Evaluating Catholics Come Home (CCH)
Summary of Findings, September 2010

Summary
Four methods to evaluate CCH were utilized. Over 95% of parish leaders and parishioners reported a positive influence of CCH on themselves, on their parish and on the Catholic Church in this region. Virtually everyone shared hopes for continuing CCH-typed efforts, both by additional diocesan/regional advertising efforts and with individual parish welcoming and outreach opportunities.

Parish Mass Attendance Census
In the Diocese of Green Bay, Mass attendance increased an average of 7.4% from October of 2009 to April of 2010. For this measure, parishes calculated Mass counts for the weekends of April 17-18 and 24-25; we received usable information from 171 worship sites, which is fully 96% of our parishes. Of these, over 75 worship sites reported First Communions as taking place during one of their weekends. Some portion of our reported 7.4% Mass attendance increase is therefore tied to people coming to First Communions (which, as it turns out, are also many of the same inactive Catholics targeted by CCH!) While the impact of First Communions on April Mass counts was to some extent statistically controlled, it cannot nor should it be completely eliminated, given that they are some of the same population as targeted by CCH.

Online Survey
This spring, 354 people throughout the diocese completed an online survey. Respondents are well represented by parish role (including over 40 priests/parish directors and 162 unpaid parishioners), parish size (incl. 51 from our smallest parishes and 167 from our largest parishes) and parish location (incl. 37 from the northwestern portion of the diocese). Among the results:

- Over 90% of parishes indicated that parishioners were told during Mass that the commercials would air, so they might be better prepared
- 44% of respondents saw the CCH commercials between 11 and 30 times and another 10% saw the commercials more than this.
- 55% of respondents talked more about faith matters in public places and 57% talked more with family and friends about faith matters
- 53% of Pastors and Parish Directors reported they saw an increase in participation in the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation, 65% noticed more people at Mass, and 33% noticed more calls to the parish and/or requests for membership info
- 56% knew the commercial air time was paid for by donors while only 11% incorrectly believed that either Bishop’s Appeal or Advancing the Mission monies paid for the commercials
CCH Gratitude Dinners
Dinners were offered throughout the diocese during which attendees reflected individually and collectively on the “big picture” of what went well regarding CCH and what they would do differently next time. The most common feedback was:

**What went really well regarding the CCH initiative?** CCH brought the parishioners together, fostered a sense of awareness and pride in the faith, enhancing the welcoming atmosphere and involving the entire parish community. The commercials were uplifting, diverse and well liked by 99.9% of parishioners.

**If your parish and the diocese were going to participate in CCH again, what should be done differently, what could be strengthened?** More advance notice and preparation needed to be offered to the “person in the pew” and other media (newspaper, billboards, radio, homilies) should be utilized along with the commercials. More/wider involvement of parishioners.

**What would you really hope/like to see happen in your parish from here in terms of outreach to inactive Catholics?** Keep working on building a warm and welcoming parish environment. Listen to non-parish members, continue to reach out and invite people both to return and to become more involved in their faith.

**What would you really hope/like to see happen in the diocese/this region from here in terms of outreach to inactive Catholics?** Continued media coverage, ranging from repeating commercials to hosting billboards to providing journalists with positive stories about the Church. Provide parishes with resources and encouragement to continue building on the momentum.

Random Calls to 20% of Parishes
Parishes were grouped according to size (under 300, between 300-750 and over 750 people on average for Sunday Mass attendance) and then 20% of parishes from each sized group were randomly called to discuss their concrete experiences and the impact of CCH. While the parishes confirmed the findings mentioned above, they also reported unique experiences based on the size of their parish, including:

**Smallest parishes:** Given that people knew one another well and already had great ownership in their parish, CCH helped the smallest parishes become even more open, receptive, welcoming and less “territorial.” A very large percentage of parishioners “chipped in” and helped in small ways with the CCH initiative all throughout the initiative. Parishes were able to use the initiative to help them with other parish goals, like having new greeters or getting a website launched.

**Medium-sized parishes:** Many of these parishes have been merged recently, so CCH was helpful in the healing process and in pulling parishioners into a single, more unified community. Medium parishes were most likely to report enhancing their worship as part of their preparations for CCH.

**Largest parishes:** Paid staff at the largest parishes, including business administrators and administrative assistants, felt more empowered to evangelize as part of their daily work, to interact in a more holistic fashion with the people contacting them for services. The largest parishes also were most likely to report gratitude for the young adult Ambassador program.