

# Sparks from Ashes

## Lenten Opportunities for Young Adult Evangelization



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# Sparks from Ashes

*an outline of the conversation*

1. **The Ash Wednesday  
& Lenten Phenomenon**  
**Why do they come?**

2. **What Can We Do?**  
**for Ash Wed & Lent**

3. **What Can We Learn?**  
**as a Church and for  
the Jubilee of Mercy**

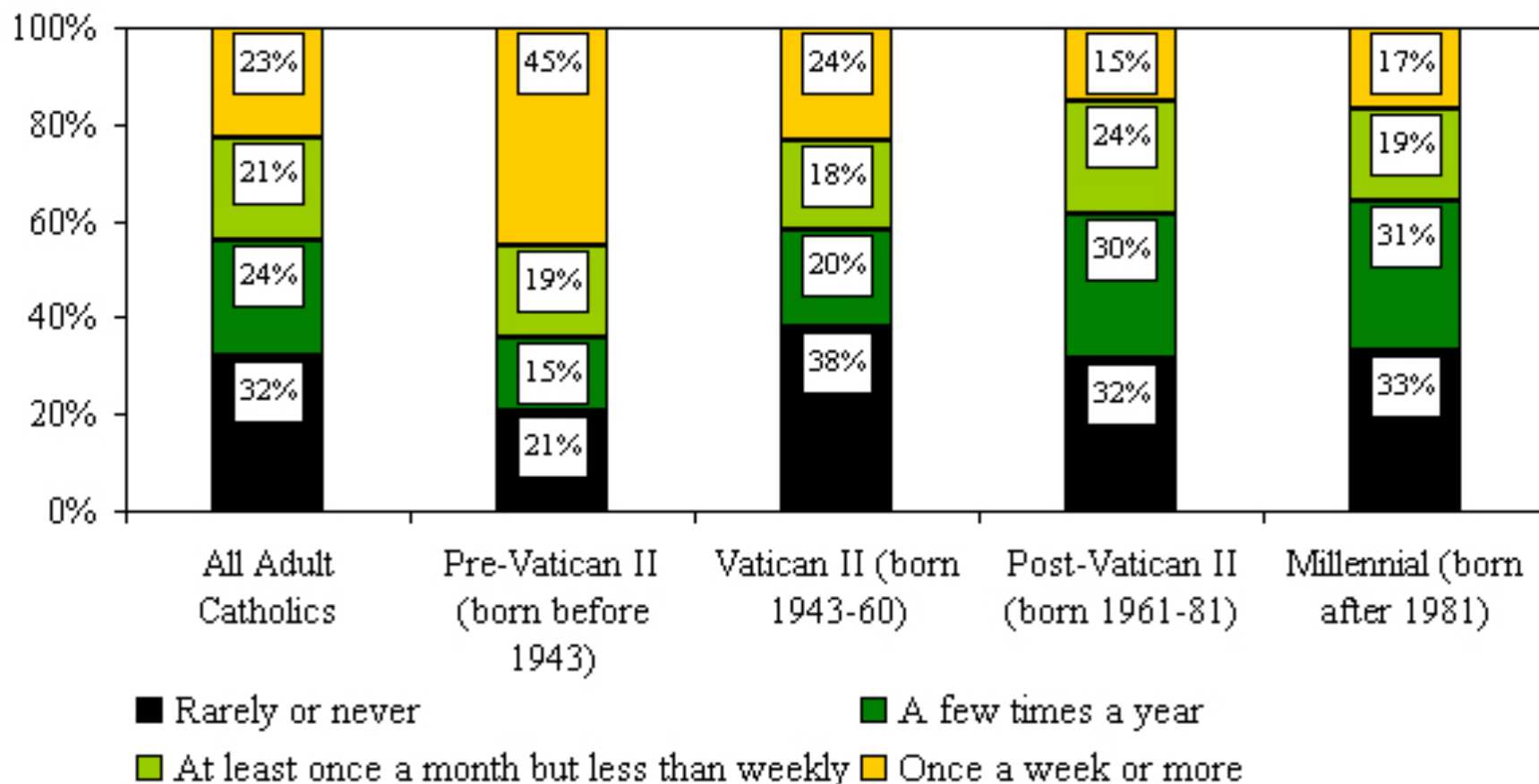


# The Ash Wednesday & Lenten Phenomenon



*Aside from weddings and funerals, about how often do you attend Mass?*

Percentage responding as such among all adult Catholics and by generation



Six response categories are combined to create four attendance frequencies

Source: "Sacraments Today," Center for Applied Research for the Apostolate (CARA), 2008

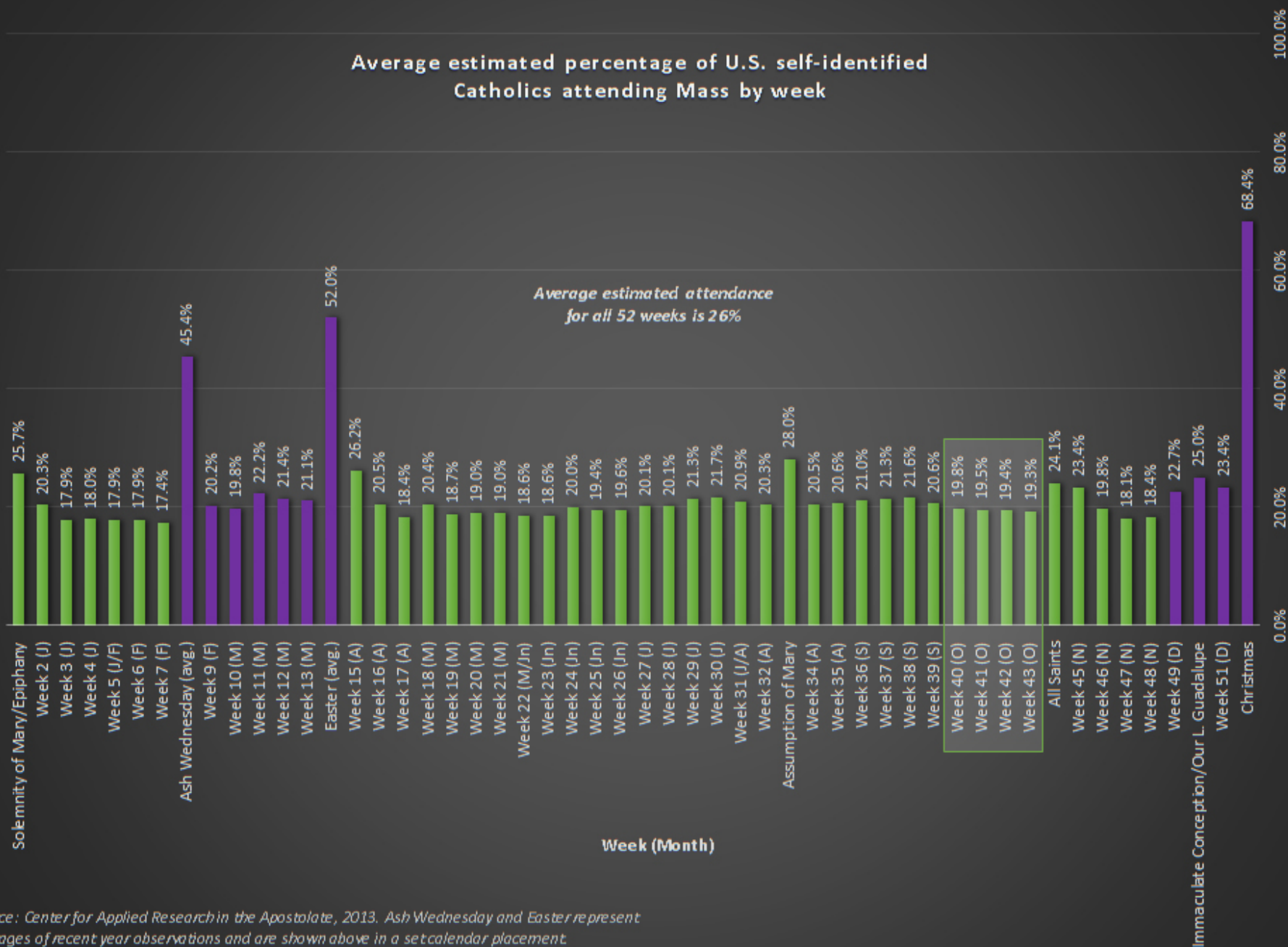
# Lenten Practices

**When asked: “Do you do any of the following during Lent?”**

*Percentage responding “yes” to each of the questions. Asked by Generation.*

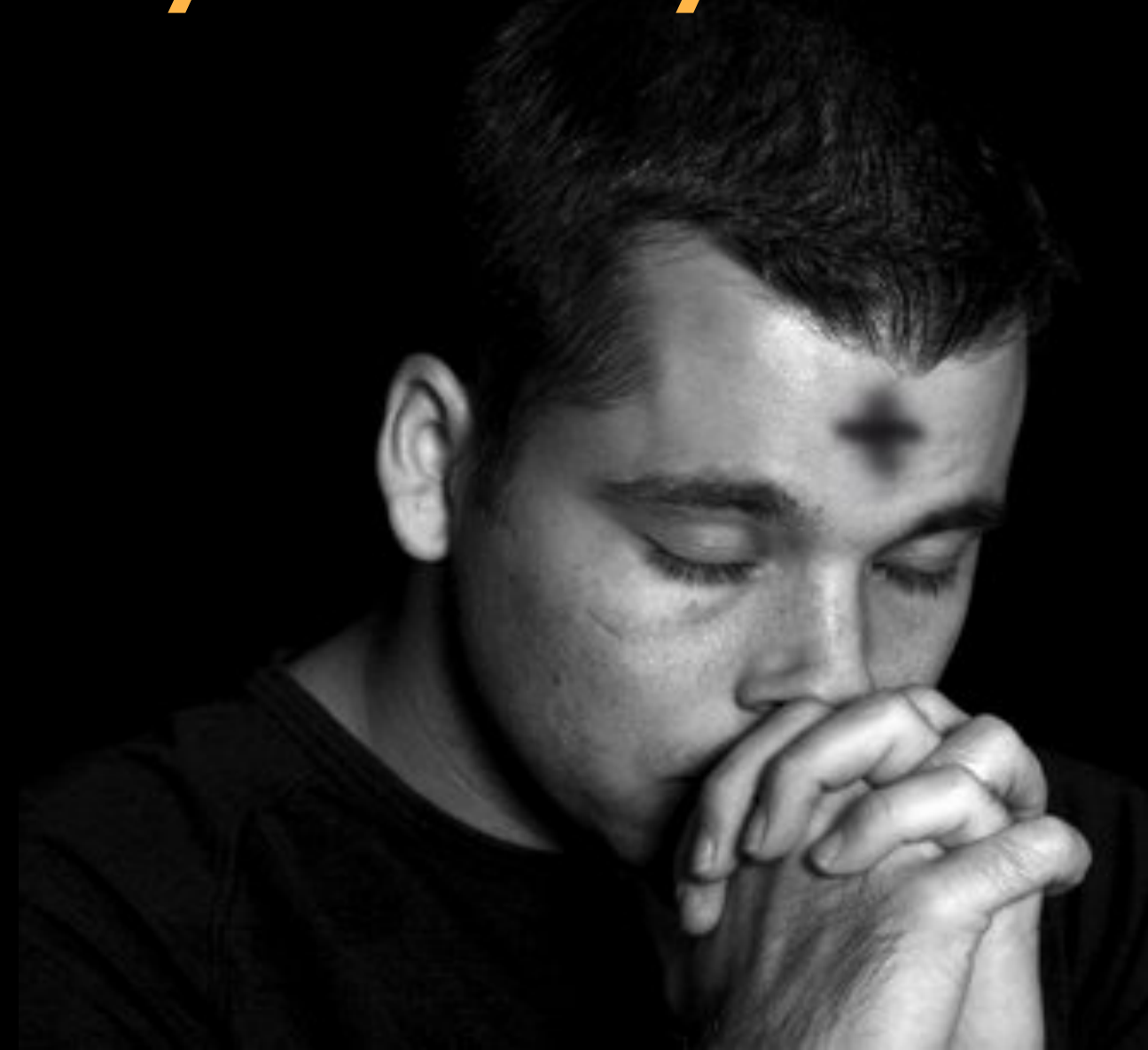
	<b>Pre-Vatican II</b> (Ages 65 - 85)	<b>Vatican II</b> (Ages 45 - 65)	<b>Post-Vatican II</b> (Ages 30 - 45)	<b>Millennials</b> (Ages 18 - 30)
Do you <u>abstain from meat</u> on Fridays during Lent?	64%	59%	59%	61%
Do you <u>receive ashes</u> at Ash Wednesday services?	58%	40%	40%	50%
Do you <u>give up anything</u> during the Lenten season?	33%	34%	38%	46%
Do you <u>do anything positive</u> , such as giving money to the needy or trying to be a better person during Lent?	50%	45%	41%	40%
	<b>45%</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>17%</b>

## Average estimated percentage of U.S. self-identified Catholics attending Mass by week



Source: Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate, 2013. Ash Wednesday and Easter represent averages of recent year observations and are shown above in a set calendar placement.

**Why do they come?**



# Why do they come?





**Who's in the pews?**  
**besides you and me?**

# Who's in the pews? and why are they coming?

The Traditionalist

*Expectation*

The Guilty

*Therapeutic*

The Tinkerer

*Curiosity*

The Busy One

*Quick & Easy*

The Passers-By

*#AshTrends*

The Bored

*Winter Blues*

The Lonely

*Community*

# Who's in the pews? and why are they coming?

The New Starter

*Resolution*

The Stagnant

*Renewal*

The Sinner

*God's Mercy*

The Anxious and  
Overwhelmed

*Refuge and  
Rest/Peace*

The Spiritual But  
Not Religious

*Spirituality  
(and Jesus)*

# What can we do?

1. Pre-Lent prep
2. Ash Wednesday experiences
3. Lent for the curious, the overwhelmed, & those in need of mercy



what can we do?

# 1. Pre-Lent preparation

Preparing the  
Active Catholics

Intentional Ash and  
Lenten Planning

Accompaniment



what can we do?

## **2. Ash Wed. experiences**

**Liturgical Aspects**

**Hospitality**

**Special Gatherings**

**Invitation to More**



what can we do?

## **3. Lent for all those in need**

**Social media Lent**

**Support networks**

**Spiritual direction  
and renewal/retreat**

**Lenten traditions**



# What can we learn?

as a Church and for  
the Jubilee of Mercy

**Evangelize, encounter,  
and accompany.**

**Be ready for the  
moments of return.**

**Focus on people's needs,  
not on programs.**





# What can we learn?

as a Church and for  
the Jubilee of Mercy

**Be religious *and* spiritual.  
Lead with Jesus.**

**Be humble and merciful.  
And listen.**

*What else have  
you learned here?*



# What can we learn?

Come to me, all you who labor and are heavy burdened and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart and you will find rest for yourselves.

Mt 11:28-29



# Thank you.



This presentation and Ash Wed/Lent resources can be found at  
**[www.catholicapostolatecenter.org](http://www.catholicapostolatecenter.org)**

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