



## AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS CONFERENCE

### **Catholic Parish attendance to be counted over four weekends**

#### **Media Release**

**April 27, 2011**

The first weekend in May will see the commencement of the 2011 National Count of Attendance, a project which aims to ascertain the practicing population of Australia's Catholics.

First held in 2001, this will be the third time the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference has conducted the count at a national level.

President of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference Archbishop Philip Wilson said that this project was part of a wider strategy to look into the ministry in parishes in Australia.

"Information collected, in addition to the number of people in attendance, includes the language and frequency of celebration. The count is conducted both for Masses and Sunday Assemblies in the absence of a Priest and consists of a simple headcount of all those who attend Mass at parishes and other Mass centres throughout the whole of Australia over four weekends."

"This count will allow us to better understand our Catholic congregations and provide ministry to them", he said.

In 2006, the last time a National Count was held, an average of 708,618 people attended Mass, or a Sunday Assembly in the Absence of a Priest, each weekend.

The total attendance figure represented 13.8 per cent of Australia's 2006 Catholic Population. An average of at least 58,000 people attended Mass celebrated in one of 30 languages other than English.

There was an average of 102 Sunday Assemblies in the Absence of a Priest, with an overall weekly attendance average of 2,357, or around 23 people per Assembly.

This year, for the first time, the National Count of Attendance will be conducted electronically, and most parishes will submit their counts online, rather than using paper forms.

**Any queries regarding the ACBC National Count of Attendance can be directed to the ACBC Pastoral Research Office on (03) 9953 3457 or by email [s.reid@pro.catholic.org.au](mailto:s.reid@pro.catholic.org.au). A copy of the report based on the 2006 National Count of Attendance can be downloaded from the Pastoral Research Office website: [www.pro.catholic.org.au](http://www.pro.catholic.org.au).**