

Corpus Christi Parish Assembly 2024

Survey of parishioners

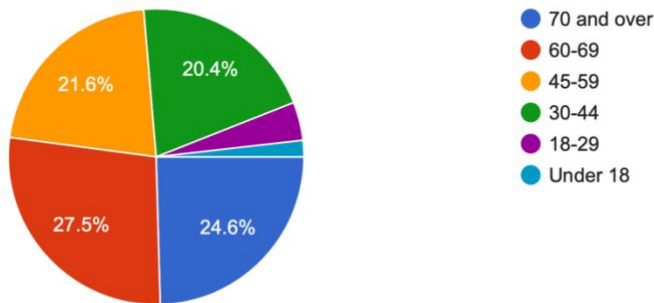
Summary

A. Demographic data

167 people responded to the survey which was open for four weeks. Here is a summary of the data:

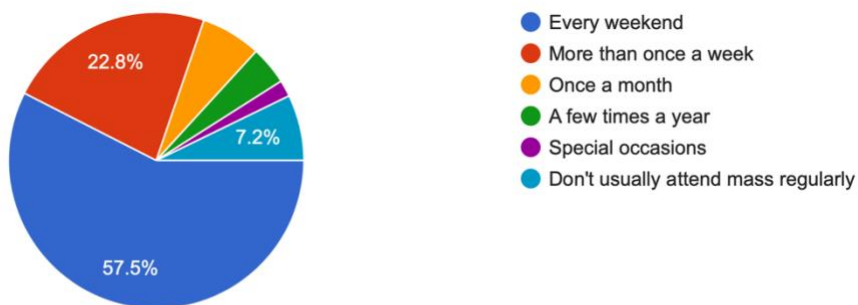
1. Please select your age range

167 responses



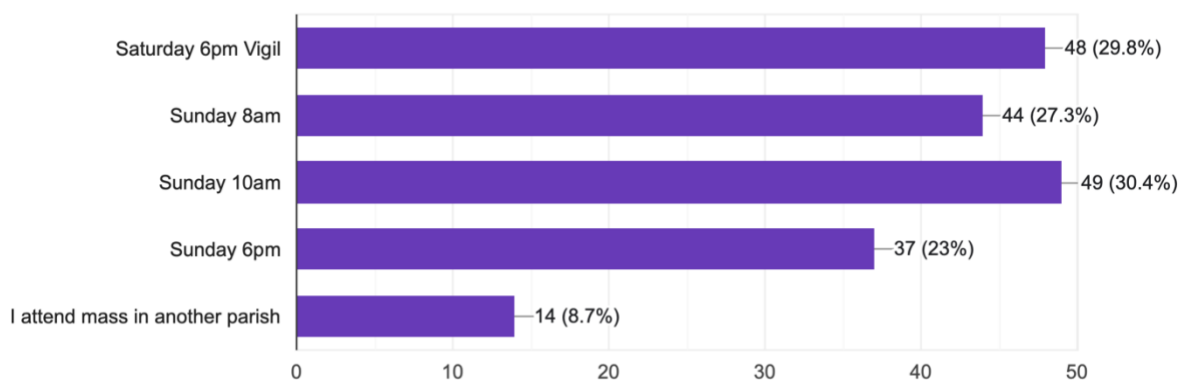
2. How often do you attend mass?

167 responses



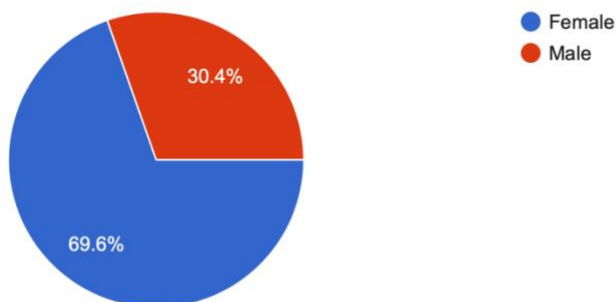
3. If you regularly participate in Sunday Mass, which Mass do you usually attend?

161 responses



4. Are you female or male? (Optional)

158 responses



5. Which suburb do you live in?

Banks:	8	Gowrie:	18
Bonython:	4	Isabella Plains:	8
Calwell:	13	Macarthur:	7
Chisholm:	13	Monash:	9
Conder:	20	Richardson:	13
Fadden:	16	Theodore:	8
Gilmore:	6	Other:	9
Gordon:	12		

B. Aspects of parish life that help/hinder a sense of belonging

6. From the list below, parishioners were asked to select up to four (4) aspects of Corpus Christi Parish that **helped their sense of belonging**.

The Mass is celebrated reverently: 127 (76%)

The music helps me to pray: 73 (43.7%)

The homilies help me to deepen my faith: 103 (61.7%)

There are opportunities for me to make friends: 47 (28.1%)

There are opportunities for me to grow in my personal relationship with God: 92 (55.1%)

There are opportunities for me to help those in need: 61 (36.5%)*

7. From the list below, parishioners were asked to select up to four (4) aspects of Corpus Christi Parish that **hindered their sense of belonging**.

The Mass is not celebrated reverently: 3 (1.8%)

The music does not help me to pray: 38 (22.8%)

The homilies do not help me to deepen my faith: 25 (15%)

There are limited opportunities for me to make friends: 36 (21.6%)

There are limited opportunities for me to grow in my personal relationship with God: 17 (10.2%)

There are limited opportunities for me to help those in need: 16 (9.6%)

Other: 38 (22.8%)*

*NOTE: Given the nature of the above questions (in which people could choose up to 4 options, including "Other" in which case they could write their own thoughts), these percentages reflect the number of selections and percentage of total participants that selected this response.

C. Emerging Themes

Respondents were then invited to provide more detail about the aspects of parish life that either helped or hindered a sense of belonging. The final question of the survey allowed respondents to share any other thoughts they had about parish life. The majority of the 167 respondents took up this offer resulting in a large amount of qualitative data. This was analysed by the assembly team and the following themes emerged as the strongest aspects of parish life that were positive or required attention.

Theme 1: **MASS, SACRAMENTS, and MUSIC**

- Importance of **quality and reverent liturgy**, music, and reverence in Mass: "The quality of the liturgy is important; the music at Mass is important"
- Desire for **Adoration, Confession, and silence** before and after Mass.
- **Formation of liturgical ministers** (musicians, readers) for better microphone usage, choice of hymns (balance of songs people know, and new/traditional), and use of sound system.
- **Homilies** – Sometimes there is too much information, things are explained too quickly in the homilies, or the topics are unrelatable, and people get lost and go home not knowing what the message was. There were also requests for guidance in the homilies about pressing issues, such as poverty, refugee crises and sexuality.
- More inspiring **prayers of intercession**.
- More emphasis on the **celebration of feast days**, especially Corpus Christi.

Theme 2: **OUTREACH (community engagement, inclusion, hospitality, schools)**

- Recognised we are a welcoming parish, but we need suggestions for **better welcoming practices** for new parishioners and **outreach to lapsed Catholics**: "I think it would be good for the parish to reach out to 'lapsed Catholics' and irregular church attenders and have existing parishioners invite them to a program where they can be updated about the church and the parish."
- Calls for **more social events** and opportunities for parishioners to bond: "More occasions where Parishioners can socially mix... would help bond the bricks of the Parish more firmly together."
- Great **youth ministry** in the parish, but concerns remain about the **lack of young people** (ages 15-45) in the parish and suggestions for engaging them.
- Proposals for **improved children's liturgy** and involvement of youth in Mass: "I also think we should review how we do children's liturgy - we're missing an age group and rely on teachers/same few people."
- Suggestions for **stronger ties between the parish and local Catholic schools**: "The parish priest needs to have more say in the Catholic schools in its area"

Theme 3: **FAITH FORMATION**

- Interest in more **Bible study groups** and adult faith formation programs.
- Recommendations for introducing programs like **Alpha** or "**Divine Renovation: Bringing Your Parish from Maintenance to Mission**" for both parishioners and school staff.
- Emphasis on **deeper spiritual education and formation for parents** involved in sacramental preparation: "Having assisted with sacramental preparation I feel that the model used needs to be revised to include more meaningful voluntary formation for parents"
- The newly baptised and initiated Catholics might feel at sea after receiving almost a year of weekly catechesis in the RCIA, perhaps an **ongoing faith formation series** could be offered.

Theme 4: PARISH COMMUNICATION and FACILITIES

- Parishioners love the **gardens and parish grounds** and would like to see the continued upkeep of the Church surrounds.
- Requests for a return to **hard-copy weekly bulletins** and better communication about parish events.
- Need for improved **visibility and communication of parish groups** and their activities: "Poster up in the foyer with all the parish groups, meeting times and contact details. "Do parishioners know what groups/offerings are available?"
- **Speakers** are needed in the foyer of the church; the sound quality is better even outside the church than in the foyer.

Theme 5: PASTORAL CARE

- **Appreciation for the pastoral support** provided by the parish community: "The support I have received from my Parish Family especially since the death of my husband has helped me to deal in some way with his loss."
- Suggestions for reaching out to and **supporting families with newly baptised children**: "Someone to contact families with newly baptised to invite them to gatherings to help make them feel more welcome."
- Need for **pastoral care and support for grieving parishioners**: "If I didn't have my faith I would be lost."
- The harvest is plenty, but the **"volunteers"** are few. There are a few people in the parish doing a lot, which has the risk of burnout.