



Preparing people to lead extraordinary lives

## Boston College Questionnaire, 2010

# Religious/Spiritual Characteristics and Behaviors of Loyola Seniors

Prepared by the Office of Institutional Research

Report number: 10-38

August, 2010

The Boston College Questionnaire (BCQ) research project was designed to gather information on seniors' academic and co-curricular experience, as well as their personal and religious/spiritual behavior and development, at Catholic colleges and universities in the United States. The BCQ project originated at and is administered by Boston College.

All graduating seniors at Loyola were invited to take the survey in spring of 2010. The response rate was 43%, with 741 seniors taking the survey. Compared to the Loyola senior population, Loyola respondents were slightly more likely to be female and slightly more likely to be white. They were representative in terms of their school (CAS, Business, etc.).

This report focuses on the religious/spiritual characteristics and behavior of seniors and their parents.

### Key findings

#### Religious preference of student and parents

- More than half of responding seniors (54%) said they were Catholic. Twenty-nine percent said they were of another religion, and the remaining 17% said they did not have a religious preference (see Table 1).
- Mothers and fathers were a little more likely to be Catholic than were their sons/daughters (63% and 58%, respectively). They were less likely to have no religious preference (5% and 9%, respectively).

#### Religiosity/spirituality of student and parents

- Fifty-nine percent of seniors said that they were religious (see Table 2). Higher percentages said that their mothers and fathers were religious (84% and 71%, respectively).
- Eighty-three percent of seniors said that they considered themselves spiritual. Eighty-eight percent said that their mothers were spiritual, while 76% said that their fathers were spiritual.

#### Attendance at religious services

- Forty-five percent of respondents said they had attending a Catholic service at least once during their senior year, and 19% said they had done so twice or more a month (see Table 3).
- Other types of religious services were rarely

attended during the senior year. After Catholic, the next most common type of service attended was Protestant, with 11% of students attending some time during their senior year.

#### Religious/spiritual conversations

- One half of respondents said that during their senior year they had an average of at least one conversation on religious/spiritual topics per month; 20% said they did not have any (see Table 4).
- Seniors were most likely to have religious/spiritual conversations with friends (67%), followed by parents (47%).
- Also relatively common were classmates (41%), roommates (34%), and siblings (31%).
- Students were less likely to have religious/spiritual conversations with professionals.
- The type of professional most commonly cited was faculty, with 16% of seniors said that they had at least one religious/spiritual conversation with a professor/instructor during their senior year.
- Jesuits were the next most commonly cited professionals (10%), while 9% said they had at least one religious/spiritual conversation during their senior year with a member of the Campus Ministry staff.

#### Prayer/meditation

- Seventy-one percent of respondents said they prayed or meditated at least occasionally during their senior year, although 19% said they did so less than once a week. Seventeen percent said they prayed daily (see Table 5).
- Seniors were most likely to pray in their residence hall or apartment, with one third praying there.
- Twenty-six percent said they prayed while walking to class, while 16% prayed on public transportation.
- Other than during formal services, 14% prayed in an on-campus chapel and 13% prayed in an off-campus chapel.

### Conclusions

- By a small margin, the majority of responding seniors said they were Catholic.
- Seniors are more likely to consider themselves to be spiritual than they are to consider themselves to be

religious.

- Conversations about religion/spirituality were fairly common among seniors, who were more likely to talk to non-professionals about such topics than they were to professionals. Conversations with peers

(friends, classmates, and roommates) were the most commonly cited.

- While most students prayed/meditated at least occasionally during their senior year, relatively few prayed every day.

Table 1			
Religious Preference of Student and Parents			
	Catholic	Other religion	None
	%	%	%
Religious preference	54	29	17
Mother's religious preference	63	32	5
Father's religious preference	58	33	9

Boston College Questionnaire, 2010 (unweighted data)

Note: Excludes "Don't know ."

Table 2			
Religiosity and Spirituality of Student and Parents			
	Not at all religious	Religious	Very religious
	%	%	%
Self - religious	41	48	11
Mother - religious	17	52	32
Father - religious	29	51	20
	Not at all spiritual	Spiritual	Very spiritual
	%	%	%
Self - spiritual	17	52	30
Mother - spiritual	12	53	34
Father - spiritual	24	52	24

Boston College Questionnaire, 2010 (unweighted data)

Note: Excludes "Don't know ."

Table 3				
Attendance at Religious Services During Senior Year <sup>1</sup>				
	Never	Less than once a month	Once a month	Twice or more a month
	%	%	%	%
Christian Catholic	46	22	8	24
Christian Protestant	86	6	2	6
Buddhist	89	6	2	3
Jewish	93	5	1	1
Hindu	94	3	1	2
Christian Orthodox	95	2	1	1
Islamic	96	2	0	2
Other Religion	91	4	2	4

Boston College Questionnaire, 2010 (unweighted data)

Note: Excludes students who responded "Don't know" or "None" to religious preference question.

Table 4	
Religious/Spiritual Conversations with Others During Senior Year	
	%
Non-professional	
Friends	67
Parents/Guardians	47
Classmates	41
Roommates	34
Brothers and/or sisters	31
Co-workers	17
Volunteer/community service peers	12
Teammates	5
Fraternity brothers/sorority sisters	5
Other	11
Professional	
Professor/instructor	16
Jesuit	10
Campus Ministry staff	9
Clergy/religious Leader	7
Academic advisor	4
Club/activity advisor	3
Residential Life staff	3
Community service program staff	2
Office of Diversity staff	1
University Counseling staff	1
Health Service staff	1
Other	4
Overall number of religious/spiritual conversations in average month	
None	20
Less than one per month	30
One per month	17
2-3 per month	20
4 or more per month	13

Boston College Questionnaire, 2010 (unweighted data)

Table 5	
Places and Frequency of Prayer/Meditation	
	%
Residence hall/apartment	33
While you walk to classes	26
Public transportation	16
On-campus chapel outside of formal services	14
Outdoor on-campus	14
Off-campus chapel outside of formal services	13
While you exercise	12
Public parks (beaches, bike paths)	11
Private transportation	11
Library	10
Workplace	10
Dining hall	5
Volunteer site	5
Other	17
Overall number of times prayed/meditated in average week	
None	29
Less than once per week	19
Once per week	13
2 - 3 times per week	14
4 - 6 times per week	8
Every day	17

Boston College Questionnaire, 2010 (unweighted data)