

# The financing of the catholic Church in France

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LMU - Munich

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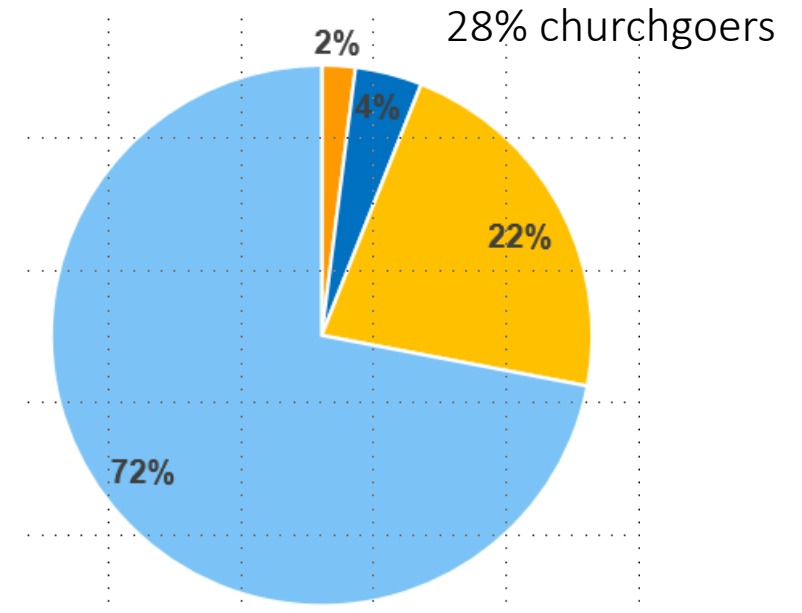
# The catholic Church in France : an overview

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## Catholicism in France in a nutshell :

- Circa 50% of the population (90% in the 50's /60's)
- Out of which

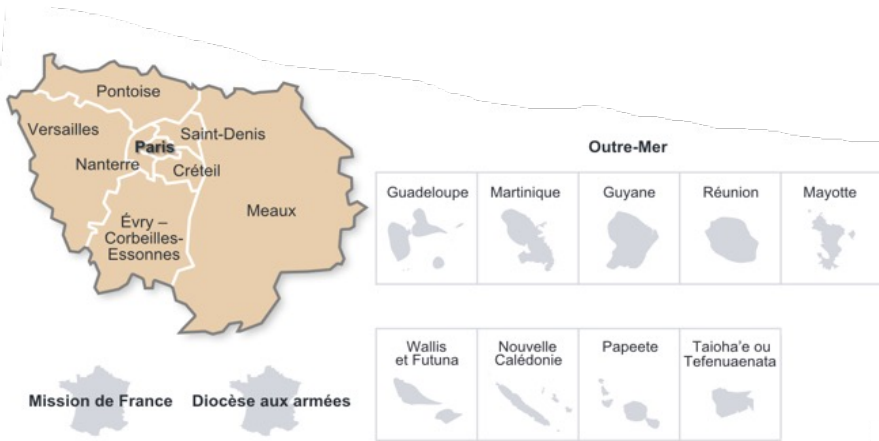
72 % cultural catholics



- Since 1905, strict separation between State and Church
  - no established Church
  - no public financing


# The catholic Church in France : an overview

100 dioceses!



# The catholic Church in France : an overview

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- 200 bishops (incl.retirees), 12,000 priests (incl. 15% fidei donum), 3,000 deacons, 5,150 staff members
  - 100 dioceses (15 provinces)+ circa 10,000 parishes
  - Catholic charities and catholic schools are independent entities
  - Circa 400 congregations and religious communities (21,000 members, 75% women, 25% men)
- 
- separate fundings

# The catholic Church in France : an overview

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## Key financial metrics (2022, M€)

• Total operating revenues	754	} 35 % clergy & staff 30 % buildings maintenance 35 % pastoral activities
• Total operating expenses	889	
• Operating short fall	135	
• Financial income		
+ asset disposals (net)	12	
• Bequests	135	
• Final result	12	

# The 5 main financing resources

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Total operating revenues 754 M€

- Offerings and gifts 551 M€
  - Bequests and donations 140 M€
- } 691 M€

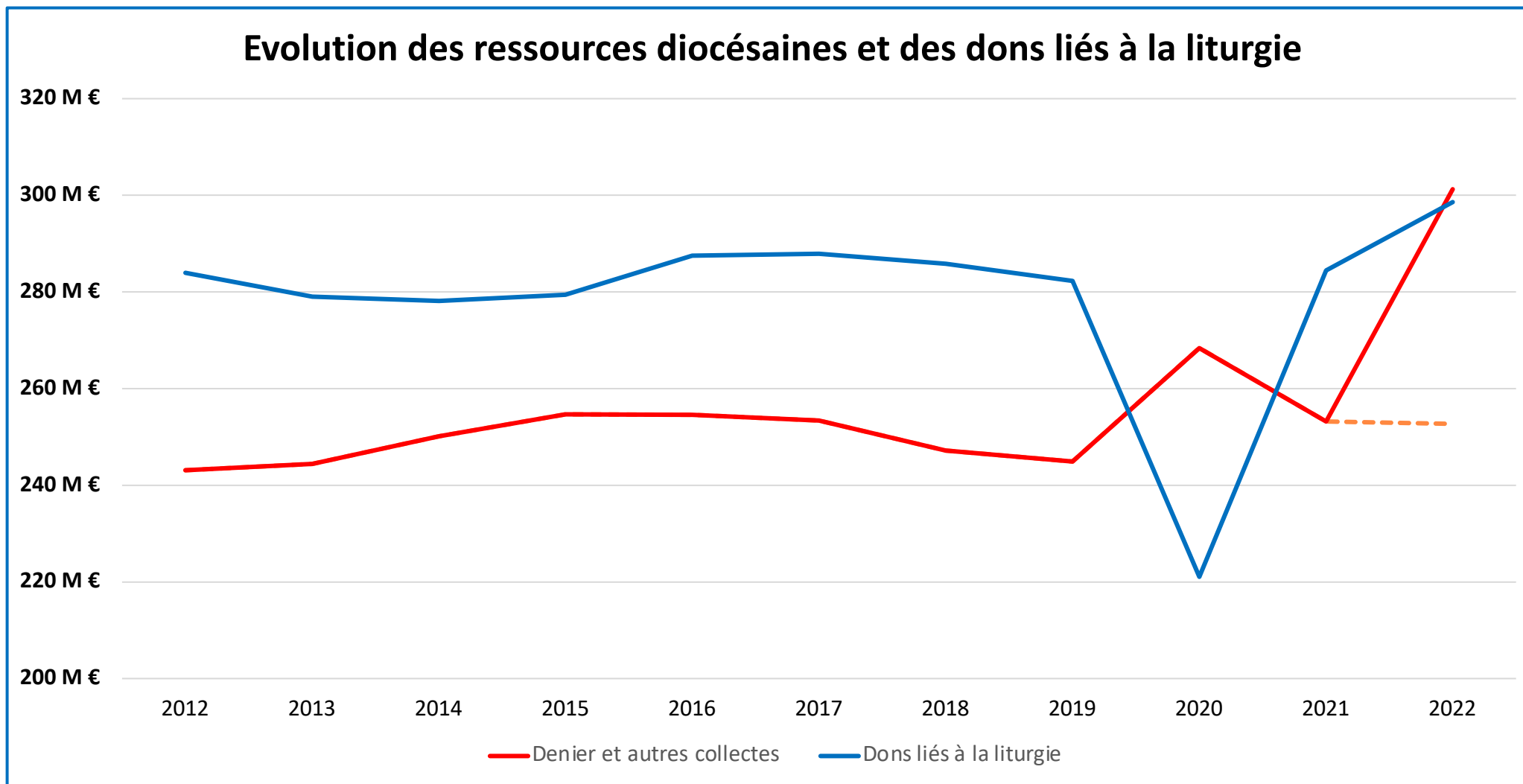
→ The French Catholic Church is **exclusively funded by the faithful**

# The 5 main financing resources

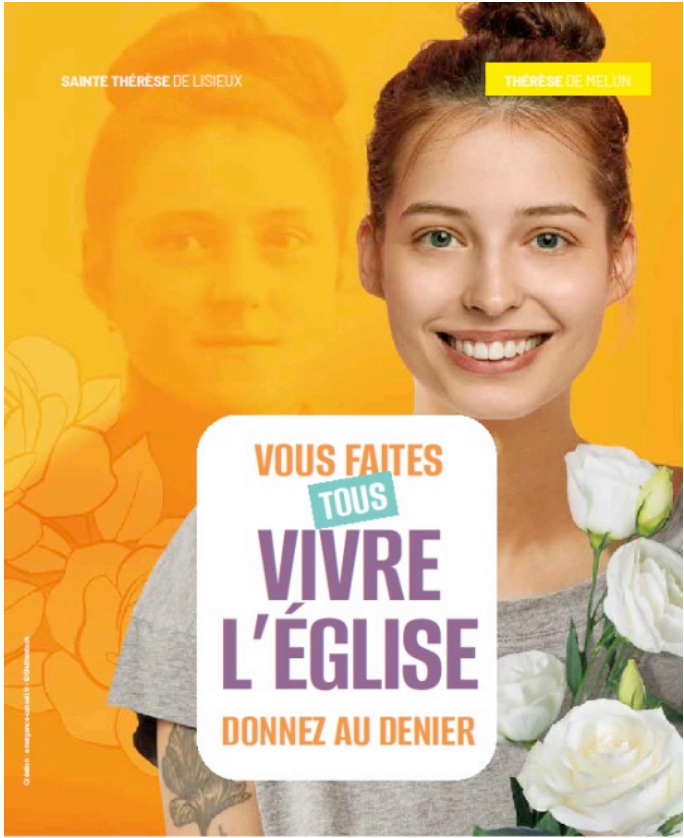
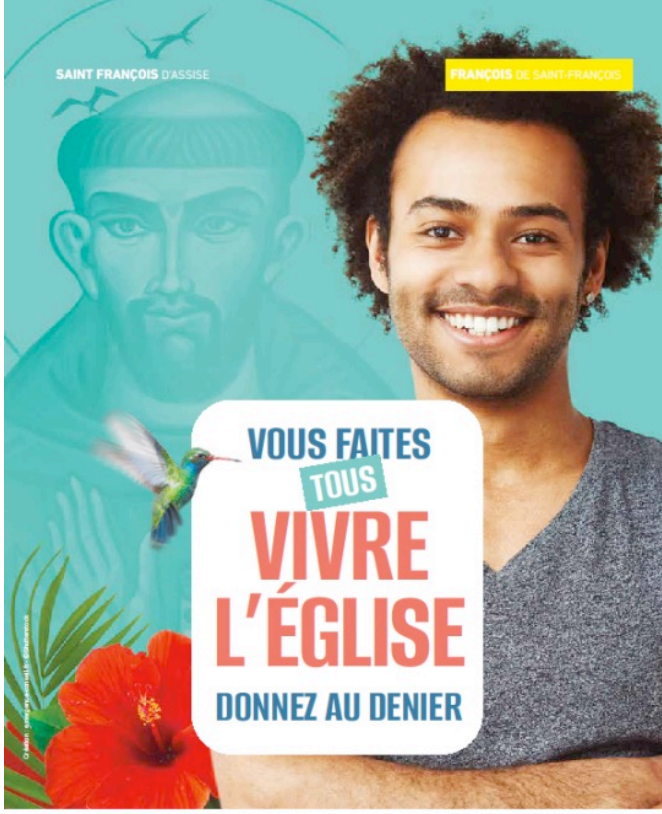
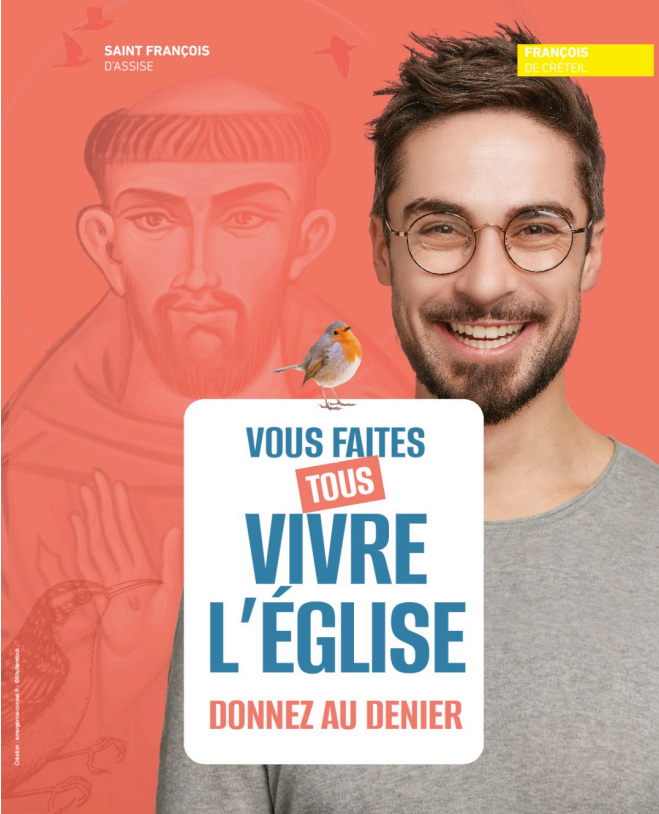
		M€		
General purpose	1. Annual appeal : Denier	253	41%	60%
	2. Bequests and donations	140	19%	
Liturgy linked	3. Sunday collections	161	22%	40%
	4. Offerings for masses	51	7%	
	5. Offerings for sacrements (baptism, marriage) and funerals (« casuel »)	86	11%	



# The 5 main financing ressources



# The 5 main financing ressources : the annual appeal, le denier



# The 5 main financing resources : wills and bequests



**La vie  
pour l'éternité**  
Je lègue à l'Église catholique!

[JecroisJelegue.catholique.fr](http://JecroisJelegue.catholique.fr)

PHOTO: G. BARRON / GETTY IMAGES / CONTRASTO; PHOTOS: J. BARRON / GETTY IMAGES / CONTRASTO; PHOTOS: J. BARRON / GETTY IMAGES / CONTRASTO; PHOTOS: J. BARRON / GETTY IMAGES / CONTRASTO; PHOTOS: J. BARRON / GETTY IMAGES / CONTRASTO

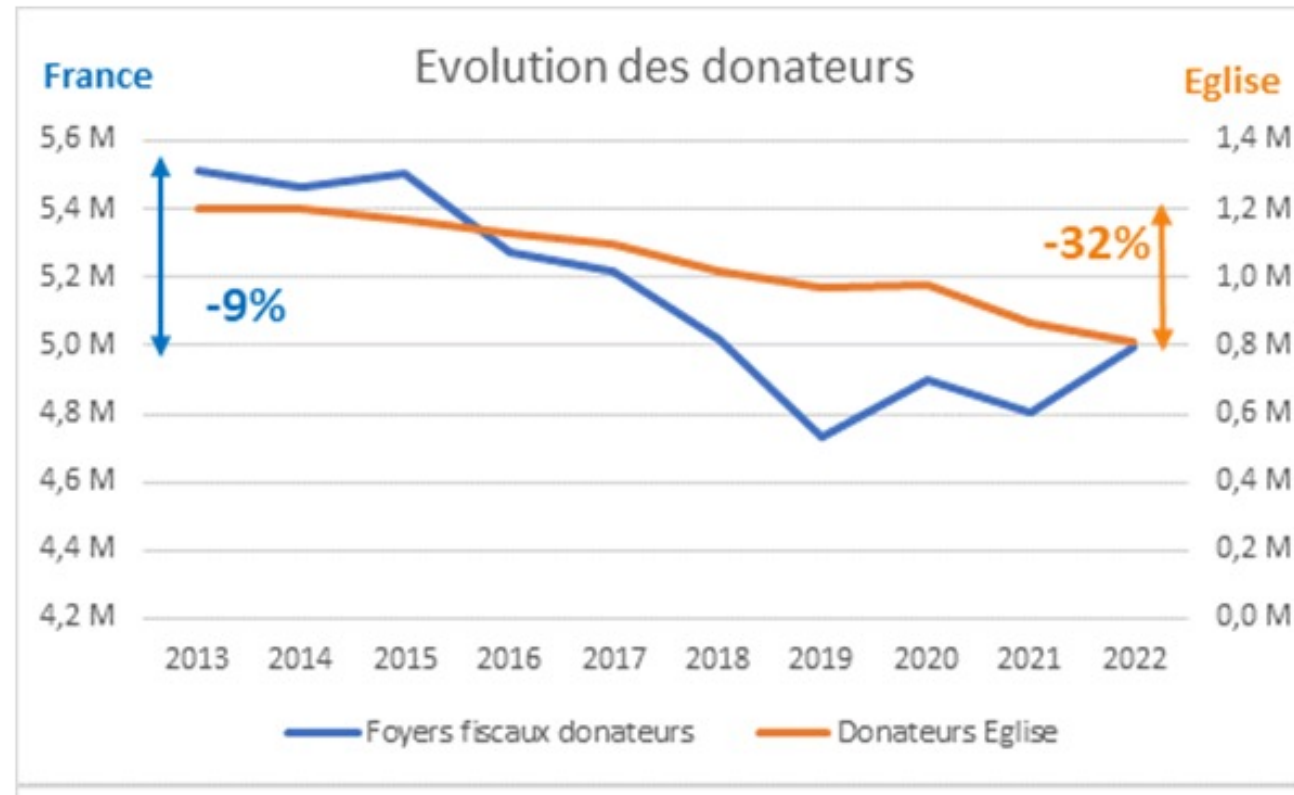
# The key challenges ahead

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1. Decline of the number of donors
2. Technological turnaround
3. Spiritual and pastoral awakening
4. Reduction of expenses

# The key challenges ahead

- ✓ Annual appeal (denier)
  - From 1,2 m donors in 2013 to 0,8 m donors in 2022



- Mitigated by a +80% rise of the average gift (365 €)

# The key challenges ahead

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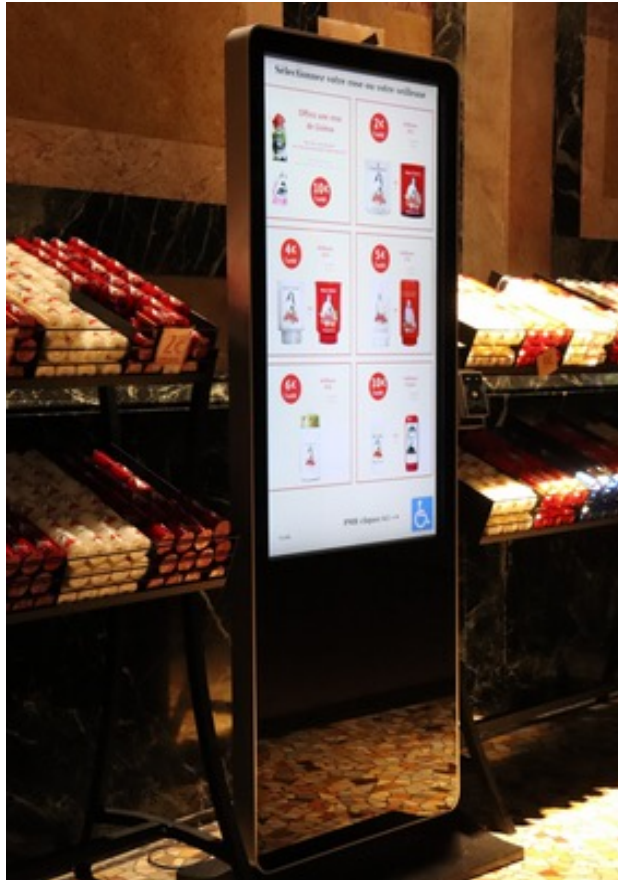
- ✓ Decline in church attendance
  - A long term trend (exacerbated by covid)
  - Sharp drop in the number of baptisms, mariages and even religious funerals
  - Mitigated by an increase of the average collection

# The key challenges ahead

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- ✓ Major technological shifts
  - Drop of cash (and check) usage
  - Annual appeal: from mailings and leaflets to on line marketing and collection
  - Liturgy : either you use connected collection plates and terminals or..... you can't collect any more
- ✓ All dioceses and parishes have to adapt and invest

# The key challenges ahead



**VOS OFFRANDES  
FONT BATTRE  
LE CŒUR DE LA  
PAROISSE.**

**DONS PAR  
CARTE ET MOBILE  
100%  
SÉCURISÉS**

**L'Église se modernise. La quête se digitalise  
grâce au paiement « sans contact ».**

**Documents  
Episcopat**

N° 6 - 2021

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LA COORDINATION DES DIOCÈSES DE FRANCE

**LES RESSOURCES  
DE L'ÉGLISE**

**SENS SPIRITUEL ET ENJEU  
PASTORAL DU DON**



# The key challenges ahead

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## ➤ Pastoral challenge

- ✓ Canon law 222 : *“The Christian faithful are obliged to assist with the needs of the Church so that the Church has what is necessary for divine worship, for the works of the apostolate and of charity, and for the decent support of ministers. They are also obliged to promote social justice and, mindful of the precept of the Lord, to assist the poor from their own resources.”*
- ✓ Half of regular churchgoers do not contribute to the annual appeal
- ✓ To reach out to cultural catholics, digital is of the essence
- ✓ The involvement of parish priests and pastoral agents in fundraising is patchy

➔ The full deployment of efficient CRM tools in all parishes should be a key pastoral goal

# The key challenges ahead

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- Spiritual opportunity
  - ✓ Prayer and gift go together as one and can't be split
  - ✓ Each type of gift has its own spiritual meaning
  - ✓ To give expresses and strengthen faith

# The key challenges ahead

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➤ Overall, revenues are resilient

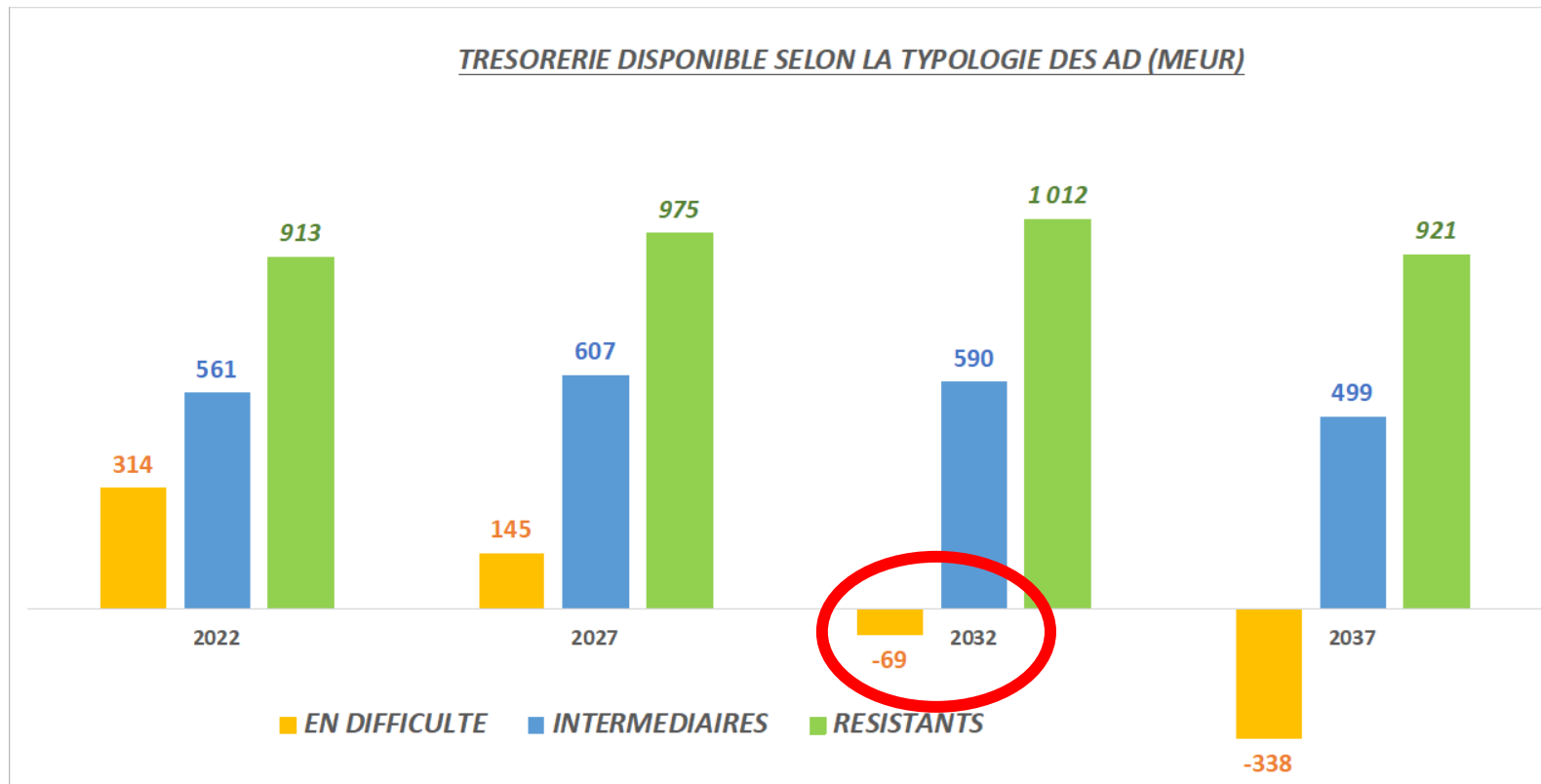
✓ Annual appeal	- 0,1 %	} + 5,3 % in 2022
✓ Liturgy linked offerings	+ 4,2 %	
✓ Bequests	+ 14,0 %	

➤ But underlying trends are worrisome

- ✓ 1/3 of the dioceses : sharp decline of revenues
- ✓ Average age of contributing churchgoers > 65/70
- ✓ Nominal revenues do not match inflation

# The key challenges ahead

- Operating expenses have to be curtailed especially
  - staff
  - buildings
- Otherwise, many (small) dioceses will hit the wall



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Thank You.

Question time !