# Engaging with your
## PARISH SOCIAL PROFILE

Based on the 2016 Australian Census

**NCPR**
National Centre for Pastoral Research
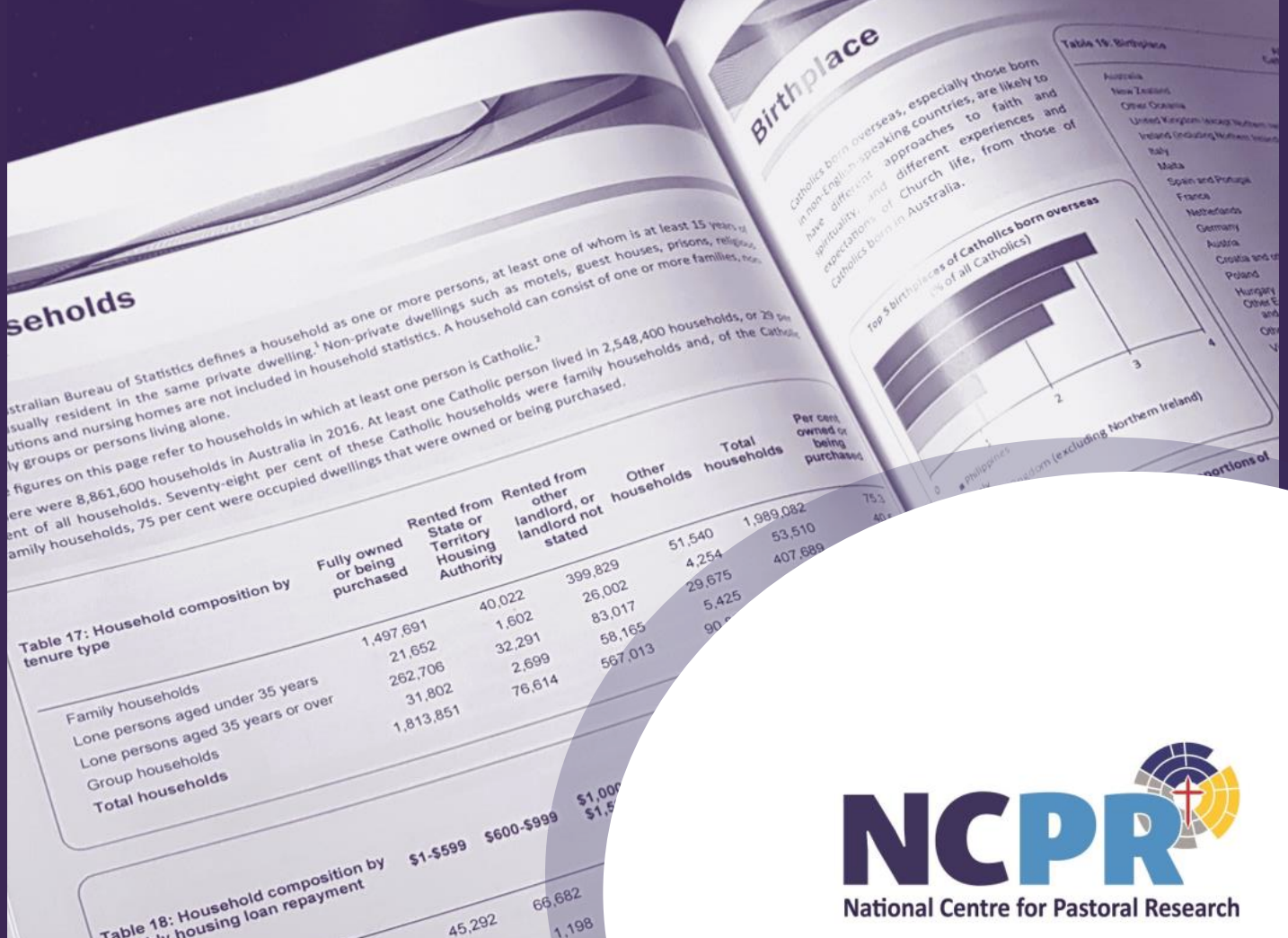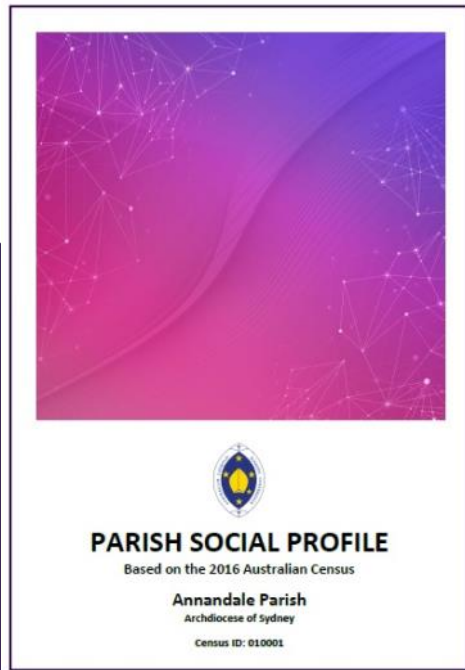
# About the Social Profiles

## History

The National Catholic Census Project was established in the early 1990s for analysis of 1991 Census data. The project had its origins in the Census work of various agencies in the Archdiocese of Melbourne, particularly the Catholic Education Office (CEOM) and the Catholic Research Office for Pastoral Planning (CROPP). It began as a joint collaboration between the two offices, but in 1996, the newly established ACBC Pastoral Projects Office (now the National Centre for Pastoral Research, previously the Pastoral Research Office) was given responsibility for the project, where it has remained. However, both offices have continued to work collaboratively on the various aspects of the project.

The information contained in the profiles are mostly for Catholics, that is, those who ticked the box 'Catholic' on the Census questionnaire. A key foundation of the project was – and continues to be – the analysis and dissemination of Census data for pastoral planning purposes for use by personnel in Catholic parishes, dioceses, education offices and other Catholic organisations. The data has always been distributed free of charge by the ACBC. The Australian Census is conducted every five years, meaning the 2016 Census was the sixth Census covered by the project, representing 25 years' worth of comprehensive Census data on the Catholic population in Australia.

## Geography

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) is responsible for the Australian Census, and much Census data, as well other statistical information, is accessible freely from their website. However, as Catholic parishes and dioceses have their own unique geography, the NCPR utilises customised data based on parish boundaries. The process of checking and updating boundaries every five years involves the NCPR working with a key contact in every diocese to ensure

## STEPS IN CREATING THE 2016 PARISH SOCIAL PROFILES

BEGIN

END



1
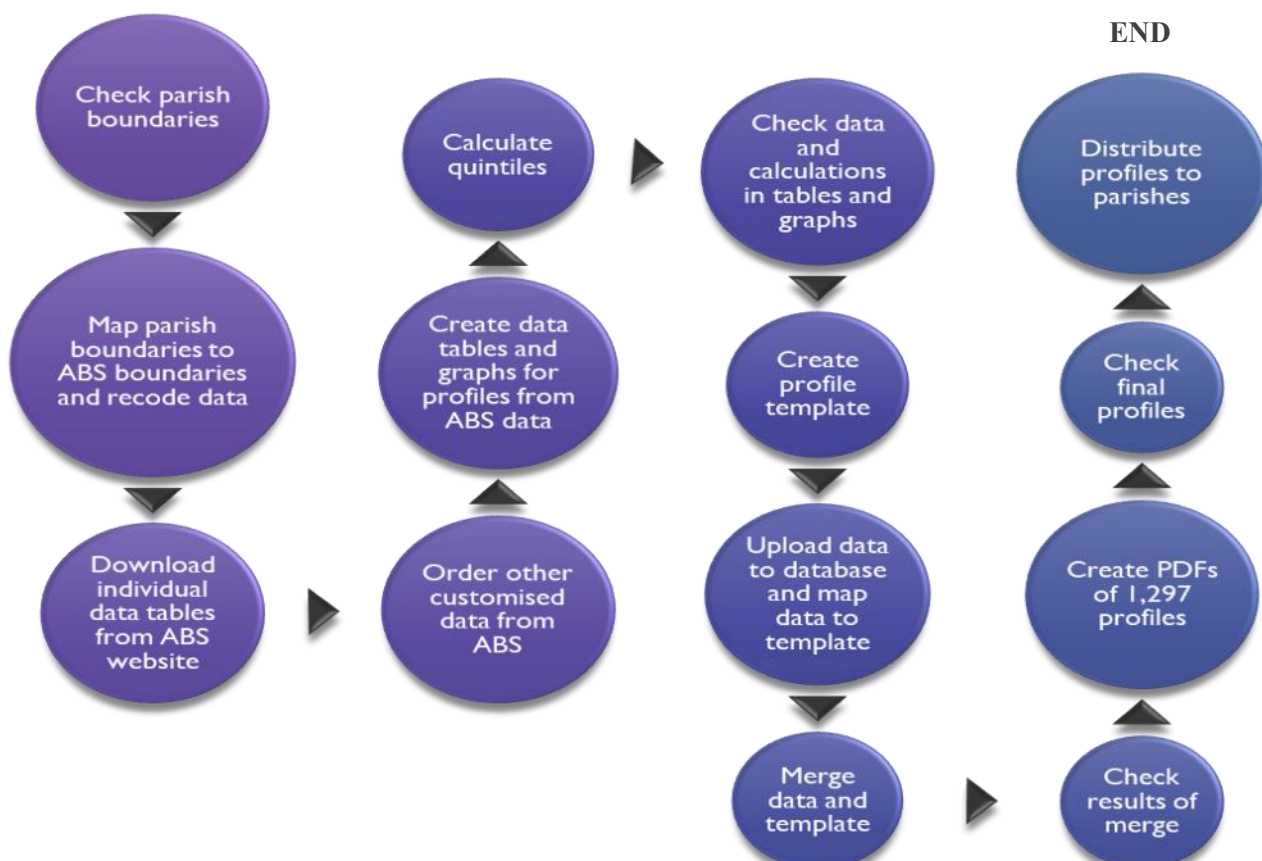
# About the Social Profiles

any boundary changes are accounted for. While there are different practical definitions of what constitutes a parish, for 2016 Census purposes there were 1,297 parishes, not including around 37 military bases.

The key and time-consuming component of the boundary-checking process is ensuring all 57,523 Census statistical areas (called SA1s, which cover the entirety of Australia) are allocated correctly into the 1,297 parishes. The allocation is done on a 'best fit' scenario, and most often SA1s overlap two or sometimes even three or four parishes. Rarely will a parish's canonical boundaries fit precisely with the ABS's boundaries. The process itself is a bit like piecing together a huge jigsaw puzzle with two layers.

## Confidentiality

The ABS uses a number of different processes on Census data to carry out its statutory obligation to protect the confidentiality of Australians. A technique has been developed to randomly adjust cell values, which is considered to be the most satisfactory technique for avoiding the release of information that may be used to identify an individual, family, household, dwelling or business. The technique – also known as 'perturbation' – randomly adjusts cell values to prevent identifiable information. In summary, these 'introduced random error' adjustments may result in tables not adding up. Most ABS tables reporting basic statistics will not show significant discrepancies due to random perturbation, and the technique allows very large tables to be produced even though they contain numbers of very small cells.

During the production of the Social Profiles, part of the process in creating customised tables for individual parishes is similar to 'reversing' the perturbation process by ensuring that the cells in each table add to the totals. This means that occasionally different tables in the Profiles, where you would expect the same figures, will show different totals. However, through each of these processes the information value of the tables are not impaired, because Census data is intended to be an instrument that paints a broad picture rather than a precise measurement of a particular locality.

## PARISH SOCIAL PROFILES BY NUMBERS

| | |
|---|---|
| 8 | Number of people directly involved in the production of the Parish Social Profiles |
| 13 | Number of graphs in each Profile |
| 30 | Number of tables in each Profile |
| 1,297 | Number of Parish Social Profiles |
| 2,342 | Number of individual items of Census data in each Profile |
| 9,500 | Approximate number of words in each Profile |
| 41,504 | Total number of A4 pages created |
| 55,771 | Total number of customised tables and graphs created |
| 3,037,574 | Total number of individual items of Census data in all 1,297 Profiles |

# Unpacking your 2016 Parish Social Profile

## What's included in your profile?

Your Parish Social Profile has a number of resources to help your pastoral ministry. This article highlights some key features provided in your report. Download a copy of your parish profile from our website: https://ncpr.catholic.org.au/2016-parish-social-profiles/

### AT A GLANCE (pages 2 and 3)

These pages provide a brief sketch of some key demographic indicators for your parish. Some important features include *A Snapshot of your Parish in 2016* and table of changes occurring in your parish between 2011 and 2016.
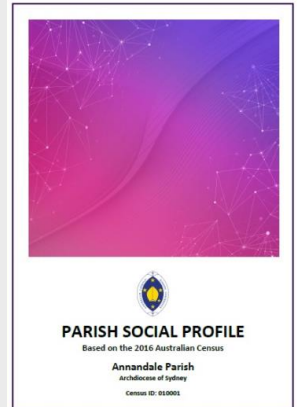
### Your parish community in 2016

**A SNAPSHOT OF YOUR PARISH (2016)**

Total Population: 33,292

Catholic Population: 3,624

Catholics make up 10.9 per cent of the total population

Median age of Catholics is 44 years

Total Catholic families: 1,618

258 Catholics live alone

625 Catholics were born overseas

21 Catholics do not speak English well

125 Catholics need assistance with core activities

1,008 Catholics have changed address since 2011

### What has changed in your parish since 2011?

| | Parish in 2011 | Parish in 2016 |
|---|---|---|
| Catholic population | 3,995 | 3,624 |
| Catholics aged 0-14 (%) | 19.5 | 18.8 |
| Catholics aged 65+ (%) | 11.5 | 15.8 |
| Catholics born in NESC[1] (%) | 10.1 | 9.0 |
| Catholics not proficient in English (%) | 0.6 | 0.6 |
| Catholic families | 1,809 | 1,618 |
| Catholics living alone | 267 | 258 |
| Catholic students attending Catholic schools[2] (%) | 39.4 | 42.9 |
| Catholics with university degree (%) | 23.8 | 26.9 |
| Catholic males in labour force (%) | 75.2 | 74.7 |

### PARISH OVERVIEW (pages 4-7)

The Parish Overview pages provide a broad summary of the Catholic community within your parish boundaries and how it is changing. Within these tables, comparisons are provided to 2011 parish data and to 2016 data for your diocese and Australia as whole. Parishes are also given a group ranking of 1 to 5 to help assess how your parish compares with others in your diocese and nationally as well. Some examples of important tables in this section are:

| Table 1: Population[1] | Parish 2016 | Parish 2011 | Diocese 2016 | Australia 2016 | Diocesan Group[2] | Australian Group[2] |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Total population[3] | 33,292 | 33,243 | 1,511,576 | 23,401,892 | 2 | 1 |
| Catholic population | 3,624 | 3,995 | 274,135 | 5,291,834 | 3 | 3 |
| Per cent Catholic | 10.9 | 12.0 | 18.1 | 22.6 | 5 | 5 |
| At same address since previous Census (%) | 63.1 | 63.0 | 62.8 | 57.3 | 3 | 2 |
| Median age[4] (years) | 44 | 41 | 43 | 40 | 3 | 2 |
| Aged 0-14 (%) | 18.8 | 19.5 | 17.2 | 19.8 | 2 | 3 |
| Aged 65+ (%) | 15.8 | 11.5 | 19.5 | 16.6 | 5 | 4 |
| Males per 100 females | 90.7 | 92.0 | 88.5 | 90.6 | 2 | 3 |

**Table 1**: This table provides figures for the Catholic and total population living within parish boundaries. It also shows the proportion of usual residents and has key figures for age and sex.

**Table 4:** This table provides figures of the birthplace of Catholics, especially those born in non-English-speaking countries. Catholics of Australian Indigenous origin are also represented here along with important figures of those for whom English is not their primary language.

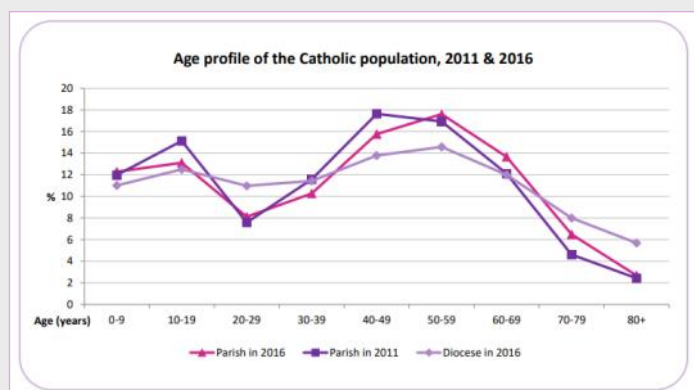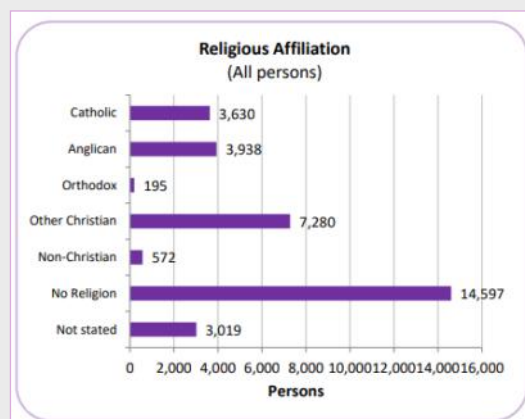| Table 4: Birthplace, Indigenous Status & Language | Parish 2016 | Parish 2011 | Diocese 2016 | Australia 2016 | Diocesan Group | Australian Group |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Born overseas in English-speaking country[6] | 8.5 | 9.3 | 5.9 | 5.6 | 1 | 1 |
| Born overseas in non-English-speaking country (%) | 9.0 | 10.1 | 20.9 | 19.1 | 5 | 4 |
| Immigrants from non-English-speaking countries arriving in Census year or previous 3 years | 33 | 21 | 5,341 | 106,428 | 4 | 4 |
| Catholics of Australian Indigenous origin | 27 | 6 | 2,725 | 133,528 | 3 | 4 |
| Speak language other than English at home (%) | 9.1 | 8.7 | 23.0 | 20.4 | 4 | 3 |
| Not proficient in English[7] (%) | 0.6 | 0.6 | 3.1 | 2.6 | 5 | 4 |

# Unpacking your 2016 Parish Social Profile

## PARISH DETAILS (pages 9-25)

A major section of the report consists of parish details—pages that explore the summary features provided in the earlier sections in greater depth. These tables and graphs allow for deeper analysis of your Catholic community as you plan particular areas of ministry. Some examples of important resources provided in these pages are:

**Religious Affiliation (Graph on Page 9)** *(shown right)*: This graph provides figures for Catholics and those belonging to other religious groups living within the parish boundaries.

**Age Profile (Graph on Page 11)** *(shown below)*: This graph is an age profile of Catholics, grouped in 10-year intervals. Along with the 2016 figures, comparisons are also made to Catholics in the parish in 2011 and to your diocese in 2016.



Religious Affiliation (All persons)

| | Persons |
|---|---|
| Catholic | 3,630 |
| Anglican | 3,938 |
| Orthodox | 195 |
| Other Christian | 7,280 |
| Non-Christian | 572 |
| No Religion | 14,597 |
| Not stated | 3,019 |



Age profile of the Catholic population, 2011 & 2016

**Table 13** *(shown below)*: This table provides figures of the religious affiliation of couples in your parish by their social marital status. The table provides figures of both de facto and registered marriages for Catholic couples, those in mixed marriages and for Catholics who are married to a non-Christian person or someone whose religious affiliation is not known.

| Table 13: Religious affiliation of couple by social marital status | In a registered marriage | In a de facto marriage | Total couples | % couples in de facto marriages |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Both persons Catholic | 355 | 43 | 398 | 10.8 |
| One person Catholic, the other non-Catholic Christian | 483 | 72 | 555 | 13.0 |
| One Catholic, the other not Christian or Not stated | 363 | 94 | 457 | 20.6 |
| **Total** | **1,201** | **209** | **1,410** | **14.8** |

**Table 17** *(shown below)*: This table provides figures of the household composition of individuals and families in your parish. A family is defined by the Australian Bureau of Statistics as two or more persons, one of whom is at least 15 years of age, who are related by blood, marriage (registered or de facto), adoption, step or fostering, and who are usually resident in the same household. Family members who live elsewhere are not included in the Census definition. The figures in this table show the number of households that are fully owned or being purchased, those that are rented and those that are of another status. The table also indicates how many people live alone, below and above age 35. The number of group households in the parish are also shown in this table.

| Table 17: Household composition by tenure type | Fully owned or being purchased | Rented from State or Territory Housing Authority | Rented from other landlord, or landlord not stated | Other households | Total households | Per cent owned or being purchased |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Family households | 1,488 | - | 127 | 34 | 1,649 | 90.2 |
| Lone person aged under 35 years | 16 | - | 3 | 3 | 22 | 72.7 |
| Lone person aged 35 years or over | 187 | - | 38 | 16 | 241 | 77.6 |
| Group households | 25 | - | 3 | 6 | 34 | 73.5 |
| **Total households** | **1,716** | **-** | **171** | **59** | **1,946** | **88.2** |

# Reflecting on your 2016 Parish Social Profile

## Reflective Questions

Reflective questions encourage us to look deeper at the demographic data reported in various tables and graphs in the 2016 Census Parish Social Profile. Throughout your profile, you will find these questions included in the commentary on each page. These questions are offered as a guide to help pastoral leaders identify and respond to the challenges and needs of their parish communities. Below are further questions related to key variables of age, place of birth, families, educational qualifications, income and employment and occupations to help you ponder about the data provided in your profile.

You will need your parish profile to help you work through these questions. Download a copy here: https://ncpr.catholic.org.au/2016-parish-social-profiles/
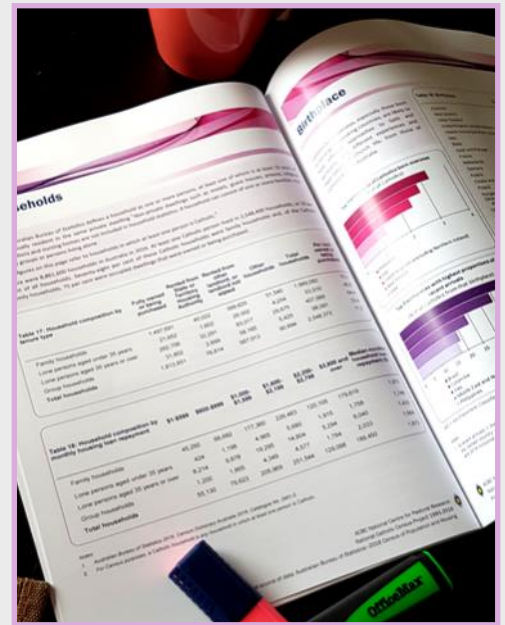
♦ **Age:** Refer to the Age profile chart on Page 11. How has the age profile of the parish population changed over the last five years?

Of the figures reported in Table 1: Population (Page 4), which do you think have been particularly significant for the life of the parish? How does the median age of your parish compare with those reported for your diocese and with Australia as a whole?

♦ **Families:** Refer to Table 18 on page 16 (Household Composition by Monthly Housing Loan Repayment). Are there a significant number of families under stress to meet mortgage repayments? How might this have changed under the current COVID-19 economic situation? What impact will this have on the usual monetary contributions these families have made to your parish it the past?

Refer to Table 14 on page 14 (Family composition by weekly family income). Are there a significant number of one-parent families in your parish? What types of pastoral support does your parish provide for such families? Has the number of one-parent families in the lowest income bracket increased since 2011? (*You will need to look at the same table in your 2011 parish profile, available here*: https://ncpr.catholic.org.au/2011-parish-social-profiles/)

♦ **Birthplace:** For Birthplace figures, refer to Table 19 on Page 17. How is the chart showing the top 5 birthplaces of recent arrivals reported in 2016 different from 2011 *(You will need to check your 2011 profile as well)*? What are some new pastoral strategies that might need to be put in place to respond to this change?

♦ **Income:** Refer to Table 23 on page 21 (Type of educational institution attending by weekly income of student's family). For some families, sending their children to a Catholic school is a choice, while for other families their level of income restricts any choice they may have. Some parishes, particularly those in rural areas, don't have a Catholic school located within their boundaries, so Catholic parents have further limited choices. Which groups have the highest reported figures? How might the parish be able to support students at non-Catholic schools?

♦ **Educational Qualifications:** Refer to Table 24 on page 22 (Highest Qualification attained by Age and Sex). Have the number of Catholic females with a university education increased since 2011 *(You will need to check your 2011 profile as well)*? What challenges and opportunities are presented to the parish as a result of this change? How would you compare this information with the profile of men and women involved in your parish ministries?

# Reflecting on your 2016 Parish Social Profile

♦ **Occupation and Employment:** Refer to Table 3 on page 5 and Tables 25 to 27 on pages 23-25. How have the changes in the employment or occupation status of Catholics (by sex, age groups and family composition) over the last five years affected the life in your parish or your parishioners' involvement in pastoral activities?

Social changes such as a shift in the number of people with higher educational qualifications, a greater number of females entering the workforce or the increased pressure of financial obligations of families, forcing both partners into employment, can considerably affect the level of parishioner involvement and the ways in which people engage with their parish community. Keeping abreast of these shifting patterns in your community and the changing needs of individuals and families is an absolute must in order to ensure the ongoing effectiveness of pastoral programs and activities. These changes also present leaders with new opportunities to refine current pastoral initiatives or develop new ones to ensure that parish continues to remain vital well into the future.

# Looking for more?

If you would like to look further into the Census data relating to your parish, we offer the opportunity of obtaining an Extended Profile. The Parish Social Profiles contain data specific to each parish, but the text in each report is generic. In an Extended Profile, the parish will receive a commentary that is written specifically for that parish and will take the local circumstances into account.

## What will an Extended Profile contain?

- Changes in demographic characteristics over time, for 25 years or more where possible
- Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) for the parish, showing areas of disadvantage and advantage
- Mass attendance figures and changes over time
- Detailed tables of additional data
- If a parish participated in the 2016 National Church Life Survey (NCLS), survey data can also be incorporated into the Extended Profile (for additional cost)
- Pastoral strategies to suit the local situation

A member of the NCPR can also visit a parish to present the Extended Profile and discuss it with key leaders, the parish pastoral council, or to a meeting of the whole parish. Alternatively, parishes may prefer to make use of the services of their own diocesan consultants to help present the Extended Profile to the parish community.

If parishes have quite specific needs beyond those outlined in the above, the NCPR can also discuss even more customisation of reports. We have access to a wealth of data not publicly available, and can tailor any report to a parish's requested needs.

## How can I place my order?

Please have a chat to one of the NCPR staff by sending an email to: ncpr@catholic.org.au or calling us on (02) 6201 9812.