

Faith Forward Movement

The Case for Connection

*A National Response to
the Faith Crisis Among
Young Catholics*

Disengagement Is Real

- **80% of young people leave the Catholic Church before age 23**
- The **median age for leaving the Church is just 13**, though this often becomes visible at graduation
- Only **16% of Catholic young adults (18–25)** attend Mass weekly
- Fewer than **1 in 5 Catholic college students** engage in campus ministry without personal outreach
- **Nearly 75% of youth who leave the Church say it was a gradual process**—and high school is often the tipping point



The Transition Gap

- Thousands of Catholic seniors graduate each year with **no direct connection** to a faith community at their next destination
- Studies show that the friendships students form in the first 72 hours on campus are the **friendships they will keep** through their entire college experience
- The **first 90 days after high school** are critical for habit formation, identity development, and relationship-building
- Without outreach or guidance, students **assume there's no one waiting for them**—and quietly drift away
- Barna Group research shows that **only 10% of young adults are considered “resilient disciples”**—those who remain committed to their faith amid cultural change

Connection Changes Everything

- Students who receive **a personal outreach** from a campus ministry are **4x more likely** to engage regularly
- Catholic students who stay involved with a faith community after high school report:
 - Higher emotional and mental well-being
 - Greater resilience in academic and life challenges
 - Increased likelihood of attending Mass, praying, and discerning vocations
- Faith-connected students are **more likely to volunteer**, remain active in parish life, and raise families in the Church



faith
forward



The Impact on Catholic Schools

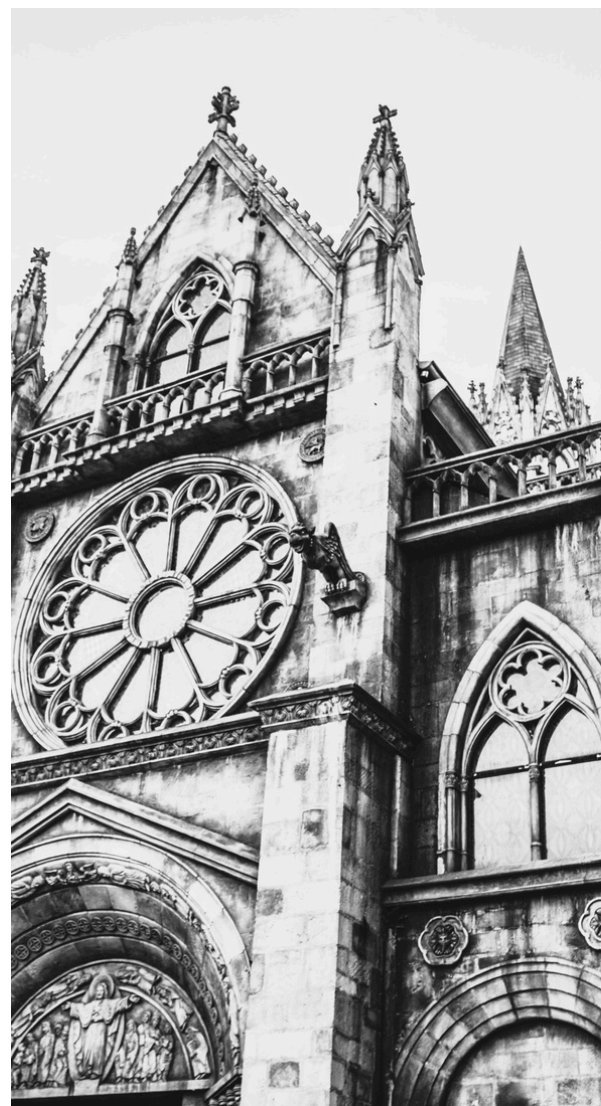
Participating schools see:

- Stronger alumni faith engagement
- Increased pride in Catholic identity
- A powerful story to share with prospective families

By supporting students in their faith after graduation, Catholic schools demonstrate a true commitment to whole-person formation—not just preparing them academically, but also nurturing their spiritual and emotional lives.

Faith Forward Movement Bridges the Gap

- Connects seniors to their next Catholic faith community.
- Empowers **schools, parishes, and parents** to collaborate
- Ensures students are **known by name and welcomed personally** before they arrive
- Offers schools a **free toolkit** with posters, QR codes, announcement scripts, and more



NOW IS THE TIME

Faith Forward Movement ensures every Catholic senior steps into college with faith, not fear.

Let's make disconnection a thing of the past.
 Help your students stay Catholic for life.

Sources

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- St. Mary's Press & CARA, *Going, Going, Gone: The Dynamics of Disaffiliation in Young Catholics*, 2017
- Barna Group, *Faith for Exiles: 5 Ways for a New Generation to Follow Jesus in Digital Babylon*, 2019
- Pew Research Center, *Religion Among the Millennials*, 2010
- Pew Research Center, *The Future of World Religions*, 2015
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- Springtide Research Institute, *The State of Religion & Young People*, 2020 & 2022