

# Audience Size: The Diocese or Parishes?

08/14/2023 2:41 pm CDT

In October 2022, the Catholic Social Media team compared and contrasted diocesan social media audiences versus parish audiences in several different U.S. dioceses and archdioceses. Here's what we found:

## **No matter what, only a small number of people follow the diocese**

At *best*, in certain small U.S. dioceses (<250,000 Catholics), about eight percent of baptized Catholics followed the diocesan social media accounts. In larger dioceses, the percentage was between 0.5-2.5%. In short, no matter how hard diocesan communications officials work, only a small number of committed Catholics who are already "interested in the hierarchy" will ever follow the diocese. As a result, diocesan messages are restricted to Church insiders, no matter how much energy is put into growing the audience beyond that group.

## **Only a small number of parishes will reshare content from the diocesan social media channels**

Even in large dioceses (>100 parishes), only about two percent of parishes will ever consistently reshare content from the diocesan social media channels to their own channels. Tracking down a post and re-sharing it is too heavy a life for most busy parish employees and volunteers.

## **COVID led to explosive growth in parish social media audiences**

Even the smallest parish in the United States now has more than 250 followers on Facebook. 14-56% of baptized Catholics in a diocese follow their parish online. This makes sense, given it's at the parish where the vast majority of Catholics experience the Church.

## **What are the implications?**

Parish social media audiences, when taken together, constitute a constituency that is 5.6-100 times larger than the diocesan social media audience. For dioceses that already produce great content, the question is how to reach this extremely large audience. Catholic Social Media: Diocesan Essentials is the perfect tool to do this, giving parishes a robust multi-platform scheduler and allowing the diocese to feed content directly to those parishes.

---