



DIOCESE OF CAMDEN

DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS IMPACTING THE DIOCESE OF CAMDEN – 2006

Introduction

Presently Roman Catholics are the largest religious denomination within the six counties comprising the Camden Diocese. Within the total population 33.5% of the people identify themselves as Catholic, compared with the national average of 23.7%. However the Catholic population varies significantly and the demographics are changing within the diocese. The changes within the Catholic population in South Jersey reflect what is happening across the U.S.

This report highlights some major demographic trends that will continue to impact the Diocese of Camden in the years ahead. These trends are interrelated and often they are local variations of national trends. For example, the local growth in the Hispanic population increases the total number of Catholics, the growth in the multicultural population, and the income disparity that is occurring across the U.S.

The purpose of this narrative is to inform and provoke further thinking and discussion about the factors that influence strategic planning for the future. These factors will affect how the Church carries out the mission entrusted to it and how pastoral services will be provided to all parts of the Diocese of Camden.

Deanery Structure in the Diocese of Camden

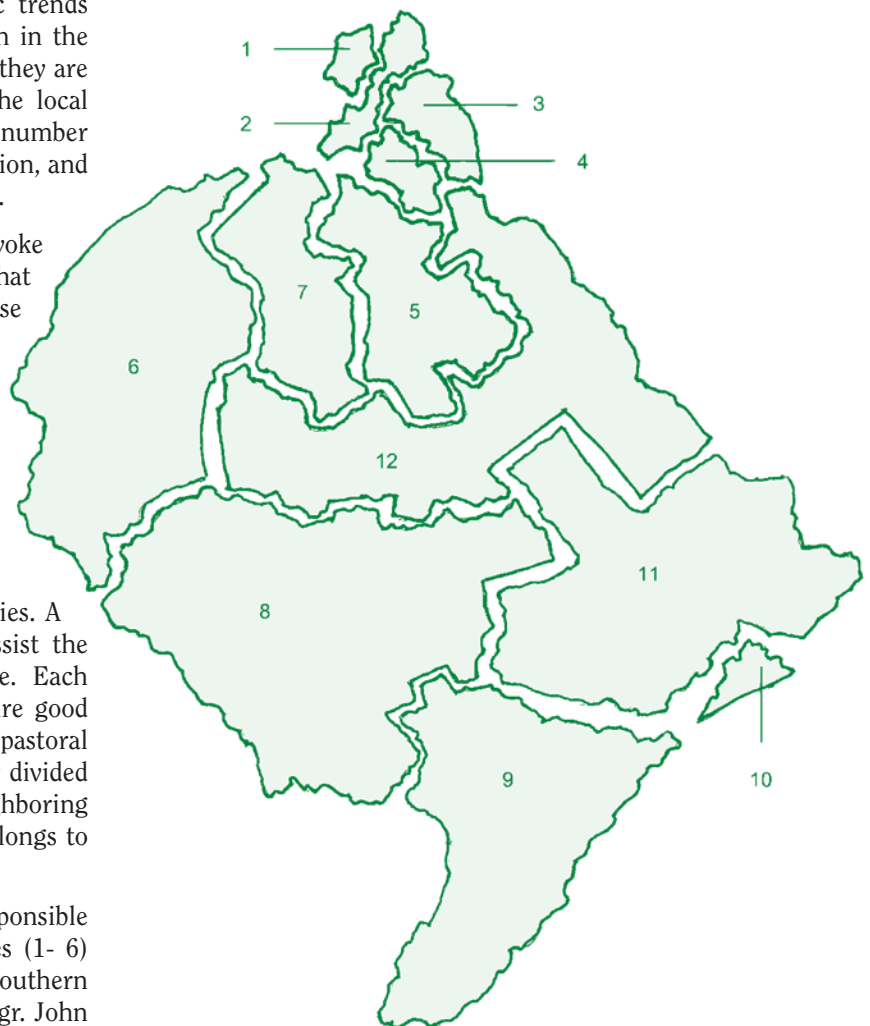
The Diocese of Camden is divided into 12 deaneries. A deanery is a grouping of parishes organized to assist the Bishop in promoting more effective pastoral care. Each deanery is headed by a dean whose role is to ensure good communication and to promote and coordinate pastoral activity within the deanery. Every deanery is further divided into 2 or 3 regions, each made up of 3 - 7 neighboring parishes. Each of the 124 parishes in the diocese belongs to one of the regions.

In the Diocese of Camden each Vicar General is responsible for six deaneries. The northern deans and deaneries (1- 6) work together with Msgr. Robert McDermott. The southern deans and deaneries (7 - 12) work together with Msgr. John Burton.

Diocesan and Deanery Reporting

The graphs and charts as well as the text in this report are intended to provide information about the entire diocese as well as the deaneries. Demographics presented by deanery indicate the deanery number (1 - 12) on the bottom of the graph. Mission data is included with that of the parish, except for Mater Ecclesiae Mission, Berlin.

Map of the Deaneries of the Diocese



Deaneries, Regions, and Parishes

Deanery 1 (Camden City)

Region 1 Parishes (4): St. Joseph, Sacred Heart, St. Bartholomew, St. Joan of Arc

Region 2 Parishes (4): St. Joseph Pro Cathedral, Holy Name, St. Anthony, Our Lady of Mt. Carmel and Fatima

Deanery 2 (Camden West)

Region 3 Parishes (4): St. John, St. Aloysius, Transfiguration, Immaculate Heart of Mary

Region 4 Parishes (4): St. Veronica, St. Peter, St. Cecilia, St. Stephen

Region 5 Parishes (6): Holy Maternity, Annunciation, St. Maurice, St. Mary, Sacred Heart, St. Anne

Deanery 3 (Camden Central)

Region 6 Parishes (4): St. Pius X, Christ the King, St. Vincent Pallotti, Holy Saviour

Region 7 Parishes (6): Holy Rosary, Queen of Heaven, St. Mary, St. Peter Celestine, St. Thomas More, St. Andrew

Deanery 4 (Camden South)

Region 8 Parishes (4): St. Lawrence, St. Gregory, Our Lady of Grace, St. Luke

Region 9 Parishes (5): St. Francis de Sales, Mary, Mother of the Church, St. Rose of Lima, St. Maria Goretti, St. Teresa

Deanery 5 (Camden-Gloucester)

Region 10 Parishes (6): Blessed John XXIII, St. Edward, St. Charles Borromeo, St. John Neumann, St. Mary

Region 11 Parishes (5): St. Agnes, St. Jude, St. John Vianney, Holy Family, Ss. Peter and Paul, (Mater Ecclesiae Mission)

Deanery 6 (Southwest)

Region 12 Parishes (4): Corpus Christi, St. James, Queen of the Apostles, St. Mary

Region 13 Parishes (5): St. Michael, Holy Name of Jesus, St. John, St. Joseph-Swedeseboro, St. Joseph-Woodstown

Deanery 7 (Gloucester County)

Region 14 Parishes (5): St. Catherine of Siena, Nativity, Our Lady of Lourdes, St. Bridget, Our Lady Queen of Peace

Region 15 Parishes (5): Incarnation, St. Matthew, Most Holy Redeemer, St. Patrick, St. Margaret

Deanery 8 (Cumberland)

Region 16 Parishes (5): Immaculate Heart of Mary, Sacred Heart, St. Francis of Assisi, St. Isidore, St. Padre Pio

Region 17 Parishes (6): Immaculate Conception, St. Teresa of Avila, St. Michael, St. John Bosco, St. Mary Magdalen, St. Mary

Deanery 9 (Cape May)

Region 18 Parishes (5): Maris Stella, Our Lady of the Angels, St. Joseph, St. Paul, St. Casimir

Region 19 Parishes (5): Our Lady Star of the Sea, St. John of God, St. Raymond, St. Ann, Assumption

Region 20 Parishes (4): Resurrection, Our Lady of Good Counsel, St. Augustine, St. Frances Cabrini

Deanery 10 (Atlantic South)

Region 21 Parishes (3): Epiphany, Blessed Sacrament, St. James

Region 22 Parishes (4): Our Lady Star of the Sea, St. Michael, St. Monica, St. Nicholas of Tolentine

Deanery 11 (Atlantic North)

Region 23 Parishes (5): St. Katherine Drexel, Our Lady of Sorrows, St. Vincent de Paul, St. Bernadette, St. Joseph

Region 24 Parishes (4): St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, St. Thomas, St. Peter, Assumption

Deanery 12 (Central)

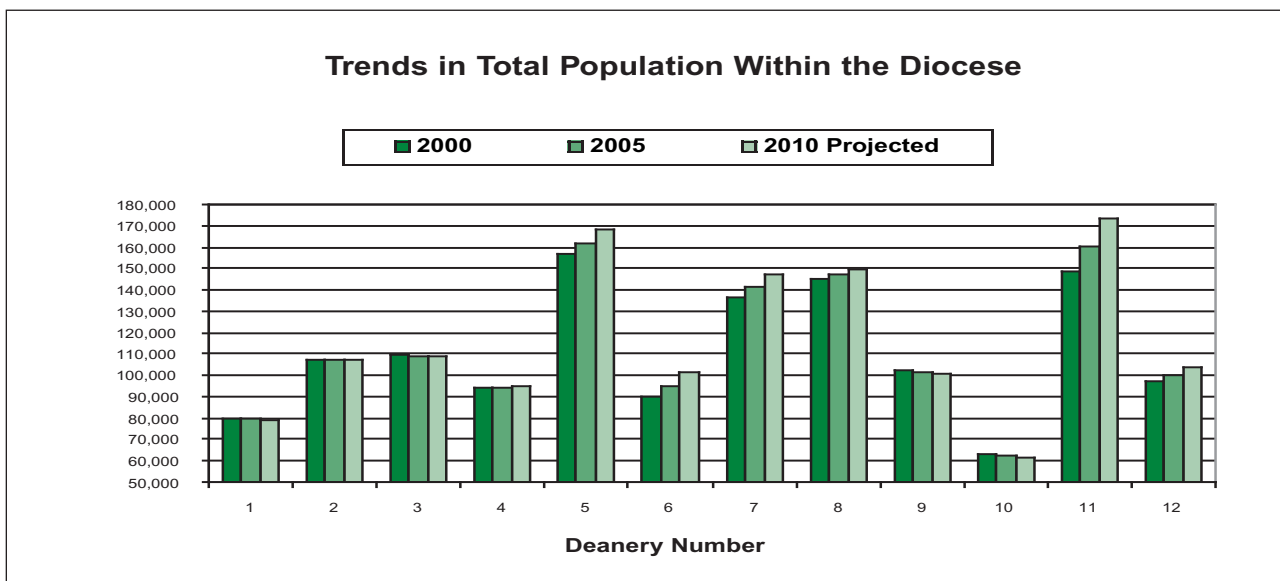
Region 25 Parishes (7): Assumption, Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, St. Nicholas, St. Anthony of Padua, St. Joseph, St. Martin de Porres, St. Anthony

Region 26 Parishes (5): Queen of Angels, Our Lady of the Lakes, St. Ann, St. Mary, St. Rose of Lima

Trends in the Total Population

The present population density is projected to be relatively stable in Camden and nearby municipalities for the next 5 years. However significant growth is projected for the larger deaneries that are located farther south. Deaneries 5, 6, 7, and 11 expect to see a marked increase in total population thereby

creating a significant need for affordable housing, schools, government services, and churches. Deaneries 8 and 12 project a slight increase in population. Only deaneries 9 and 10 project a slight decrease in population, deaneries 1, 2, and 3 show a negligible decline.



Counting the Catholic Population

Counting the Catholic population within the geographic boundaries of a parish presents difficulties, for parishes do not take a regular census. All baptized Catholics who live within the boundaries of a parish as well as those who consciously choose to affiliate with the parish are to be included in the total parish population count. Each pastor submits a Spiritual Report annually which attempts to provide a reasonable estimate of the number of individual Catholics and Catholic households within the parish.

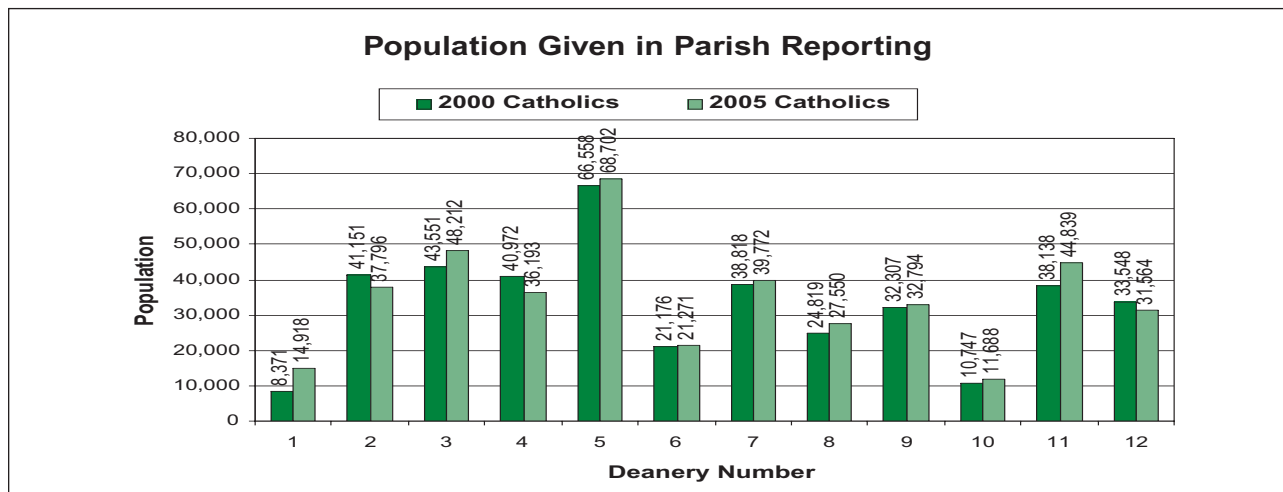
The parish roster includes those Catholics who have registered in the parish and those who have not. Some Catholics neither formally join a parish community, engage in parish life, nor contribute to its support. Others may attend liturgy only a few times a year and do not affiliate with any parish community, but do claim their religious affiliation to be Catholic. Some Catholics who live within the parish boundaries may no longer identify themselves as Catholic. Although boundaries of parishes remain geographic, a significant number of Catholics choose to participate in liturgy at the location of their choice.

Deanery 5 has the largest Catholic population and has shown some growth in the past 5 years. Both deanery 1 and deanery 11 have had the most dramatic increase in Catholic population. A small increase is seen in deaneries 7, 8, 9, and 10. The Catholic population is decreasing in four of the six deaneries (2, 3, 4, 12) that have the highest number of Catholics.

According to the 2005 census update the total population of the six counties that comprise the Diocese of Camden is 1,359,213. This is an increase of 30,007 or 2.3% since the year 2000. The percentage of those who identify Roman Catholicism as their religion is 33.5% or 455,336. The 2005 Official Catholic Directory provides data from 2004. It lists the total population in the Camden Diocese as 1,347,648 with 450,271 Catholics representing 33.4% of the total population in 2004.

Pastors' reports concerning the number of Catholics in their parishes vary considerably from these figures. Different interpretations of who is to be counted may be used when the parish data is reported. The Spiritual Reports for the year 2005 indicate that the total number of individual Catholics within the Camden Diocese has increased from 400,156 in 2000 to 415,245 in 2005, a total increase of about 3,000 each year. One known contributing factor to population discrepancy in these reports is the significant number of Catholics who come from countries where Catholics do not formally register in the parish. Also political attitudes in the US regarding immigration and lack of documentation discourage immigrating people from registering. Another factor is the time of the year that numbers are collected and collated.

Since current census projections for the year 2010 do indicate the population will rise another 2.5% to 1,395,070, it is likely that the total number of those who indicate they are Catholic will also rise which would bring the total number of Catholics to over 467,000.



Four Trends in the Redistribution of the Catholic Population

One trend is the continuing redistribution and uneven growth of the Catholic population over time in the Diocese of Camden.

Historically growth in Catholic population had been confined to cities and towns, and their surrounding edges and/or suburbs. These areas have little possibility for expansion. They are stable or are beginning to decline in projected population. There is population growth in areas that were formerly productive farmlands. Developers are

dividing up large tracts of land to create residential developments, often for the affluent. These developments may or may not be near to a Catholic church. If they are near to a town with a Catholic church, the local parish may find itself with insufficient space for worship and religious formation, an inadequate number of clergy to minister to an influx of Catholics, and the awareness that newly arrived Catholics are being evangelized by the assertive outreach of other denominations.

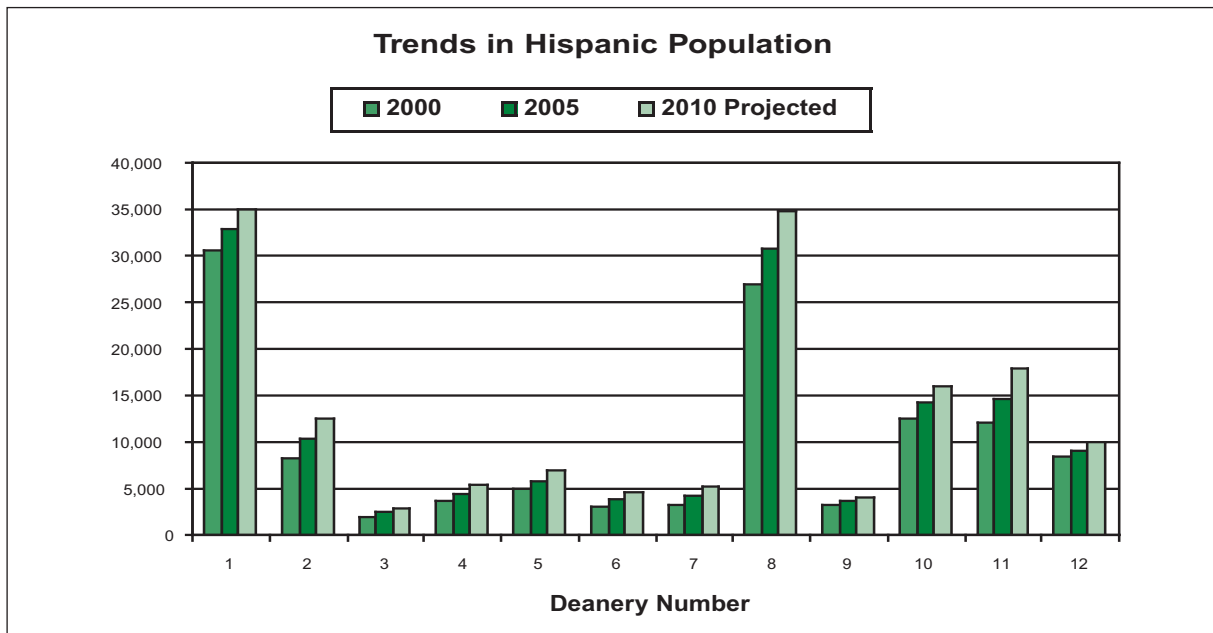
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Four Trends in the Redistribution of the Catholic Population (continued from previous page)

A *second trend* is the rapidly increasing Hispanic population throughout the diocese.

Hispanic peoples are traditionally Catholic. They come to South Jersey from Mexico and from various countries in Central America, South America, and Caribbean islands. The greatest concentration of Hispanic immigrants can be found in three different sections of the diocese. Increasing numbers of immigrants have settled in the city of Camden, (deanery 1 - 2) and in the agricultural areas of Cumberland County (deanery 8) and Atlantic County (deaneries 10, 11, and 12) especially Bridgeton, Vineland, and Pleasantville. Some Hispanics come temporarily to work with the fruit and vegetable harvest. Others come to stay. The influx of Hispanics reflects a national demographic trend, which impacts noticeably on the growth of the Catholic population.

Whether they are permanent or temporary residents, immigrants need help with education, language skills, housing, jobs, and day-to-day survival skills. Creating worship space, liturgical formation of bilingual priests who can bridge cultures, multilingual catechesis: these raise a variety of issues that directly challenge existing parishes. Finding ways to interrelate with existing faith communities, heightening social consciousness, welcoming their Hispanic sisters and brothers, involves recognizing and accepting the gifts that immigrants bring to the Church of South Jersey.



A *third trend* unique to South Jersey is the movement of Catholic population away from a long-established residency on the barrier islands in Atlantic County and Cape May County.

Extremely lucrative purchase offers for shore homes often replaced later or converted into high-end condos have resulted in the relocation of families to other inland areas, thereby diminishing year-round residents. This trend has produced a rapidly diminishing school age population as fewer young families with children can afford to remain. However the number of vacationers who fill up the pews of the Catholic churches at the shore in summer is not expected to diminish.

A *fourth trend* is the diminishment of registered Catholics in predominantly northern deaneries.

Some parishes in deaneries 2, 3, and 4 are located very close together. Each has many empty pews. These older parishes often are close-knit communities of faith-filled Catholics, but they no longer include a large number of young families that once filled the pews with a steady stream of children and youth. At one time most of these parishes had a pastor assisted by more than one associate pastor, an elementary school run by sisters, an active sports program for Catholic youth, and CYO activities for teens. Several priests and sisters were the “religious professionals” who taught in the elementary and secondary schools continued the religious formation begun at home. Although many indicate they have a fond nostalgia for this chapter in US Catholic life, this form of parish life no longer exists.

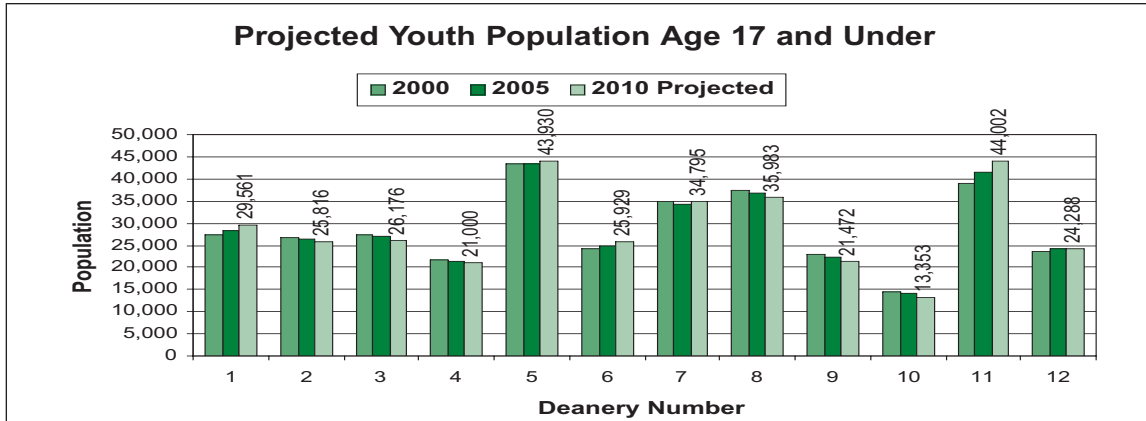
Today there is a graying of these parishes as the “empty nesters” have remained in their homes. Many senior Catholics continue to be the anchors in their parishes, but they cannot retain this role for long. Factors such as the absence of the 25-50 year olds in the life of the Church, fewer children, single-parent families, declining numbers of priests and sisters, closing or regionalizing of schools, rising school tuition costs, and aging parish buildings, put these parishes in a high risk category.

Youth Population: Ages 17 and Under

The total youthful population, ages 0 - 17, shows a small but steady decline in 6 of the 12 deaneries in the diocese (2, 3, 4, 8, 9, 10). This trend is projected to continue in these deaneries. In contrast, deanery 11 with a projection of 44,002 shows a steady and significant upward trend and will have the largest number of school age children and youth in 2010. Presently deanery 5 has the greatest youthful population with a slight increase projected for 2010. Deanery 10 has the smallest projected youth population (13,353).

Of the two deaneries most densely populated by school age children and youth (5 and 11), only deanery 11 has easy access to a Catholic high school.

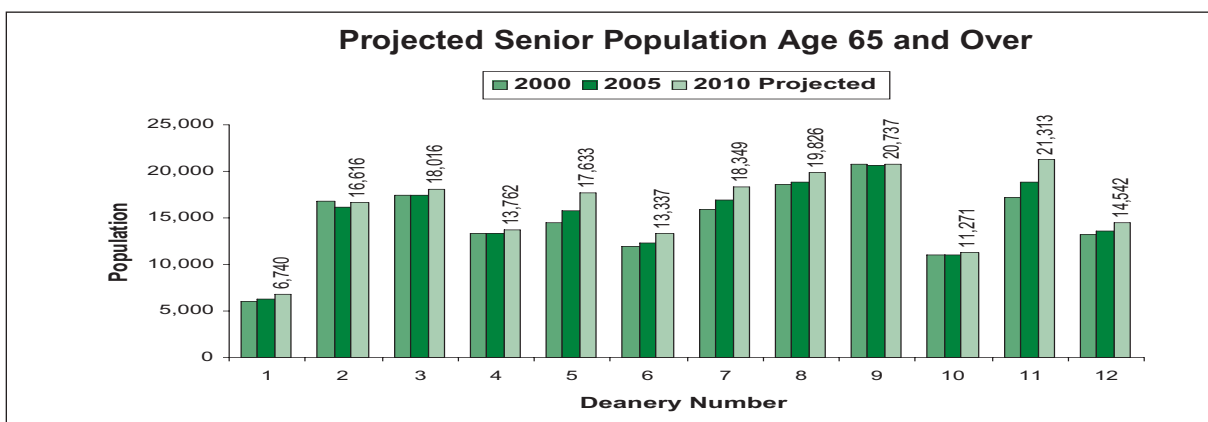
Two deaneries (1 and 6) show a small but steady increase in youthful population. Deanery 12 shows a minimal incremental trend. The youthful population in deaneries 7 and 8 appears to be leveling off by 2010. A downward trend in youthful population has begun in deanery 8.



Senior Population

Looking ahead there will be a significant growth in the senior population (age 65 and older) within the diocese. Census projections through 2020 indicate that the senior population will grow much faster than the overall population, largely due to the aging of the Baby Boomers. Ten of the 12 deaneries project an increase of senior population by 2010. Only deaneries 2 and 9 have had a slight decrease in the past five years, but projections indicate that their senior population is returning to their 2000 levels. The increase in senior population is significant in deanery 11 with a projected total of 21,313. However 10 other deaneries have projections ranging between 11,000 - 20,000 seniors by 2010. Only deanery 1 projections indicate fewer than 6,800 seniors.

This aging population will likely make increased demand for pastoral service for the senior population. An increased demand has the potential to create tensions as human and material resources serving other population groups, such as children, may be targeted for redirection. This potential tension over resources serving children may arise especially in those areas of the diocese that are expected to experience a decline in the number of school aged-children through 2020. However this decline will not occur everywhere in the diocese as some deaneries are projected to experience growth in the number of children. Clearly the impact of these factors will vary by location. However the diocese is likely to be serving an older population in the future.



Trends in the Composition of the General Population and Society

Several trends that affect the general population and society will impact the Diocese of Camden as well.

- The strong presence of multicultural populations in some areas
- The presence of residents who have emigrated and do not speak English at home (not limited to Hispanic peoples)
- Steady growth in the senior population (aged 65 and older) over time
- Variations in the numbers of school-aged children in different locations
- Increasing diversity in culture, language, and ethnicity

Although the growing Hispanic population is one of the major immigrant cultures in the changing composition of the diocese, it is joined by peoples from Asia, Eastern Europe, and the Caribbean.

These trends will necessarily bring about changes that will alter traditional and familiar ways of carrying out ministry. Providing sufficient priests, lay ministry education, formation in faith, developing language and cultural skills, as well as engaging in new forms of pastoral ministry present significant pastoral challenges to the Church. They also require that the Church engage in planning for change.

Impact on Parishes

The trend of redistribution, both growth and diminishment of the local Catholic population is likely to continue to affect several aspects of the vitality of parish life including:

- Shifting numbers of registered Catholics in present parishes, both influx and exits
- Growth in Catholic population especially Hispanics
- Demands for greater accessibility and financial assistance to Catholic elementary schools as tuition costs and parish assessments rise

- The increased graying of the Catholic population
- Growing economic disparity in different areas of the diocese.

These trends clearly impact on decisions about resource allocations such as assigning a diminishing number of priests and continuing to maintain and support the present number of parishes and schools. Present redistribution trends are expected to continue.

Weekend Mass Attendance within the Diocese of Camden

One of the most dramatic and visible changes in the Catholic Church in the U.S. is the drop off in Church attendance. Attending Sunday mass, participating in the Eucharistic liturgy, formerly was a hallmark of “practicing Catholics.” Families came to Sunday liturgy to worship together. Life in the parish attracted people with its faith-based spiritual, social, and community functions and events held at the parish. Sunday liturgy remains the one weekly celebration where the Catholics are regularly nourished and fed, educated and challenged as a worshipping community. Yet, for a variety of reasons many Catholics no longer can be found within the church pews on Sunday.

To assess how many Catholics are participating regularly in liturgy the following method was used. Four times during 2004 - 2005 (summer, fall, winter, spring) every parish was asked to count the number of people attending each of the weekend parish liturgies. Each time this count was taken by the ushers, it was to be done within the same 2 - 3 week period in all of the parishes so that an accurate assessment of the total number of worshippers at a given time could be made. These parish numbers were collected, compiled, and added to provide data concerning the weekend attendance

(Saturday evening, and all Sunday masses) throughout the entire diocese.

	Total Count	
Spring 2005	111,213	} <i>111,240 average for these three counts</i>
Winter 2005	111,448	
Fall 2004	111,060	
Summer 2004	135,532	

The 2004 summer mass count shows an increase of 24,472 persons as compared to fall 2004. The large Catholic populations that go “down the shore” during summer do attend weekend liturgy. Many, but not all, of these vacationers come from outside the diocese. Discounting this inflated summer number and averaging mass attendance for spring, winter and fall indicates that the number of weekend worshippers in the Church of South Jersey is 111,240. Comparing the 2005 census update, the 2005 Catholic Directory, and the parish reports to the 111,240 average attendance indicates that 25.4% of the Catholic population of South Jersey attends mass regularly.

Numbers of Diocesan Priests

The long-term historical decline in the number of priests has been well documented throughout the U.S. Fewer priests are serving an ever-increasing number of Catholics. In 1950 the ratio of priest to people was 1 for every 1200, in 1999 it was 1 for every 1650. By 2004 it had risen to 1 for every 2,348 people. Parishes that had four priests twenty years ago now have one priest. As a result priests are “stretched thinly” across the diocese and are more likely to be “stretched” even further in the future given current trends.

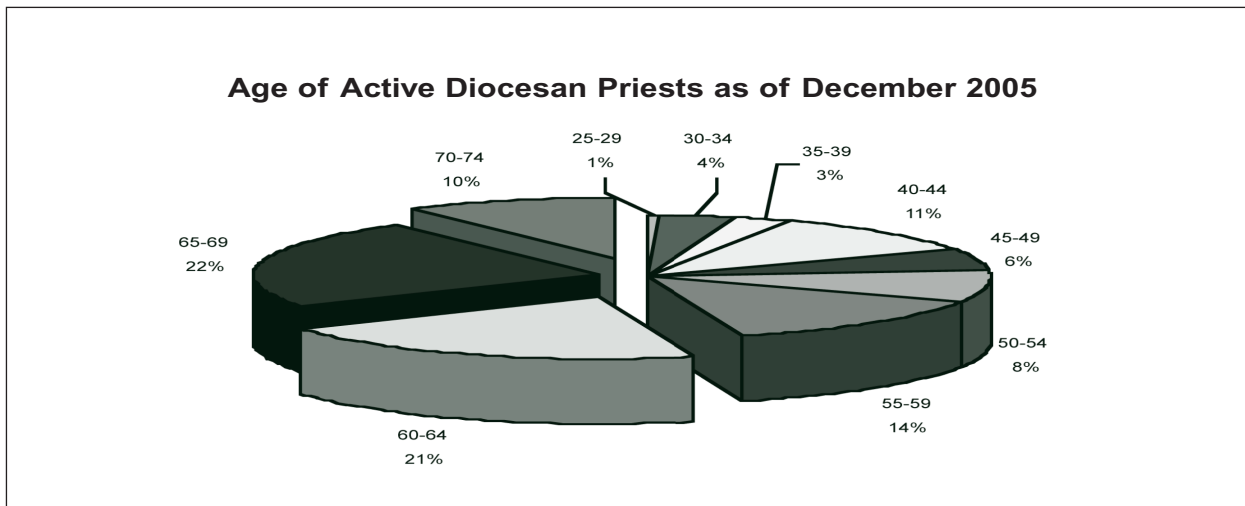
As of December 31, 2005 the Camden Diocese had a total of 224 active priests serving in various ministries. (An active priest is defined as one who has been given an assignment by the Bishop.)

Diocesan priests	171
Religious Order priests	19
International priests	31
On loan from other dioceses	3
	224

Of the active diocesan priests, 47% are under 60 years of age and 53% are 60 years of age or above. The 60 - 69 age group is the one closest to retirement and it is the largest group accounting for over 40% of diocesan priests.

19%	under the age of 45
28%	between the ages of 45 – 59
43%	between the ages of 60 – 69
10%	remain active after the retirement age of 70

Within the next 5 years, 22% of diocesan priests will be eligible for retirement at age 70. Within 10 years almost half of our 171 active diocesan priests will be either be in retirement because they are aged 70 – 79 or they will be fully eligible for retirement. Some 10% of priests eligible for retirement will generously continue to minister for some time after age 70. As their aging continues some will become ill, some will be called in death.



The number of priestly ordinations now averages between 2 and 3 per year. It is expected that in the future this number is likely to drop. Even though recently ordained priests have entered their studies for priesthood at a more mature age than formerly, that does not reduce the 7 years of study preparatory to ordination normally required by the Church.

Not all priests serve as pastors; some serve as teachers, chaplains, or serve in other pastoral ministries. Some priests find their vocation as a member of a religious community. Religious order priests have contributed much to the Camden Diocese throughout its sixty-eight years. They continue to

staff three parishes and to serve in other ministries, but religious orders also are experiencing a serious decline in vocations. The presence and sacrifice of international priests who leave their home countries to minister in the diocese for a period of time is greatly appreciated. However they cannot be expected to fill all of the vacancies created by the declining number of local clergy. International priests continue to have responsibility for their home diocese.

The redistribution of the Catholic population comes at a time when the number of priests available for ministry is rapidly declining. This in turn affects not only the staffing but

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Numbers of Diocesan Priests (continued from previous page)

the number, location, and structuring of parishes. Many parishes were established in a concentrated area during the suburban growth of the 1960's and 1970's. An influx of Catholics continues to come from outside the diocese. Some come to retire while others cross the bridges from Pennsylvania to settle into large homes built on former farm fields of Salem and Cumberland Counties. Others take up residence in the cities and towns looking for jobs in New Jersey. Changing demographics is directly correlated to number of vocations to the priesthood and the present priestly staffing of 124 parishes.

The Church is missionary by its very nature. It is sent to the people with the responsibility to present and spread the gospel message both in Word and deed. It is also

multicultural. Catholic immigrants turn to the Church expecting to find help during their time of transition. They need pastoral care and the nourishment of the sacraments. There is a limited number of priests whose language skills go beyond celebrating liturgy in Spanish. As the number of diocesan priests continues to decline and their average age increases, address the pastoral needs of a youthful Catholic Hispanic population offers a tremendous challenge to the diocese.

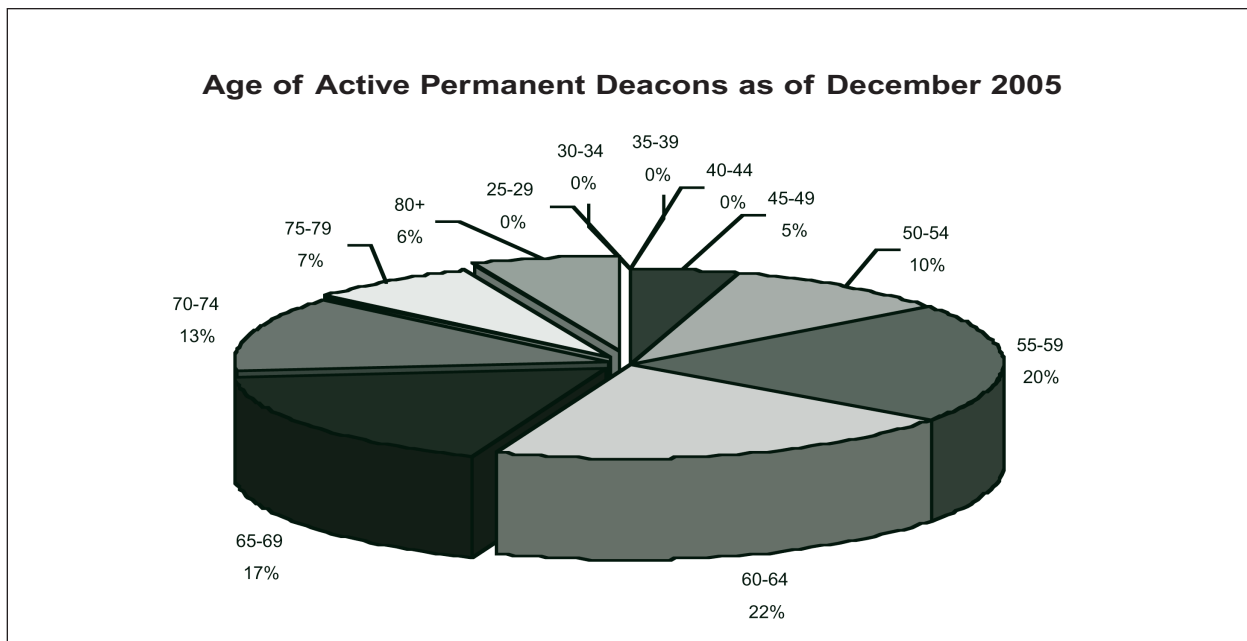
The reality of the priest shortage will remain for the foreseeable future. Efforts to revitalize parish life and reconfigure parish structures are major challenges to the entire Church of South Jersey.

Permanent Deacons Serving in the Diocese of Camden

Following Vatican Council II the diaconate was restored as a permanent ordained ministry in the Church. Catholic deacons serve in a great variety of ministries primarily as ministers of charity and justice; e.g., adult education, marriage preparation, baptisms, bereavement ministry, prison ministry, chaplaincy, social work, and health care. There are 110 active permanent deacons serving either part time or full time in the diocese. There are 53 men currently preparing to be deacons in the 5-year period of formation preparatory to ordination. Aspirants to the diaconate often enter the preparation process at a more mature age.

Presently none of the deacons in the Camden diocese is below the age of 45 and only (5%) are between the ages of 45 – 49. More than half (57 %) of the deacons are below the age of 65.

As successive classes of permanent deacons are ordained for ministry they will be taking a more predominant role in diocesan and parish life as their number increases. At the same time the vocation to permanent diaconate is not a vocation to priesthood and their service to God's people does not replace the ministry of the priests.



Religious Education for Public School Children

Religious education classes are provided in each parish for children who attend public school. Classes are intended to build on the religious foundation begun in the home since it is the role of parents and families to form their children in faith. Classes are held during the regular school year generally for an hour a week. Those who are responsible for the religious education classes have varying degrees of professional preparation ranging from Catechetical Leader holding a Masters degree in religious education to those are working on diocesan certification. Often those who teach classes have volunteered for the ministry of catechizing and preparing children for the reception of the sacraments: Penance, First Eucharist or Confirmation.

Children begin classes at the first grade level and often remain in the religious education program until they are

confirmed. The age range for confirmation varies from parish to parish, ideally when the child is ready, somewhere between ages 11- 14, rather than by grade level. After confirmation there is little formalized religious education for public school students as parishes report that continuing parish-based classes during high school is extremely difficult to sustain. There are no required religious education classes for youth. There is a limited number of parish youth programs directed by youth ministers.

In 2001- 2002 the number of public school students in religious education classes was 33,665. Five years later in 2005 - 2006 the number of students was 31,589, a decline of 6.2%. It appears that local factors regarding religious education classes in the individual parishes vary greatly and may render any deanery comparisons invalid.

Religious Education Enrollment 2001/2002 - 2005/2006

Deanery Number	Actual 2001/2002	Actual 2005/2006	Actual Change	Percentage Change
1	659	694	35	5.3%
2	2,404	1,791	-613	-25.5%
3	4,376	4,279	-97	-2.2%
4	2,272	2,026	-246	-10.8%
5	6,345	6,387	42	0.7%
6	2,758	2,910	152	5.5%
7	3,612	3,396	-216	-6.0%
8	1,594	1,471	-123	-7.7%
9	2,176	1,884	-292	-13.4%
10	610	697	87	14.3%
11	4,234	3,591	-643	-15.2%
12	2,625	2,463	-162	-6.2%
Total Diocese	33,665	31,589	-2,076	-6.2%

K - 8 Catholic Elementary School Enrollment 2001/2002 - 2005/2006

City	School Name	2001/2002	2005/2006	Change	% Change
Atco	Assumption School	163	153	-10	-6.1%
Atlantic City	Our Lady Star of the Sea School	277	231	-46	-16.6%
Barrington	St. Francis de Sales School	361	264	-97	-26.9%
Bellmawr	Annunciation School	294	195	-99	-33.7%
Berlin	Our Lady of Mt. Carmel School	280	312	32	11.4%
Blackwood	St. Agnes Regional School	255	226	-29	-11.4%
Blackwood	St. Jude Regional School	486	463	-23	-4.7%
Bridgeton	Immaculate Conception School	159	124	-35	-22.0%
Brigantine	St. Philip the Apostle School (closed 2002)	130	0	-130	-100.0%
Camden	Holy Name School	210	153	-57	-27.1%
Camden	Sacred Heart School	240	240	0	0.0%
Camden	St. Anthony of Padua School	200	194	-6	-3.0%
Camden	St. Joseph Pro-Cathedral School	259	284	25	9.7%
Cape May	Our Lady Star of the Sea School	207	165	-42	-20.3%
Carneys Point	Bishop Guilfoyle Regional School	374	309	-65	-17.4%
Cherry Hill	Holy Rosary (merged with O.L. of Grace- '05-'06)	198	0	-198	-100.0%
Cherry Hill	Queen of Heaven School	202	171	-31	-15.3%
Cherry Hill	St. Peter Celestine School	276	267	-9	-3.3%
Clayton	St. Catherine of Siena School	198	191	-7	-3.5%
Collingswood	St. John School	246	179	-67	-27.2%
Dennis Township	Bishop McHugh Regional School	374	389	15	4.0%
East Vineland	St. Mary Regional School	304	306	2	0.7%
Egg Harbor City	Saint Nicholas School	156	125	-31	-19.9%
Gibbstown	Guardian Angels School (opened 2002)	0	95	95	
Glassboro	St. Bridget Regional School	279	249	-30	-10.8%
Gloucester	St. Mary School	324	243	-81	-25.0%
Haddon Heights	St. Rose of Lima School	388	372	-16	-4.1%
Haddonfield	Christ the King Regional School	351	352	1	0.3%
Hammonton	St. Joseph Regional School	306	326	20	6.5%
Lindenwold	St. Lawrence School	273	203	-70	-25.6%
Margate	Blessed Sacrament School	238	217	-21	-8.8%
Mays Landing	St. Vincent de Paul School	228	221	-7	-3.1%
Merchantville	St. Peter School	435	346	-89	-20.5%
Millville	St. Mary Magdalen School	255	151	-104	-40.8%
Newfield	Notre Dame Regional School	257	236	-21	-8.2%
Ocean City	St. Augustine Regional School	190	133	-57	-30.0%
Pennsauken	St. Cecilia School	241	192	-49	-20.3%
Pennsauken	St. Stephen School	205	209	4	2.0%
Pleasantville	St. Peter School (closed 2005)	184	0	-184	-100.0%
Pomona	Assumption Regional School	227	246	19	8.4%
Runnemede	St. Teresa Regional School	256	229	-27	-10.5%
Somerdale	Our Lady of Grace School	222	176	-46	-20.7%
Somers Point	St. Joseph Regional School	353	436	83	23.5%
Stratford	Saint Luke School	272	227	-45	-16.5%
Ventnor	Saint James School	241	167	-74	-30.7%
Verga	St. Matthew Regional School	205	139	-66	-32.2%
Villas	St. Raymond Regional School	184	134	-50	-27.2%
Vineland	Sacred Heart Regional School	374	334	-40	-10.7%
Vineland	St. Francis of Assisi School	188	164	-24	-12.8%
Westmont	Holy Saviour School	209	200	-9	-4.3%
Westville Grove	Most Holy Redeemer School	238	169	-69	-29.0%
Wildwood	St. Ann Regional School	307	194	-113	-36.8%
Williamstown	St. Mary School	532	529	-3	-0.6%
Woodbury	St. Patrick School	234	185	-49	-20.9%
Woodbury Heights	St. Margaret Regional School	573	493	-80	-14.0%
Total Enrollment		14,618	12,508	(2110)	-14.4%

Catholic Elementary Schools in the Camden Diocese

There are 52 Catholic elementary schools in the Diocese of Camden. Thirty-six (36) of the elementary schools have been regionalized, thereby providing the opportunity for children in nearby parishes to receive a Catholic education. The total Catholic elementary school population K-8 given in the standard National Catholic Education Association Report for 2005 - 2006 was 12,508. This represents a decline of 2,110 students, a decrease of 14.47% in the past 5 years.

Accompanying the declining enrollment over the past 5 years has been a steady increase in the average tuition fees due to rising costs.

Tuition and parish subsidies are the two major sources of revenue funding the Catholic schools. The average tuition cost has risen \$661 in the past 5 years as compared with the average actual cost per student, which has risen \$1018 during the same time. This leaves a \$357 annual deficit per student. The actual cost per student is subsidized primarily through the assessment of parish subsidies. Some parishes are paying school subsidies ranging from 31% – 45% of their budgets, a burden that they cannot sustain. The amount from parish

subsidies in 2005-2006 is estimated to fund 21% of the total, combined elementary schools operating expenses or a total \$10,000,000 for the diocese.

	Enrollment	Tuition/ fees per Student	Average Actual Cost Per Student
2001 - 2002	14,618	\$1,615	\$2,583
2002 - 2003	14,134	\$1,818	\$2,874
2003 - 2004	13,562	\$1,899	\$3,202
2004 - 2005	13,074	\$2,059	\$3,476
2005 - 2006	12,508	\$2,276	\$3,601

Changes in Enrollment and Related Concerns

The change in Catholic elementary enrollment from 2001 - 2006 indicates that 11 of the 52 Catholic schools either maintained or increased their enrollment during this time period. Thirty-two (32) Catholic elementary schools had a decline in enrollment ranging from 10%–41% of its students during the past 5 years. Eighteen (18) schools lost over 50 students in the past five years. Two schools closed and 2 schools merged into one. One school was established in Gibbstown and is adding a grade each year.

Data reveals a rapid and steady decline in Catholic school enrollment. Twenty-six schools have fewer than 225 students K - 8. Of those 25 schools, 21 have an enrollment of fewer than 200 students. The minimum enrollment considered necessary to sustain effective and efficient education is generally considered to be 225 students.

Recent school evaluations have resulted in focusing on maintaining a high standard of Catholic identity and academic performance as well as vigorous marketing in attempting to change trends of diminishing enrollment.

In the US the legal separation of church and state is preserved in public education through tax-supported public schools. Catholic schools established and supported by Catholic parishes, have been regarded as the preferred way for furthering the religious foundation begun in the home, as well as preparing children socially and academically for life in society. Deepening knowledge and practice of the faith, the

developing a firm foundation in the love of God and neighbor, and academic achievement have been hallmarks of Catholic schools.

Catholic schools have achieved academic excellence with dedicated teachers and fewer resources. Test scores consistently show that Catholic schools in the US rank well above public schools even though teacher salaries fall below their public school counterparts. Because Catholic schools offer an alternative to public school education, some families, Catholic or not, are attracted to Catholic schools for their values-based education, academic achievement, discipline, and maintaining a socially safe environment.

Catholic education has also become very expensive and becomes more so with declining enrollment. Fewer Catholic parents are choosing to send their children to Catholic schools. Many cannot afford the tuition costs that increase every year. In addition to high tuition, parishes are required to provide large subsidies to keep Catholic elementary schools open. Maintenance of aging buildings and keeping schools up to standards may involve significant capital expenditures. Personnel and financial resources needed for parish vitality may be drained disproportionately to maintain Catholic schools.

Like the many other areas in Church life described in this report, demographics, trends, and limited resources challenge the current reality in Catholic elementary schools.



The Church is faced with immense challenges as it seeks to pass on the depth and richness of Catholic faith in a time of great change. The demographics contained in this report bring into sharp focus the need and the difficulties of planning for the future. Yet trust in God's guidance and a Spirited vision draw us forward and illuminate our pathway.

"We the Catholic Church of South Jersey, envision growing ever more into a dynamic community of faith, hope and love wherein we reveal the mind and heart of Jesus through our actions and our worship."

*From the 2006 Vision for the
Future of Our Church*



Sources for Charts and Graphs

1. Trends in Total Population within the Diocese—Percept Ministry Area Profiles (August, 2005)
2. Catholic Population by Deanery—as reported by parishes in the Annual Spiritual Reports, Year 2005 and 2005
3. Trends in Hispanic Population—Percept Ministry Area Profiles (August, 2005)
4. Projected Youth Population Age 17 and Under—Percept Ministry Area Profiles (August, 2005)
5. Projected Senior Population Age 65 and Over—Percept Ministry Area Profiles (August, 2005)
6. Weekend Mass Attendance within the Diocese of Camden—as reported by parishes in the Summer 2004, Fall 2004, Winter 2005, and Spring 2005 Quarterly Mass Counts
7. Age of Active Diocesan Priests as of December 2005—Office of Priest Personnel, Diocese of Camden
8. Age of Active Permanent Deacons as of December 2005—Office of Permanent Diaconate, Diocese of Camden
9. K – 8 Catholic Elementary School Enrollment 2001/2002 – 2005/2006—National Catholic Education Association Annual Reports, provided by Catholic Schools Office, Diocese of Camden
10. Religious Education Enrollment 2001/2002—2005/2006—Office of Religious Education, Diocese of Camden

Additional Sources

1. Office of the Chancellor, Diocese of Camden
2. *A Projection of Priests for Diocese of Camden*, Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate Reports, December 2003
3. *2003 National Study of Parish Reorganization*, Conference for Pastoral Planning and Council Development
4. 2005 New Jersey Provincial Directory, 63rd Edition
5. Percept, Vista2000 website www.percept.info

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