

This week's Pastor's Notes will begin the in-depth analysis of the liturgical questionnaire that we did in January. In particular, I would like to make note of the various controls that indicate to us that our data is valid, and then we will look at two sections of the questionnaire: Direction of Worship (*ad orientem/versus populum*) and Incense.

Solid Data

We know that our survey was taken seriously and that people were actually reading the questions and answering correctly. For example, on Question 30, Holy Communion is a time to judge my neighbor. Less than 1% agreed, which can be thrown out as simply someone either misreading the question or just being silly. 😊 We also asked the same things in slightly different ways, and the results came back within only a few points of difference, showing a consistency in response and not arbitrary answers. Lastly, when asked about parish catechesis on a subject, over 90% of our regular attendees report being aware of it, whereas only 58% of our visitors were familiar with it, which follows a logical presumption, and indicating that people were paying attention to the questions and answering truthfully and accurately.

Direction of Worship: *Ad orientem / Versus populum*

With the exception of visitors, 84% - 96% of all segments report that they are **familiar with the parish's catechesis on the *ad orientem* posture**. This indicates that we have done a good job of explaining this traditional practice, and that it is not confusing to the faithful.

A large majority of respondents (7 in 10) **prefer the *ad orientem* posture**, and this level of preference is consistent across age groups, gender, regular attendees, supporters, and even visitors. Notable among the visitors, who have not received the parish's catechesis on this matter, still 72% stated that they preferred the *ad orientem* posture during the Eucharistic prayer.

Preference for *versus populum* posture is reported by only 1 of 5 respondents overall. The 5:30 and 9:00 Masses indicate a higher preference for *versus populum* (35% and 29% respectively, or about 1 out of every 3 attendees at those Masses, still a clear minority).

4 in 5 respondents, however, report being **comfortable with both postures**, and this response is consistent across the 5:30, 9:00, and 11:30 Masses. This will be a major thing for us to look at in our future Mass format planning, in that we currently only offer *ad orientem* at the 11:30 Mass.

Only 3 in 5 *Missa Cantata* attendees report being comfortable with both postures. 94% of *Missa Cantata* attendees indicated a preference for *ad orientem*.

Less than 4% of the write-in comments received dealt with this topic, and they were evenly divided in preference for one posture over the other.

For sure, this will be something that we will look at more closely as a parish as we plan our liturgical future, as this is something that seems to very much unite us as a worshipping community.

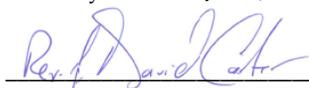
Incense

There is overwhelming **appreciation for the use of incense**: nearly 90% overall. This appreciation is consistent across Mass times, age groups, gender, regular attendees, supporters, and even visitors, with at least 85% in each segment affirming the use of incense.

Fewer than 10% of respondents in most categories, under 7% overall, and 4 commenters, report that **incense causes them health problems**. Marginal exceptions are the 5:30 Mass (11%) and visitors (12%).

Once again, the evident appreciation for incense is not reflected in the current Mass format, in which the majority of our Masses do not utilize incense, ostensibly to be sensitive to those who have health problems. However, it will be a good conversation for us to have in the future about expanding the use of incense at one or the other Mass time that does not usually experience it.

Sincerely in Christ Jesus,



Rev. J. David Carter, JCL, Pastor and Rector