

## NEWS RELEASE

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### SURVEY RESULTS SHOW PEOPLE KNOWLEDGEABLE ABOUT THEIR PARISH

The results of the survey taken in the 151 parishes of the Diocese of Allentown on the weekend of September 15-16 show the almost 60,000 respondents are very knowledgeable about the liturgical services (Mass and the Sacraments) offered by their parish.

Majorities are also aware of the existence of religious education for high school students, the existence of pastoral and finance councils at the parish level, and about outreach to people who are not members of the parish.

Across the Diocese demographically: 59% of the respondents were female, 39% male. Two-thirds of the respondents were married. 49% were between 16-55 and 49% were 56 and older. The respondents were evenly distributed among five choices for the number of years they had belonged to the parish; although the largest single group, 22% belonged to their parish their entire life.

90% of the respondents to the survey said they were very or somewhat attached to their parish.

The results of the survey will be among the information used by the 33 Deanery Region Committees around the Diocese to make recommendations to the Diocesan Pastoral Council on the consolidation and restructuring of parishes and on the other topics of the Synod: Strengthening Catholic Family Life, Cultivating and Recruiting Candidates for Holy Orders and the Consecrated Life, Planning the Fiscal Feasibility of Catholic Schools, Ensuring Effective Catechetical Programs, and Evangelizing Youth and Young Adults.

Doctor Carmina Magnusen-Chapp, who chaired the Diocesan Pastoral Council committee that developed the survey said, "For those parishes that will be restructuring, it is imperative that the pastors use the survey to know just how well their parishioners understand the actual situation of their parish before they begin to discuss restructuring possibilities."

All baptized Catholics 16 years of age or older, who are residents of the Diocese of Allentown, and attended Mass the weekend the survey was conducted were eligible to participate. The survey was completely anonymous. Participants were not required to sign their name in order to fill out a survey.

The Most Reverend Edward P. Cullen, Bishop of Allentown said, "This survey will enable parishioners, pastors and deanery regions to reflect on current strengths and

challenges of their parishes with a view to forming strong parochial families with a vibrant faith,”