

Annual Parish Survey

Year two results from a 12-question annual survey initiated by the Metropolis Missions & Evangelism Ministry in January 2020.

Beginning in March 2020, churches worldwide were deeply impacted by the closures and concerns from the COVID-19 pandemic. We knew that 2020 data would show dramatic differences from 2019, as part of telling the story of the pandemic.

As expected, average Sunday attendance was down in 2020, as well as the number of people participating in confession.

More parishes experienced a budget deficit in 2020 than in 2019. Overall income declined, but parishioner giving remained the same. Parish expenses, however, also declined.

Respondents can expect to receive summary reports on the previous year's data at each Clergy-Laity Assembly. All individual parish results will be kept confidential.

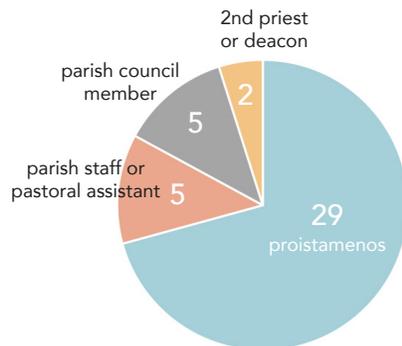
Collecting a few key pieces of data gives our Metropolis Missions & Evangelism Ministry **an opportunity to grow in our ability to analyze and interpret data in a meaningful way.** We are in the perfect position to blend qualitative and quantitative research; we can test hypotheses against what we already know about the context of each parish, such as number of clergy serving, year established, location, and even significant moments in the parish history. If over time we see that a certain parish stands out from the data, it gives us a starting point

for exploring why this is the case, which in turn may inspire new hypotheses.

All models improve with more data. As our body of data increases over time, our findings will become more meaningful.

The more parishes that participate, the more accurate their responses, and the more data that we gather, the more useful this tool will become for all of our communities.

At the printing of this report, 41 of our 67 parishes, including 3 missions, submitted responses. The breakdown of position in the parish of each respondent is as follows:



Thirty of the parishes submitted surveys both years. Fourteen parishes from 2019 did not respond in 2020, while 11 new parishes came forward for the second survey.

It's not too late. If your parish has not yet responded, we encourage you to take a

moment to do so at this link: [2020 Annual Parish Survey](#).

What's next? Parishes who have responded with both 2019 and 2020 data can expect to receive a comparison of the data in the mail in the next few weeks.

Expect this annual survey every January, or concurrently with Metropolis Clergy-Laity Assembly registration. Please reach out to me, or any member of the Metropolis Missions & Evangelism Team, so that we can improve this tool.

Respectfully submitted,
Thomaida Hudanish
Director

Live-streaming

127
average Sunday
livestream viewers

38
parishes offering
Sunday livestream

Respondents in 2020 were asked to provide the number of livestream viewers to help capture the unique participation of parishioners in 2020. All but the three parishes (three missions) offer Sunday livestream. 20% of respondents did not have a way to measure the number of livestream viewers. There was no correlation between the size of the parish and the number of livestream viewers.



METROPOLIS OF
SAN FRANCISCO

Missions & Evangelism Ministry Team

His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos

Fr. Aris Metrakos

Fr. Constantine Pappademos

Fr. Photios Dumont

Fr. Andrew Barakos

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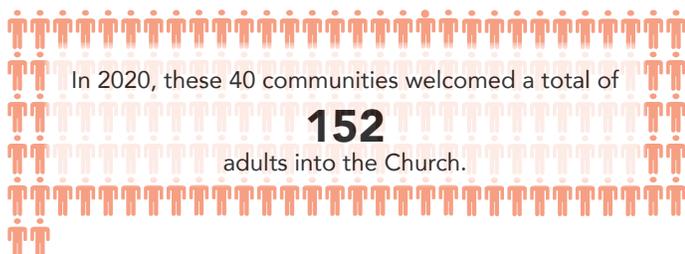
Cliff Argue

Connie Contes

Lisa Buck

2020 Key Observations

Adults Becoming Orthodox



Although six parishes reported a significant increase, the overall number of adult conversions decreased from 2019 to 2020. Even attributing a decline to the pandemic, the average number of adults received into the church is very low from year to year indicating a need for more systematic evangelism and outreach. Assuming 1 household is 2.6 people the average rate of growth was only 0.09% in 2019 and 2020.

Usually the amount of time between when someone begins attending a parish and when they are received into the Church is more than 12 months. For this reason, it is likely that the 152 people received into the Church in 2020 began attending in 2019 or earlier. We believe it is safe to conclude that whatever winning traits that parishes who had an increase in converts in 2020 have, they are traits they had prior to the pandemic.

We plan to follow-up with those parishes to learn more about how these individuals found the Orthodox Church, and the routine practices of the parish to respond to inquirers.

Parish Budget Deficit

\$63,089
average 2020
budget deficit

\$46,421
median 2020
budget deficit

In 2019, 23.3% of parishes responded that they had a deficit (expenses > income) while in 2020, 42.5% of parishes responded they had a deficit.

A decline in parish income is likely attributable to the cancellation of Greek Festivals and other in-person fundraising events while the decrease in expenses is attributable to an overall decrease in activity in the parish during 2020.

Year-to-Year Comparison

Significant impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic were observed in several parameters of parish health. Responses from 2019 and 2020 were compared to determine if there were statistically significant differences.

P-value = probability value. The closer the p-value is to 0, the more statistically significant the results are. As the p-value increases, the less likely it is that a difference will be consistent in the data.

Parameter	2019 Avg	2020 Avg	p-value	Change
Number of households financially supporting the parish	225	214	0.37992	None
Average number of Sunday worshippers	175	68	0.00001	Decline
Number of faithful confessing	51	30	0.01144	Decline
Number of adults received into the parish	5	5	0.27518	None
Number of adults participating in weekly activities (worship or ministries)	64	84	0.26562	None
Total parish income	\$624,790	\$451,030	0.02181	Decline
Total income from parishioner giving	\$366,568	\$366,629	0.49957	None
Total parish expenses	\$547,056	\$443,504	0.09933	Decline
Number of people served directly/ locally through almsgiving	834	314	0.06213	Decline

In 2019 a model was created to predict the number of Sunday attendees as a function of the number of households in the parish. This model showed that the larger the parish the Sunday engagement dropped sharply.

In 2020 the number of Sunday attendees declined sharply due to restrictions on in-person worship so this model was not evaluated with 2020 data.

The number of persons served locally declined due to restrictions on in-person interactions and should rebound in 2021 as states re-open.

Confession

The number of persons confessing sharply declined likely due to the unavailability of in-person meetings, as well as restrictions against hearing confessions over the phone or by video conferencing.



2021 Survey Questions

I. PEOPLE

6 questions

1. Number of households supporting your parish financially in 2020:
- 2a. Average number of Sunday worshippers (including parishioners and guests, adults and children) in 2020:
- 2b. Average number of Sunday livestream views in 2020:
3. Number of parishioners participating in the sacrament of confession, at least annually, in 2020:
4. Number of ADULTS received into the parish (by baptism or chrismation) in 2020:
5. Average number of ADULTS participating in worship or ministries during the week, in 2020:
6. Please list the worship services and ministries used to calculate the response to the previous question.

II. FINANCES

3 questions

7. Total parish income in 2020:
8. Total income derived from parishioner giving (stewardship, candles, Christmas card, designated gifts, etc.):
9. Total parish expenses in 2020:

III. MINISTRIES

3 questions

10. Number of people served DIRECTLY and LOCALLY by parish outreach/almsgiving ministries in 2020:

This question is meant to teach us about the parish's direct ministry to local individuals. Please do not include financial or in-kind donations to partner organizations, such as lbs of food given to a food bank, or donations sent to a national organization.

11. Please list parish outreach/almsgiving ministries used to calculate the response to the previous question:
12. Which ministries or activities were active in your parish in 2020? Please check all that apply.

- Seniors' Ministry
- Adult small groups (including men's or women's)
- Adult religious education (including Bible Study, parish-hosted retreats)
- Young Adult gatherings
- GOYA or Jr GOYA (high school and middle school youth programs)
- Hope or Joy (pre-K through elementary youth gatherings)
- Youth religious education (including Sunday school)
- Greek School
- Greek Dance
- Adult sports league
- Youth sports league
- Prayer Ministry
- Philoptochos (or outreach/almsgiving programs)
- Family Wellness Ministries (including groups, events, or classes re: parenting, marriage enrichment, bereavement, divorce care)
- Missions & Evangelism Ministry (including Welcome Ministry/Greeters and programs for integrating newcomers)
- Project Mexico trip or other mission/work trips
- Group pilgrimage or off-site retreats
- Other:

2019 Key Observations

Metropolis Size

9,900
worshippers

10,300
households

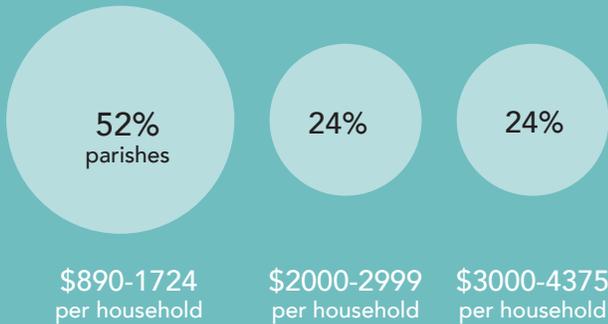
Based on 43 responses, the average number of Sunday worshippers is 175, and the median is 150. With these numbers we can estimate that on any given Sunday there are 9,900 worshippers in Liturgy throughout the Metropolis. We can also use this method to estimate that there are 10,300 households affiliated with (i.e. financially supporting) our parishes.

Adults Becoming Orthodox



Per Household Giving

The median pledge is \$1700/household excluding missions, and \$2,000/household including missions.



Predicting Sunday Attendance

At the printing of this report, 43 of our 66 parishes, including 4 missions, submitted responses. The breakdown of position in the parish of each respondent is as follows:

# of Households supporting parish financially	Predicted % in church on Sunday	# People in church on Sunday
5	86%	11
10	76%	20
20	67%	35
30	61%	48
40	57%	59
50	54%	70
60	51%	80
70	49%	90
80	48%	99
90	46%	107
100	44%	116
150	39%	152
200	35%	181
250	32%	207
300	29%	228
400	25%	263
500	22%	289
600	22%	343
700	22%	400
800	22%	458
900	22%	515
1000	22%	572

After testing various correlations, the most significant finding was that the larger the parish, the smaller the percentage of people expected in church on Sunday, until it evens off at 22%.

With rare exceptions, parishes that experience ratios above this curve, are those with more than one priest. This information supports a long-held Metropolis ideal that a priest should be assigned to serve

Signature Ministries

Survey respondents shared about many unique ministries that have developed in their communities, especially in the areas of philanthropy and education. Now that we are aware, in many cases for the first time, of these signature ministries, we can reach out individually to learn how they function and share their successes with the rest of the Metropolis.



Survey Questions

I. PEOPLE

6 questions

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11. Please list parish outreach/almsgiving ministries used to calculate the response to the previous question:
12. Which ministries or activities were active in your parish in 2019? Please check all that apply.
Clarification: Many parishes have ministries that are not active every year. For example, you may regularly participate in Project Mexico, but did not go in 2019--please do not check that box. You may historically have a Welcome Ministry, but have not had any official organization of it in 2019--please refrain from checking that box. Thank you.

- Seniors' Ministry
- Adult small groups (including men's or women's)
- Adult religious education (including Bible Study, parish-hosted retreats)
- Young Adult gatherings
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- Other: