

NOVEMBER MASS COUNT.... A chance for learning more than numbers?

As we move towards the annual November Mass count, I thought it might be useful to share our experience last November. It might be useful as is or perhaps there is some wisdom out there among other parish teams that might refine the process.

The simple process we used last November gave us an opportunity for more than a head count. We learned more about the worshipping community of the parish and the process led to a fuller commitment to the ministries of the parish.

HOW DID IT HAPPEN?

Over the four weeks, as well as doing a head count, we used four simple cards (which is attached) to gather information about our worshipping community.

These were completed at Mass and while the head count was being done. There was a very full response four questions:

Who we are? Cultural background? Time and Treasure? Time and Talent?

Feedback in the bulletin each week seemed to keep the process alive.

Week 1

The Census Card



I always come to this Mass: *(please circle)* YES/NO

I prefer to come to Mass on *(please circle)*

Sat 5.30pm Sun 7am Sun 8.30am Sun 10am Sun 5.30pm

I have been in this parish for years.

Age: *(please circle)*

12-18 19-35 36-50 50-65 65 and over

I have children under 12 years old.

Thank you for completing this information.

The Response which appeared in the bulletin

SOME RESULTS FROM PARISH CENSUS

WEEK 1: WHO ARE WE?

Thank you for taking part in the Parish Census last weekend. Here are the results of week 1 of the total 4 weeks to get a snapshot of *who we are* at St Patrick's Parish Blacktown.

Summary

- There were 1544 census cards completed on the weekend. And the Parish Count showed 1773 people in attendance. What an excellent response to the survey!
- Parishioners at St Patrick's have been part of the parish community from between 6 months to 88 years!
- From the results, the age group of our parish community is broken up as:

U/12: 377 (approx 24.4%)	12-18: 79 (approx 5.1%)
19-35: 197 (approx 12.8%)	36-50: 249 (approx 16.1%)
50-65: 321 (approx 20.8%)	65+: 294 (approx 19%)
No response: 27	
- Some highlights from each of the Masses:
 - Saturday 5.30pm: Made up of 50% of people under 50 years old and 50% over 50 years old.
 - Sunday 7am: 65% of the congregation are over 50 years old.
 - Sunday 8.30am: 64% of the congregation are 36 years and over
 - Sunday 10am: Has a very high family composition
 - Sunday 5.30pm: 75% of the congregation are under 50 years old.

Week 2

The Census Card



Where were you born?

If outside Australia,
how long have you been in Australia?

I have people in my family/household who belong to other
Christian Churches/other faiths. *(please circle)* YES/NO

Languages spoken.....

Age: *(please circle)*

12-18	19-35	36-50	50-65	65 and over
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Thank you for completing this information.

The Response which appeared in the bulletin

SOME RESULTS FROM PARISH CENSUS WEEK 2: CULTURAL BACKGROUND

- Thank you to all those who have taken time to complete our census cards. One person in the over 65 age group asked why cultural background was important - "its almost as though you are asking us HOW AUSTRALIAN ARE WE?" I appreciated the comment. The parish team is simply seeking to honour the rich cultural diversity of the parish. Some say Australia is a *melting pot*, I say it is a *salad bowl!* In melting pots everything is reduced to the same. In salad bowls each content retains its own flavour! The information below gives us a window into the flavours and the common richness of our worshipping community.

Summary

- There were 1146 census cards completed on the weekend. And the Parish Count showed 1722 people in attendance.
- Parishioners born overseas 747 (338 from Philippines) out of these, the times since their arrival varies from 3 months to 60 years. 399 were born in Australia.
- AGES: 12 - 18: 124
 19 - 35: 183
 36 - 50: 217
 51 - 65: 339
 65+ : 283
- LANGUAGES: 605 (53%) speak at least one language other than English at home. Most common languages Filipino (254), Maltese (136), African languages (40) Hindi (37), Arabic (29), French (19), Spanish (17), Italian (16), Konkani (12), Indonesian (10). Other languages in (alphabetical order) are: Bangali, Portuguese, Samoan, Singalese, Slovenian, Tamil and Urdu

Fr Peter

Week 3

The Census Card



TIME & TREASURE

Outside coming to Mass, I give hours of ministry and service to St Patrick's per month.

I contribute regularly to the Parish Collection: *(please circle)* YES/NO

I make a regular contribution to the Parish via the planned giving envelopes or by credit card: *(please circle)* YES/NO

I support the Diocesan Works Fund Appeal: *(please circle)* YES/NO

Age: *(please circle)*

12-18 19-35 36-50 50-65 65 and over

The Response which appeared in the bulletin

SOME RESULTS FROM PARISH CENSUS WEEK 3: TIME & TREASURE

- Thank you to all those who have taken time to complete our census cards.

Summary

- There were 964 census cards completed on the weekend. And the Parish Count showed people in attendance.

Ages	Hours of Ministry	Parish Collection	Planned Giving	DWF
12 - 18: 74	115	56	13	31
19 - 35: 128	138	108	26	48
36 - 50: 172	206	158	70	122
51 - 65: 285	379	260	120	221
65+ : 243	638	225	126	186
Blank: 62				
Grand Total: 964	1476	807	355	608

Week 4

The Census Card

The Response which appeared in the bulletin



Have you considered taking up A ROLE OF MINISTRY at St Patrick's Parish? *(please circle)* YES/NO

In 2010 I would like to talk to someone about ...

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Music Ministry | <input type="checkbox"/> Altar Server | <input type="checkbox"/> St Vincent de Paul |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Teaching in State Schools | <input type="checkbox"/> Church Cleaning | <input type="checkbox"/> Greeters |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Senior Servers | <input type="checkbox"/> Social Committee | <input type="checkbox"/> Formation Team |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Reading at Mass | <input type="checkbox"/> Liturgy Team | <input type="checkbox"/> Eucharistic Minister |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grounds & Maintenance | <input type="checkbox"/> Other | |

Name: Phone Number:
 Email Address:

Thank you for completing this information.

TIME AND TALENT 2010

Thanks again for all the patience and generosity that people showed during the census month of November. Last weekend 131 people filled out cards for ministry in the coming year. There are many new people who have come forward. In the coming weeks they will be contacted so that their generosity can be picked up in various ministries in the new year.

Fr Peter

NOTE:

The data from the fourth week was diverse and fed into strengthening engagement in various ministries.

So as we approach that November Mass count time I thought it might be useful to share our experience. There might be some part of it that is of value to others. There are after all a few voices out there reminding us that we are called to be *servng together*.

Fr Peter Confeggi