

Generational Reach

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Can you really reach young people with Catholic Social Media?

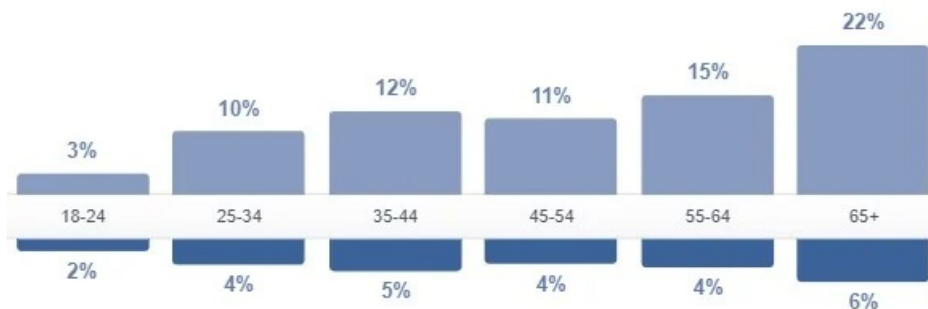
Social media is always tracking detailed demographic information about your followers and people reached. With a little digging, you can learn the age and gender breakdown of the people you're reaching, along with where your followers are located. That age breakdown tells us a lot.

Take Holy Trinity Catholic Church in Fort Dodge, Iowa, for example. We started working with Monsignor McCoy's team in the spring of 2020, during the height of the COVID shutdown:

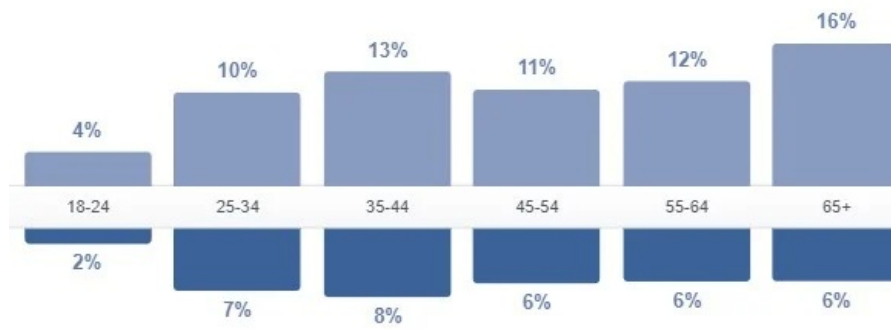


Monsignor is a lucky pastor with an incredibly talented, motivated staff. His team jumped into social media with both feet and they wove our Catholic Social Media content in alongside their own live videos and coffee chats. They used social media creatively and effectively to keep families engaged when in-person Mass was not an option in early 2020.

If you take a look into the age breakdown of Holy Trinity's Facebook followers, you'll see a pretty common age distribution for a Catholic parish in the United States. The largest group of followers is 65+:



But here's where things get interesting. Take a look at the age distribution of the people reached, which includes not just people who follow the parish page, but also the friends, colleagues, and neighbors of those followers who see the parish's posts whenever a follower likes or shares the content.



See the difference? Look at how many young people are being reached by the parish's posts!

What does this mean? It's pretty simple. **Holy Trinity's social media posts are "trickling down" from older parishioners to their younger family members, colleagues, and neighbors.**

Older followers are liking and sharing posts, and that's putting Holy Trinity's content into newsfeeds of the younger people in their lives.

And since Facebook also is focused so heavily on local reach, the parish isn't just reaching young people – the parish is reaching young people *within driving distance of the parish.*

If you've ever had an older parishioner open up to you about his or her children leaving the faith and having unbaptized grandchildren, one helpful tip you can share is to have that person share the parish's social media content. It's a subtle, consistent way for the parish to reach those young people even if they aren't attending Mass. Keep them close, keep Christ in front of them, and let the Holy Spirit inspire them back into the fold.
