level of participation in the parish.  

In summary, there were occasional negative comments, but the vast majority of comments concerning the personality or social aspects of Catholicism in the Diocese of Raleigh were positive. The most frequently used descriptions included “warm,” “friendly,” “community,” “inclusive,” “personal,” and “personable.” Because the region is a region of Catholic transplants, and transplants with more free time due to retirement, the pastors, parishes, and parishioners appeared to be on the lookout for newcomers to welcome them in and help them rebuild the social networks they may have abandoned. For sure, some new arrivals may “fall through the cracks” and not receive such a welcome, and some priests and some parishes may be more effective than others in intentionally welcoming newcomers, but the vast majority of respondents described their

293 For example, one respondent who moved from Maryland to a region with a more theologically conservative priest noted their displeasure: “Moving here, I found the church facility unpleasant and less church-like. The priest is pleasant in some ways, but not welcoming and uses the church law to ban people from Eucharist. Forgive sin? Welcoming? [I] cannot see myself a part of the Church at present.” Another respondent remained in the parish because of its affiliation with a Catholic grammar school.
parishes in the Diocese of Raleigh, with two parish exceptions, as warm, friendly, inclusive places.

6.3.2. Conservative/Liberal Divide

As with other Christian denominations, there is a conservative/liberal divide within the Catholic Church in the United States (Roof and McKinney 1987; Wuthnow 1988). The divide, however, is neither simple nor categorical. Theologically, the conservative/liberal or formal/casual frame of reference can be understood as tempering or embracing the teachings of the Second Vatican Council. It can also apply to the format and presentation of the liturgy. With other theological topics, the divide is apparent in “orthodox” versus “progressive” teachings on issues such as women in the priesthood, artificial contraception, divorce, or validity of other religious belief systems. Still further, the conservative/liberal divide in the Catholic Church is found in relation to socio-political views on topics such as political affiliation, church-state relations, and prayer in public schools. And on some issues the conservative/liberal division incorporates both theological and socio-political views, such as the legality of abortion and the use of the death penalty.

Needless to say, when a Catholic is described as liberal or conservative, we need to pry further into what this means. Is it a political assertion? A theological one? Both? A Catholic can be theologically conservative on some topics and socio-politically liberal on other issues. Other Catholics remain in a state of cognitive dissonance on “life issues” by simultaneously opposing legalized abortion and supporting the legality of the death
penalty. It is not quite clear, then, what is meant when respondents claim that Catholics and Catholicism in the Diocese of Raleigh are more liberal or more conservative. However, regardless of what was intended by the conservative/liberal terms, respondents utilized them and their variants to describe the differences between religion in the Diocese and elsewhere in the nation.

The conservative designation is used by some respondents to refer to the formality of the Mass and the choice of music in Diocese of Raleigh parishes. The perception crosses all generational groups. A pre-Vatican II-aged woman from Missouri noted the rigid formality and “less inclusive” nature of the Mass in her current parish. A recent Boomer migrant compared her current parish to other regions: “[Catholicism in the South] is fairly conservative. When I lived in the Pacific Northwest, I felt the liturgy was open and more lively.” A Post-Vatican II respondent from California echoed this sentiment: “When we moved to NC eight years ago, it was a very strange situation. The parish was nothing like ours in CA and the formality and rigidness was alienating.”

The perception of a more formal and conservative Catholicism in the Diocese of Raleigh does not appear to be limited to the liturgy. In one parish, a respondent noticed some women wearing doilies on their heads. Another parish member commented on

294 It noteworthy that 35 percent of survey respondents who claimed abortion is always morally wrong are against the abolition of the death penalty at the federal level (17 percent “somewhat” and 18 percent “strongly”). It should be noted that the question concerning abortion does not address the legality of the practice. It only asks about the morality of the practice and whether it is always morally wrong, wrong under certain conditions, or entirely up to the individual.

295 In attending Mass at the parishes involved in the study, I also noticed doilies being worn by some women in the congregation at one particular parish. Most of the women wearing doilies were younger women with children also in attendance.
differences observed in the southern Catholic practice: “More orthodox–not current with issues of today. Orthodox–I mean very old school.” The perception of formality was not limited to one parish. A Boomer member from another parish recounted their troubles adjusting in noting, “Southern Catholicism is SO conservative. Coming from a NY state Diocese that was progressive, this has been a serious problem adjusting.”

The more formalized, traditional Mass and conservative expression of Catholicism in the diocese worried some respondents about the impact of this formality and conservatism on the future of the Church in the region. They fear that migrants, young families, and youth will be “turned off” by the rigidity and perceived lack of enthusiasm in the Mass. Speaking primarily about the local liturgy, one Boomer wrote:

[The] Diocese should do something about the old time organ music that all the Catholic churches in the area play. Many transplants have come from more progressive areas. Can’t imagine it is very appealing to the youth either. Music should be ‘joyful’ not a funeral dirge.

A younger Boomer transplant agreed: “Parish masses are not geared for the 21st century. Our children cannot follow the mass, old traditions as we had at other ‘current’ parishes in North Carolina and Ohio [parishes].” What some parishioners consider as distinctively Catholic, others interpret as unappealing to younger and recently arriving Catholics.

The formality of the parish Mass was not the only concern expressed. The conservative leaning of Catholicism as believed was also cited as a source of anxiety for the future of the Church. One Boomer respondent conveyed her trepidation:

I am disheartened by the current return of ‘conservativism’ in the Diocese of Raleigh. Rules and regulations are keeping younger families and young adults away–turning more to non-denominational churches to meet their needs. If you look at our clergy population as well as our congregational population you will
see the ‘graying’ of both. If the church does not change, who will be sitting in our pews 30 years from now?

The respondents and interviewees routinely expressed this fear. The lack of young families present in parishes aroused sincere doubt of the sustainability of the current growth rate in the long run.

Not all respondents perceived Catholicism in the Diocese of Raleigh to be more traditional, formal, or conservative than elsewhere. In fact, slightly more than half the comments pertaining to the conservative/liberal divide described Catholicism in the region as more casual, more relaxed, and more liberal than elsewhere. A Boomer woman from Massachusetts noted that the Mass in her current parish “has a lighter feel to it.” Descriptions such as “less formal,” “fresh feel,” “more relaxed,” “laid back,” “more welcoming,” and “more joyful,” routinely appeared in respondents’ comments and interviews. In some cases, the relaxed style of worship and dress positively impacted parish participation. For others, the informality helped foster a strong sense of community among parishioners. A Boomer from Maryland described her new parish, “It is much more relaxed–casual clothing, jokes at Mass, friendlier people, more attempt at outreach.” A younger, recent transplant from Maryland also appreciated the less rigid format of the liturgy and its positive impact on the community aspect: “[The format of the Mass is] less structured. The social aspect is very important–there’s much more talking in the church before Mass and after Mass.” This view is confirmed by another Boomer Catholic: “[Catholicism in the Diocese is] more laid back and welcoming, not as staunch in ideals. More community focused.”
As with the perception of conservatism present in regional Catholicism, the perception of a progressive Catholicism is not limited to the liturgy. Some respondents also reported that the pastors and parishioners are more liberal and accepting in their attitudes and beliefs. A forty-seven year-old transplant from New Jersey described her new parish as “much more open-minded and seems to be open to contemporary ideas and views. As a divorced mother, I feel welcome.” A Boomer from Ohio agreed that her new parish is “more progressive–modern, more welcoming,” and another middle-aged woman noted Catholicism in the diocese is “not as strict. You are accepted the way you are, look or just for you.”

A slight majority of comments and interviews under the conservative/liberal theme perceive Catholicism to be less formal, livelier, and more progressive in the Diocese of Raleigh. Yet, these respondents did not uniformly laud the casualness and liberal expression of their faith. About half of respondents observing the progressive trend also derided the informality and liberal expression of their faith in the diocese. These respondents perceived the informality and casual attitude as a lack of reverence and respect for their faith. A Boomer from Missouri described the Mass at her new parish: “[It is] more relaxed, too much talking while sitting in pews, not as much attention to those who wish to pray in silence.” A former New Yorker agreed: “Here, they do not bow down in adoration! Lots of talk–loud talk before Mass. No one can pray. It breaks my heart. Gossip instead of adoring our Lord Jesus.” Other respondents were dismayed by the casual dress, hand holding, singing of prayers, clapping, failure to genuflect before the Eucharist, and overall lack of reverence. A very young couple from
Maryland expressed their dislike for the different liturgical style in the majority of parishes in the Diocese: “My wife and I drive 50 minutes to Mass because the local parishes are heavily involving progressive elements, i.e., an almost total focus on ‘community’ to the neglect of the divine, and a sadly casual approach to the Blessed Sacrament. My family will never be members of these parishes.”

A pattern emerged from the above critiques disapproving of the progressive liturgy and beliefs in the majority of parishes, pastors, and parishioners in the Diocese of Raleigh. These respondents suspect liberal Protestantism is slowly seeping into Catholic liturgical practice and compromising the sanctity and the solemnity of the Mass. The liberal theology and socio-political attitudes espoused by some priests and parishioners reinforce their perceptions. Many wonder where the Catholic Mass went. A young New York transplant expressed his displeasure with what he encountered in southern parishes: “[There is] more tradition in the North. The southern states tend to flirt with the line of Protestant tendencies such as choir and makeup of the Mass.” A pre-Vatican II Virginian agreed: “Less reverence. […] Much like a Protestant gathering in mannerisms.” For these respondents, the local, dominant Protestantism and liturgical tendencies spill over and corrode the Catholicity of local priests, parishes, and liturgies.

The frustration with southern Catholicism and the regional Protestant influence is not limited to the liturgy service. Respondents are also perturbed by the overly progressive theological sentiments characteristic of some prominent Protestant denominations in the region. They assert that regional Catholicism is gradually drifting
away from what they feel is the authentic, orthodox, traditional Catholic teaching. One Boomer vented his frustration:

Since Vatican II liberal Protestantism has infiltrated the Catholic religion. People want it to be ‘touchy-feely’ Baptist-type religion where it’s all about friendship and dinners and helping others without concentrating on the interior life. You have to help yourself first before you can help others. The priests are instructed to speak from the pulpit only about socially acceptable religious education—never any talk of HELL or how to avoid it or how to use Catholic tools (scapular, etc.) to bring them closer to Jesus and Mary in order to gain Heaven.

Another respondent in his mid-forties concurred with the above sentiment when assessing the practice of Catholicism in the Diocese. The former Virginian explained, “There are liberal tendencies, such as accepting the ordination of women, high tolerance for gay networks and ministering to them, priests not believing in Eucharist; just taking it as a reminder (historical) decreased respect to Magisterium and the Pope’s authority.” In these cases, the local religious influence is quite unwelcome.

To be sure, the opinion that Catholicism is losing its distinctiveness and compromising its orthodoxy is not isolated to Catholics in the Diocese of Raleigh. It may be a function of the conservative/liberal divide cutting across and even within generations in the Catholic Church (Roof and McKinney 1987; Wuthnow 1988). Even so, being situated in a religious environment dominated by Protestants can increase the exposure

296 Recall the respondent reported on earlier who noted his frustration: “My wife and I drive 50 minutes to Mass because the local parishes are heavily involving progressive elements, i.e., an almost total focus on ‘community’ to the neglect of the divine, and a sadly casual approach to the Blessed Sacrament. My family will never be members of these parishes.” For most respondents, however, the focus on “community” is viewed in a more positive light.

297 Although, as noted in Chapter 3 and the 2008 CARA report, the Boomers appear to be the most liberal in their theological beliefs. The Pre-Vatican II Generation is the most orthodox while the Post-Vatican II Generation is more orthodox than Boomers on some items as well.
to, and possibly influence of, the majority religion on Catholic faith and practice. Encountering others of different faiths may also heighten the perception of Protestant influence on Catholic liturgy and theology in southern regions.

The responses suggested that one, and possibly two, of the parishes in the study are liturgical and theologically more conservative and traditional than others. Few complaints concerning the casualness or lack of reverence originated from these parishes. The survey responses, additional comments, and interviews indicated that there are regions of the diocese that tend to embrace a more informal and progressive approach to liturgy while other parishes prefer a more conservative liturgical expression of the faith. Additionally, the differences among parishioners within a particular parish in the Diocese reaffirmed the notion that Catholicism is not homogeneous in belief and practice. The disparity may be explained, in part, by respondents noting that the tone of the parish merely reflected the personality of the pastor.

### 6.3.3. Religious Activities

Concerning the differences in Catholicism in the South from elsewhere, the third and fourth typological divisions are somewhat related. By a wide margin, diocesan Catholics perceived more opportunities for parish involvement and community outreach than in former parishes. Additionally, and possibly as a result, parishioners declared being more committed to parish programs and to their own faith than before. Three reasons for this phenomenon emerged from the responses: more opportunities abound, lack of rootedness among arrivals, and increased level of free-time.
First, respondents noted the ample opportunities for parish involvement. For example, one recent Boomer migrant from New York recalled: “Upon my first 4 months of being a parishioner, I find there are many opportunities to become involved in parish life which I was not able to do in my old parish.” Another Boomer compared her current parish to her former one: “[There are] many more programs offered at our church here in the Carolinas than in PA.” Other respondents concurred, describing their current parish in North Carolina, in relation to their former parish, as a “more active parish,” having “more social activities,” “more programs for adults,” “more community involvement,” “more lay involvement in ministries,” and “more aware of the economic, social, and environmental needs of those less fortunate.” The opportunities for involvement in the parish include activities for the parishioners themselves, such as bible study and social events, as well as outreach efforts toward the larger community in general, and the local Hispanic community and migrant workers in particular.  

A brief examination of the parish bulletins revealed these numerous opportunities for parish involvement. One parish describes itself as an “active and vibrant parish” asking for new parishioners to give their time and talents, in addition to finances, to the parish. Another parish implores members to “share their special gifts within the

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298 At the majority of Masses I attended, announcements were made for the collection of non-perishable food and grooming items to be distributed among the regional migrant workers. The collections were part of an ongoing effort to support the less fortunate in the diocese.

299 In addition to the distribution of the bulletin after weekly Mass, every parish involved in the study makes their bulletin available electronically. This allows for parishioners to stay connected to the parish when away or when physically unable to attend services. In speaking with parishioners, many of them spend extended time away from their home in North Carolina for lengthy vacations or travelling to visit with children and grand-children. They noted their appreciation for the online bulletins to feel connected to the parish even while away.
community.” A third parish advertises over a dozen religious activities and ministries affiliated with the parish, all of which are headed by various parishioners.

The majority of respondents reported more activities in their current parish in the diocese than in their former parishes. Are there tangible reasons for this difference? Some respondents noted that the massive influx of new Catholics into the region may be the impetus behind the availability of parish activities. One recent Boomer migrant from Michigan observed: “[Catholicism in North Carolina] is growing. We need more parish services to keep up with the growth. We have untapped potential in our Church and we must provide opportunities for people to grow in their faith and service.”

Second, the “rootlessness” experienced by some recent arrivals may contribute to their interest in parish activities, particularly the social activities. An older respondent from Connecticut noted, “Our parish is friendly and more active due to the large number of people who moved here from other places.” Another commenter agreed, “Those of us from the northern section of the country build community as a new family.” A third linked recent migration to increased activities, “More attendance at Mass and activities, as we are all from somewhere else.” These comments support the theory that, in many cases, newly arriving migrants utilize the parish service and community opportunities to assist in rebuilding the social networks broken up by a regional move. In particular, the social functions at the parish assist in developing these relationships.300

300 The lack of rootedness may also contribute to new arrivals not re-joining a parish. A dozen or so comments relayed an anecdote about Catholic friends or neighbors moving to the region while simultaneously falling away from the Catholic Church. In these cases, the lack of parish connections may be the very reason why they do not rejoin a parish. Because it is an enormous challenge, methodologically
Third, the abundant parish activities and the high rates of involvement in these activities in the Diocese of Raleigh may be due to the tendency that recent arrivals are retired and now possess more unscheduled free-time. One Boomer stated, “As a retired person I have more time than when working and raising children to devote to my church and community. I found new friends by joining the parish.” Other respondents agreed: “Since I retired, I had more time to volunteer,” “We have a large number of retired people who participate in many activities and the [parish] Council,” and “We are more involved in programs and activities through K[nights] of C[olumbus] and with retirement have more time for community work.” Two pastors in the diocese also noted that retirees provide the backbone for the parish services both internally and externally in the larger community.

The opportunity for parish involvement in the Diocese of Raleigh may be greater than elsewhere and local Catholics appear to take advantage of the opportunities. However, the increased level of parish participation may also be needed in southern parishes. The parishes in the study employ one or two priests at the most. As a result, lay participation is required for the parish and activities, internal and external, to run smoothly. One recent migrant Boomer from New York described her current parish as “more ‘do it yourself’, less dependence on clergy. Less priests, deacons, nuns, masses.” One pastor, the lone priest at his parish, noted that parishioners in the Diocese have to

and financially, to track down “former” or “non-practicing” Catholics, these theories must remain as theories for the time being.
take ownership of their parishes and, for the most part, they do.301 Another parish, also run by a single pastor, advertises dozens of programs and activities, but also lists lay contacts as the individuals leading the activities. Some respondents acknowledged feeling “needed” by their parishes. A Pre-Vatican male recounted, “I feel I am needed more here in my parish as an active participant. Up North, I feel as if I was just one in a large number of parishioners.” Feeling needed by the parish can instigate higher levels of individual participation in parish activities and instill a sense of responsibility among parishioners for the direction and outreach of parish activities.302

While potentially spurring parishioner participation, the limited number of priests and ordained religious in the region may also have negative consequences. For example, the sacrament of Reconciliation is not readily available. Daily Mass is less frequent. The church doors are not always open for prayer. Some respondents professed this disappointment,303 but the overwhelming majority noticed instead the abundance of parish activities. Additionally, according to the respondents, the level of participation in these activities is higher in the Diocese of Raleigh than elsewhere.

301 Recorded in a conversation with a pastor of a parish included in the study (April 25, 2009).

302 One reason behind the ongoing success and strength of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is due to the tithing of time in addition to finances (Iannaccone 1994; Stark 1984). Other research supports this argument by noting that an increase in parish participation increases the layperson’s religious capital in that congregation resulting in “stronger” communities (Iannaccone 1990; Kelley 1972; Olson and Perl 2001; Park and Smith 2000). They will feel more connected and thus more dedicated to the church as a result.

303 Additional comments on this topic included the following: “[Up North] the doors were open day or night to pray, light a candle, or just to seat [sic] in the church for peace (reflection/meditation),” and “You have far more Communion Services during the week in place of the Mass. During Lent I had to go to a different parish for Stations of the Cross because my parish didn’t have them.”
Not all respondents were satisfied with the plenitude of parish activities. Some respondents noted the opportunities to participate, but were disappointed that the activities seemed to be directed toward the older, retired parishioners. One younger, Post-Vatican II respondent expressed his disappointment:

I would do more in the church but 85% of our parish are retired people and the events, meetings, etc., conflict with work 95% of the time or require a mad dash to leave work and a 45 minute ride for events that last less than an hour–cost outweighs benefits.

An employed Boomer recently migrating from Virginia concurred: “The difficulty with attending many programs offered is that they are usually during the day. If work schedule permits me to attend, it’s usually just retirees. It’s good to have programs that would encourage different age groups to attend.” Having activities directed toward the most populous cohort-group in the parish may enhance participation of one sector, but can also alienate other, possibly younger, cohort-groups. A frequently reported fear, and one addressed later in the chapter, is that the needs and preferences of the younger parishioners are being neglected. Without programs designed for teens, young adults, or parishioners with young families, the fear is that they may go elsewhere to find these specific services.

The comments and interviews also revealed other critiques of the surplus of activities at the parish level. Some respondents questioned the wisdom of having so many additional social programs noting that the parish is less spiritual or devotional as a result. Others argued that the emphasis on community outreach and catering to the needs
of Hispanics (in the community and in the parish) is to the detriment of the original parish members. One Boomer expressed his displeasure:

St. [XXXX] church […] is in trouble! [The pastor] is courting the Spanish to the detriment of the old members. The old line is leaving the church in droves. They are cutting down on their support and walking away with their checkbooks. No one is happy with the abandonment.304

This respondent was not alone. However, he and others expressing the same sentiment were clearly in the minority. The parish activities and outreach efforts were supported by the majority of respondents and found to be more plentiful in the Diocese of Raleigh. While primarily appealing to and enjoyed by older, retired parishioners, the internal activities and outreach efforts are wonderful opportunities to be involved in the parish and parishioner support is needed, due to lack of priests, if these activities are going to be successful.

6.3.4. Religious Commitment Level

It should come as no surprise that a heightened level of religious commitment by Catholics in the Diocese of Raleigh accompanies the more numerous parish activities. The comments and interviews revealed, in overwhelming fashion, that the respondents perceived Catholics in the region to be more “committed to and demonstrative about their faith” than elsewhere. One Boomer’s comments are representative of this perception. The transplant from New York responded, “People are much more into it here in the

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304 Another respondent wrote: “Many of the local Catholics feel the immigrants force the need for a larger church or activities, but do not help raise the [money] or mix with natives and learn English (behave in ‘proper manner’ at church). They say it makes the other citizens look down on the whole Catholic family.”
South—maybe because there are not many of us! Masses and community work are much more creative, involved, embracing of differences; real passion is evident.” Other comments characterized Catholics in the Diocese of Raleigh as “stronger,” “more faithful,” “more prayerful,” “more sincere,” “more energized about being Catholic,” “more devoted about attending,” having a “greater sense of commitment,” and being “more apt to be committed to the faith and the community.” Catholicism in the region was described as being “observed more seriously,” “more participatory and spiritual,” “more vibrant,” and placing “more emphasis on faith formation and continuing education in the faith.” Additional laudatory comments continued in this manner.

Although this study does not examine the beliefs and behaviors of individuals who fell away from their faith after moving to the region, the comments asserting the higher levels of commitment and participation in the region when compared to elsewhere so outnumber the opposing characterizations that we can generally assume Catholics in the diocese are more involved in their faith and parishes than elsewhere. The empirical evidence presented in previous chapters also uncovers an increase in religious activities upon arriving in the region. To seek an explanation for the phenomenon, following sections present interviews and comments relating to the minority status of Catholicism in the diocese and ways in which southern religious expression may influence changes in religious practice among incoming Catholics.
6.3.5. Fear for the Future

The activities in the parishes examined in this study are plentiful, but also typically geared toward the older generations of retired parishioners. A host of comments critiqued the focus on older parishioners and expressed fear that the dearth of programs directed toward families and youth in the parishes may, in the end, drive these cohort-groups elsewhere. Respondents noted the lack of children of all ages in their parishes. The following sentiments were common: “fewer young families,” “so few children,” “less active youth group and activities,” “no youth ministry [...] and no young adult or singles programs,” and “there should be more activities for younger people to be active in either both spiritually and socially.” In personally attending Masses at the parishes involved in the study, I immediately noticed the scarcity of children, young adults, and young families.

While younger generations make up a small minority of parishioners, respondents are frightened by the repercussions of not pastoring to the young families, young adults, and children in their parishes. They fear these individuals will go elsewhere to meet their programmatic needs, become socialized into a new non-Catholic congregation, and

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305 A sample of programs from examined parishes include: handling grief with the death of a loved one, estate planning, a “Living with Cancer” support group, and a meeting of the Catholic Daughters of America.

306 This observation stood across Mass times and even when the parish was associated with a Catholic grammar school. Two of the six parishes in the study have accompanying Catholic grammar schools. Yet, even in these two parishes the vast majority of parishioners were Caucasian and older.
abandon the Catholic faith altogether.307 A Boomer migrant from Pennsylvania critiqued, “The Church here is not developing the younger generation and the current priest population (sparse) is not focused on youth. […] The surge in NC of Catholicism may be short lived.” The wide array of services offered at Baptist and non-denominational churches were cited as potentially luring the youth and young families away. Since there are so few Catholic grammar schools and no Catholic high schools in the regions surrounding the parishes to bring the youth back to the faith, the defection may be permanent.308

Proposed solutions range from the creation of more Catholic grammar and high schools in the region309 to a concerted effort to develop and fund programs for Catholic youth and young adults310 to continually updating the music and presentation of the

307 One respondent noted, “Baptist etc. youth groups are more appealing to youth with ski trips, dinners, and gatherings. Kids want to have fun and other denominations offer more activities that are fun! The kids lean toward that religion. We are losing our youth.”

308 There are currently three Catholic high schools in the entire Diocese of Raleigh, but none in the immediate geographic regions surrounding the parishes involved in the study. One of the high schools, St. Thomas More Academy, is not run by the Diocese of Raleigh. It was founded in 2002 by Catholic laity with the approval of the sitting Bishop. One of the two diocesan schools, Pope John Paul II High School, began in 2010 and is currently only teaching ninth grade.

309 For example, one respondent noted, “The survival of our Church and our future requires our commitment to Catholic education–schools. We need, here in the South, elementary and secondary schools. Many priests in this area do not share this belief and will not support such efforts. The Bishops need to take a firm stand on this issue.”

310 One respondent claimed: “The youth groups for all religions except Catholic are very strong in the South. We are losing our youth from the Church.” Another noted, “It was difficult to raise our children in the faith as most non-Catholic Churches have many more activities for children and teens to attend.”
liturgy\textsuperscript{311} to changing the “archaic attitudes” in the Church.\textsuperscript{312} For Catholicism in the South to sustain its viability, the respondents recognized that some action must be taken to keep families and youth involved in the parishes. While many respondents appeared to be aware of the issue, one pastor received criticism from his parishioners for expending parish resources on youth programs and family initiatives while the vast majority of the parish is comprised of older, retired adults. According to the pastor, the detractors noted that the resources were coming from the older parishioners and thus should be allocated to programs benefitting this cohort-group. Dismayed, but not convinced, the pastor continued providing programs for youth and young families in the parish stressing that the “children really are the future of the Church.”\textsuperscript{313}

6.3.6. The Pastor and the Parish

Many respondents were quick to qualify their complaints and even some compliments by noting that the dynamics of their parish were merely a reflection of the acting pastor. Essentially, the pastor sets the tone and can usher in success or breed resentment depending on his views and the views of the particular parishioners. The comments revealed that a priest cannot please everyone in the parish. Gushing praise and

\textsuperscript{311} Respondents were willing to institute change for fear of the future: “Music is an integral part of the Mass. \textit{Glory and Praise} should be allowed and encouraged, especially to help with the dwindling number of young families/people. Christ said ‘Bring me the children.’ He didn’t say bring me the well-behaved, straight-sitting, quiet children.’ Children are key to the survival of our faith and priests need to do more to encourage, enthuse, and welcome all children, especially during the liturgy.”

\textsuperscript{312} Reflecting this notion, a respondent declared, “Rules and regulations are keeping younger families and young adults away–turning more to non-denominational churches to meet their needs. If you look at our clergy population as well as our congregational population you will see the ‘graying’ of both. If the church does not change, who will be sitting in our pews 30 years from now?”

\textsuperscript{313} Recorded in a conversation with a pastor from an parish included in the study (May 10, 2009).
biting critiques were directed at the same pastor and parish. Some comments expressed disappointment at the lack of uniformity from one parish to the next, noting that one of the benefits of the Catholic faith and liturgy is its universality.\(^ {314} \)

Most of the criticisms emanated from two of the six parishes. The complaints revolved around the “coldness,” “seriousness,” “lack of warmth,” or “inapproachability” of the pastors. In other cases the complaints concerned the strict orthodoxy or “dogmatism” of the priest or politicizing of the faith by the priest and parish. In some cases, respondents pointed directly to the pastor as the reason they no longer attend a particular parish.

Some compliments attributed the success of the parish to the current pastor. A Boomer summarized her experience:

> Our parish is now vibrant and alive thanks to the priests who arrived 4 years ago. Prior to that, the parish and its congregation were ignored by the last two pastors. […] At that time the church was half full and few people involved themselves. It is obvious that the future of Catholic parishes depends on the quality and involvement of the priests.

A comment from a Post-Vatican II Catholic reflected the same sentiment:

> I believe that a highly effective priest influences the growth of a parish’s community. Characteristics of a highly effect priest include: humbleness, a teacher (esp. through his homilies), acceptance, availability, follow-thru, and a servant. My faith and level of commitment to my faith has grown primarily due to the atmosphere that exists at my current parish. The atmosphere stems from the parish’s current spiritual leader.

\(^ {314} \) For example, one complaint noted, “One huge problem with Catholicism is that some priests are not ‘people persons’ and can’t seem to understand changing times and therefore turn off their parishioners who in turn leave the parish or church altogether. The parish should not be a representation of the pastor’s personality—which our parish is. If Catholic means universal why are so many parishes and traditions drastically different from one another, especially in different parts of the country?”
The respondents looked to the pastor to set the tone for the parish and provide leadership. Leadership, as respondents noted, should not be merely centralized in the pastor, but entails empowering laity to join into and lead parish activities and programs.\(^{315}\) When their potential contribution to the parish was perceived to be either ignored or unwanted, respondents derisively called the pastor a “control freak” or “just a businessman” unwilling to allow input into the direction of the parish.

### 6.3.7. The Minority Effect

Analysis of the empirical survey data revealed that, when accounting for controls, perceived religious minority status fails to have a statistically significant impact on religious commitment among Catholic respondents in the Diocese of Raleigh. While the regression results show no statistical correlation, user comments and anecdotes can also provide insight into the local effect perceived minority status may have on individuals’ religious commitment. In referencing this issue, three groups emerge from the interviews and comments. The first group is firmly aware of the low proportion of Catholics and Catholic churches in the diocese. The second group, many of whom have been residents of the diocese for some time, note awareness of Catholic minority status, but has also witnessed the tremendous increase in co-religionists over the past twenty or so years. A third group recognize the minority status in general in the region, but qualify their recognition by stating that they are surrounded primarily by other Catholics in their

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\(^{315}\) During conversations and interviews, three of the six pastors mentioned the overwhelming desire of and need for parishioner involvement in parish activities and programs. It comes as no surprise that the pastors of the two parishes that received the most criticism did not independently mention the need for parishioner empowerment.
neighborhoods, mostly other northerners who moved into the area. Therefore, these respondents subsist in a type of Catholic enclave without much interaction with people of other faiths.

The additional comments and interviews certainly support the notion that Catholics in the Diocese of Raleigh are aware that Catholicism is a minority faith. Time and again, respondents were shocked by the number of Baptists and Baptist churches in the region. A Boomer recently migrating from Ohio noted that “everyone seems to be Baptist,” while another recent migrant from New Jersey concurred in observing that “Baptists are the largest group” in the region. Another recent Ohio migrant announced, “N[orth] C[arolina] is mission territory!”

Two phrases kept emerging from the comments to describe the transplant’s experience in the diocese. First, respondents repeatedly described feeling like an “alien” or being seen as “strange” in the more Protestant South. A Boomer from Virginia remarked, “Quite often I feel like an alien being a Roman Catholic in NC. My family has often been approached and solicited by non-Catholics to join their churches. It feels like you aren’t part of ‘the club’ unless you belong to ‘their’ church.” A Pre-Vatican II transplant from Massachusetts noted, “Catholicism in the South is treated like a strange, alien culture out of step with the majority and ‘not quite Christian,’” and a Boomer from Florida responded, “Catholics in the South are in the minority. This is a small town–Catholics are considered ‘strange’ compared to the Protestants.” Responses also noted that neither Catholic theology nor Catholic practices are understood by natives in the region. Southerners think Catholics “pray to idols,” “are not Christian,” and are “poor,
immigrant, fundamental.” In some cases, the respondent was the first Catholic their neighbors or co-workers had ever met.

In addition to merely being viewed as “strange” or feeling “alien” in the more Baptist, Protestant-dominated culture, respondents also noted suspicion and a more vitriolic response to expressing their faith. A Pre-Vatican II transplant from New Jersey recounted his encounter with natives, “There [are] more of such expressions as: ‘Oh, you’re Catholic?’ People often pull away when you confess your faith, eyebrows go up.” A Boomer also recalled her unpleasant experiences, “As a Catholic in North Carolina, I have run into quite a bit of prejudice from ‘Catholics will all go to Hell’ to and including ‘Catholics are Communists and at least a cult.’” Lack of familiarity with Catholic theology and ritual by local residents along with traditional patterns of American anti-Catholicism has resulted in some arriving Catholics being treated with suspicion and palpable animosity.

Even though some respondents reported feeling like an alien, being viewed as strange, being called “cultish,” or shunned by regional natives, some positive outcomes were also reported. First, respondents noted that the minority status and perceived hostility on occasion strengthens the bonds among Catholics in the region. Some comments resembled a sense of being an “embattled minority” in the diocese. A Pre-Vatican II respondent noted this feeling shared by others, “In the South, Catholicism is a more personal caring and sharing faith. Because of our minority status we respond strongly to each other’s needs in positive interaction which bonds us together. There are no strangers in our parish.” Another Pre-Vatican II respondent was explicit in noting the
minority impact, “Because Catholics are a minority I think the bond is stronger and many are new to the area.” Being a minority faith can have the impact of pulling people together and developing an “us versus them” mentality.

Another common sentiment in response to the awareness of being a religious minority in the region regards the perceived need to authentically represent the Catholic faith. Respondents have recounted thinking they may be the only Catholic some North Carolina natives ever encounter. Comments reflecting this sentiment included: “[I am] more determined to keep faith because of majority of southerners look down on Catholics,” “[I] have to be more of an example as I am among the few Catholics or Yankees that my Protestant neighbors have ever met,” “There are more daily opportunities to be challenged and consequently grow given that Catholics are less numerous than Cleveland, OH,” and “I feel that my parish needs me to stand up for my faith and that I am necessary and not just another number like up North where the parish was huge and anonymous.” These are examples of religious minority status having a positive influence on the strength and development of individuals’ faith. Unwilling to accommodate to the dominant faith, the minority status ushered in a conscientious effort on part of the believer to be emphatic about their beliefs. In other comments, respondents also noted the intentional effort it takes to interact with other Catholics when not surrounded by co-religionists on a daily basis. For some, coming to North Carolina has strengthened their faith precisely because it is the minority religion in the diocese.316

316 One respondent explicitly noted the regional effect on their faith, “Coming to NC has strengthened my faith. Distance alone to attend Mass, my age and so few Masses takes a real concerted
While a number of respondents noted the minority status of Catholics in the Diocese of Raleigh, others were also quick to report that the number of Catholics in the region is rapidly increasing primarily due to incoming northern migrants. Respondents who have been in the diocese for some time have witnessed the growth and, in some areas, acceptance of the Catholic faith. For example, a Boomer who moved to the region in her youth noted, “Thirty years ago there was more prejudice against Catholics in North Carolina. I think that has changed due to the influx of so many northern Catholics.” Another Post-Vatican II respondent and long-time resident agreed, “In the 24 years I have been in NC (from PA) I notice an increase in the number of Catholics around me and feel less of a minority.” A Pre-Vatican II, long-time resident recounted his experiences:

I have lived in North Carolina for 30 years. In that time, the Catholic population and number of parishes [have] increased. Hostility has eased greatly. Indifference is common. I have acquired many non-Catholic friends who do not care or know that I am Catholic. A few go out of their way to accommodate my mass schedule and fast/abstinence days.

As detailed in previous chapters, the Catholic Church has grown numerically stronger in the region over the past few decades. Respondents who have lived in the diocese for some time recognized this growth and compare the present to the past, but newcomers were still quite aware of the minority status of Catholicism in the area.

A final group of respondents may be aware of the Catholic minority status in the region in general, but live in a neighborhood or retirement community surrounded by other, presumably northern, Catholics. They detailed a type of Catholic enclave where
exposure to other faiths is limited. An older Pre-Vatican II respondent typified this position in commenting, “In our neighborhood, there are so many transplants who are Catholic that if you are not Catholic you sometimes feel left out.” A Boomer described her experience, “I live in a development in which at least 90 percent of the residents have moved from the northeast and upper Midwest, heavy Catholic areas.” Another Boomer described the same scene: “In the neighborhood I moved into there are more New Yorkers and Jersey people so therefore more Catholics and this is reason I don’t feel isolated or strange being a Catholic.” The retirement communities are mostly comprised of newcomers, many of whom are from the Midwest or Northeast where the Catholic population is much larger. As a result, a number of these communities don’t reflect the religious landscape of the rest of the diocese.

As the comments and interviews demonstrated, some respondents were aware of the minority of Catholics in the region in general, but were insulated from being overwhelmed by other faiths. As the rapid influx of midwestern and northern Catholics continues, it will be intriguing to assess any change in reported minority perception and the effect of a Catholic minority status on religious behavior.

6.3.8. Regional Differences in Religious Expression: The Spillover

The level of religious commitment and manners of religious expression vary by region in the United States (Hill 1985; Smith, Sikkink, and Bailey 1998; Stump 1984a; Wuthnow and Christiano 1979). This is also true of Catholicism (Anderson 1995; CARA 2008; Friend 1995; The Gallup Organization 2005). A final collection of comments
revolved around perceived differences concerning the manner of religious expression and commitment discovered in the Diocese of Raleigh, NC as compared to elsewhere. Some comments pertained to religion in general, while others noted differences specific to Catholicism.

One common reflection held that people in the South and the diocese are “much more willing to talk about God in everyday conversation.” Also, “religion–all faiths–seems to be a more prominent part of life in the South. People pray aloud in restaurants and meetings.” One couple recounted, “One of the first questions my husband and I were asked when we moved to a southern town was ‘where do you attend church?’” A number of other respondents recalled similar experiences upon arriving in the diocese. The public expression of religious belief and the frequency with which it arises in conversation surprised some newcomers.

In addition to religion taking on a more public role in the region, respondents also noted the deep knowledge local residents have of the bible and the frequency with which they quote from it. A Post-Vatican II transplant from Maryland commented on her discovery upon moving south:

I find it curious that, as a whole, Catholics do not know our Bible the way other faiths do. We allow it to be interpreted by our priests and that’s all we know [and] feel the need to know. Other faiths (Baptists) always seem much more knowledgeable. This is especially evident in the South where Catholics are really outnumbered by other churchgoing individuals.

Catholics are confronted with their lack of familiarity with the bible when conversing with people of other faiths in the Diocese of Raleigh. Does the experience convince newcomers to take up reading the bible with more frequency?
The empirical data showed that the longer Catholics have lived in the diocese, the more likely they read the bible frequently. The comments and interviews support this finding. According to responses, the emphasis placed on scripture by local residents, not only in religious services but in conversation, appears to positively impact the rate at which incoming Catholics read the bible. “I have become more aware of the Bible since living here,” a recent Boomer transplant from Ohio noted. She continued, “I wish the Catholic Church would do much more with having bible studies.” The increase in reading may result from the need to be able to converse with others and defend the Catholic faith. A Boomer from New York recognized the need to become more biblically literate, “When we moved to the Bible Belt, the Catholic Church had to incorporate more Bible readings and explanations of our faith.”

Respondents noted, and empirical studies have confirmed, that the geographic region containing the Diocese of Raleigh is more religious than other areas of residence as measured by the number of religious adherents and the salience of their faith (American National Election Study 2008; General Social Survey 2000-2008; Jones et al. 2002). The majority of believers in the region are evangelical and mainline Protestant and Protestant Christians tend to read the bible with more frequency and are more biblically literate than their Catholic counterparts (Baylor University 2005; Smith et al. 2011 [GSS 2000-2008]; Jones et al. 2002; Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life 2010). Further, according to survey respondents, religion and religious belief are more openly discussed in public and in private conversations. As a result, Catholics are often

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317 This is the impression of the survey respondents as well.
confronted with questions about their faith and lack the biblical literacy to carry on a conversation with those who initiated it. The oft-noted lack of biblical knowledge has spurred some Catholics in the region to educate themselves by reading the bible more often, attending bible classes at Protestant and non-denominational churches, or urging their own parish to add bible classes and incorporate more biblical exegesis in weekly homilies.

The comments and interviews demonstrated that the specific religious environment of the Diocese of Raleigh, in some cases, positively impacted the practice of bible reading. In addition to bible reading, the more frequent church attendance by Catholics and non-Catholics in the region affected one younger respondent from New York: “I feel southerners are more devoted to attending church–whatever the religion. Church going is much more the norm here. This helped me to get to church on a regular basis.” For this respondent and others echoing her sentiment, the regional religious environment directly impacted the frequency of religious activities.

Coupled with earlier empirical findings noting the higher level of Mass attendance in the Diocese (even among those receiving the survey by mail) the spillover theory finds support among the comments and interviews. The more religious environment spills over–across denominational boundaries–and positively impacts the level of religious commitment of incoming Catholics. Catholics may increase their frequency of bible reading, salience, and Mass attendance presumably to match the behaviors of the more religious surroundings.
6.4. Conclusion

The Catholic Church in the Diocese of Raleigh, NC is currently enjoying a boom as Catholic migrants from midwestern and northern states descend into the region. The number of registered Catholics in the area has tripled over the past twenty years (Official Catholic Directory 1990, 2008). Many of the new transplants to the coastal region are retired from the workforce and move to enjoy their latter years among the amenities and pleasant climate provided by eastern North Carolina.

The survey associated with this dissertation provides invaluable insights into the demographic makeup of the new transplants, changes in their religious practice upon arriving to the region, perception of their religious minority status, level of support for changes in the qualifications of priesthood, and other intriguing quantitative findings. The empirical data, however, is not sufficient, by itself, to uncover all the trends in belief, behavior, and attitude emerging from diocesan Catholics. To overcome this lacuna, Catholics in the region were asked to provide their own insights, through comments and personal interviews, concerning their experiences of Catholicism in the Diocese of Raleigh. Analysis of this qualitative data illustrates the ways in which Catholicism in the region differs from elsewhere.

This data reveals the majority perception that Catholics (and people in general) are warmer and friendlier in the southern region than elsewhere. The characterization of

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318 The raw number of Catholics in the Diocese of Raleigh registered with a parish has jumped from 73,893 in 1990 to 204,644 in 2008 (Official Catholic Directory 1990, 2008). The percentage of the population who are registered Catholics tripled from 1980 to 2008, increasing from 1.6 percent of the population in the diocesan region in 1980 to 4.8 percent in 2008 (Official Catholic Directory 1980, 2008).
Diocese of Raleigh parishes and parishioners commonly included phrases such as “more personable,” “warmer,” and “more intimate.” While there were some detractors, they were typically limited to only two parishes, and significantly outweighed by the positive comments.

There was general disagreement over the liberalism or traditionalism of parishes in the region compared to elsewhere. Typically, it depended on the parish of which the respondent was a member. Further, the “liberal” and “conservative” designations were applied separately to liturgical celebrations and the theological trends of the pastor and parishioners. Some respondents derided the liberalization of the liturgy and progressive theology they discovered in regional parishes, attributing the change to the influence of the overwhelming Protestant majority in the region. Others welcomed the changes and expressed anxiety that a more traditional liturgical style and more orthodox theology will deter young families and youth from continuing their parish affiliation. Fear for the future of the Catholic Church in the Diocese was a frequently expressed concern.

According to the qualitative data, Catholic parishes in the region have more parish and social activities available than elsewhere. This fact may stem from the plethora of newcomers looking to become involved, socially and programmatically, in the parish. Also, the increased level of free-time among retired parishioners provides the additional occasion to be actively involved in the parish and its programs.

Connected to the allotment of parish and social programs, the gathered data also suggests that Catholics in the Diocese of Raleigh are more committed to their faith, the parish, and its activities. Responses suggest this may be a result of the additional
emphasis placed on religion and personal faith by residents of the diocesan region, 
especially the Protestant locals. Respondents reported more frequent Mass attendance 
than elsewhere, not only for themselves but for others, Catholic and non-Catholic, as 
well. Further, the qualitative data suggest the heightened level of attendance and 
commitment may be a reaction to the perceived minority status of Catholics in the region. 
Some Catholics expressed the desire to represent their faith well, in knowledge and Mass 
attendance, when confronted by local non-Catholics.

The qualitative data provided additional insights not gleaned through mere 
examination of the empirical data. In the final chapter, excerpts of personal interviews of 
respondents who changed their religious behavior upon arriving in North Carolina will be 
introduced. These respondents were asked why their behavior changed. The concluding 
chapter will also reconcile the quantitative and qualitative findings in an attempt to 
present a holistic picture of Catholicism in the Diocese of Raleigh, with a special 
emphasis on the religiosity of retired Boomers migrating into the region. Finally, the 
theories of religious change presented in the second and third chapters will be measured 
against the study’s findings.
CHAPTER 7:
BOOMER CATHOLICISM IN THE DIOCESE OF RALEIGH, NC:
A SYNTHESIS AND GLIMPSE OF THE FUTURE

7.1. Introduction

A young Boomer couple was living in New York working hard to achieve their retirement dreams. After witnessing the tragic events of September 11, 2001, the couple decided to expedite their pending retirement to maximize the enjoyment of their sunset years. Two years later, at a young enough age “to make friends” and “have a life,” the couple moved into an older retirement community in the Diocese of Raleigh. Confirmed as a Catholic at thirty years of age, the wife had stayed away from church most of her life. Upon arriving to their new environment, however, she returned by way of recognizing that “church was a great way to make friends.” Over time, the parish became more than just a place to attend Mass. “Church is not just church for us,” the wife replied when asked about her changes in religious participation. “[Church] is also our social life, entertainment, etc.” Her husband followed her back to active church involvement and now consistently attends Mass as well. Responding to the need for adult religious educators, she became certified to teach in the RCIA program. Her husband also increased his involvement by becoming an usher. Both are now fully entrenched into the parish community. The trajectory of this couple’s religious experience in the Diocese of Raleigh emerged frequently in discussions with regional Catholics.

This chapter continues assessing the qualitative results of the study by focusing exclusively on why individuals may have changed, positively or negatively, their
religious behaviors upon arriving to the Diocese of Raleigh, NC. The discussion then synthesizes the qualitative data with the empirical findings presented earlier in the dissertation to develop an integrated picture of Boomer Catholicism in the Diocese of Raleigh. Finally, various theories of religious change will be assessed in relation to their predictive value in this particular study.

### 7.2. Sources of Change in Retired Boomer Transplants

Fifty percent of the Vatican II/Boomer respondents reported they are either retired or semi-retired.\(^{319}\) As expected, retired Boomers in the region reported higher levels of voluntarism than their working counterparts through donating their time in both parish and non-parish sponsored volunteer activities. Twenty-four percent of retired Boomers reported volunteering once a month or more in the community through *parish*-sponsored activities. Fourteen percent of non-retired Boomers volunteered with the same frequency.\(^{320}\) Even more retired Boomers participate in volunteer activities outside of parish sponsorship. Forty-one percent of retired Boomers reported volunteering in *non-parish*-sponsored activities once a month or more often, markedly higher than the 26 percent of non-retired Boomers.\(^{321}\) Retirement is strongly, positively correlated with volunteering in the community through both parish and non-parish sponsored activities.

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\(^{319}\) Sixty-five percent of the older wave of Boomers (1943-1951) reported being retired or semi-retired compared to only 14 percent of the younger wave (1952-1960).

\(^{320}\) This finding is statistically significant at p=.01.

\(^{321}\) This finding is statistically significant at p<.001.
Time spent volunteering in the community is connected to employment status, but what about time spent specifically in parish activities? The survey asked respondents about their level of activity over the past year in various activities. The empirical results revealed a statistically significant difference, albeit slight, between retired and non-retired Boomers when assessing the frequency of parish committee or administration work. Retired Boomers reported marginally more frequent involvement than non-retired Boomers. The results were inconclusive regarding other parish activities. Retired respondents reported a higher frequency of Eucharistic Adoration over the past year, but the difference is only weakly statistically significant. After speaking with respondents, however, this measure and a few others may not be entirely accurate. The six parishes involved in the study did not offer the sacrament of Reconciliation or opportunities for Eucharistic Adoration with uniform regularity. As a result, the empirical data concerning the frequency of these activities may be biased toward attendees at parishes that repeatedly offer the services. The caveat does not apply across all parish activities. In reviewing parish bulletins and speaking with pastors, administrative staff, and parishioners, all parishes in the study provided numerous opportunities for volunteer undertakings, bible study, and social programs.

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322 There is a 4 percent difference in the “never” response category when inquiring about parish committee or administration work. The finding is statistically significant at p<.01.

323 For example, the frequency of going to confession over the past year slightly favored the non-retired Boomer group. It was only after speaking with respondents that it was revealed that daily confession is not offered at all parishes in the study. It may be the case that confession is offered more frequently at parishes with a higher percentage of non-retired attendees.
The survey also asked respondents to report changes in their participation in “parish-sponsored activities” upon their arrival to the region. As with the regularity of confession and Eucharistic Adoration, the availability of “parish-sponsored activities” may impact respondents’ involvement. However, the interviews and recorded comments indicated a strong supply of available programs through which parishioners can be involved in the religious communities. In fact, as discussed later in the chapter, the numerous advertised programs served as an incentive for recently arriving transplants to become involved in the parish. With a steady stream of programs in the surveyed parishes, we can assess with confidence the fluctuations in parish-sponsored activities upon arriving to the region.

Taking into account only Vatican II/Boomer respondents, 34 percent reported that they increased (substantially or slightly) their participation in parish-sponsored activities compared to 27 percent who decreased (substantially or slightly) their involvement.324 The gap widens when assessing only retired Boomers. Thirty-nine percent of retired Boomers increased (substantially or slightly) their participation in parish-sponsored activity compared to 23 percent who decreased (substantially or slightly) their involvement. Only 29 percent of non-retired Boomers reported any increase.325 The qualitative data, especially the findings presented in Chapter 6, support the quantitative

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324 Attendance at Sunday Mass also substantially increased among retired Boomers moving to the region. Twenty-four percent of Boomers increased their attendance at Sunday Mass upon moving to the diocese compared to only 6 percent who decreased their rate of attendance. Changes in Mass attendance were discussed at length in Chapter 4.

325 This finding is statistically significant at p<.05.
results in revealing retired transplants overwhelmingly became more active in their parish upon arriving to the diocese.

One limitation to the empirical data involves possible causes behind a reported increase or decrease in parish involvement upon moving to the region. What is it about the region and/or the incoming migrants that resulted in an increase in parish participation? In an attempt to uncover the array of motivations, respondents were asked directly if they can pinpoint the reason(s) for their change in commitment upon moving to the region. Five common factors emerged from assessing these responses.

The most cited explanations for increasing religious behaviors upon arriving to the diocese result from (1) an increase in free time resulting from workforce retirement, (2) the prevalence of activities available in their new parish, and (3) the use of the parish as a hub of social networking. On the flip side, decreases in participation in the parish community were explained primarily through the greater distance individuals live from the parish. Another reason cited for waning religious involvement, dislike of or

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326 While the survey instrument clearly distinguishes between changes in Mass attendance and fluctuations in parish-sponsored activities, the interviews sometimes approached the issue by discussing changes in religious commitment or religious behavior in more general terms.

327 Respondent recollection concerning particular past behaviors may not be entirely accurate. For example, individuals may cite theological reasons for joining a new religious community, but research shows that religious movements grow primarily through previously established social networks (Stark 1997; Stark and Bainbridge 1985; Stark and Finke 2000; Stark and Glock 1968). These respondents, however, are not switching religions. The question asks why certain behaviors in which they may have already been engaged increased or decreased. Additionally, the time frame for the change is typically within ten or so years. As a result, the problem of reconstructive or selective memories in this sample may be less of a factor.

328 The previous chapter also presented interview excerpts and respondent comments supporting the thesis that free time, numerous parish activities, and need for socializing increases parish activities. The excerpts in this chapter, however, are direct responses to the question concerning a change in religious behavior upon moving to the diocese.
incompatibility with the pastor, is inextricably linked to the first. Other, less frequent complaints included (1) the response of the Catholic Church to the sex-abuse crisis, (2) the perceived constant requests for funds, and (3) the purported parish focus on the Hispanic community to the detriment of the spiritual development of the parish’s Caucasian financial supporters.

7.2.1. Personal Accounts of Increasing Participation in Parish-sponsored Activities

Seventy-two percent of the entire sample, and 50 percent of Vatican II/Boomer respondents, reported being retired or semi-retired from the workforce. A new abundance of leisure time tends to accompany retirement. It appears that Catholics in the Diocese of Raleigh utilized this newly acquired time to become more involved in the programmatic life of their parish. A semi-retired Boomer, arriving from New York ten years ago, was asked why her religious behaviors changed upon arriving to the diocese. She did not hesitate in responding that after retiring she acquired “time to volunteer [and do] service work.” Also, she had “more time to get involved in the church actively.” Another Boomer, also from New York, noted the same factor in becoming more involved with the parish. “Recently,” she observed, “[I] do have more free time. So, my activities [in the parish] went up.” A third retired Boomer from Kentucky concurred. Upon moving to the area ten years ago, she increased religious commitment activities. She was clear in her declaring the motivation behind the increase: “I retired and have more time

\footnote{Unfortunately, the data does not determine when a respondent retired. It is not clear if the retirement occurred before, after, or even during their move to the diocese. The general sense gathered from talking to respondents is that they retired shortly before moving to the region.}
for prayer, scripture study, and parish-sponsored activities.” Over and over, respondents cited newly acquired time as the main reason behind additional participation in their parish.330

A second reason also emerged explaining increased participation in parish-sponsored activities upon moving to the diocese. The abundance and tremendous variety of activities sponsored by the parish urged newly arriving members to become involved. The previous chapter recounted respondents’ perception that there are more activities available in Diocese of Raleigh parishes than elsewhere. The responses to inquiries about changes in parish participation pointed to these activities as a catalyst for increased involvement. One Boomer respondent recounted her initiative for becoming more involved in parish activities, “There are more activities. […] People [here] seem to be much more involved both spiritually and socially, including me!” She felt as if she were missing out on the parish life and parish dynamics by not being involved. Other Boomer interviewees concurred. Upon arriving to the diocese, a respondent noted she “felt the need to get involved more and not be lost in the numbers.”

The connection between these first two motivations for increasing participation in parish-sponsored activities emerged during a discussion with a retired Boomer who migrated to the diocese ten years ago. The former New Yorker recounted her experiences:

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330 This finding is unambiguous, but not surprising. The study targeted regions of the diocese serving as retirement destinations. As result, the substantial increase in religious activity among respondents arriving to the region is to be expected.
My religious behaviors changed mainly for two reasons. The first being that I do have more time now to both volunteer with my church and community and to participate in church activities and programs [such as] Bible study, faith sharing group, retreats, Eucharistic Minister, etc. The second reason is both the multitude of programs and activities offered and the inviting, warm spirit that is inclusive to all in our parish. I do read the Bible more because of being in many Bible Study groups.

An increase in free time allows for more involvement in parish activities. Parishioners looking to become involved may turn elsewhere if an allotment of inviting programs were not offered. The majority of pastors I talked with were aware of this issue. Even though there continued to be few priests and religious in the region, these pastors welcomed, and even encouraged, lay initiative to begin new programs.\textsuperscript{331} I asked one pastor why parishioners in the region tended to be so involved and committed. He pointed to the empowerment of the laity in a post-Vatican II Church. Boomers arriving to the region typically embraced the concept of contributing to their parish and he encouraged them to do so. When there was not a specific program to meet the desires of newly arriving Catholics, the laity were urged to develop it. The ownership of these programs by the laity, he noted, contributes greatly to their success.

The desire to meet friends, socialize, and become integrated quickly into the community reflects a third frequently cited impetus for increased religious activity upon arriving in the parish. A semi-retired Boomer who moved to the region ten years ago recounted feeling the need to become involved in parish programs quickly. Doing so would help her and her husband become accepted as a “new comer” faster and would assist in finding people with the same values. Another Boomer woman who moved eight years ago

\textsuperscript{331} In most cases, the new programs needed the approval of parish council and the pastor.
years ago from Ohio noted that, upon arriving in the diocese, “Church allowed me to make new friends when I didn’t know anyone here.” A third Boomer moved to the region seven years ago. She recalled her experiences upon arriving to the region, “When I first arrived, I contacted [my] church […] to immediately get involved and build a strong faith sharing community. My retirement years are joyful and peaceful based upon the relationships I have in my Catholic community.” Her enjoyment now is based on the decision to develop her friendships through the church.332

Increasing parish activity upon arriving appears to help rapidly develop the social networks sacrificed in moving to the region. The reverse is true as well. Developing social networks through the parish seems to contribute to increasing individuals’ participation among the many available programs in that parish. This does not come as a surprise. When asked why her participation in parish activities substantially increased upon arriving to the diocese four years ago, one woman succinctly stated, “I have more time and want to grow in my faith with others on the same journey.” Three-fourths of her local friends are members of her parish and they positively influence her attendance at weekly Mass and participation in parish programs. Other respondents recounted perceiving similar expectations to become involved in the parish, at least for Mass and social gatherings.333 The combination of the numerous parish programs and high

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332 Another Boomer noted, “As a retired person I have more time than when working and raising children to devote to my church and community. I found new friends by joining the parish.”

333 The previous chapter cited a woman who claimed even more parish activities are needed to keep up with the continual growth. She noted the “untapped potential” of newly arriving Catholics.
percentage of active participants appears to have a direct impact on incoming parishioners.

7.2.2. Personal Accounts of Decreasing Participation in Parish-sponsored Activities

While less frequent, survey responders also reported decreases in parish-sponsored activities upon moving to the Diocese of Raleigh. Past studies have demonstrated the negative impact regional migration can have on Mass attendance and overall religious commitment (Bainbridge 1990; Stark and Bainbridge 1985; Stark and Finke 2000; Welch and Baltzell 1984; Wuthnow and Christiano 1979). One common explanation of the adverse effect cross-regional migration has on religiosity points to the disruption of established social ties and close personal networks in their religious communities (Bainbridge 1990; Iannaccone 1990; Stark and Bainbridge 1985; Stark and Finke 2000; Welch and Baltzell 1984). In a new environment, individuals may not feel compelled to attend religious services as there is little, if any, behavior maintenance in effect (Ellison and George 1994; Iannaccone 1994; Smith et al. 1998; Tittle 1977; Welch and Baltzell 1984). In this case-study, however, the aforementioned explanation does not appear to fit. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the infrequency of local co-religionists—since Catholics are in the minority—drives the recent migrants to Catholic parishes and programs in order to quickly re-establish the social networks sacrificed by a move. Essentially, the newcomers may go to church to find and connect with people similar to themselves—retired, Catholic, and from outside the region.
If the breakdown of social networks and social capital could not explain decreases in participation in parish-sponsored events, what could? Reasons for decreases in participation varied, but an analysis of comments and interviews revealed that explanations concentrated on two specific themes. The first commonly cited justification for a decline in participation was based merely on the geographic distance between the respondent and the parish.\textsuperscript{334} Parishes in the surveyed regions are very spread out. As a result, some respondents found themselves much further away from their home parish than in the past. A Boomer who moved to the region five years ago from New York reported a substantial decrease in parish-participation and a slight decrease in Mass attendance. When asked what accounted for the decrease she simply said, “[The] distance to church plays a factor.” The distance also impacted the sense of community experienced by these respondents. Another Boomer from New York, although she is retired, complained in her response, “I participate much less because of the church being so far away. There is no community feeling on my part.” She reported having a 35-45 minute drive to the parish. Thirty-five percent of Pre-Vatican II and Vatican II/Boomer respondents estimated the drive time to their parish to be more than fifteen minutes. While the predictive power of the distance cannot be easily determined, it was cited as a reason for declining participation.

\textsuperscript{334} Among the Pre-Vatican II and Vatican II/Boomer cohort groups, the empirical data \textit{does not} reveal any statistically significant correlation between changing religious behaviors and driving distance from the parish. Sixty-five percent of respondents in these age categories are less than 15 minutes from their parish by car. Twenty-eight percent are between a 15 and 25 minute drive from their parish and only 7 percent are more than 25 minutes away.
A second justification for waning religious commitment upon arriving to the diocese is linked to the distance between parishes in the diocese. One Boomer’s comment highlighted the pertinent issue: “We are very limited in our choice of churches. [There are] only two within an hour drive.” An inability to switch parishes due to geographic constraints may have detrimental effects on participation. Each parish involved in the study received its share of complaints, which were primarily directed toward (1) the personality or theological tendencies of the pastor, (2) the liturgical style of the Mass, or (3) the attitudes of the parishioners themselves. One respondent’s animosity toward his current pastor was made clear in a long diatribe which culminated in a description of this priest: “He is our penance on earth!”

It is unrealistic to think that personalities between pastors and parishioners will always be harmonious. Also, the pastor typically drives the liturgical style of his parish. This too can be a source of conflict. With the wide range of personalities, preferences, and beliefs among Catholic laity, issues will surface in every parish. The problem arises, however, when the tension becomes too great to overcome or overlook. In this region, there is little recourse for those dissatisfied with their pastor, liturgy, or parish. For many transplants, this is an unusual feeling. The majority of parishioners are from the North and Midwest where Catholicism is more prevalent and Catholic parishes are more prominent. While the situation is not ideal, a northern Catholic dissatisfied with her own parish due to personality conflicts, theological opinions, or liturgical preferences can attend another parish. The typical distance between parishes is manageable. Catholics in
the Diocese of Raleigh, however, do not have the option of easily switching parishes. As a result, some people attend weekly Mass, but refuse to participate in, or contribute financially to, their parish.

A Boomer from Maryland discussed his dilemma upon moving to the region less than ten years ago. The retired transplant explained, “I am fully responsible for my decrease in church activities. However, mean and/or condescending priests and lay educators have made it much more difficult to attend Mass or require my children to attend CCD classes.” As the previous chapter recounted, complaints levied against some of the pastors and parishes in the study were not uncommon. When asked for the reasons behind their decrease in parish involvement, a portion of respondents expressed dissatisfaction with their current parish yet were unwilling or unable to travel to other parishes in the region where they may be more satisfied with the pastor and fellow parishioners.

Other specific issues arose in discussions about waning religious commitment upon arriving to the diocese. Two common complaints have little to do with regional Catholicism. First, some respondents pointed to the Church sex-abuse crisis for their decrease in involvement. The timing of the crisis may have coincided with a move to the region, but I doubt there was any direct connection between the migration and these respondents’ decrease in parish involvement.

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335 The parishes are closer together in the Raleigh metropolitan area. However, the parishes in this study are in regions that have fewer Catholic churches and are further apart from one another.
A second, less frequent, complaint blamed decreased parish involvement on the perception of a constant request for financial contributions. Specifically named were the requests for the Bishop’s Annual Appeal, construction funds and capital campaigns, and funding for minority programs. While the parishes in the Diocese of Raleigh are experiencing explosive growth, especially in retirement destinations, and are constantly in need of expanding, I imagine this complaint levied against the regional parishes is common throughout the United States.

Finally, the attention paid to the local minority communities by church leadership was cited as a reason for decreased involvement in the parish. These complaints were limited in number. In talking with these individuals, I gathered that blame placed on the attention paid to the Hispanic community was misplaced and indicative of another larger issue. A portion of parishioners did not feel the collected resources were being allocated properly and they used the Hispanic community or youth programs as an example. These respondents wanted more resources (both monetary and temporal) dedicated to the spiritual needs of those providing the majority of these resources. At its root, the blame directed toward the Hispanic community appeared to be a theological disagreement with pastors and pastoral councils concerning the Catholic Church’s responsibility to assist in alleviating the suffering of the poor and marginalized. The disagreement, which

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336 A retired Boomer from New York expressed his anger with his local parish: “[I’m] glad to see the church reaching out to minorities, but this parish building has turned me off completely. Between that and the ‘Bishop’s Annual Appeal’ I walk out of Mass very angry. Some people have left this parish and are attending in North Myrtle Beach. So the parish and diocese have lost!” Another Boomer concurred. Upon arriving to the diocese she discovered that her parish was “less interested in feeding us spiritually. [There was] too much focus on growing the parish—new building, etc. I’m turned off by the fundraising style, so [I] stopped tithing.”
sometime resulted in decreased parish participation, revolved around competing visions of the parish.\textsuperscript{337}

7.3. Combining Methodological Approaches: A Holistic Picture of Catholic Boomers in the Diocese of Raleigh

A substantial amount of information has been gathered and presented in this study regarding the religious makeup of Catholics in the Diocese of Raleigh. Both quantitative and qualitative methods have been employed in an attempt to fully understand the culture of Catholicism in the region and to measure fluctuations in religiosity of newcomers as they migrate to retirement destinations. Some conclusions are reinforced by both the quantitative and qualitative data, while other discoveries found support through only one data source. It is important, then, to weigh the findings and seek reasons for inconsistencies in order to ascertain an accurate portrayal of Catholicism, especially among Boomers, in the Diocese of Raleigh.

7.3.1. Boomer Catholicism in the Diocese Continues to Rise

The empirical data gathered in this project confirmed results from other recent studies in highlighting the notable increase of affiliated and registered Catholics in the Diocese of Raleigh (\textit{Official Catholic Directory} 1980, 2008; Kosmin and Keysar 2009). Additionally, recent census data revealed the north-to-south migratory pattern taken up by older, retired, Americans (Logino et al. 2002; North Carolina Division of Aging and Adult Services 2008). The vast majority of survey respondents in this study transplanted

\textsuperscript{337} For an investigation into this type of ecclesial tension, see Robert S. Rivers, \textit{From Maintenance to Mission: Evangelization and the Revitalization of the Parish} (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2005).
to North Carolina from outside the region. In fact, 73 percent of Boomers who moved to the region in the last fifteen years were from northern states.\footnote{These states include Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Vermont.}

For the most part, the comments from and conversations with respondents supported the empirical findings. Catholicism is expanding rapidly in retirement destinations of the region. Anecdotes of overcrowded churches and ongoing expansion to meet rising demands were common. The cause of the recent explosion was accurately perceived to be northern and midwestern Catholics retiring from the workforce. They were enticed into moving to the amenable climate flooded with amenities geared toward an older population. The growth has been so swift and concentrated that, in some instances, retirement neighborhoods resemble northern urban Catholic enclaves.

Both the empirical data and recorded comments suggest that the Catholic migratory trend is just warming up. The southern migration of northern retired Catholic Boomers should continue well into the future. Parishes should expect, and prepare for, the steady stream of northern Catholics into the region. If these incoming Catholics resemble the sample in this study, they will tend to be retired, attend Mass frequently, and be willing to spend their newly acquired free time in parish (and non-parish) volunteer activities.

7.3.2. The Influence of Southern Religiosity on Boomers

It has been established that residents in southern regions exhibit higher levels of religious commitment as operationalized by a variety of measures (Hill 1985; Smith,
Did this more religious environment have an influence on Boomer Catholics migrating to the region? In evaluating only Boomers who moved to the region less than fifteen years ago, their attendance at Mass increased more than decreased upon arriving to the region. Yet, this finding could also be a factor of new arrivals retiring and having more time on their hands—retired Boomers attend Mass more frequently than those still in the workforce. There was a slight increase in participation in parish-sponsored events among this subgroup of Boomers, but the finding was not statistically significant.

Within the empirical evidence, the most notable changes among recently arriving Boomers occurred in monetary contributions, frequency of bible reading, and frequency of prayer. These three measures increased substantially among Boomers arriving to the Diocese within the last fifteen years. One of these items, bible reading, may have been directly influenced by the more biblically oriented culture of the area. Even though bible reading increased in both retired and working Boomers, retired Boomers read the bible less than their counterparts still in the workforce. In fact, being retired predicted less frequency of reading the bible among Boomers. It is possible that the more religious environment, to which working Boomers were more regularly exposed,

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339 Southern Catholics have been shown to be more committed than their northern and northeastern counterparts (CARA 2008; The Gallup Organization 2005).

340 All three of these findings are statistically significant at p<.005.

341 In the entire sample, the amount of time spent in the diocese is directly related to the frequency of bible reading. This finding, however, disappeared when only assessing Boomers.
influenced the level of bible reading among this cohort-group. The data supported this interpretation.

Not only did the respondents note a more intense religious environment across all faiths in the Diocese of Raleigh, they also became aware of the biblical knowledge possessed and demonstrated by the residents, especially Protestants, in the region. In order to participate in conversations regarding their particular faith and religion in general, many Boomers noted the need to become more biblically literate.\(^{342}\) To achieve this goal they attended bible classes and increased their bible reading on their own. For some older Boomers who grew up in a Pre-Vatican II Catholic Church, beginning to read the bible emerged as a new and exciting enterprise.

Results emerged from both the quantitative and qualitative data supporting the spillover or adaptation theory—that a more religious environment heightened the religious commitment levels of individuals who migrated into it. The theory found traction in both data sets especially among Catholic Boomers and their notable increase in bible reading frequency upon arriving to the area. Catholic parishes in the diocese should embrace this tendency and increase their offering of bible study programs. Some Boomers remarked that they attend Protestant churches for more in-depth and educational bible study groups.\(^{343}\)

\(^{342}\) Boomers, both working and retired, read the bible with much more frequency than the Pre-Vatican II Generation.

\(^{343}\) Some researchers would consider these individuals more at risk for defecting from Catholicism as they build up extensive relationships outside their faith.
In addition to Protestantism being practiced more fervently in the region and impacting Catholic migrants, it is possible that more intently-religious Catholics influenced newcomers. According to the empirical data, Catholics in the Diocese of Raleigh attend Mass with greater frequency than comparable subsets in other regions. The overwhelming sentiment emerging from interviews and comments was that Catholics in the diocese are more committed than elsewhere. This too could have a positive effect on the religious behaviors of recent Boomer migrants. For example, the frequency of bible reading among Boomers was positively, and significantly, related to the percentage of local friends who are also Catholic. In addition to the more religious Protestant environment spilling over and influencing Catholic commitment, the increased commitment among local Catholics also contributed to increasing the commitment level of incoming Boomer Catholics. Parishes in the region can take advantage of the “Catholic-to-Catholic” spillover effect by introducing new arrivals to Catholics already established in the region with a high level of parish involvement.

7.3.3. Social Networks and the Influence on Religious Commitment

The previous section briefly discussed the phenomenon, but the two data sets present overwhelming evidence of the tremendous influence social networks have on religious commitment. As introduced in Chapter 5, the percentage of local friends who are Catholic possessed strong predictive power for particular measures of religious commitment. As the rate of local Catholic friends increased, the more likely the respondent attended Mass on a weekly basis. The positive, linear relationship between
Catholic friends and Mass attendance was most evident among Boomer respondents. The percentage of Catholic friends effectively predicted other measures of commitment as well, such as volunteering through the parish, being involved in parish committee work, and attending parish sponsored prayer meetings.

The qualitative findings were consistent with the empirical data linking the rate of local Catholic friends to religious commitment. As presented earlier in this chapter, Boomers utilized the parish as a social hub and source of establishing new social connections to replace the old ones severed upon moving to the region. Attending parish events then became a social activity as well as a spiritual one. And the more a person involved themselves in the parish, the greater the likelihood they established more parish (Catholic) friendships. If they wanted to spend more time with those friends, they could do so by attending parish events.

According to the comments and interviews, the effort put forth by the local parish, pastor, and staff to welcome new arrivals appeared essential in setting the process in motion. Those who perceived their parish to be cold or unwelcoming also noted that they were less likely to engage themselves in parish programs. If they decreased (or failed to increase) their involvement, they may have had fewer opportunities to make parish or Catholic friends. As a result, the Catholic social network could not strongly influence the commitment level of the new arrivals.

344 Possible explanations for the finding are presented in Chapter 5.
7.3.4. Minority Status and Religious Discrimination: Boomers’ Perception and Reaction

Even though Catholicism is growing in the Diocese of Raleigh, Catholics still make up a tiny minority of the religious adherents in the region. Additionally, the number of Catholic churches is far surpassed by the more established Protestant faiths and non-denominational churches in the area. Past research has linked minority status and small market share to increased religious commitment among those in the less represented religion (Olson 1998, 2008; Olson and Sikkink 2004; Perl and Olson 2000; Stark 1998; Stark and McCann 1993; Zaleski and Zech 1995). Is this the case with Catholic Boomers in the Diocese of Raleigh?

While Catholics in the Diocese of Raleigh may be in the religious minority, not all respondents perceived themselves as such. Some respondents felt surrounded by other (northern) Catholics and infrequently interacted with people of other faiths. To assess the impact of small market share on commitment, it was imperative to ask respondents whether they were aware of being in the religious minority in the diocese. Among Boomers receiving the survey by mail, there was a ten point difference in weekly Mass attendance between those who perceived minority status versus those who did not. In this sub-group of respondents receiving the survey by mail, 73 percent of Boomers aware of their minority status attended Mass weekly versus 63 percent of Boomers who were unaware. The difference, however, did not have statistical significance. Binominal logistic regression analysis in Chapter 5 showed the perception of minority status was not predictive of attendance frequency among Boomers receiving the survey by mail.
Perception of minority status among this sub-group of Boomers also failed to predict the frequency of bible reading.

Comments from Boomers about the influence of perceived minority status on religious commitment in general, and Mass attendance in particular, diverged from the empirical findings. When mentioned, respondents who were aware of their minority status as Catholics in the region responded by becoming more committed to their faith. Sometimes expressing the sentiment of an “embattled minority,” respondents felt compelled to learn more about their faith, through bible reading and parish programs, to defend it against attacks. Perception of minority status and a lack of contact with co-religionists outside of religious services also contributed to some respondents’ expressed need to be more intentional about the practice of their faith.

Unlike perceived minority status, the perception of religious discrimination emerged in the empirical data as a powerful predictor for the frequency of Mass attendance and bible reading, although in different ways. With the entire sample, the perception of religious bias negatively correlated with the frequency of Mass attendance and positively correlated with the frequency of bible reading. This means that respondents who perceived discrimination based on their religious beliefs tended to attend Mass less frequently than their counterparts, yet read the bible more frequently than their counterparts. When considering Boomers alone, the negative relationship between religious bias and Mass attendance dropped out. The positive correlation between perceived bias and bible reading remained, but was only marginally significant at p<.10.
In discussions with respondents, it was challenging to decipher the separate effects a perception of minority status and a perception of religious bias had on religious commitment. While there were occasional anecdotes about being “looked upon as somewhat strange” or “being treated like an alien,” there were only a few connections made between this experience and increased religious commitment. I gathered that being treated differently because of one’s faith had the same effect, with regard to bible reading, as the perception of religious minority. Boomers wanted to learn more about their faith and increase their theological knowledge to answer questions posed by others about the Catholic faith. Plus, the majority faith in the region–Southern Baptist–has historically placed a strong emphasis on reading the scriptures. The high level of scripture reading in the region may have spilled over and contributed to more frequent bible reading among Catholics who perceived being treated differently due to their faith. This theory is supported by the qualitative data.

Unfortunately, the qualitative data failed to produce an adequate explanation for the negative correlation between perceived religious bias and Mass attendance in the sample. The same relationship between the variables occurred with Boomers until the controls were entered into the model. Even so, the odds ratio between the variables remained powerful despite the disappearance of the statistical significance. It is possible that respondents were influenced by the Protestant majority faith, their own mistreatment, and local emphasis placed on bible reading. Could these perceptions lead to an increase

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345 One Pre-Vatican II respondent remarked, “[I am] more determined to keep the faith because of the majority of southerners look down on Catholics.”
in the frequency of reading the bible in order to replace attending weekly Mass? Bible reading can be done in private while Mass attendance is a public display of one’s faith. Publicly attending services or reporting to co-workers, neighbors, or friends where they attended religious services may, in the end, invite more criticism or mistreatment due to their faith. Future conversations with and studies of Catholics in the region should further investigate the differing influences perceived religious discrimination has on Mass attendance and bible reading.

7.4. Theories of Religious Change: Do Boomers Fit the Models?

The second and third chapters introduced theories accounting for fluctuations in religious commitment among individuals under a variety of circumstances. The predictive value of these theories can be weighed against the empirical and ethnographic data results of this case-study. Do retired Catholic Boomers migrating to the Diocese of Raleigh exemplify the models of religious change presented in past research? At this point, all the data has been presented and discussed at length and conclusions have been drawn about the nature of Boomer Catholicism in the diocesan region. This section briefly discusses each particular theory of religious change and determines whether it holds explanatory value for the sample of Boomer Catholics.

7.4.1. Catholic Boomers, Minority Status, and Small Market Share

Three theories attempted to explain the relationship between a religion’s minority status or small market share in a particular region to the increased commitment of members in that smaller market share religion. The first theory suggested that religious
suppliers of a minority faith understand the intense competition for adherents and try harder—through innovation and commitment—to retain their adherents and attract new members. Among Boomers in this case-study, qualified support for this theory emerged. The ethnographic data clearly demonstrated that parishes and pastors “trying harder,” by being warm and welcoming to newcomers, effectively drew recent migrants into the parish. Recent arrivals—seeking to reestablish forfeited social networks—may then develop friendships with co-religionists and co-parishioners, which was the most robust predictor for sustained commitment as measured by Mass attendance and involvement in parish-sponsored programs. The support for the theory must be qualified, however. According to some pastors and respondents, the parishes and their programs have been successful because the laity has been intricately involved and empowered to lead the available programs. In this sense, it was not the religious suppliers per se, but the religious consumers (parishioners)—under the guidance of the religious suppliers—that became responsible for the success and growth of the parish.\textsuperscript{346}

The second theory relating to small market share religions suggested that only the most committed members of the minority faith stay in the faith. Marginal or less committed members could defect to other, more common, religions that serve as close substitutes. There was little evidence that a host of marginal Catholic Boomers abandoned their faith upon moving to the region. In fact, by looking at the changes in their behaviors upon arriving to the region, most notably Mass attendance and financial

\textsuperscript{346} While religious consumers (parishioners) may initiate and sustain some parish programs, the activities ultimately require the approval of the pastor in order to be affiliated with the parish.
contributions, they were more committed to their particular minority faith. Additionally, there are few close substitutes for Catholicism in the region. Southern Baptists, the most dominant faith, is quite dissimilar in theology and ritual practice. Further, most Boomer Catholics have been entrenched in their faith having built up, in some cases, half a century of very specialized religious capital. Of course, this case-study had no way of finding Boomers who defected from the faith. Only those who were either attending Mass during one of three weekends or registered with a parish received the survey. In the future, it will be instructive to poll other religious denominations, especially the larger non-denominational churches, to seek out ex-Catholic Boomers and try to uncover reasons for their defection.

The notion of an “embattled minority” was presented as the third explanation for increased religious commitment among members in small market share faiths. Most of the support for this theory among Boomer Catholics was presented in the previous section. Some empirical findings were supportive of this theory, such as increased bible reading, but other results were either inconclusive or undermined the theory of the “embattled minority.” For example, among the entire sample a negative relationship

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347 Eighty-five percent of Boomers in this study were baptized Catholic as infants.

348 Recounting a beach-side baptismal ceremony at a non-denominational church, Hope Chapel, in southern California, Donald E. Miller (1997: 39) observed that about a third of the seventy or so newly baptized members were former Catholics. Miller’s empirical data supported this observation. In his study of emerging non-denominational, “new paradigm” churches, 28 percent of churchgoers were raised as Catholics (69).

349 One finding is not mentioned above. Compared to retired Boomers, non-retired Boomers were slightly more likely to perceive their religious minority, but twice as likely to report experiences of religious discrimination.
emerged between both perception of minority status and religious bias and Mass attendance. The qualitative data, however, was more supportive of the theory that tension with the surrounding culture had uplifting effects on religious commitment.

7.4.2. Catholic Boomers, Retirement, and Life Cycle Effects

Catholic Boomers, especially retired respondents, are entering a phase of life that has been associated with increased religious activity. Dillon and Wink (2007) supported earlier studies in discovering a significant increase in religiousness from late-middle adulthood to late adulthood, or from one’s fifties into their seventies (see also Miller and Nakamura 1996). But the pair also noted the increase in this age cohort-group came after a religious “dip” in middle adulthood. The levels of religiosity never quite returned to levels reported at adolescence. Retired Catholic Boomers in the Diocese of Raleigh appear to follow the pattern described by Dillon and Wink (2007).

Comments from and discussions with Catholic Boomers revealed that more available free time resulting from retirement is inextricably linked to increased religious commitment as measured by Mass attendance, participation in parish-sponsored events, volunteering in the community, and participation in parish social events. The empirical data supported the anecdotes of heightened participation upon retiring. The only caveat: non-retired Boomers read the bible more frequently than retired Boomers. This finding, however, may be a function of working-Boomers’ increased exposure to other, non-Catholic, faiths. Protestantism is the majority overarching faith represented in the region.
Protestants read the bible more frequently and this practice may rub off on the Boomers still in the workforce.

While retired Boomers increased their religious behaviors to approach the level of prior generations, it does not appear that their religious attitudes will follow suit. As noted in Chapter 4, Catholic Boomers are much less orthodox in their beliefs than the Pre-Vatican II Generation. Further, Boomers espoused less institutional support and more personal autonomy when compared to prior generations. On these measures, substantial differences failed to emerge between retired and non-retired Boomers. Religious behaviors may have changed upon Boomers’ retirement, but religious and moral attitudes held steady.

7.4.3. The Effect of Migration, Social Networks, and Southern Religiosity on Boomer Catholics

Isolating the influence of regional migration on religiosity is a complicated task having to take into account the age at which an individual moved, the region from which the individual moved, the destination to which the individual migrated, and the religious commitment level of those willing to move in the first place. Chapter 3 outlined these various issues and presented research detailing the findings. In short, the theorists pointed to both the disruption of location-specific religious capital and the breakdown of established social networks in the churches as catalysts behind depressed religious

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350 Calling the phenomenon a variety of names–integration-disruption hypothesis (Welch and Baltzell 1984), social bond theory (Bainbridge 1990), dislocation (Stump 1984a), location-specific religious capital (Myers 2000)–researchers focused on the importance of social relationships in maintaining religious commitment.
commitment among regional transplants. The first wave of new acquaintances, these theorists argued, may not be co-religionists especially in a region dominated by another faith. Therefore, there may be a lack of coercion to continue with religious practice in the original faith and possibly efforts by the new acquaintances to take up the majority faith.

Regardless of the various causes of increased religious activity among Boomer transplants in this data set, regional migration did not appear to adversely impact religious commitment. Granted, those who fell completely away from the faith and did not register with a parish in the diocese were not included in the study. All indications, however, provided by the quantitative and qualitative data results pointed to heightened religious participation after migration. At a minimum, there was religious stability among the Boomer transplants.

Retired Catholic Boomers encountered a host of variables in migrating to the Diocese of Raleigh. The sacrifice of location-specific religious capital and the loss of an established social network were not enough to adversely impact the religious commitment level of this set of Catholic Boomers. In fact, the desire to replace forsaken social networks, the addition of free time through retirement, and the impact of a more religious regional environment appeared to overshadow any detrimental effects migration could have had on religiosity.

7.5. A Final Synthesis

It is unwise to assume that every retiring Boomer Catholic experienced identical surges in religious activity upon arriving in the Diocese of Raleigh. Changes in religious
commitment can occur at any moment and for a host of reasons. For example, the most religiously committed sub-group in the entire sample consisted of widows.\textsuperscript{351} The death of a spouse or other significant life event can push an individual toward their faith and their religious community for ongoing support.

While keeping the intensely personal nature of religious behavior in mind, the task of this case-study was to identify specific trends in religious beliefs and behaviors of a particular subset of the population—retired Catholic Baby Boomers migrating to the Diocese of Raleigh, NC. The sample size of the study was large enough to identify tendencies in behavior and belief and to provide a reasonable amount of confidence in them.\textsuperscript{352} What follows is a compilation of these trends into a synthesized picture of Boomer Catholicism in the Diocese of Raleigh, NC.

Among arriving Boomer Catholics to the Diocese of Raleigh, a type of commitment-inducing cycle emerged from the data. Noting recent migratory trends, more and more (northern and midwestern) Catholics continued to move into the diocesan region. The majority of new arrivals, at least in the parishes in retirement destinations, reported being retired or will be in the near future. With retirement came a new allotment of free time. At the same time, there was an expressed and perceived need for lay contributions in regional parishes due to the fewer number of priests. The additional free time allowed for increased commitment, such as Mass attendance and involvement in

\textsuperscript{351} Ten percent of the total sample reported their “current marital status” as widow/widower.

\textsuperscript{352} Surveys from 760 Catholic Boomers were submitted. About one-third of these respondents also contributed additional comments.
both in-parish and extra-parish volunteer activities. In addition to the more religious regional environment, the average level of commitment increased among parishioners. This higher average commitment level put more pressure, overt and latent, on others to become more involved.353

The abundant variety and number of parish-sponsored programs emerged because parishes have the lay resources (with time available) to lead the programs. At the same time, regional pastors, at least the majority of them interviewed for this study, empowered the laity to take on these roles. More activities allowed for more leadership opportunities and the diversity of activities appealed to a wider audience. The end result: more people contributing more time.354

The perception of a religiously committed regional environment helped parishes and parishioners develop a *culture of commitment*. This *culture of commitment* was presented to newly arriving Boomer Catholics through the wealth of parish activities, the tremendously high rate of weekly Mass attendance, and the level of volunteer participation. New arrivals turned to local parishes in search of fellow northerners (and Catholics) and for social networks to replace the ones abandoned by a regional move. They were welcomed into a community and became socially attached to a parish with a heightened level of average commitment. The higher level of participation served as a coercive mechanism for newcomers to alter their commitment to match those around

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353 This effect is highlighted by Kelley (1972) and later demonstrated more in depth by Iannaccone (1994). See the Appendix in Iannaccone (1994) for more details.

354 This model is different from other parish models where a small minority of volunteers contributes the majority of time and energy for running committees and parish programs.
them. The coercive power was even more effective because fellow parishioners became *friends* with the transplants. New arrivals became more religiously committed because established arrivals were already highly committed!

The *culture of commitment* is not limited to Catholics in the region. The Protestant religious environment also contributed to increases in religiosity among Boomer transplants. The public discussion of religion and the higher rates of biblical literacy among those in the majority faith spilled over across denominational lines and appeared to influence Catholic migrants—the new residents adapted to this environment. For example, the longer Boomers lived in the region the more likely they became frequent bible readers.

The vignette of a Boomer couple recounted at the outset of this chapter roughly followed this data-supported pattern. The same trajectory was reported in dozens of other conversations with Boomers in the region. The move (in most cases south) after retirement has been viewed as an opportunity to “start anew.” The new allotment of free-time allowed for residents to follow their interests whether they were recreational, spiritual and religious, or rooted in voluntarism. And, in the majority of parishes in the Diocese of Raleigh, there were plenty of programs and opportunities to utilize the burgeoning supply of temporal and financial capital.

The future looks bright for the Catholic Church in the Diocese of Raleigh, at least for the next few decades. As time passes, however, it is easy to wonder what will happen to the parishes that have grown so big through migrating, northern Boomer retirees (and previous generations). Being located primarily in retirement destinations, these parishes
will need to continue drawing migrants to the region. Right now, the parishes lack the young families and youth to replace the Boomer population. The worry is oft-repeated in comments and conversations. Calls for more schools in the region were offered as a partial solution. Parish programs designed for the youth, akin to the services offered at the larger Baptist and non-denominational churches, were also recommended. Without retired Boomers bringing their grown children with them, and few do, it is hard to envision the parishes retaining their growth over the long term. It will certainly be a story to follow.

7.6. At the End of the Day: “I Can’t Play Golf 24/7”

This chapter and study will end with one especially memorable encounter that reflects the nature of Boomer Catholicism in the Diocese of Raleigh, NC. Taking a leisurely break while researching parishes in the diocese, I headed to the driving range of a local golf course situated in an up-scale retirement neighborhood. It was after the morning rush, and the roomy range was empty. A few swings in, another golfer pulled up in a cart, grabbed a handful of clubs, and began warming up a few yards away. After exchanging customary greetings, he asked me what brought me to the area, “We don’t have a whole lot of youngsters here during the week.” Between swings, I explained the central aspects of my research. After finishing, he paused at the top of a swing and offered, “You’re studying folks just like me.” Fortunately, he did not mind talking a bit about his experiences.
A retired, northern Catholic, he and his wife moved a “few” years ago from New York. He commented, “Where else would I be from? Everyone’s either from New York or New Jersey around here. Get used to the accent.” He and his wife attend Mass weekly at the nearest parish because it is “part of our schedule” and it’s a good way to see their friends. Mass is typically followed by brunch with this same social circle. He has his non-Catholic friends too. Some are his golfing buddies, others are non-Catholics he either knew from “up north” or met through volunteering opportunities.

He and his wife volunteer occasionally and attend social and religious functions at the parish. Being this involved in a parish is a new experience for him. The couple raised children and both were involved in their northern parish through child-related activities, but little in addition to that. I asked, “What do you think is the reason for becoming more involved now when you weren’t involved before?” I began to offer up reasons—the priest, the more religious environment—when he stopped me with a wave of his 6-iron. “What else am I going to do?” he quipped. “I can’t play golf 24/7, so I might as well get involved.” With that answer, he hit the last ball from the small pile next to him. He shook my hand, wished me all the best, hopped in his cart, and headed back to the clubhouse. I hit a few more drives, but I couldn’t focus on my swing. I headed to the car with my clubs, drove to my hotel, popped open my laptop, and began writing.
APPENDIX 1:  
THE PROCESS OF PARISH SELECTION

The parishes contacted for participation in the study were determined using data acquired from *The Official Catholic Directory, The Association of Religious Data Archives*, United States Census Bureau, and North Carolina Office of State Budget and Management. U.S. Census data was examined to discover counties within the Diocese of Raleigh, North Carolina exhibiting high rates of new home construction. These results were compared with information gathered from the North Carolina Office of State Budget and Management to determine (1) the percentage of Baby Boomers (age 45 to 64 in 2007) of the total county population, (2) the median age of the county, and (3) the percentage change in population from 2000 to 2007. These results were cross-checked with other analyses on population and migration trends in North Carolina.\(^{355}\)

Three distinctive regions emerged within the Diocese of Raleigh which experienced, and continue to experience, a substantial influx of older migrants. These areas, not surprisingly, have been among the fastest growing in terms of new construction and possessed the highest population growth rates in the state (over 16.96% per year from 2000 to 2007). The regions also reported a high percentage of their population between the ages of 46 and 64 and above average median ages compared to the entire state. Finally, these areas of the diocese have been widely publicized in advertising and in cohort-specific literature as popular retirement destinations.

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The three distinct regions in the Diocese of Raleigh addressed in the study include: Southeastern coastal counties (Brunswick, New Hanover, and Pender counties), Southern Pines and Pinehurst (Moore county), and the North Carolina portion of Virginia Beach-Norfolk-Newport News, VA (Currituck, Pasquotank, and Camden counties). From these regions twelve total parishes were selected based on their size and potential for having high rates of retired parishioners.

After determining potential parishes, a letter was sent to the Vicar General of the Diocese of Raleigh, Monsignor David Brockman. After initially receiving approval for moving forward with the study in the fall of 2008, a further inquiry was requested by Bishop Michael Burbidge in spring 2009. Upon reviewing the survey instrument, Bishop Burbidge determined that the Diocese could not officially endorse the survey. The petitioned parishes were notified of the Bishop’s decision. In the end, the Diocese left the decision to participate in the study up to individual pastors.

Informational letters were sent to the pastors of twelve parishes asking to participate in the study. In addition to outlining the value of the study, the letter stressed the anonymity of the parishes and potential respondents. For participating in the study, parishes were offered an executive summary of the survey results along with the code book detailing results of the entire sample. Of the twelve pastors contacted, nine agreed to have their parish participate in the study. Based on size and location, this number was pared down to six parishes with at least one parish from each diocesan region.
When compared to the national sample in the CARA report, the Catholic respondents in the Diocese of Raleigh report significantly higher levels of Mass attendance across each age bracket. The Diocese of Raleigh sample only includes respondents who received the mailed survey. The CARA sample only includes respondents *registered* with a Catholic parish.

**Table A.1. Mass Attendance by Generation (in percent) – Mailed Sample versus CARA (parish registered)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>“Aside from weddings and funerals, about how often do you attend Mass?”</th>
<th>Diocese of Raleigh</th>
<th>2008 CARA National Sample</th>
<th>2008 CARA National Sample</th>
<th>Weekly or more often</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>G.I. and Silent Generations (1901-42)</strong></td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>25.2</td>
<td>25.2</td>
<td>87.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Baby Boomer Generation (1943-60)</strong></td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>47.5</td>
<td>54.7</td>
<td>70.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>13th and Millennial Generations (1961+)</strong></td>
<td>27.6</td>
<td>29.5</td>
<td>20.1</td>
<td>42.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

265
The General Social Surveys from the years 2000 to 2008 are consolidated into a single data file. The table below isolates respondents who self-identified as Catholic.

Table A.2. Catholic Mass Attendance by Educational Attainment (in percent)—2000-2008 General Social Survey Consolidated Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>“How often do you attend religious services?”</th>
<th>Once a year or less</th>
<th>Several times per year/once a month</th>
<th>2-3 times per month/almost weekly</th>
<th>Weekly or more often</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than high school</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school graduate</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some college</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s degree</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate or professional degree</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=2,924

Table A.3. Logistic Regression Predicting Weekly Mass Attendance (Pre-Vatican II and Vatican II/Boomers)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th></th>
<th>Model 2</th>
<th></th>
<th>Model 3</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FRDPAR3</td>
<td>1.340</td>
<td>3.817*</td>
<td>(.24)</td>
<td>1.232</td>
<td>3.429*</td>
<td>(.28)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RELOUT2</td>
<td>-0.892</td>
<td>0.410**</td>
<td>(.34)</td>
<td>-1.508</td>
<td>0.221**</td>
<td>(.45)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RELMIN3</td>
<td>0.263</td>
<td>1.300</td>
<td>(.18)</td>
<td>0.404</td>
<td>1.498+</td>
<td>(.22)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MIGRATE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.012</td>
<td>0.988</td>
<td>(.20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHURIMPR</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.180</td>
<td>3.256*</td>
<td>(.16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CATDIFF3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.096</td>
<td>0.908</td>
<td>(.20)</td>
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<tr>
<td>MARITAL3</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.241</td>
<td>0.786</td>
<td>(.33)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRADE2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>RETIRED</td>
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<tr>
<td>SEX2</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>AGE</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

N=368

*p<.10; **p<.01; *p<.001
APPENDIX 3:
QUALITATIVE DATA AND COLLECTION METHOD

Qualitative data can be defined as any non-numerical data that is captured in reference to the research subjects. Examples of qualitative data include observations of the subjects in their environment, conversations with or interviews of the research subjects, analysis of written documents, or any other field research that contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of the subjects (Trochim 2006). Miles and Huberman (1994: 10) tout the exceptional, multifaceted value of qualitative data:

[Qualitative data] often have been advocated as the best strategy for discovery, exploring a new area, developing hypotheses. In addition we underline their strong potential for testing hypotheses, seeing whether specific predictions hold up. Finally, qualitative data are useful when one needs to supplement, validate, explain, illuminate, or reinterpret quantitative data gathered from the same setting.

This dissertation, at times, employs all three strategies of qualitative data analysis. While the survey instrument and quantitative data analysis is designed to assess particular hypotheses regarding Catholics migrating to the Diocese of Raleigh, reviewing the qualitative data may, by itself, open up new areas of discussion not envisioned earlier in the project (Constable et al. 2005). For example, the bitterness some parishioners expressed toward Hispanics—both in the parish and the local community—is not assessed in the quantitative analysis. The qualitative data results, however, usher in new questions concerning the relationship between ethnic groups, parish contributions, and the role of charity.

Second, limitations of the survey instrument may prevent effective investigation of all pertinent research questions. Qualitative methods provide insight into these areas
of interest. One hypothesis not directly investigated by the survey instrument in this study concerns the impact an increase of free time associated with workplace retirement may have on parish participation and weekly Mass attendance. Interviews allowed for respondents to be asked about the role of additional free time on parish participation. In the end, additional time allotment was often cited as a primary reason behind increased levels of parish participation.

Third, the entire project, as a case-study, is exploratory in nature. Therefore, the empirical data findings must be checked against the “real world” experiences Catholics living in the Diocese of Raleigh. For example, analysis of the surveys discovered that Catholics in the Diocese of Raleigh attend Mass more often than their counterparts in a national sample. This is true even when isolating respondents receiving the survey by mail and considering comparable age cohort-groups. Because of the discrepancy, questions may arise as to the validity of this finding without any further investigation. Written comments and interviews with parishioners and pastors revealed that their perception is consistent with the empirical data–Catholics in the Diocese attend more often and are more committed to their parish and faith than elsewhere. In addition to providing confirmation, qualitative studies contribute to a more complete explanation of findings resulting from quantitative data analysis. For example, comments can be probed to help explain how minority status, religious discrimination, and migration timing influence the frequency of bible reading.
Qualitative Methodology

Traditionally, there have been few standard guidelines for qualitative study (Miles 1979). Additionally, it is a challenge to isolate the researcher’s bias and interpretive framework from the input of research subjects. In essence, the heuristic approach invariably creates a dilemma between objectivity and subjectivity. One common critique of qualitative analysis, usually from positivistic minded detractors, is that the researcher is the sole research tool (Borman et al. 1986). As a result, there is no independent check on the methods by which the researcher selects samples and collects data. Neither is there an unbiased arbiter for conclusions drawn from data gathering. The qualitative researcher filters and interprets the data gathered (using his or her own subjective method) and may manipulate such data to support preconceived notions (Borman et al. 1986; Wolcott 1975). In short, the data may not speak for itself as it is gathered, interpreted, and presented through the lens and biases of the researcher.

Even with the above charges, qualitative analysis is valuable if it is done with discipline and routinely checked against other studies and modes of data (Borman et al. 1986; Miles and Huberman 1994).356 Recognizing the potential pitfalls in qualitative data analysis, I employed data gathering methods which help reduce my observer bias. First, the survey instrument provided ample room for comments on a number of questions, especially ones requiring additional explanation outside the pre-determined coded answers. For example, one survey item inquired about differences in Catholicism between the southern region and elsewhere. In addition, to the “Yes,” “No,” and “Not

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356 This process has been called “triangulation” by some qualitative researchers.
sure/No opinion” categories, space was provided for respondents to write “in what manner or fashion” Catholicism in the South is different than elsewhere. Additionally, the final page of the survey asked respondents for any other insights into the practice of Catholicism in the Diocese of Raleigh.

Second, the personal interviews with respondents were designed to be free flowing conversations instead of question/answer sessions with the researcher probing the respondent for particular answers.357 The interviews all began with an introduction of the researcher, the research project, and questions concerning the respondents’ experiences of Catholicism in the South. Notes were taken on the conversations and documented at a later time. While there was a rough outline for conversations with willing respondents, the intention was to allow for respondents to choose the direction of their account.358 Employing this type of narrative methodology and combining it with my own comments

357 The research subjects chosen for follow-up interviews were not selected at random from the entire sample. Rather, they were selected as a result of their demographic data. The dissertation seeks to uncover the changes in religious practice of recent Baby Boomer retirees arriving in the Diocese of Raleigh. Toward this end, respondents (who also included their telephone information) meeting this criteria were selected first for the follow-up interviews. Some native North Carolina Catholics were also included among those contacted as the dissertation seeks to uncover the effect of the massive influx of northerners on southern Catholic religious life. When potential interviewees requested written questions, they were provided. In all, thirty-six interviews were conducted. Nine interviews were with respondents native to North Carolina or having moved there more than fifteen years ago.

358 There may be a bias in the religious commitment and attitudes of respondents who volunteer for follow-up interviews. I may only have received the information from individuals to whom their religion is very important or are highly critical of the church. Further, do respondents feel at ease in revealing deep felt critiques of the Church? I have noticed that the comments have been very candid in their reporting of Catholicism in the Diocese of Raleigh.
on interviewee’s descriptions, I was able to produce both emic and etic descriptions of Catholicism in North Carolina.\textsuperscript{359}

\textsuperscript{359} An “emic” description entails using the words, phrases, and terms that are deemed meaningful to the respondent. The “emic” account comes from a person from within the culture being studied. In contrast, an “etic” description is one employed by the observer to explain beliefs or behaviors of the subjects of inquiry (Harris 1976). The “etic” description attempts to be culturally neutral in its explanation.
APPENDIX 4:
SURVEY INSTRUMENT AND FULL-SAMPLE RESULTS

The following survey was distributed either by mail or by hand. Two parishes provided its parish roll and surveys were mailed out to respondents with an accompanying explanatory letter. The mailings included self-addressed, stamped return envelopes.

Surveys that were distributed by hand were done so in four parishes at the back of church after Mass on three consecutive weeks. In each case, the pastor made an announcement about the availability of the surveys and asked the parishioners to participate. When the researcher was not present at the Mass, marked boxes containing the surveys were made placed at various exits. The surveys included self-addressed, stamped return envelopes.

The distributed survey was contained on eleven pages (six pages with printing on the front and back). With the over-sampling of women in the survey, the sample was weighted using the male to female ratio of the general population of the four counties in which the parishes are located. Due to rounding, the following results may not add up to 100 percent.

Distributed Survey and Full-Sample Results

1.) What is your gender? [SEX]
   □ □ Male 37%
   □ □ Female 62%

2.) How would you describe your race? [RACE]
   □ □ White 97%
   □ □ Black/African-American 1%
   □ □ Hispanic 1%
   □ □ Asian 1%
   □ □ Mixed 1%
   □ □ Other race (If other: ______________) 1%

3.) What year were you born? [BIRTHYR]
Average birth year: 1945

4.) Were you born in the United States or another country? [COUNTRY]
   □ □ United States 96%
   □ □ Other country (if other country: ______________) 4%

5.) Are you a citizen of the United States or another country? [CITIZEN]
   □ □ United States 99%
   □ □ Other country (if other country: ______________) 1%
6.) What is the highest grade that you completed in school? [GRADE]
- □  Less than High School  1%
- □  High School/Trade School Graduate  14%
- □  Some College  22%
- □  College Graduate  33%
- □  Post Graduate  30%

7.) What is your current marital status? [MARITAL]
- □  Married  80%
- □  Living with a partner  1%
- □  Never Married  4%
- □  Divorced/Separated  6%
- □  Widowed  9%

8.) Last week were you working full time, part time, going to school, retired, or something else? [EMPLOY]
- □  Working full time (35 hours a week or more)  24%
- □  Working part-time  6%
- □  On leave  ~
- □  Unemployed  2%
- □  Retired  58%
- □  Semi-retired (Retired and working part-time)  5%
- □  In school  1%
- □  Homemaker (not employed outside the home)  4%
- □  Other (if other: ________________________)  1%

9.) Are you a “native” to North Carolina or a “transplant” from another state/country? [NATIVENC]
- □  “Native” to North Carolina  5%
- □  “Transplant” or moved to North Carolina  94%
- □  Other (if other: ________________________)  1%

10.) If you moved to North Carolina, where did you move from? [MOVESREG]
- □  A different city/county in North Carolina  (please indicate city/county: ________________________)  2%
- □  A different state  67%
  (please indicate state: ________________________)
- □  A different country  1%
  (please indicate country: ________________________)
- □  N/A–I did not move in the last five years.  30%
12.) If you moved to North Carolina, how many years ago was your move? [MOVE5YR2]
   - Within the past year: 5%
   - 1-2 years ago: 10%
   - 3-4 years ago: 15%
   - 5-6 years ago: 11%
   - 7-10 years ago: 15%
   - 10-15 years ago: 18%
   - More than 15 years ago: 26%
   - Not applicable: I am “native to North Carolina”

13.) With which religion do you identify? [RELIG]
   - Catholic: 99%
   - Protestant (indicate denomination– Baptist, Methodist, etc.: _____________)
   - Orthodox (Greek Orthodox, Russian Orthodox, etc.): ~
   - Jewish: ~
   - Muslim: ~
   - Other religion: ~
   - No specific religion: ~
   - No religion (atheist/agnostic): ~

14.) If Catholic, when did you become Catholic? As a… [CATID]
   - An infant (Baptized as an infant): 86%
   - Child (ages 1-12): 2%
   - Teenager (ages 13-17): 1%
   - Adult (ages 18 or older): 12%

15.) If you converted to Catholicism as an adult, what was your religion before becoming Catholic? [RELIGB4]
   - Protestant (indicate denomination– Baptist, Methodist, etc.: _____________): 86%
   - Orthodox (Greek Orthodox, Russian Orthodox, etc.): 2%
   - Jewish: 2%
   - Muslim: ~
   - Other religion: 3%
   - No religion: 8%
16.) If you are married, please indicate the religious affiliation of your spouse.

[RELIGSP]

- □ Catholic 80%
- □ Protestant (indicate denomination– Baptist, Methodist, etc: ) 13%
- □ Orthodox (Greek Orthodox, Russian Orthodox, etc.) ~
- □ Jewish 1%
- □ Muslim ~
- □ Other religion 1%
- □ No specific religion 5%
- □ No religion (atheist/agnostic) 1%

17.) How important is religion in your life? [SALIENT]

- □ Very important 79%
- □ Somewhat important 19%
- □ Not too important 1%
- □ Not at all important ~
- □ Don’t know/No opinion ~

18.) Would you say your religion provides some, quite a bit, or a great deal of guidance in your day-to-day life? [GUIDE]

- □ Great deal of guidance 50%
- □ Quite a bit of guidance 37%
- □ Some guidance 13%
- □ No guidance ~

19.) Aside from weddings and funerals, about how often do you attend Mass? [ATTEND]

- □ Never 1%
- □ Less than once a year 1%
- □ Once or twice a year 1%
- □ Several times a year 2%
- □ Once a month 1%
- □ 2-3 times a month 8%
- □ Weekly 75%
- □ Several times a week 11%

20.) How often do you attend Mass on Holy Days of Obligation? [HOLYDAYS ]

- □ Never 3%
- □ Rarely 12%
- □ Sometimes 25%
- □ Regularly 59%
- □ Don’t know ~
21.) How long have you been attending Mass at your current parish? [ATTPARSH]

- □ Less than one year: 7%
- □ 1-2 years: 13%
- □ 3-5 years: 23%
- □ 6-10 years: 22%
- □ 10+ years: 35%
- □ Visitor to this church: 1%

22.) How did you find out about your current parish? Please check all that apply. [KNWPARSH]

- □ Attending parish since youth: Yes: 2%
- □ Through a friend: Yes: 15%
- □ Through family: Yes: 7%
- □ Phone book: Yes: 10%
- □ Diocesan website: Yes: 2%
- □ Parish is in the neighborhood: Yes: 56%
- □ Other: Yes: 17%

23.) What is/are the reason(s) why you attend your current parish? Please check all that apply. [WHYPARSH]

- □ Attending parish since youth: Yes: 4%
- □ I like the priest(s): Yes: 42%
- □ Closest one to home: Yes: 67%
- □ Friends attend same parish: Yes: 22%
- □ Family attends same parish: Yes: 7%
- □ Like the way the liturgy is performed: Yes: 36%
- □ Other reasons: Yes: 23%
24.) People miss Sunday Mass for a number of reasons. Please check all the reasons you have for not attending weekly Mass. [WHYMISS]

- Too busy [ ] Yes: 8%
- Parish is too far away [ ] Yes: 2%
- Recreational activities conflict (golf, soccer, etc.) [ ] Yes: 8%
- Don’t like the priest [ ] Yes: 3%
- Don’t like the liturgy service/ Don’t like the way liturgy is performed [ ] Yes: 2%
- No friends at the parish [ ] Yes: 1%
- Need a break from church/religion [ ] Yes: 3%
- Parish does not meet my needs [ ] Yes: 2%
- Other reasons: ________________________ [ ] Yes: 47%

25.) About how long is your drive to your current parish (in minutes) for Sunday Mass? [DRVTIME]

- Less than 10 minutes [ ] 24%
- 10-15 minutes [ ] 42%
- 15-25 minutes [ ] 27%
- 25-35 minutes [ ] 6%
- 35-45 minutes [ ] 1%
- 45 minutes to an hour [ ] ~
- More than an hour [ ] ~

26.) How many of your local friends are members of your current parish? [FRDPARISH]

- None [ ] 28%
- About one quarter [ ] 48%
- About half [ ] 14%
- About three quarters [ ] 7%
- All or nearly all [ ] 3%

27.) Is your current number of parish friends less, more, or the same as in your previous parish? [FRDNOW]

- Less [ ] 39%
- About the same [ ] 38%
- More [ ] 23%
28.) How many of your local friends are Catholic? [FRDCAT]

- □ None 16%
- □ About one quarter 50%
- □ About half 21%
- □ About three quarters 10%
- □ All or nearly all 4%

29.) Since moving to North Carolina, have you increased or decreased the following behaviors, or have they remained the same?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavior</th>
<th>Increased substantially</th>
<th>Increased slightly</th>
<th>Remained the same</th>
<th>Decreased slightly</th>
<th>Decreased significantly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance at Sunday Mass [29a–CHGATT5]</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation in parish-sponsored activities [29b–CHGPART5]</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monetary contributions to the parish [29c–CHGMONY5]</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bible reading outside of Mass [29d–CHGBIB5]</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prayer outside of Mass [29e–CHGPRYR5]</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small faith community [29f–CHGSFC5]</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

30.) Outside of attending religious services, how often have you read the Bible in the past year? [BIBFRQ]

- □ Never 36%
- □ Once or twice 22%
- □ Several times in the past year 18%
- □ Once a month 3%
- □ 2-3 times a month 5%
- □ Weekly 6%
- □ Several times a week or more often 9%
31.) Outside of religious services, how often have you prayed in the last year? [PRYRFRQ]

- □ Never: 1%
- □ Once or twice: 2%
- □ Several times in the past year: 6%
- □ Once a month: 1%
- □ 2-3 times a month: 4%
- □ Weekly: 11%
- □ Several times a week or more often: 76%

32.) How often have you received the sacrament of reconciliation (Confession) in the last year? [CNFSNFRQ]

- □ Never: 48%
- □ Once or twice: 37%
- □ Several times in the past year: 11%
- □ Once a month: 1%
- □ 2-3 times a month: 1%
- □ Weekly: 2%
- □ Several times a week or more often: ~

33.) How often have you prayed the rosary in the last year? [ROSRYFRQ]

- □ Never: 39%
- □ Once or twice: 17%
- □ Several times in the past year: 16%
- □ Once a month: 4%
- □ 2-3 times a month: 5%
- □ Weekly: 5%
- □ Several times a week or more often: 15%
34.) How often have you participated in the following religious activities over the last year?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Occasionally</th>
<th>Once a month or more</th>
<th>Once a week or more</th>
<th>Once a day or more</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adult religious education programs, such as Bible study or faith sharing [34a–RELEDFRQ]</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>~</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eucharistic Adoration [34b–EUCADFRQ]</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choir practice or other musical programs [34c–CHOIRFRQ]</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>~</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parish-sponsored counseling programs [34d–CNSLFRQ]</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>~</td>
<td>~</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer in the community through parish programs [34e–PVOLFRQ]</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer in the community, but not through the church or parish programs [34f–NPVOLFRQ]</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parish upkeep and maintenance [34g–WORKFRQ]</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parish-sponsored prayer meetings [34h–PRYRMFRQ]</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>~</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Committee or administrative work at your parish [34i–ADMINFRQ]</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small faith or discipleship group [34j–SFGFRQ]</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>~</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

35.) Do you feel like a religious minority living in North Carolina? In other words, do you feel that the number of Catholics is far less than the number of people belonging to other religions? [RELMINOR]

□ □ Yes 54%
□ □ No 34%
□ □ Not sure/No opinion 12%

36.) Living as a Catholic in the South, have you ever felt like an outsider or treated differently because of your faith? [RELOUT]

□ □ Yes 24%
□ □ No 69%
□ □ Not sure/No opinion 7%
37.) Have you ever felt like an outsider or treated differently in your own parish?
[RELOUTP]
☐ ☐ Yes 11%
☐ ☐ No 85%
☐ ☐ Not sure/No opinion 5%

38.) In your experience, have you felt that Catholicism in the South is different than Catholicism as you formerly experienced the faith? [CATDIFF]
☐ ☐ Yes 32%
In what manner or fashion: ____________________________________________

☐ ☐ No 55%
☐ ☐ Not sure/No opinion 12%

39.) Over the last 3 years, have you increased or decreased the following behaviors, or have they remained the same?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavior</th>
<th>Increased substantially</th>
<th>Increased slightly</th>
<th>Remained the same</th>
<th>Decreased slightly</th>
<th>Decreased significantly</th>
<th>N/A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance at Sunday Mass [39a–CHGATT3]</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation in parish-sponsored activities [39b–CHGPART3]</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monetary contributions to the parish [39c–CHGMONY3]</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bible reading outside of Mass [39d–CHGBIB3]</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prayer outside of Mass [39e–CHGPRYR3]</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small faith community [39f–CHGSFC3]</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

40.) Have you ever invited any of the following to come to your parish Mass with you?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Invited to Mass</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>…family? [40a–INVITFAM]</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>…friends? [40b–INVITFRI]</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>…neighbors? [40c–INVITNGH]</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>…your co-workers? (if applicable) [40d–INVITCOW]</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>…strangers? [40e–INVITSTR]</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
41.) Have any of the following invited you to their church (Catholic or non-Catholic)?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>…family? [41a–INVBYFAM]</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>…friends? [41b–INVBYFRI]</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>…neighbors? [41c–INVBYNGH]</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>…your co-workers? (if applicable) [41d–INVBYCOW]</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>…strangers? [41e–INVBYSTR]</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

42.) Which one statement comes CLOSEST to your personal beliefs about the Bible? [BIBLE]

☐ □ It means exactly what it says. It should be taken literally. 13%
☐ □ It is perfectly true, but should not be taken literally. 45%
☐ □ The Bible contains some human error. 19%
☐ □ The Bible is an ancient book of history and legends 11%
☐ □ I don't know 12%

43.) Which one statement comes CLOSEST to your personal beliefs about God? [GOD]

☐ □ I have no doubts that God exists. 83%
☐ □ I believe in God, but with some doubts. 15%
☐ □ I sometimes believe in God. ~
☐ □ I believe in a higher power or cosmic force. 3%
☐ □ I don't believe in anything beyond the physical world. ~
☐ □ I have no opinion. ~

44.) Which one statement comes CLOSEST to your personal beliefs about Jesus? [JESUS]

☐ □ Jesus is the son of God. 95%
☐ □ Jesus was one of many messengers or prophets of God. 4%
☐ □ Jesus was an extraordinary person, but was not a messenger of God. 1%
☐ □ Jesus probably existed, but he was not special. ~
☐ □ Jesus is a fictional character. ~
☐ □ I have no opinion. ~

45.) Which one of the following statements comes CLOSEST to your views on life after death? [LIFAFT]

☐ □ I am sure there is life after death. 68%
☐ □ I believe in life after death but have some doubts. 28%
☐ □ I think there is no life after death, but I am not certain. 3%
☐ □ I am sure there is no life after death. 1%
46.) Which of the following statements BEST fits your view of salvation? [SALVTIN]

- □ Belief in Jesus Christ as the *only* way to salvation. 44%
- □ Belief in Jesus Christ as *one* way to salvation, but there are other ways as well. 53%
- □ Belief in Jesus Christ is *not* relevant to salvation. 2%

47.) Which of the following statements BEST reflects your belief about the Eucharist/Holy Communion? [EUCHBEL]

- □ □ Jesus Christ is really present in the bread and wine of the Eucharist. 85%
- □ □ Bread and wine are symbols of Jesus, but Jesus is not really present. 15%

48.) Please mark whether you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding the priesthood.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Somewhat agree</th>
<th>Don't know or No opinion</th>
<th>Somewhat disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It would be a good thing if priests who have married were allowed to return to active ministry. [48a–MARPRSTR]</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It would be a good thing if married men were allowed to be ordained as priests. [48b–MARPRST]</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It would be a good thing if celibate women were allowed to be ordained as priests. [48c–CWOMPSTR]</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It would be a good thing if married women were allowed to be ordained as priests. [48d–MWOMPSTR]</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
49.) How much do you agree with the following statements?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Somewhat agree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am proud to be a Catholic.</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>~</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[49a–CATPROUD]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>I think of myself as a practicing Catholic.</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[49b–CATPRACT]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sacraments are essential to my faith.</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[49c–SACIMPT]</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can be a good Catholic without going to Mass every Sunday.</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[49d–MASSIMPT]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In deciding what is morally acceptable, I look to Catholic Church teachings and statements made by the Pope and Bishops to form my conscience.</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[49e–FORMCONS]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Pope is infallible on all matters of religious faith.</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[49f–POPE]</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Catholic Church is the one true Church.</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[49g–TRUECHUR]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s important to obey Church teachings even if I don’t understand them.</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[49h–OBEYCHUR]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My parish is an important part of my life.</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[49i–CHURIMPR]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I give more than my fair share of money to the church.</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[49j–GIVEALOT]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

50.) Which of the following statements best reflects your view on evolution?

[EVOLUT]

- □ □ Humans and other living things have evolved due to natural processes such as natural selection. 11%
- □ □ A supreme being guided the evolution of living things for the purpose of creating humans and other life in the form it exists today. 63%
- □ □ The world was brought about in six, 24-hour days as is recounted in Genesis in the Bible. 14%
- □ □ Other/Don’t know. 11%
Indicate your belief about the following...

51.) Jesus was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. [JCBRNMRY]
- □ I have never doubted this. 78%
- □ I have had doubts about this in the past, but I have none now. 6%
- □ I have a few doubts about this from time to time. 13%
- □ I frequently doubt this. 2%
- □ I do not believe this. 1%

52.) Mary, the Mother of God, was immaculately conceived without original sin. [MRYNOSIN]
- □ I have never doubted this. 76%
- □ I have had doubts about this in the past, but I have none now. 7%
- □ I have a few doubts about this from time to time. 13%
- □ I frequently doubt this. 2%
- □ I do not believe this. 2%

53.) Jesus rose from the dead and ascended to heaven. [JCROSE]
- □ I have never doubted this. 85%
- □ I have had doubts about this in the past, but I have none now. 4%
- □ I have a few doubts about this from time to time. 9%
- □ I frequently doubt this. 1%
- □ I do not believe this. 1%

54.) Christ will come again at the end of time to judge the living and the dead. [JCRTRN]
- □ I have never doubted this. 75%
- □ I have had doubts about this in the past, but I have none now. 5%
- □ I have a few doubts about this from time to time. 16%
- □ I frequently doubt this. 3%
- □ I do not believe this. 2%

55.) The Pope and the Bishops of the Church have by divine institution succeeded Saint Peter and the apostles of Jesus as pastors of the Church. [POPESUC]
- □ I have never doubted this. 59%
- □ I have had doubts about this in the past, but I have none now. 6%
- □ I have a few doubts about this from time to time. 26%
- □ I frequently doubt this. 5%
- □ I do not believe this. 4%
56.) In your opinion, is this following behavior always morally wrong, wrong except under certain circumstances, or is it entirely up to the individual?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavior</th>
<th>Always morally wrong</th>
<th>Wrong except under certain conditions</th>
<th>Entirely up to the individual</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Use of condoms or birth control pills to prevent pregnancy.</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Premarital sex.</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Termination of a pregnancy by having an abortion.</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engaging in homosexual acts.</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

57.) In politics, do you usually think of yourself as a Republican, a Democrat, Libertarian or independent? [POLITID]

- Strong Republican 30%
- Weak Republican 18%
- Strict Independent 19%
- Weak Democrat 9%
- Strong Democrat 15%
- Libertarian 2%
- Other 6%
58.) To what extent do you agree or disagree that the federal government should…

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Somewhat agree</th>
<th>Don’t know or No opinion</th>
<th>Somewhat disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>…abolish the death penalty.</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[58a–ABDEATH]</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>…fund faith-based organizations.</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[58b–FAITHORG]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>…allow the display of religious symbols in public spaces.</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[58c–DSPLYREL]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>…allow prayer in public schools.</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[58d–SCHLPRYR]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>…provide vouchers to parents to help pay for their children to attend private or religious schools.</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[58e–VOUCHER]</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thank you for completing this survey for the North Carolina Catholicism Project. All of your answers are confidential and will remain anonymous. There will also be a series of follow-up interviews. If you are willing to be contacted for one of these interviews, please write your first name, a nickname, or your initials in the space provided below along with a phone number. After the interview is complete, your phone number is completely separated from your answers. Individual responses will not be identified.

Please fill in the following sections if you are willing to participate in a follow-up interview in person or by phone. The interviews will allow for respondents to give full answers to more in-depth questions. Again, the answers will be completely anonymous and pseudonyms will be used to protect individual and parish identities.

First Name and Last Initial: ____________________________________________________________

Phone number (with area code): ______________________________________________________

Any additional comments on the survey or Catholicism in North Carolina?
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
REFERENCES


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