CHURCH IN THE 21ST CENTURY
PART ONE

John Roberto
LifelongFaith Associates

FOUR PERSPECTIVES ON OUR CHANGING WORLD

1. Social
2. Generational
3. Educational
4. Religious/Spiritual
ACCELERATING CHANGE

The world is now changing at a rate at which the basic systems, structures, and cultures built over the past century cannot keep up with the demands being placed on them. Incremental adjustments to how you manage and strategize, no matter how clever, are not up to the job. You need something very new to stay ahead in a age of tumultuous change and growing uncertainties.

(John Kotter, Accelerate: Building Strategic Agility for a Faster-Moving World)

SOCIAL PERSPECTIVE
TRANSFORMATION IN SOCIAL LIFE

New Social Network Operating System

The Triple Revolution

1. Social Network Revolution
2. Internet Revolution
3. Mobile Revolution
The Social Network, Internet, and Mobile Revolutions are coming together to shift people’s social lives away from densely knit family, neighborhood, and group relationships toward more far-flung, less tight, more diverse personal networks.
TRANSFORMATION IN SOCIAL LIFE

**Networked Individualism**

The three revolutions have made possible the new social operating system – *Networked Individualism*. The hallmark of networked individualism is that people function more as connected individuals and less as embedded group members.
TRANSFORMATION IN SOCIAL LIFE

*Networked Individualism*

- This stands in contrast to the longstanding social arrangements formed around large hierarchical bureaucracies and small, densely knit groups such as households, communities, and workgroups.
- It is an operating system because it describes the ways in which people connect, communicate, and exchange information.

LIVING A NETWORKED LIFE

- Mobile devices have fundamentally changed the relationship between information, time, & space.
- Information is now **PORTABLE, PARTICIPATORY, PERSONAL**
- Information will find you through social networking. “If news is important it will find its way to me.”
- People turn to their social networks to help them evaluate new information they encounter.
- People have become content creators – when they discover content they will share it with their network.
- Reciprocal sharing is the way people build their social capital and reputations.
AGE, GENERATIONAL, & FAMILY PERSPECTIVES

LIFE SPAN DIVERSITY

0-10 11-19 20s 30s 40s 50s 60s 70s 80s 90s
FAMILY DIVERSITY

1. Married Couples with no children
2. Married Couple with Children (biological family)
3. Married Couple with Children (blended family)
4. Single Parent with Children
5. Unmarried Couple with Children
6. Unmarried Couple without Children
7. Same Sex Couple with Children (married / unmarried)
8. Same Sex Couple without Children (married / unmarried)
9. Grandparents & Parents with Children
10. Grandparents as Primary Caregivers
11. Parents with Single Young Adults Living at Home

FIVE GENERATIONS

- iGeneration (2000-)
- Millennials (1980-99)
- Generation X (1961-1979)
- Baby Boomers (1946-60)
- Builders (before 1946)

- Relationship to Institutions
- Relationship to Authority
- Family Relationships
- Work-Life Balance
- Communication Style
- Technology Usage
- Learning Style
- Spiritual Expression
- Worship Style
GENERATIONAL DIFFERENCES

From Builders to Millenials

Institutions/Organizations ------------------ People/Causes/Issues
Loyal to Institutions -------------- Suspicious/Critical of Institutions
Leader Influenced----------------------------- Peer Influence
Group-Centered ------------------------------- Network-Centric
Local/Parochial ------------------------------- Global / Inclusive
Word Culture ------------------------------- Image Culture
Analog Culture ------------------------------- Digital Culture
One Size Fits All ------------------------------- One Size Fits One

RELIGIOUS – SPIRITUAL PERSPECTIVES
SPIRITUAL-RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY

The Unaffiliated

The Spiritual

The Occasional

The Active

RISE OF THE NONES

Changing U.S. Religious Landscape

Between 2007 and 2014, the Christian share of the population fell from 78.4% to 70.6%, driven mainly by declines among mainline Protestants and Catholics. The unaffiliated experienced the most growth, and the share of Americans who belong to non-Christian faiths also increased.

Source: 2014 Religious Landscape Study, conducted June 4-Sept. 30, 2014

PEW RESEARCH CENTER
Unaffiliated Make Up Growing Share Across Generations

% of each generation that identifies current religion as atheist, agnostic or nothing in particular

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Generation</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Silent generation (b. 1928-1945)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>+2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baby Boomers (b. 1946-1964)</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>+3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generation X (b. 1965-1980)</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>+4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Older Millennials (b. 1981-1989)</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>+9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Younger Millennials (b. 1990-1996)</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Rapid Growth of Religiously Unaffiliated

Source: 2014 Religious Landscape Study, conducted June 4-Sept. 30, 2014

Five Million Fewer Mainline Protestant Adults Than in 2007

Source: 2014 Religious Landscape Study, conducted June 4-Sept. 30, 2014

Declining Number of Catholics

Source: 2014 Religious Landscape Study, conducted June 4-Sept. 30, 2014
Religious Switching: “Nones” Make Big Gains, Catholics Experience Big Losses

There are more than six former Catholics for every convert to Catholicism. By contrast, there are more than four people who join the ranks of the unaffiliated for every one person who leaves the unaffiliated and now identifies with a religion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ratio of change by group</th>
<th>Leaving</th>
<th>Joining</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unaffiliated</td>
<td>1 : 4.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evangelical Protestant</td>
<td>1 : 1.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historically Black Prot.</td>
<td>1.6 : 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainline Protestant</td>
<td>1.7 : 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>6.5 : 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How the U.S. Public Became Less Religious

- As of 2014, the relatively affiliated are, by and large, about as religious as they were in 2007.
- ...but the percentage of adults who describe themselves as religiously affiliated has declined about 7 points.
- At the same time, the percentage of adults who are religiously unaffiliated has jumped about 7 points.
- ...and the “nones” have become even more secular in their belief and practice.
- The net result is an overall U.S. adult population that has become slightly less religious.

YOUTH & YOUNG ADULTS

Youth (teens)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abiders</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adapters</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assenters</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoiders</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atheists</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Emerging Adults (20s)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Committed Traditionalists</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selected Adherents</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spiritually Open</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religiously Indifferent</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religiously Disconnected</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irreligious</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

THE CATHOLIC FAMILY STUDY (CARA, 2015)

Do any of your children currently attend...

1. A Catholic elementary or middle school: 8%
2. A Catholic high school: 3%
3. A parish-based Catholic religious education program: 21%
4. A youth ministry program: 5%
5. None of the above: 68%
THE RISE OF THE “DONES”

- Dechurched U.S. adults
- Number of U.S. adults (millions)
- Left church
- Left church in both affiliation (34.5M)
- Dones by Gender
  - Female: 51.6%
  - Male: 48.4%
- Dones by Age
  - 18-22 years: 8.3%
  - 26-31 years: 19.6%
  - 35-54 years: 43.3%
  - 55-64 years: 20.8%
  - 65+ years: 7.8%

**How involved in church**
- I attended services but nothing more: 44.3%
- I attended services and some events or a small group: 33.7%
- I volunteered my time to serve in the church’s ministries: 17.8%
- I was heavily involved as a leader in the congregation: 1.1%
- I was on paid staff: 3.2%
**REASONS: LEAVING/DISSATISFACTION**

1. Church too judgmental
2. Church bureaucracy
3. Lecture style of preaching
4. **Church is not where I encounter God**
5. Social & political stances of the church
6. **Church is not where I find community**
7. Couldn’t find a church that was welcoming
8. I wanted to be more involved in living out God’s calling in my life

**TYPES OF SBNR PEOPLE**

- **Dissenters** are people who largely stay away from institutional religion (“protesting” or “drifted” dissenters”).
- **Casuals** are people whose religious or spiritual practices are primarily functional (makes me feel better).
- **Explorers** are like spiritual tourists who enjoy the journey but do not plan to settle anywhere (theological hybrids).
- **Seekers** are searching for a spiritual home (reclaiming an earlier religious identities or moving on to something new).
- **Immigrants** have moved to a new spiritual “land” and are trying to adjust to this new identity and community (tension between commitment, constancy, and group loyalty – and SBNR ethos of independence, freedom, non-dogmatism, and an open and questing attitude).
Value & religious transmission is primarily a family affair. Families can transmit a religious faith tradition or not.

Keys:
1. Family Religious Inheritance
2. Grandparents
3. Parental Role Modeling
4. Parent-Child Relationship
WHY THESE TRENDS WILL CONTINUE

- Younger generations more unaffiliated and less involved in faith communities
- Older generations more affiliated and more involved and supportive
- Generational transition: as younger generations replace the older generations there will be fewer engaged and more unaffiliated

WHY THESE TRENDS WILL CONTINUE

- Declining levels of family religious transmission and faith practice at home are a result of non-affiliation.
  - 1st generation & 2nd generation
- If the pattern continues, expect higher levels of non-affiliation and lower levels of church involvement in younger families.
WHY THESE TRENDS WILL CONTINUE

- Increase in individualism – more focus on the self, less on others and society. Religious affiliation is low when the culture is high in individualism and low in social support.
- Increase in religious pluralism—questioning or minimizing of all faiths.
- Increase in diversity

HOWEVER....

- 40% of the “no religion in particular” say it is “very” or “somewhat” important in their lives
- The overwhelming majority of religiously unaffiliated believe in God.
- Less about people “losing their religion” than dissatisfaction with available institutional options
- Young generations seem allergic to large-scale institutions that demand not only spiritual allegiance but financial commitment. None of these things are “religion” for these people.
FEELINGS OF SPIRITUALITY RISE

Americans have become less religious in recent years by standard measures such as how important they say religion is to them and their frequency of religious service attendance and prayer. But, at the same time, the share of people across a wide variety of religious identities who say they often feel a deep sense of spiritual peace and well-being as well as a deep sense of wonder about the universe has risen.

HOWEVER...

- Corporate, mega-church dominated models of religious & spiritual activity are starting to be replaced by smaller, more locally oriented church communities, and by larger churches that attract the masses for a spiritual or musical performance, and a sense of belonging to something much larger than themselves.
- Young people are looking for intimacy and personal connections, deep spiritual experiences, service to others, and the opportunity to create their own community.
Religion is not going away anytime soon, regardless of how people may identify themselves. But business as usual among existing religious institutions will not stem the losses we are seeing.

(Richard Flory, USC)

(http://religiondispatches.org/u-s-christianity-is-dead-long-live-u-s-christianity)
A shift from education to learning anywhere, anytime.
A shift from consumption of information to participatory learning.
A shift from institutions to networks.
LEARNING NETWORKS

HIVE LEARNING NETWORK
A laboratory approach to creating transformative learning experiences for youth.

Anytime, Anywhere, Interest-powered

Cross-disciplinary Collaborative, Shared

Innovative, Creative, Analog-Digital

Open, Networked, Production-centered
DIGITALLY ENABLED LEARNING

FULLY ONLINE FAITH FORMATION

MOSTLY ONLINE WITH REGULAR INTERACTION IN GATHERED SESSIONS

ONLINE FAITH FORMATION & GATHERED SESSIONS (FLIPPED CLASSROOM)

GATHERED PROGRAM WITH ONLINE COMPONENTS BEYOND THE PROGRAM

GATHERED PROGRAM WITH SUPPORTIVE ONLINE CONTENT

IMAGINING A NEW FUTURE
A NEW FAITH FORMING ECOSYSTEM

Intergenerational Faith Community

Online & Digitally-Enabled Faith Formation

Age Group/Generational Faith Formation

Missional Faith Formation

Family Faith Formation

Online Resources (Videos, Best Practices, Commercial Products)

Self-paced Online

Classroom

Virtual Classroom

Noble Learning

Events, Workshops, Webcasts, Webinars

Crowd / Social Learning (blogs/forums, open content)

Performance Support / Job Aids

Learning Ecosystem
COMPREHENSIVE FAITH FORMATION

GROWTH IN FAITH

Learning the Tradition

Praying Spiritual Formation

Reading the Bible

Serving Working for Justice Caring for Creation

Worshipping

Caring Relationships

Rituals & Milestones

Church Year Seasons

Learning the Tradition

Praying Spiritual Formation

Reading the Bible

Serving Working for Justice Caring for Creation

Worshipping

Caring Relationships

Rituals & Milestones

Church Year Seasons