

Pastoral Research Online

Issue 48

March 2020



Dear Readers,

The month of March brings with it much uncertainty as COVID-19 (Coronavirus) continues to significantly impact our lives. While adhering to government regulations, at the NCPR we are doing everything we can to ensure that our work continues while keeping our staff safe. However, these changes may cause some delays in the publishing of research reports and in the manner in which we respond to data requests from parishes, dioceses and other agencies. We appreciate your patience at this time. Please be assured that we are working as efficiently as possible to ensure your needs are met.

Our highest priority at this time is the production of the 2016 Parish Social Profiles. Recently, we have responded to several requests for parish-level Census data necessary for planning purposes. We will try our best to accommodate these requests until the profiles are ready for distribution.

All our staff are currently working remotely. The best way to contact us now is via email, details of which are found at the back of this newsletter. All urgent enquiries can be sent to trudy.dantis@catholic.org.au. We are unsure of how long these changes will last but we will endeavour to update you as soon as the situation changes.

In other news, last month we welcomed a new volunteer, Lavina Thomas, to the Canberra office. We are glad to have her on board and are grateful for her help.

We wish our readers good health and safety in this time of uncertainty and look forward to getting through this crisis together. May God's grace and blessings be on us all.

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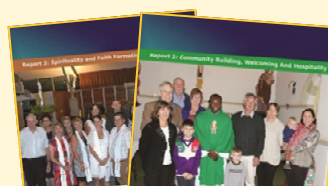
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2016 National Catholic Census Project

Top Five Parishes in Australia

According to the 2016 Census, the parish of Burleigh Heads, in the south of the Brisbane Archdiocese, had the highest number of Catholics in Australia, with almost 31,200 Catholics living within the parish's geographical boundaries. Two other parishes in Brisbane were also in the 'Top Five' for Catholic population: Maroochydore

and Caloundra, both in the Archdiocese's north. The parish of Craigieburn, in Melbourne's outer north, had the second highest number of Catholics (23,800), while Mill Park, a parish in the north-eastern suburbs, was the fourth highest ranked parish, with around 21,600 Catholics.

In 2011 as well, Burleigh Heads had the highest number of Catholics in Australia, with around 32,600.

Top five parishes - Catholic population

Rank	Number of Catholics	Parish (diocese)
1.	31,179	Burleigh Heads (Brisbane)
2.	23,815	Craigieburn (Melbourne)
3.	22,856	Maroochydore (Brisbane)
4.	21,629	Mill Park (Melbourne)
5.	21,273	Caloundra (Brisbane)

When it came to the **proportion** of Catholics however, four parishes in the Diocese of Darwin and one in the Diocese of Broome had the highest proportion of Catholics in Australia in 2016. Just over nine in every ten people (90.7%) on Bathurst Island, 80km north of Darwin, were Catholic, as were 82.6 per cent of the population in Santa Teresa parish, 80km south-east of Alice Springs.

The parish of Wadeye (74.4%), Melville Island (74.2%) and Kalumburu (66.6%) rounded out the top five. In 2011, only Kalumburu was not in the top five, replacing another Broome parish of Balgo - Kutjungka.

Top five parishes - Percentage Catholic

Rank	Percent Catholic	Parish (diocese)
1.	90.7	Bathurst Island (Darwin)
2.	82.6	Santa Teresa (Darwin)
3.	74.4	Wadeye (Darwin)
4.	74.2	Melville Island (Darwin)
5.	66.6	Kalumburu (Broome)

Top five parishes - Percentage of Catholic population aged under 15

Rank	Percent aged 0-14	Parish (diocese)
1.	41.9	Mungindi (Armidale)
2.	35.9	Wyndham (Broome)
3.	35.5	Wadeye (Darwin)
4.	35.2	Palm Island (Townsville)
5.	33.5	Dampier Peninsula (Broome)

A number of remote or rural parishes had the highest proportion of Catholics aged under 15 in 2016. Almost 42 per cent of Catholics in the parish of Mungindi, one of the northern most parishes in the Armidale diocese, were aged under 15 years. The parish of Wyndham, in Broome diocese, was ranked second highest with 35.9 per cent aged under 15, while the parishes of Wadeye

(Darwin) and Palm Island (Townsville) had similar proportions of young people aged under 15, with 35.5 and 35.2 per cent respectively. Another parish in the Broome diocese, Dampier Peninsula, rounded out the top five, with just over one third of Catholics aged under 15.

In contrast to the younger age profile in the rural and remote areas, the Adelaide Archdiocese's coastal parish of Victor Harbour/Goolwa, recorded the highest proportion of Catholics aged 65 and over, with 39.3 per cent of Catholics in this age group. Another sea-side parish— Rosebud, in the Melbourne Archdiocese—ranked the second-highest, with 38.3 per cent. Two other Melbourne parishes, Reservoir North (36.9%) and Hadfield (35.6%), ranked third and fourth, while the parish of Forster, a coastal parish in the Maitland-Newcastle diocese, was fifth-ranked, with 35.1 per cent of Catholics aged 65 and over.

Top five parishes - Percentage of Catholic population aged 65 and over

Rank	Percent aged 65 +	Parish (diocese)
1.	39.3	Victor Harbor / Goolwa (Adelaide)
2.	38.3	Rosebud (Melbourne)
3.	36.9	Reservoir North (Melbourne)
4.	35.6	Hadfield (Melbourne)
5.	35.1	Forster (Maitland-Newcastle)

All figures contained in the above tables are derived from the Australian Bureau of Statistics 2016 Census of Population and Housing, as part of the National Catholic Census Project.

Order of Consecrated Virgins in Australia

On 31 May 2020, it will be the 50th anniversary of the promulgation of the *Ordo Consecrationis virginum* – Order of Consecrated Virgins. This ancient rite was renewed by the provisions of the Vatican II Constitution on the Liturgy *Sacrosanctum Concilium*. This form of consecrated life is distinct from religious and secular institutes, and has reappeared in many dioceses across the world. Unlike religious orders which include vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, consecrated virgins live in the world without such constraints, but with a binding commitment to Jesus as their spouse.

As part of the recognition of the 50th anniversary, the Vatican reached out to the ecclesial conferences throughout the world to gather information about the consecrated virgins in their dioceses, of whom the bishops are entrusted with their pastoral care. In Australia, the NCPR was tasked with collecting this information, and a survey was sent out to all dioceses in 2019. The final information was reported to the Vatican in January 2020.

Findings show that Australia currently has 13 consecrated virgins, in the following states/dioceses:

State	Number	Dioceses
NSW / ACT	6	Sydney (1); Parramatta (1); Wagga Wagga (2); Canberra & Goulburn (2)
VIC	2	Melbourne (1); Ballarat (1)
QLD	1	Brisbane (1)
SA / NT	1	Adelaide (1)
WA	2	Perth (2)
TAS	1	Hobart (1)
Total	13	

The Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life estimates that there are over 5,000 consecrated virgins worldwide. The most recent document, *Ecclesiae Sponsae Imago (Instruction on the Ordo Virginum)*, issued by the Vatican on the state of life of consecrated virgins, its discipline, and the responsibilities of diocesan bishops toward this vocation can be found at this link:

<http://press.vatican.va/content/salastampa/en/bollettino/pubblico/2018/07/04/180704d.html>

Journey to Plenary Council 2018-2020 Update

Diocesan reports now online

The customised reports for each geographical diocese of the submissions made in the Plenary Council Phase 1: Listening and Dialogue are now available online at this link:

<https://plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au/resources/reports/>

(Scroll down to the middle of the page to access the section “Diocesan Reports”)

The analysis provided in this report is mainly quantitative in nature and explores the demographic characteristics of individuals and groups that participated in the process. Some examples of these characteristics are age, sex, country of birth, location and religion.

The report also includes an analysis of the most common themes discussed by the participants from that diocese.

In addition to the quantitative analysis, all de-identified submissions received from that diocese (that had consent to publish the submission online and share with the diocese) have been included in the report. These include the answers to Question 1: *What do you think God is asking of us in Australia at this time* and the stories submitted in response to Question 3: *Would you like to share a story about your experience of faith or of the Church in Australia that has shaped you?*

A sample list of questions received from the diocese in response to Question 2: *What questions about the future of the Church in Australia would you like the Plenary Council to consider?* has also been included.

Please note: The size of the reports ranges from about 40 pages for the smaller dioceses to the largest (Melbourne) which is 596 pages in total. Please keep this in mind before pressing “Print”.

Several participants (individuals and groups) made their submission through uploaded documents, while others uploaded additional material (in the form of documents, images and videos) as part of their submission. Due to the large file size, it was not possible to include these in the printed diocesan reports. Where consent to share was received therefore, these files from each diocese were provided to each bishop in electronic format at their Plenary meeting last year.

All late submissions received after March 2019 were also provided to the bishops in electronic format.

Please contact our office if you have questions regarding your submission or any of these reports.

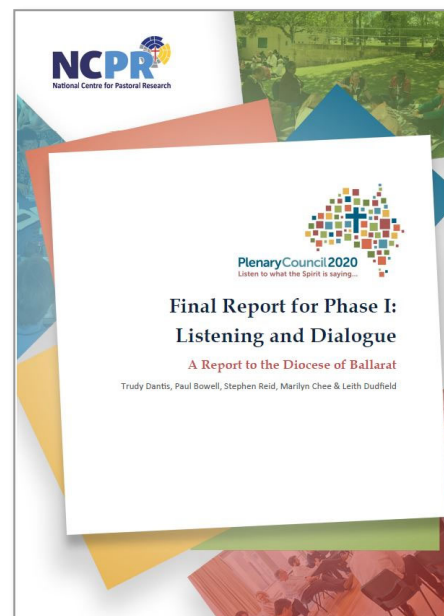
In other Plenary Council news:

- The list of delegates from the “local churches”—dioceses, eparchies, ordinariates and personal prelature—has been confirmed and is available at this link: <https://plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au/delegates/>
- Responses submitted in Phase II: *Listening and Discernment* under the six National Themes are available online at this link:

<https://plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au/listening-and-discernment/discernment-submissions/>

- For more information on the journey towards Assembly 1 please visit the Plenary Council homepage:

<https://plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au/>



The Australian Survey of Social Attitudes



Australians' connection with Catholic agencies

In 2018, the NCPR commissioned a question in the Australian Survey of Social Attitudes, a nationally representative sample questionnaire conducted at four periods over 12 months. The survey is carried out annually, with a different topic each year. The theme of the 2018 instalment was 'Religion'. The NCPR sought information via the questionnaire about the extent to which the general population connects with the many and varied agencies of the Catholic Church in Australia.

During the past 12 months, apart from attending religious services, have you or your family had contact with any of the following Catholic organisations? If so, which ones? (Please choose all that apply.)

Response	%
A Catholic school or university	19
A Catholic social welfare service	15
A Catholic hospital or health service	11
A Catholic aged or supported care service	5
A Catholic church or parish	17
A Catholic social justice or political group	1
A Catholic sporting club or team	3
A Catholic financial service provider	2
A Catholic group or activity not listed above	2
My family and I have not had any contact with a Catholic organisation in the past 12 months	61
Total	136

*Source: Evans, Anne, 2019-05-14, Australian Survey of Social Attitudes 2018.
(1,612 responses from 1,190 respondents - percentages add to more than 100 because respondents could choose all that applied.)*

The table to the left shows the survey question and the results of the survey.

Almost one in five respondents (19%) indicated they or their family had had contact with a Catholic school or university in the previous 12 months. Two-thirds of these were not Catholic.

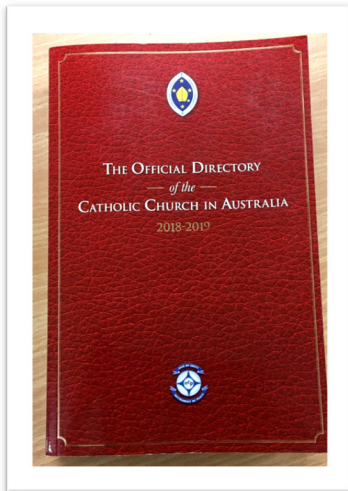
A slightly smaller proportion (17%) had connected with a Catholic parish or church, and it is worth noting the caveat in the question 'apart from attending religious services'. Just under half of these respondents who indicated they had connected with a parish or church were not Catholic.

Fifteen per cent of all respondents had connected with a Catholic social welfare service (69 per cent were not Catholic), while eleven per cent had had contact with a Catholic hospital or health service (69 per cent were not Catholic).

A smaller proportion of respondents had connected with the Catholic Church through aged or supported care services (5%), a sporting club or team (3%), a financial service provider (2%), a social justice or political group (1%) or another group or activity (2%).

Sixty-one per cent of respondents indicated they or their family had not had any contact with any Catholic organisation in the previous 12 month period, of whom around eight per cent were Catholic.

Call for Diocesan Statistics



Diocesan statistics for the Official Directory of the Catholic Church 2020-2021 in Australia are due by 17 April 2020.

Diocesan contacts will have received a request to provide the annual statistics for the Official Directory of the Catholic Church in Australia. The directory provides a valuable reference for the Catholic Church and presents a picture of the current population, clergy and significant ministries of the various dioceses.

The request includes a copy of last year's figures to assist with the process. Responses should be returned to NCPR staff by no later than **Friday, 17 April 2020**. Any questions about the process, or the information required, can be directed to Stephen Reid at stephen.reid@catholic.org.au.

Staff News

In February, we welcomed a new volunteer, Lavina Thomas, to the Canberra office. Lavina, who has recently arrived in Australia, has a background in Information Technology and Project Management. She will be assisting NCPR researchers with data verification, maintaining accurate research records and creating online forms and reports. We are very grateful for her assistance and thank her for her generous service.



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