



Faithful Census Weekend

Get Out the Count in Your Congregation!

March 27th-29th

Join communities of faith across the country March 27-29 in lifting up the 2020 Census in their houses of worship during Faithful Census Weekend. As **trusted messengers** in the community, faith leaders have a unique position to encourage census participation. Faith leaders can powerfully communicate the message that responding to the 2020 Census is an **act of faith** that shows your love for neighbor because an accurate count ensures access to quality schools, hospitals, roads and services that make a difference in people's lives. They can also affirm the **God-given dignity of each person**. Bringing the Census into worship provides a space for reflection on the values that call us to be counted and share with your community the importance of the census.

IDEAS FOR the FAITHFUL CENSUS WEEKEND

- Preach on the Census
 - Connect faith themes of dignity, community, and equality to census
 - Discuss relevant scripture
 - Encourage participation
- Read a litany on dignity and the census
 - Write your own or use our guide to let your community that we all count
- Invite community members to fill out the Census after worship
 - See [GOTC Guide for Mobilizing Faith Communities](#)
- Provide a short [Census 101 presentation](#) in the weeks before or day of
- Canvass in your congregation's neighborhood to share information

Share your Faithful Census Weekend

Let us see the meaningful work you are doing! Use #FaithfulCensus and #JuntosContamos on social media or send a picture of your Faithful Census Weekend to census2020@faithinpubliclife.org

CENSUS SERMON GUIDE

Dignity

- We believe that all people, regardless of race, religion, or immigration status, are made in God's image. Our God-given dignity demands recognition.
- What we declare when we answer the Census is that we are here, and we are part of "we the people" and we refuse to be excluded.
- *Fear not*, is the most often repeated phrase in Hebrew and Christian scripture--repeated 365 times. Do not be afraid to state your presence.
- Originally, the Census counted every white man, woman and child as a full person, counted enslaved people of African descent as ¾ of a person, and didn't count Native Americans at all. We have an opportunity to reclaim the census as a tool for dignity, justice, and equity.

Community

- When you count yourself, you are also making sure your neighbor's child has a seat in their classroom and their mother has access to medical care. We must work together and do everything in our power to make sure that everyone in our local communities are counted so we all can get the resources we deserve.
- The 2020 Census' impact on our communities is profound. It shapes everything from whether we have fair political representation in Congress to whether our roads, hospitals, schools and fire departments have the funding they need to support our health and well-being.
- You count in this country. Your work and your contribution to the common good and common ground, moves beyond the walls of where we worship. Your voice matters. Your communities, your schools, your children need you to be counted to receive the right economic apportionment.

Democracy

- A full, accurate count lays the foundation for a healthy democracy and communities where families thrive and flourish. By completing the Census and encouraging our communities to do so, we claim our rightful representation and fulfill our responsibility to our neighbors and future generations.
- It is important to be counted in the Census because it is economic empowerment and political empowerment. As spiritual and moral people, to participate in our democracy is to be counted.
- The truth is that being counted contributes to the strengthening of democracy. If we are undercounted, they are taking away our voices from our democracy and our rights.



LITANY ON DIGNITY

Reader: God, you tell us that we are made in your image. We believe that all people, regardless of race, religion, or immigration status have inherent dignity because you made us. Our God-given dignity demands recognition.

All: We will celebrate our dignity and we will count ourselves!

Reader: We know you long for the freedom of all people and for chains of oppression to break. For far too long, too many of your children have been excluded and counted as less than human, which has resulted in inequality and injustice. But we know you count each of us as equal in your eyes.

All: Just as you count us, we will count ourselves!

Reader: You've commanded us to love our neighbor as ourselves. When we count ourselves, we are helping make sure not only our needs are met, but also that our neighbors have good schools, hospitals, roads, critical resources, and fair political representation.

All: For our neighbors, we will count ourselves!

Reader: Lord, you assure us to 'fear not.' You walk with us in our lives and we trust in your spirit and guidance. We proclaim ourselves as your children and our dignified presence in this nation.

All: We declare our presence and we will count ourselves!

RELEVANT SCRIPTURE

Hebrew Scriptures

- On the first day of the second month, in the second year following the Exodus from the land of Egypt, the Lord spoke to Moses in the Wilderness of Sinai, in the Tent of Meeting, saying: Take a Census of the whole Israelite community by the clans of its ancestral houses, listing every name. (Numbers 1:1-2)
- The Lord spoke to Moses, saying, "Among these shall the land be apportioned as shares, according to the listed names."(Numbers 26:52-53)
- Rich and poor have this in common: The Lord is the Maker of them all. (Proverbs 22:2)
- Speak up and judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor and needy. (Proverbs 31:9)
- Learn to do good; seek justice, correct oppression (Isaiah 1:17)
- But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream. (Amos 5: 23-24)

New Testament Christian Scriptures

- In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world...So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. (Luke 2:1-5)
- The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because He has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed. (Luke 4:18)
- But God has put the body together, giving greater honor to the parts that lacked it, so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it. (1 Corinthians 12:24-26)
- Give proper recognition to those widows who are really in need. (1 Timothy 5:3)

Islamic Scriptures

- He knows each one of them, and has counted them a full counting. (Maryam 19:94)
- Surely those who deny the truth spend their wealth to hinder people from the way of Allah, and will continue to so spend until their efforts become a source of intense regret for them. (Al-Qur'an 8:36)
- Do not mix truth with falsehood or hide the truth knowingly. (Al-Baqarah 2:42)
- They ask thee what they should spend. Say, "Let whatever of your wealth you spend be for parents, kinsfolk, orphans, the indigent, and the traveler. Whatever good you do, truly God knows it." (Al-Baqarah 2:215)
- You will never attain piety till you spend from that which you love. And whatever you spend, truly God knows it. (Ali 'Imran 3:92)

Sikh Scriptures

- Everything and everyone contains the same light. It's Divine Light within us all. (Guru Nanak)
- I see no strangers and no enemies. The whole world is connected to me. (Guru Arjan)
- O my mind, know that the truly liberated person is one who sees the oneness between happiness and pain and connection between friend and foe. (Guru Tegh Bahadur)
- O Ravidas – It is rare to find someone who understands that divinity is in everyone equally. (Bhagat Ravidas)

Buddhist Scriptures

The Buddha provided us the following compassionate directives:

- If we fail to look after others when they need help, who will look after us?
- Better than a thousand hollow words, is one word that brings peace.

Hindu Scriptures

ŚB 5.18.9

- May the entire Universe be blessed with peace and hope.
- May everyone, driven by envy and enmity, become pacified and reconciled.
- May all living beings develop abiding concern for the welfare of others.
- May our own hearts and minds be filled with purity and serenity.
- May all these blessings flow naturally from this Supreme benediction.
- May our attention become spontaneously absorbed in the rapture of pure love unto the transcendent Lord.

REFLECTIONS

You can find faith specific reflections in the Interfaith Census 2020 Count Coalition's [Faith Leaders Toolkit](#)