



Australian Catholic Bishops Conference

**Pastoral Research Office**

## *Pastoral Research Online*

Issue 37

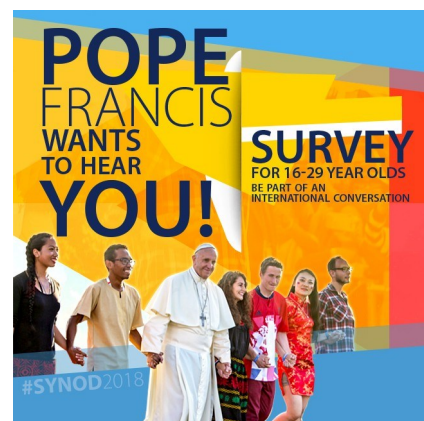
May 2017

### **Calling young Australians to be part of an international conversation**

Young people across Australia, between the ages of 16 and 29, are being called to share their views about life, faith, and their experience of Church through an online survey published recently by the Australian Bishops. The survey seeks to capture the opinions and perspectives of young people as part of a national consultation process that will inform an international conversation in Rome next year.

This is a unique opportunity for young people to have their voice heard on a range of topics. The Australian bishops see the potential of young people; they seek to listen to young people and they recognise that sometimes young people struggle to find their sense of place and purpose.

Young people are encouraged to tell their friends about the survey or share the link with their networks. It will run for four weeks, the closing date for responses is midnight on Sunday, 2 July 2017. The link to the survey is: <https://www.catholic.org.au/youthsurvey>



What will the Church look like in the near future? Is it possible, using current research, to predict what changes will occur over the next 10-15 years? What does the research tell us, and what might we expect to see in 2030?

Dr Bob Dixon addressed such questions as the Keynote speaker at the St Thomas More Forum in April. To watch a video of the talk, visit the website and follow the links:

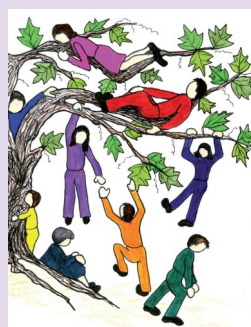
<http://www.stthomasmore.org.au/index.php/forum>

### **National Pastoral Leaders and Planners Conference**

**Monday 4 to Thursday 7 September 2017**

The National Pastoral Leaders and Planners Conference will be held in Melbourne between Monday 4 September and Thursday 7 September 2017 at Rydges on Swanston, Carlton.

Keynotes speakers include US Professor Richard Gaillardetz, author and social researcher, Hugh Mackay, and journalist Geraldine Doogue.



The Conference will be an opportunity for pastoral planners, pastoral associates and clergy to reflect upon the signs of the time and move forward with hope.

To view the full list of workshops on offer and to register for the conference,

visit: <https://nplpconference.wordpress.com>

# Intense Interest by Chatswood Parish in 2016 National Church Life Survey Results



## Our Lady of Dolours Catholic Parish, Chatswood, NSW

Interest was intense at an April 2017 special meeting at the Chatswood Parish, in the Diocese of Broken Bay, to discuss the *Summary Profile Results* from the *National Church Life Survey* (NCLS) conducted in late 2016. Working in collaboration with the Parish Priest, Fr Paul Finucane, members of the Pastoral Council and leaders from many of the ministry groups, this

“first look” meeting was coordinated by parishioners Denis McNamara and Martin Teulan and facilitated by Chris Ehler on behalf of *NCLS Research*.

During the meeting the eight page *2016 NCLS Summary Profile* results provided statistical information about key aspects of parish life, such as what people most value and what needs attention. The new-look format of the *Summary Profile* proved to be a significant stimulus for discussion and motivation to improve a range of parish life features. A range of graphs, tables and symbols clearly identified important demographic data about the parish and the range of people’s gifts and skills including the high percentage (20%) of people who want to be more involved at the Chatswood parish. Further insightful results revealed that 35 per cent of Mass attenders were new arrivals in the last five years and nine per cent of those who completed a survey were visitors to the parish on the weekend of the survey. The importance of improving the strategies for welcoming and hospitality were quickly identified during the discussion as major priorities for improvement. Other topics included how people relate to God, each other and the wider community. Results also showed how people in the pews regard the vision, innovation and leadership culture of the parish. Drawing upon some of the 2011 survey results the attenders at this Chatswood parish meeting were pleased to note substantial improvement in the growth of vitality and levels of participation and outreach over the past five years.

In the weeks ahead the parish will receive a *Church life Survey Pack* which will contain a more detailed 28 -page, coloured hard copy of the *Church Life Profile* along with a detailed *Church Life Survey Workbook* which will guide the response by the parish to increase vitality and effectiveness in mission.

The meeting was a valuable opportunity to gain a helpful overview of the areas of parish life which are going well and to identify emerging opportunities for further discussion, formulation and action.

The *Church Life Survey Workbook* will be used by the leadership group to engage the whole parish in responding to the results. The next step will be to communicate the results to all parishioners using the *Summary Profile*.

The Director of *NCLS Research*, Dr Ruth Powell, was delighted to learn that Chatswood Parish had conducted this special meeting so soon after obtaining the first wave of results and said that Fr Paul Finucane is to be congratulated for his prompt support for gathering together key people in leadership roles to consider the NCLS results. Dr Powell has encouraged all local church leaders to arrange a series of gatherings to review the survey results and move forward with constructive responses according to the three recommended steps (*evaluate, communicate* and *act*) following the receipt of the results.

Further information is available via the website: [www.2016ncls.org.au](http://www.2016ncls.org.au)



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A Catholic Digital Edition of the *Workbook*, available for download from the NCLS Research website, aims to help each parish to explore and understand the survey results. It offers processes to help leaders and the whole parish to respond to the unique results and form future directions. The *Workbook* is part of the *Church Life Pack* of resources that parishes receive after completing a *Church Life Survey*. It is a companion document to the *Church Life Profile* of survey directions. Gaining the feedback of Mass attenders via a *Church Life Survey* is the first step of the process. Taking some actions based on the results is essential to completing the process through the three steps: evaluate results, communicate insights and findings, and then act on the goals formulated in response to the survey learnings.



Church Life Survey  
**Workbook**

Reidy Jones-Pearce | Chris Egan | Neil Pearce | Mike Pearson | Don Sheehan

The Catholic Digital Edition of the *Church Life Survey Workbook* is available for download from: [www.2016ncls.org.au/church-life-pack](http://www.2016ncls.org.au/church-life-pack)



## Institute for Religion, Politics & Society

### Asia-Pacific Catholicism and Globalization: Conference

**Wednesday 28 to Friday 30 June 2017**

Australian Catholic University's *Institute for Religion, Politics and Society* is hosting a conference on Asia-Pacific Catholicism and Globalization. The Conference is the culmination of a three-year research project co-sponsored by the Institute and the Berkley Center for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs of Georgetown University, Washington, D.C.

The project gathers fifteen prominent scholars of Catholicism to study the inter-relations between the development of Catholicism in Asia and three distinctive phases of globalization in the Asia-Pacific Region from the 16th century to the present.

Key speakers will include one of the world's top scholars in the sociology of religion, Professor Jose Casanova, as well as other prominent academics, bishops and clergy from the Asia-Pacific region, including PRO's Honorary Senior Fellow, Dr Bob Dixon.

The conference will be held at ACU's Melbourne campus at 115 Victoria Parade, Fitzroy. Full program details and registrations are available via the conference website: <https://irps.acu.edu.au/events/asia-pacific-catholicism-and-globalization-conference>

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