

# Faith Digest

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**No competition for donations.** Houses of worship and other charities often aren't in competition for dollars but instead tend to reap donations from similar donors, a new study shows. Slightly more than 50 percent of people who financially supported congregations also gave to at least one charitable organization in the last year, according to a study conducted by Phoenix-based Grey Matter Research Consulting. Researchers also found the more Americans give to a house of worship, the more they donate to other groups. The study, which was commissioned by the nonprofit fundraising firm Russ Reid Co. of Pasadena, Calif., was conducted last May by telephone and online among a nationally representative sample of 2,005 American adults. It had a margin of error of plus or minus 2.2 percentage points.

**Crime up at U.S. churches.** Each week brings an average of two arsons, seven thefts and 19 burglaries at churches in the United States, according to [Christian Security Network's](#) second annual year-end report of church crimes. The report—based on news articles, police blogs and verified personal reports—showed a slight increase in most church crimes in 2010 from 2009, for a total of 1,783 incidents. That figure was up 546 from the year before and included 970 burglaries, 397 thefts, 102 arsons and 89 counts of vandalism, the report stated. The report only covered churches and not other houses of worship, such as mosques or synagogues.

**Vatican zaps phone app.** Just in case Catholics wonder whether [a new iPhone app](#) might be able to forgive their sins, the Vatican has issued a clarification: No. According to its U.S. producers, "Confession: A Roman Catholic App" is designed to help users prepare for confession through a "personalized examination of conscience for each user, password protected profiles, and a step-by-step guide to the sacrament." The Indiana-based

company, Little iApps, says its application is the first to receive an imprimatur, or official permission for publication, from a Catholic bishop—Kevin C. Rhoades of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend. But Vatican spokesman Federico Lombardi insisted the sacrament requires “the relationship of personal dialogue between the penitent and the confessor and absolution by the confessor present,” and a smart phone app cannot substitute for that.

**Shea receives lifetime Grammy.** Gospel singer and longtime Billy Graham associate George Beverly Shea received a [Lifetime Achievement Award](#) at the 53rd annual Grammy Awards in Los Angeles. At 102, Shea is one of the oldest living people to be honored by the Recording Academy. For more than 60 years, Shea was the signature soloist at Billy Graham crusades, and according to Guinness World Records, he has sung before more people than anyone else—an estimated combined live audience of 220 million people. During his 80-year career, Shea recorded more than 70 albums and wrote several popular worship songs. He was nominated 10 times for a Grammy and won in 1965.