

# Mass attenders' thoughts on the work of Catholic Mission

**A Report to the National Office of Catholic Mission**  
**On questions included in the 2016 National Church Life Survey**

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## Background to the National Church Life Survey

In late 2016, more than a quarter of a million church-going Australians took part in the National Church Life Survey (NCLS) by completing a questionnaire on their faith, their involvement in church life, and a variety of other topics. These people came from over 3,000 parishes and congregations representing more than 20 denominations and independent churches across the country.

Catholic parishes have participated in the last four National Church Life Surveys, in 2001, 2006, 2011 and 2016. A parallel project, the Catholic Church Life Survey (CCLS), was conducted in 1996.

## The national random sample

This report is based on questionnaires completed by Mass attenders in a national random sample of parishes. The sample was designed with the intention of ensuring that a representative sample of parishes from every diocese took part. A representative sample was achieved in almost all dioceses. The final sample size was 195 parishes.

Once the national sample had been finalised, all other parishes were invited to take part in the survey, and 162 did so, meaning that a total of 355 Catholic parishes participated in the 2016 survey. These additional parishes received a report on their results, but as they are not part of the statistical sample, their results are not included here.

Because of the statistically representative nature of the national random, the findings of the survey can confidently be regarded as applying, with a high level of probability, to all Mass attenders in Australia.

## Weighting

For the sake of ensuring representativeness within each diocese, the sample was constructed so that at least seven parishes were selected from every diocese, resulting in a variation in the percentage of parishes sampled in each diocese. For example, 78 per cent of the nine parishes in the Diocese of Broome were selected in the sample, compared to just 7.4 per cent of the 216 parishes in the Archdiocese of Melbourne. In analysing the data for this report, each diocese has been assigned a numerical weight designed to correct the situation where some dioceses are overrepresented compared to others.

## How the survey was conducted

All people aged 15 and over at Mass (or, in some places, services in the absence of a priest) on the day of the survey were invited to complete a questionnaire. The total number of completed questionnaires received from the parishes in the national sample was around 37,350.

In addition to the adult questionnaire, parishes could order optional questionnaires for children aged 8 to 14 years, a modified and shorter version of the adult survey. In total, 2,164 children completed the children's survey. However, results from the children's survey are not included in this report.

## Questionnaire version

The extremely large sample meant that the project could investigate a wide variety of topics without making questionnaires unduly long. This was done by using a number of different versions of the questionnaire, distributed at random to the people at Mass on the Sunday of the survey. Questionnaire AC, which formed the basis of the report prepared for each parish, was completed by 67 per cent of respondents in each parish, while the remaining 33 per cent of respondents completed one of 20 other versions, each dealing with a different topic. Most of these versions were distributed to attenders of all denominations, but two, Questionnaires S3 and X, were designed for use only in Catholic parishes.

The questions commissioned by Catholic Mission were included in Questionnaire X, which was completed by 1,728 attenders.

## Contents of this report

The following elements make up this report:

- This introduction, containing background information about the survey.
- The number and percentages of attenders who selected each response in the commissioned questions, that is, Questions 23 and 55 in Questionnaire X.
- Cross-tabulations of the questions with age, sex and other key demographic and parish involvement variables, with indicators of statistical significance.
- A demographic profile of the Mass attenders who answered the questions.
- A copy of Questionnaire X.

## A note on statistical significance

Each cross-tabulation in this report is marked as significant or not significant and the level of significance is also indicated.

To say that a result is statistically significant is to say that it is highly probable that the result shows an actual difference, not one that has arisen by chance. For example, if in a sample we find that 60 per cent of men and 40 per cent of women believe Statement A is true, this can either be due to chance factors which determined the make-up of our sample, or to an actual difference between what men and women believe. A statistically significant result is one where the likelihood of the result arising by chance is below a specified level of probability.

Statistical significance is usually reported at 0.05, 0.01 or 0.001 level, meaning that there is a less than five in one hundred chance, one in a hundred chance, or one in a thousand chance, respectively, that the result under discussion has arisen by chance. In the example above, a 0.001 level of statistical significance means that there is less than one chance in a thousand that the observed difference between men and women has arisen by chance. In other words, the observed difference is highly likely to reflect a real difference in what men and women believe.

However, it is important to note that saying a result is statistically significant is not the same as saying it is important. It may be that the difference between men and women in their belief about Statement A is not at all important or that it is not substantial. The importance of a result cannot be determined statistically. Rather, it is a matter for the judgement of those interpreting the results.

## **Non-Catholic attenders**

Not all Mass attenders in Catholic parishes are Catholics. About 1.9 per cent of Questionnaire X respondents were not Catholic.

## **Analysis of the data**

People are complex, and the data set used in this report is complex, too. Neither univariate analysis (e.g., the frequencies) nor bivariate analysis (e.g., cross-tabulations) tells the full story. One reason for this is that most, if not all, of the variables included in bivariate analyses with the questions commissioned by Catholic Mission are correlated with other variables such as age and sex. Marital status provides a good example. Are differences in the opinions of those who have never married and those who have been widowed a result of their marital status or their age, given that most of the former are young and most of the latter are much older? The best way to sort out such relationships is to use some form of multivariate analysis. This type of analysis is beyond the scope of this basic report, but can be carried out if required.

## **Age**

Cross-tabulations by age shown in this report use the three age groups 15 to 34, 35 to 59, and 60 and over. They were chosen mainly because the responses to many questionnaire items within each of these age groups are relatively homogeneous, with discontinuities occurring around the ages of 35 and 60. It seems that age 35 is a cut-off point for the category of 'young adults', probably because of changes in family responsibilities that now typically happen at about that age in Australia.

## Demographic profile of respondents to Questionnaire X

Unweighted (actual) figures - All responses

Questionnaire X completed by 1,728 respondents in national random sample parishes.

*NOTE: Not all respondents to Questionnaire X answered every question. Older people (those aged 60 and over) were over-represented among non-respondents. Statistical tests show the effect of this non-response on the results reported here to be negligible.*

Age	Number	Per cent
15-34yrs	195	12
35-59yrs	527	32
60+yrs	935	56
Total	1,657	100

Sex	Number	Per cent
Female	1,066	64
Male	604	36
Total	1,670	100

State or Territory	Number	Per cent
NSW & ACT	860	50
Vic & Tas	350	20
Qld	311	18
SA & NT	107	6
WA	100	6
Total	1,728	100

Marital status	Number	Per cent
Never married	245	14
In first marriage	1,037	60
Remarried after divorce	54	3
Remarried after death of spouse	13	1
In a de facto relationship	20	1
Separated but not divorced	26	2
Divorced and not remarried	59	3
Widowed	201	12
Total	1,655	100

Type of primary school attended	Number	Per cent
Catholic	1,020	69
Government	418	28
Other	48	3
Total	1,486	100

Type of secondary school attended	Number	Per cent
Catholic	1,069	71
Government	363	24
Other	81	5
Total	1,513	100

Level of education	Number	Per cent
Primary school	89	5
Some secondary school	218	13
Completed secondary school	361	22
Trade certificate	151	9
Diploma or associate diploma	228	14
Bachelor degree	370	22
Post graduate degree or diploma	240	15
Total	1,657	100

Birthplace	Number	Per cent
Australia	966	58
NZ & Pacific Islands	28	2
Great Britain	47	3
Ireland	22	1
Italy	42	3
Malta	22	1
Other Europe	57	3
Vietnam	24	1
Philippines	221	13
India/Sri Lanka	104	6
Other Asia	63	4
Other	75	4
Total	1,671	100

Mother's birthplace	Number	Per cent
Australia	822	50
Other English speaking country	120	7
Non-English speaking country	686	42
Total	1,628	100

Father's birthplace	Number	Per cent
Australia	767	47
Other English speaking country	150	9
Non-English speaking country	698	43
Total	1,615	100

Birthplace of both parents	Number	Per cent
Both parents born in Australia	736	46
One parent born in Australia	103	6
Both parents born in non-English speaking country	661	41
Other combination of parental birthplaces	105	7
Total	1,605	100

Language spoken at home	Number	Per cent
English only	1,142	68
English plus other language(s)	501	30
Non-English language(s) only	35	2
Total	1,678	100

When did you become Catholic?	Number	Per cent
Infancy	1,454	86
Childhood	44	3
Teenage years	17	1
Adulthood	134	8
Not a Catholic	32	2
Total	1,681	100

Spouse or partner Catholic?	Number	Per cent
Yes	960	61
No	230	15
Not applicable	391	25
Total	1,581	100

## Other questions from Questionnaire X used in this report

Percentages have been weighted so that they better reflect the distribution of Mass attenders across Australia.

For each question, the actual (unweighted) number of respondents is shown as 'N = '

Totals for Questions 1, 2 and 5 exceed 100% because respondents could choose more than one response.

No.	Question	
1	<b>Involvement in parish groups</b>	Per cent
	Yes, in small prayer, discussion or Bible study groups	15
	Yes, in fellowships, clubs, social or other groups	22
	No, we have no such groups	9
	No, I am not regularly involved	59
	Total	105
	N = 1,603	
2	<b>Involvement in parish outreach activities</b>	Per cent
	Evangelisation, spreading the Gospel	6
	Welfare activities, helping non-parishoners	11
	Wider community service	17
	Promotion of social justice	6
	Not regularly involved	71
	Total	111
	N = 1,582	
3	<b>Sense of belonging</b>	Per cent
	Strong and growing	42
	Stable	30
	Weakening	9
	Not a strong sense of belonging	16
	Don't know or not applicable	3
	Total	100
	N = 1,604	
4	<b>Importance of parish community</b>	Per cent
	Very / extremely important	58
	Quite important	29
	A little / not important	13
	Total	100
	N = 1,635	
5	<b>Leadership role in parish</b>	Per cent
	Reader or special minister of the Eucharist	19
	Music ministry	8
	Member of liturgy planning group	2
	Preparing adults for sacraments (eg, RCIA, marriage preparation)	2
	Children's liturgy or sacrament preparation	4
	Religious education teacher in a Government school	1
	Visitor to sick, elderly, others in need	8
	Leader of a group in the parish	3
	Member of parish council or similar leadership group	5
	Member of a committee	4
	Teacher in the parish school	2
	Active involvement in parish school, but not as teacher	3
	Other role not mentioned above	12
	No leadership or ministry role	57
	Total	130
	N = 1,521	
16a	<b>Frequency of attendance at Mass</b>	Per cent
	First time	0
	Hardly ever / Special occasions	2
	Less than once a month	1
	Once a month	2
	Two or three times a month	8
	Usually every week	69
	More than once a week	17
	Total	100
	N = 1,526	



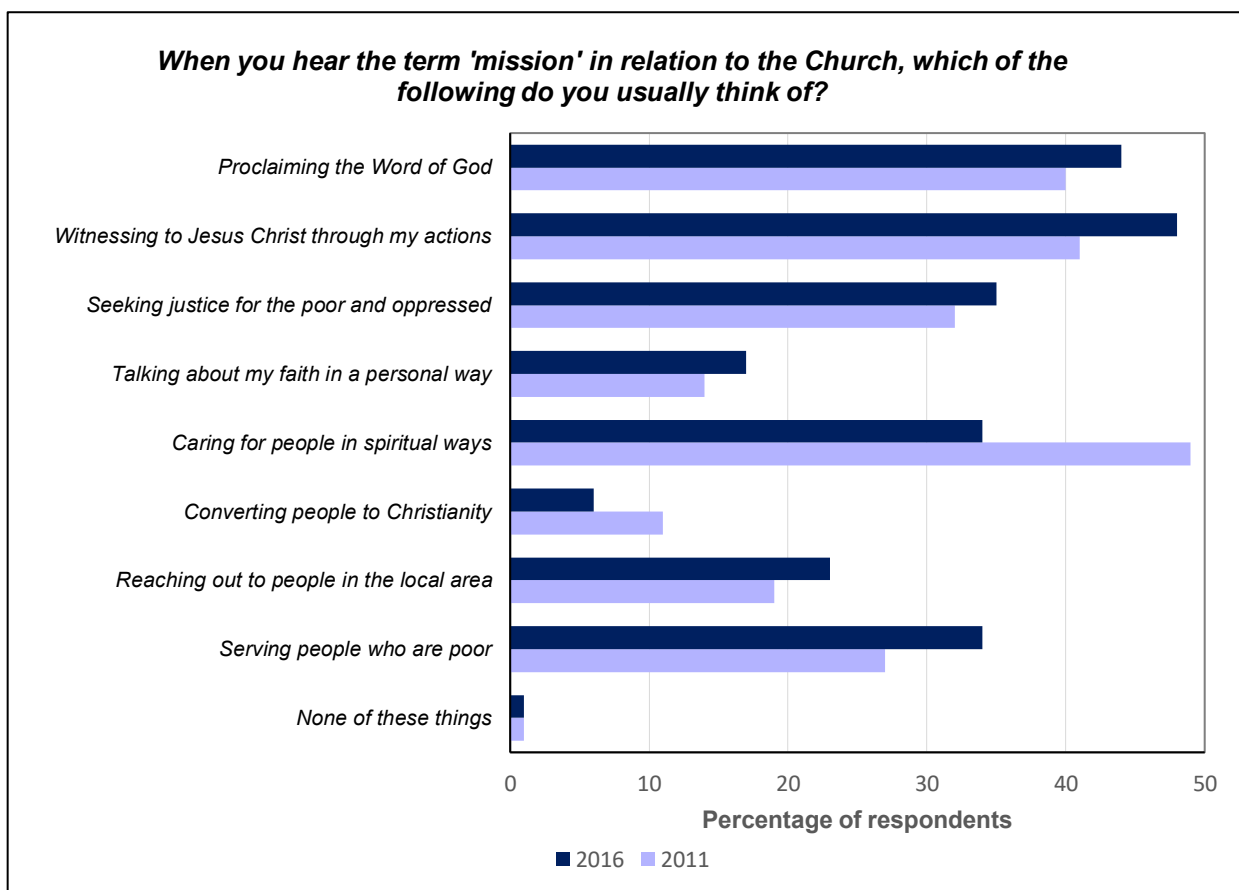
## Question 23

**When you hear the term 'mission' in relation to the Church, which of the following do you usually think of?**

(Mark up to **THREE** options)

(1,642 responses)

<b>To me, mission means:</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2011</b>
<i>Proclaiming the Word of God</i>	44	40
<i>Being a witness to Jesus Christ through my actions</i>	48	41
<i>Seeking justice for people who are poor and oppressed</i>	35	32
<i>Talking about my faith in a personal way</i> <sup>1</sup>	17	14
<i>Caring for people in spiritual ways</i> <sup>2</sup>	34	49
<i>Converting people to Christianity</i>	6	11
<i>Reaching out to people in the local area</i> <sup>3</sup>	23	19
<i>Serving people who are poor</i>	34	27
<i>None of these things</i>	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>242</b>	<b>234</b>



### 2011 formulations of response options

<sup>1</sup> Talking about one's faith in a personal way

<sup>2</sup> Caring for people in practical and spiritual ways

<sup>3</sup> Reaching out to people in one's local area

## Question 23

**When you hear the term 'mission' in relation to the Church, which of the following do you usually think of?**

Question number	Question	Proclaiming Word of God (%)	Witness through actions (%)	Justice for poor (%)	Talking about personal faith (%)	Caring spiritually (%)	Conversion (%)	Local outreach (%)	Serving the poor (%)	None of these (%)
<b>Demographic characteristics</b>										
6	<b>Age</b>									
	15-34 yrs	54	37	38	15	32	6	30	46	2
	35-59 yrs	44	51	38	13	39	7	23	33	1
	60+ yrs	41	50	34	20	31	6	23	31	2
	<i>N = 1,595</i>	*	**		**	*			**	
7	<b>Sex</b>									
	Female	42	51	36	18	37	5	25	33	1
	Male	48	45	34	16	27	10	21	36	2
	<i>N = 1,608</i>	*	*			***	***	*		
	<b>State / Territory</b>									
	New South Wales & ACT	48	46	33	16	32	8	22	31	1
	Victoria & Tasmania	37	49	37	16	36	3	24	38	1
	Queensland	45	53	40	20	32	6	23	35	0
	South Australia & Northern Territory	48	52	28	21	36	8	30	25	1
	Western Australia	41	44	42	15	20	12	20	40	3
	<i>N = 1,642</i>	**					**		*	
10	<b>Marital Status</b>									
	Never Married	49	52	42	14	35	7	22	36	1
	Married *	43	48	35	17	34	7	24	33	1
	Separated / Divorced	39	53	29	16	38	5	26	31	0
	Widowed	46	48	32	20	26	4	21	36	2
	<i>N = 1,596</i>									
	<i>* Includes 20 people who identified themselves as being in a de facto relationship</i>									
13	<b>Type of primary school attended</b>									
	Catholic	42	52	39	18	32	6	23	34	2
	Government	46	47	29	16	38	8	26	33	1
	Other	41	53	27	17	30	8	20	31	0
	<i>N = 1,446</i>			**						

Question number	Question	Proclaiming Word of God (%)	Witness through actions (%)	Justice for poor (%)	Talking about personal faith (%)	Caring spiritually (%)	Conversion (%)	Local outreach (%)	Serving the poor (%)	None of these (%)
14	<b>Type of secondary school attended</b>									
	Catholic	44	50	37	16	31	7	23	34	2
	Government	44	45	31	17	40	7	27	32	1
	Other	43	52	27	18	36	4	23	39	1
	<i>N = 1,476</i>			*		*				
15	<b>Level of Education</b>									
	No Post Secondary	46	43	36	20	31	7	22	29	1
	Diploma / Trade Certificate	42	49	25	18	30	6	21	36	1
	Degree or Higher	42	53	41	15	38	6	26	37	1
	<i>N = 1,611</i>		**	***		*			*	
8a	<b>Birthplace</b>									
	Australia	37	55	42	16	31	6	26	34	1
	Other English speaking country	47	42	33	31	30	7	16	28	0
	Non-English speaking country	55	41	27	16	37	7	20	35	1
	<i>N = 1,606</i>	***	***	***	***			**		
8b	<b>Mother's birthplace</b>									
	Australia	35	56	42	17	30	6	25	33	1
	Other English speaking country	45	50	29	31	36	6	22	30	0
	Non-English speaking country	54	42	31	15	37	7	22	36	1
	<i>N = 1,568</i>	***	***	***	***	*				
8c	<b>Father's birthplace</b>									
	Australia	36	56	42	17	29	6	25	34	1
	Other English speaking country	40	50	35	26	36	6	22	32	0
	Non-English speaking country	53	42	31	15	39	7	23	35	1
	<i>N = 1,556</i>	***	***	***	**	**				
	<b>Birthplace of both parents</b>									
	Both parents born in Australia	35	56	43	16	29	6	25	33	1
	One parent born in Australia	39	56	35	18	43	4	25	37	0
	Both parents born in Non-English speaking country	54	41	31	15	38	7	23	35	1
	Other	44	48	34	27	34	7	19	30	0
	<i>N = 1,549</i>	***	***	***	*	**				

Question number	Question	Proclaiming Word of God (%)	Witness through actions (%)	Justice for poor (%)	Talking about personal faith (%)	Caring spiritually (%)	Conversion (%)	Local outreach (%)	Serving the poor (%)	None of these (%)
9	<b>Language spoken at home</b>									
	English only	39	53	39	18	32	7	25	33	1
	English plus other language(s)	54	41	27	16	38	6	20	34	1
	Non-English language(s) only	48	36	34	21	17	5	36	37	5
	<i>N = 1,615</i>	***	***	***		**				*
11	<b>When did you become Catholic?</b>									
	Infancy	45	49	36	17	33	6	22	33	1
	Childhood	49	34	23	24	25	7	31	27	0
	Teenage years	31	41	34	11	44	9	48	64	0
	Adulthood	36	51	39	21	43	6	22	37	3
	Not a Catholic	23	34	36	15	37	9	46	41	0
	<i>N = 1,626</i>	*						**	*	
12	<b>Spouse or partner Catholic?</b>									
	Yes	46	48	33	18	33	6	24	34	1
	No	35	46	41	17	38	7	26	29	1
	<i>N = 1,158</i>	**		*						
<b>Participation in the parish</b>										
1	<b>Involvement in parish groups, ministries or activities</b>									
	Is involved	42	63	40	20	33	6	24	32	1
	Is not involved	45	42	34	15	34	7	23	35	1
	<i>N = 1,544</i>		***	*	*					
2	<b>Involvement in parish outreach activities</b>									
	Is involved	40	64	40	20	31	3	23	37	1
	Is not involved	45	42	34	15	34	8	24	34	1
	<i>N = 1,530</i>		***	*	*		***			
3	<b>Sense of belonging to the parish</b>									
	Strong and growing	48	57	37	20	36	4	23	32	0
	Stable	40	45	39	15	31	9	23	37	1
	Weakening	40	54	33	11	31	9	18	26	4
	Not a strong sense of belonging	40	37	34	15	34	7	24	36	1
	Don't know	43	33	18	8	32	2	31	46	6
	<i>N = 1,548</i>	*	***	*	*		*		*	***

Question number	Question	Proclaiming Word of God (%)	Witness through actions (%)	Justice for poor (%)	Talking about personal faith (%)	Caring spiritually (%)	Conversion (%)	Local outreach (%)	Serving the poor (%)	None of these (%)
4	<b>Importance of parish community</b>									
	Very / extremely important	48	53	35	19	36	6	20	35	1
	Quite important	39	47	37	16	33	7	28	33	1
	A little / not important	34	36	37	9	24	8	25	36	5
	N = 1,581	***	***		**	**		**		***
5	<b>Leadership role in parish</b>									
	Yes	39	63	43	21	29	5	25	32	1
	No	46	39	31	14	36	7	22	36	2
	N = 1,476	**	***	***	**	**				*
16a	<b>Frequency of attendance at Mass</b>									
	At least once a week	46	51	36	18	32	7	22	32	1
	Less than weekly	30	34	40	10	39	5	31	42	1
	N = 1,478	***	***		**			*	*	

Statistical Note:

Results have been weighted so that they better reflect the distribution of Church attenders across Australia.

Percentages across each row add to more than 100% because respondents could choose more than one option.

For each question, the actual (unweighted) number of respondents is shown as 'N = '

Statistical significance is shown as follows:

\*\*\*  $p < 0.001$

\*\*  $p < 0.01$

\*  $p < 0.05$

Blank indicates relationship not significant

## Question 55

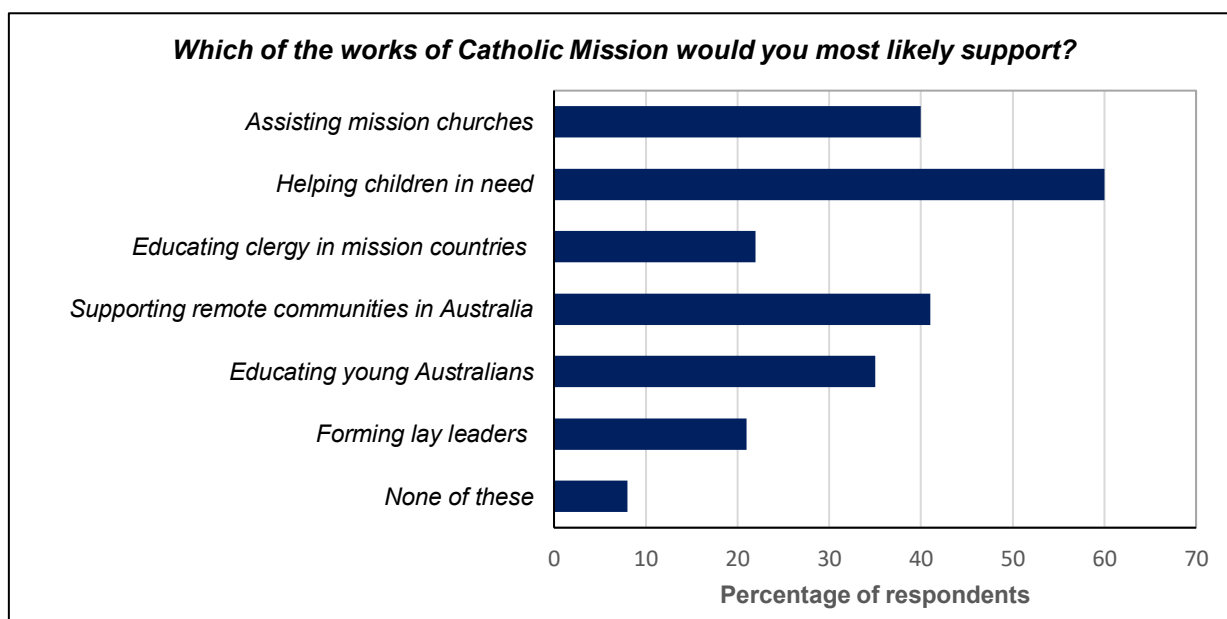
**Catholic Mission is the Australian branch of the Pontifical Mission Societies, the Church's worldwide mission aid agency. Which of the works of Catholic Mission would you most likely support?**

(Mark ALL that apply)

(1,518 responses)

	%
Assisting mission churches (Society for the Propagation of the Faith)	40
Helping children in need (Society of Missionary Childhood)	60
Educating clergy in mission countries (Society of St Peter the Apostle)	22
Supporting remote communities in Australia (Home Mission Fund)	41
Educating young Australians to talk about their faith	35
Forming lay leaders to serve others and work for justice	21
None of these	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>227</b>

Total adds to more than 100% because respondents could choose more than one response.



In 2011, there was a similar but different question:

**Catholic Mission is the Australian arm of the Pontifical Mission Societies, the Church's worldwide mission aid agency. Which of the works of Catholic Mission would you most like to support?**

(Mark ONE only)

(1,474 responses)

	(%)
Helping missionaries carry out their practical and spiritual work	23
Supporting the Church's work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people	11
Educating young Australians to talk about their faith, serve people in need and act for justice	26
Training young priests, religious, catechists and lay leaders in mission areas	13
Helping children in need in Africa, Asia and the Pacific	21
None of these	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

## Question 55

**Catholic Mission is the Australian branch of the Pontifical Mission Societies, the Church's worldwide mission aid agency. Which of the works of Catholic Mission would you most likely support?**

Question number	Question	Assisting mission churches (%)	Helping children in need (%)	Educating clergy (%)	Supporting remote communities (%)	Educating young Australians (%)	Forming lay leaders (%)	None of these (%)
<b>Demographic characteristics</b>								
6	<b>Age</b>							
	15-34 yrs	25	77	25	44	42	19	11
	35-59 yrs	38	71	21	41	38	23	6
	60+ yrs	45	48	22	40	32	20	9
	<i>N = 1,477</i>	***	***			*		
7	<b>Sex</b>							
	Female	38	63	22	44	37	22	7
	Male	43	54	21	38	33	19	11
	<i>N = 1,488</i>		**		*			*
	<b>State / Territory</b>							
	New South Wales & ACT	39	59	21	38	36	21	10
	Victoria & Tasmania	41	64	22	46	37	20	6
	Queensland	46	57	25	41	31	23	5
	South Australia & Northern Territory	28	49	25	42	32	19	16
	Western Australia	40	68	20	53	38	15	7
	<i>N = 1,518</i>	*	*					**
10	<b>Marital Status</b>							
	Never Married	42	64	28	52	38	27	12
	Married *	39	61	21	39	35	19	8
	Separated / Divorced	40	60	34	61	44	38	6
	Widowed	45	48	19	34	31	16	7
	<i>N = 1,482</i>		*	**	***		***	
	<i>* Includes 20 people who identified themselves as being in a de facto relationship</i>							
13	<b>Type of primary school attended</b>							
	Catholic	41	60	23	44	36	24	8
	Government	39	60	22	39	33	17	10
	Other	36	77	23	33	34	8	2
	<i>N = 1,343</i>						**	

Question number	Question	Assisting mission churches (%)	Helping children in need (%)	Educating clergy (%)	Supporting remote communities (%)	Educating young Australians (%)	Forming lay leaders (%)	None of these (%)
14	<b>Type of secondary school attended</b>							
	Catholic	40	59	23	42	36	22	8
	Government	41	62	20	39	32	20	10
	Other	42	66	22	39	34	13	3
	<i>N = 1,367</i>							
15	<b>Level of Education</b>							
	No Post Secondary	37	52	20	37	32	17	12
	Diploma / Trade Certificate	44	54	25	43	39	21	7
	Degree or Higher	41	70	22	44	37	23	6
	<i>N = 1,485</i>		***					**
8a	<b>Birthplace</b>							
	Australia	39	56	23	46	33	21	9
	Other English speaking country	40	75	26	47	32	32	8
	Non-English speaking country	42	62	20	34	40	19	9
	<i>N = 1,490</i>		**		***	*	*	
8b	<b>Mother's birthplace</b>							
	Australia	42	54	22	47	33	21	8
	Other English speaking country	41	68	27	52	37	36	7
	Non-English speaking country	39	66	22	36	39	20	9
	<i>N = 1,453</i>		***		***		**	
8c	<b>Father's birthplace</b>							
	Australia	43	52	22	47	32	21	8
	Other English speaking country	41	68	27	46	32	32	7
	Non-English speaking country	38	68	22	36	40	19	9
	<i>N = 1,447</i>		***		***	**	**	
	<b>Birthplace of both parents</b>							
	Both parents born in Australia	43	52	22	47	32	20	9
	One parent born in Australia	37	66	25	43	44	25	5
	Both parents born in Non-English speaking country	39	67	22	36	39	20	9
	Other	40	69	29	51	34	35	8
	<i>N = 1,440</i>		***		***	*	*	



Question number	Question	Assisting mission churches (%)	Helping children in need (%)	Educating clergy (%)	Supporting remote communities (%)	Educating young Australians (%)	Forming lay leaders (%)	None of these (%)
9	<b>Language spoken at home</b>							
	English only	40	58	23	44	34	22	8
	English plus other language(s)	41	64	20	36	39	18	9
	Non-English language(s) only	23	62	19	32	15	14	16
	<i>N = 1,495</i>				**	*		
11	<b>When did you become Catholic?</b>							
	Infancy	41	60	22	41	36	22	8
	Childhood	37	63	29	45	47	20	7
	Teenage years	43	74	24	44	29	12	0
	Adulthood	40	49	18	46	27	14	9
	Not a Catholic	16	54	6	38	39	18	10
	<i>N = 1,498</i>							
12	<b>Spouse or partner Catholic?</b>							
	Yes	40	59	19	36	35	18	8
	No	41	65	25	48	34	25	9
	<i>N = 1,063</i>				**		*	
	<b><i>Participation in the parish</i></b>							
1	<b>Involvement in parish groups, ministries or activities</b>							
	Is involved	49	57	27	46	43	28	5
	Is not involved	36	61	19	40	31	18	10
	<i>N = 1,440</i>	***		**	*	***	***	**
2	<b>Involvement in parish outreach activities</b>							
	Is involved	48	59	27	47	42	28	6
	Is not involved	37	61	20	39	32	18	10
	<i>N = 1,428</i>	***		**	**	***	***	**
3	<b>Sense of belonging to the parish</b>							
	Strong and growing	46	63	24	43	40	21	5
	Stable	38	59	19	45	32	20	9
	Weakening	34	60	20	37	32	28	11
	Not a strong sense of belonging	34	59	21	39	35	20	13
	Don't know	28	55	25	37	20	12	17
	<i>N = 1,442</i>	**				*		**

Question number	Question	Assisting mission churches (%)	Helping children in need (%)	Educating clergy (%)	Supporting remote communities (%)	Educating young Australians (%)	Forming lay leaders (%)	None of these (%)
4	<b>Importance of parish community</b>							
	Very / extremely important	48	62	24	44	40	21	6
	Quite important	31	58	21	37	34	21	9
	A little / not important	24	54	16	44	20	21	18
	N = 1,468	***			*	***		***
5	<b>Leadership role in parish</b>							
	Yes	44	59	24	47	39	26	6
	No	38	62	21	39	32	17	11
	N = 1,381	*			**	*	***	**
16a	<b>Frequency of attendance at Mass</b>							
	At least once a week	43	58	24	40	35	21	9
	Less than weekly	23	71	14	49	36	21	6
	N = 1,361	***	**	**	*			

Statistical Note:

Results have been weighted so that they better reflect the distribution of Church attenders across Australia.

Percentages across each row add to more than 100% because respondents could choose more than one option.

For each question, the actual (unweighted) number of respondents is shown as 'N = '

Statistical significance is shown as follows:

\*\*\*  $p < 0.001$

\*\*  $p < 0.01$

\*  $p < 0.05$

Blank indicates relationship not significant

# Thank you for taking part in this survey

- Please use a BLACK OR BLUE PEN or dark pencil and press firmly.
- FILL IN or CROSS the box next to the category that best describes your response ( ☐ or ☒ ). PLEASE DO NOT USE TICKS.
- Choose ONE ONLY for each question unless it states otherwise.  
Example: Do you eat fruit? ☒ Yes ☐ No

## Mass Centre Code

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X



### 1. Are you regularly involved in any group activities here? (Mark ALL that apply)

- ☐ Yes, in small prayer, discussion or Bible study groups
- ☐ Yes, in clubs, social groups or other types of groups
- ☐ No, we have no such groups
- ☐ No, I am not regularly involved

### 2. Do you regularly take part in any of the following parish activities which reach out to non-parishioners? (Mark ALL that apply)

- ☐ Parish outreach or evangelisation activities which spread the Good News of the Gospel
- ☐ Parish welfare activities which assist people from the non-parish community with personal needs
- ☐ Parish service activities which contribute to the wider community in some way
- ☐ Parish activities which promote social justice
- ☐ No, I am not regularly involved

### 3. Do you have a strong sense of belonging to this parish?

- ☐ Yes, a strong sense of belonging, which is growing
- ☐ Yes, a strong sense - about the same as last year
- ☐ Yes, although perhaps not as strongly as in the past
- ☐ No, but I am new here
- ☐ No, and I wish I did by now
- ☐ No, but I am happy as I am
- ☐ Don't know/not applicable

### 4. How important is this parish community in your life?

- ☐ Not at all important ☐ Very important
- ☐ A little important ☐ Extremely important
- ☐ Quite important

### 5. Do you currently perform any of these leadership or ministry roles in this parish? (Mark ALL that apply)

- ☐ Reader (lector) or special minister of the Eucharist
- ☐ Music ministry (e.g. choir, organist, musician)
- ☐ Member of a liturgy planning group
- ☐ Preparing adults for sacraments (e.g. RCIA, marriage preparation)
- ☐ Involved in children's liturgy or sacrament preparation
- ☐ Religious education teacher in a government school
- ☐ Visitor to the sick or elderly or others in need
- ☐ Leader of a group (e.g. a prayer, discussion, youth or social group)
- ☐ Member of the parish council or similar leadership group
- ☐ Member of a committee
- ☐ Teacher in the parish school
- ☐ Actively involved in the parish school (not as a teacher)
- ☐ Another role not mentioned above
- ☐ I do not have any leadership or ministry role at present

## About You

### 6. In what year were you born?

Please write the year in the squares:

--	--	--	--

### 7. What is your gender?

- ☐ Female ☐ Male

NB: If you identify as 'Other', this option is in the online survey.

### 8. Where were you born? Where was your mother born? Where was your father born? (Please mark an option in EVERY COLUMN)

	You	Mother	Father
Australia	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
New Zealand	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pacific Islands	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Great Britain	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ireland (incl. N. Ireland)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Italy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Malta	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other Southern Europe	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Northern or Western Europe	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Eastern Europe/former USSR	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Middle East/North Africa	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Republic of South Africa	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other Africa	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mauritius	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
North America	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Central or South America	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
China/Hong Kong	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Korea	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vietnam	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Philippines	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
India/Sri Lanka	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other Asia	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### 9. At home, do you speak a language other than English?

- ☐ English only
- ☐ English plus other language(s)
- ☐ Non-English language(s) only

### 10. Which term best describes your present marital status?

- ☐ Never married ☐ In a defacto relationship
- ☐ In first marriage ☐ Separated
- ☐ Remarried after divorce ☐ Divorced
- ☐ Remarried after widowed ☐ Widowed

This form will be scanned - Please mark boxes ☒ and ☐  
WRITE NUMBERS CLEARLY to help scanning process

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### 11. Are you a Catholic?

*Yes, I became a Catholic when I was*

- |                                     |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> A baby     | <input type="checkbox"/> An adult                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A child    | <input type="checkbox"/> No, I am not a Catholic |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A teenager |  |

### 12. Is your spouse or partner a Catholic?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not applicable

### What type of school did you (or do you now) mainly attend? (Mark ONE in each row)

	Catholic	Government	Other
13. Primary School	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. Secondary School	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### 15. What is the highest educational qualification you have completed?

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Primary school               | <input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor degree from a university or equivalent institution |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Some secondary school        | <input type="checkbox"/> Postgraduate degree or diploma                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Completed secondary school   |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Trade certificate            |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Diploma or associate diploma |  |

## About Your Faith and the Church

### 16. How often do you go to Mass? Please answer for how often you go to Mass, AND for how often you go to Mass in this parish. (Mark an option in BOTH columns)

	Generally?	Here?
This is my first time	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hardly ever/special occasions only	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Less than once a month	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Once a month	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Two or three times a month	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Usually every week	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
More than once a week	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### 17. In what way do you see yourself being involved in the Catholic Church in the future?

- ☐ I will probably attend Mass and be involved in my parish  
☐ I will probably only attend Mass  
☐ I don't think I will attend Mass regularly, but will probably be involved in other ways  
☐ I don't think I will be involved with the Church in the future  
☐ Not sure/Don't know

### 18. What do you value most about being a Catholic? (Mark up to THREE options)

- ☐ Being a part of the faith community  
☐ Participating in Mass and other sacraments  
☐ Being involved in small groups (e.g. youth group, prayer group)  
☐ It's something I can do with my family  
☐ The commitment to social justice  
☐ The Church's beliefs and teachings  
☐ It connects me with God  
☐ It helps me to form my values  
☐ Some other reason not listed above  
☐ I am not a Catholic

### 19. Do you agree or disagree? 'It is a sin to miss Mass on Sunday unless you have a serious reason'

- ☐ Strongly agree ☐ Disagree  
☐ Agree ☐ Strongly disagree  
☐ Neutral or unsure

### 20. Throughout your life, which of the following have given you the strongest support in your faith?

(Mark up to THREE options)

- ☐ My family  
☐ The parishes I have been part of  
☐ The schools that I attended (or now attend)  
☐ Small group(s) (e.g. youth group, prayer group)  
☐ Catholic organisations (e.g. St Vincent de Paul (Vinnies), Catholic Women's League)  
☐ Movements in the Church (e.g. Cursillo, Marriage Encounter)  
☐ Social media and online resources  
☐ Studying theology or related subjects  
☐ Events (e.g. conferences, World Youth Day, retreats, festivals)  
☐ Some other factor not listed above  
☐ None of the above

### 21. In your opinion, how important is it for Catholics to develop closer relationships with, and understanding of, people from non-Christian religions (e.g. Muslims, Jews and Buddhists)?

- ☐ Catholics should not do this  
☐ Catholics should do this, but it's not very important  
☐ It is quite important for Catholics to do this  
☐ It is very important for Catholics to do this  
☐ Don't know/Not sure

### 22. In your opinion, how important is it for Catholics to work towards unity with the other major Christian denominations?

- ☐ Catholics should not do this  
☐ Catholics should do this, but it's not very important  
☐ It is quite important for Catholics to do this  
☐ It is very important for Catholics to do this  
☐ Don't know/Not sure

### 23. When you hear the term 'mission' in relation to the Church, which of the following do you usually think of? (Mark up to THREE options)

To me, mission means:

- ☐ Proclaiming the Word of God  
☐ Being a witness to Jesus Christ through my actions  
☐ Seeking justice for people who are poor and oppressed  
☐ Talking about my faith in a personal way  
☐ Caring for people in spiritual ways  
☐ Converting people to Christianity  
☐ Reaching out to people in the local area  
☐ Serving people who are poor  
☐ None of these things

### 24. Some say there are barriers preventing women from taking on leadership roles in the Church. During the last few years, have you ever experienced such a barrier, or known a woman who has?

- ☐ No, I have not experienced or observed such a barrier

*Yes, I have observed such a barrier as a result of: (Mark ALL that apply)*

- ☐ Opposition or lack of support from a priest or priests  
☐ Opposition or lack of support from men in the Church  
☐ Opposition or lack of support from women in the Church  
☐ Opposition or lack of support from older people in the Church  
☐ Church practices that favour men for certain positions  
☐ The exercise of authority in the Church  
☐ Other factors not listed above

## The Church and Society

### 25. On which of the following public issues in Australia do you think the Catholic Church should be most active? (Mark up to FOUR options)

- ☐ Aboriginal issues
- ☐ Asylum seekers/refugees
- ☐ Bioethical issues (e.g. abortion, euthanasia, surrogacy)
- ☐ Drugs/substance abuse
- ☐ Environmental issues/climate change
- ☐ Farming issues
- ☐ Human trafficking
- ☐ Opposition to same-sex marriage
- ☐ Poverty and disadvantage in Australia
- ☐ Poverty overseas
- ☐ Prisons and the criminal justice system
- ☐ Standards in TV, film and literature
- ☐ Support for marriage and the family
- ☐ War and conflict overseas
- ☐ Workplace conditions and laws
- ☐ Another issue not listed here
- ☐ The Church should not be involved in public policy issues

### 26. What is your view of the work of the Catholic Church in promoting social justice and supporting human rights?

- ☐ The Church is playing a very positive role
- ☐ The Church is playing a positive role but much more could be done
- ☐ The Church is making little more than a token effort
- ☐ Don't know

### 27. Which of the following do you think are appropriate for Catholic Church social service agencies? (Mark ALL that apply)

- ☐ Providing social services, such as aged care and employment assistance
- ☐ Accepting government funding for social services provided by the Church
- ☐ Influencing general standards required of all service providers across a particular sector (e.g. aged care or employment assistance)
- ☐ Maintaining some independence from the wider Church
- ☐ None of the above

### 28. Do you think public policy-making in Australia should be influenced by what Catholic social teaching calls 'preference for the poor'? (Mark ALL that apply)

- ☐ Yes, because this principle is firmly grounded in Gospel values
- ☐ Yes, because this principle is central to the idea of a just and fair society
- ☐ No, because this is a religious notion which has no place in government decision-making in Australia
- ☐ Not sure, because I do not understand what is meant by 'preference for the poor'
- ☐ I have another opinion not mentioned above
- ☐ Don't know

### 29. Do you agree or disagree? 'Christians should work to change the structures of society in order to create a more just society'

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neutral or unsure
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

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### In the past 12 months, how often did you donate money to the following overseas aid agencies?

(Mark one box in EACH row)

	Not at all	Once or twice	Several times	Monthly or more
30. Caritas Australia (Project Compassion)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
31. World Vision	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
32. OXFAM/Community Aid Abroad	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
33. CARE Australia	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
34. Christian Blind Mission (CBM)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
35. Save the Children Fund	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
36. Plan International (Foster Parents Plan)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
37. Christian Children's Fund (CCF)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
38. Fred Hollows Foundation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
39. UNICEF	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### 40. Are you involved in any community service, social action or welfare groups not connected to this parish? (Mark ALL that apply)

- ☐ Yes, community service, care or welfare groups
- ☐ Yes, social action, justice or lobby groups (e.g. environmental, human rights or local issues)
- ☐ No, I am not involved with such groups

### Which of the following advocacy or campaign actions might you take if you cared deeply about a social justice issue? (Mark one box in EACH row)

#### 41. Sign a printed petition

- |                          |   |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| I have done this         | I have not done this, but would consider doing so | I would not do this      | Don't know/ Not sure     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

#### 42. Write to my local Member of Parliament

- |                          |   |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| I have done this         | I have not done this, but would consider doing so | I would not do this      | Don't know/ Not sure     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

#### 43. Ring my local Member of Parliament

- |                          |   |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| I have done this         | I have not done this, but would consider doing so | I would not do this      | Don't know/ Not sure     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

#### 44. Attend a public rally or march

- |                          |   |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| I have done this         | I have not done this, but would consider doing so | I would not do this      | Don't know/ Not sure     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

#### 45. Attend a prayer vigil

- |                          |   |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| I have done this         | I have not done this, but would consider doing so | I would not do this      | Don't know/ Not sure     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

#### 46. Write a letter to the editor

- |                          |   |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| I have done this         | I have not done this, but would consider doing so | I would not do this      | Don't know/ Not sure     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

#### 47. Speak to my friends and family in person

- |                          |   |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| I have done this         | I have not done this, but would consider doing so | I would not do this      | Don't know/ Not sure     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

#### 48. Join a local group that organises advocacy actions e.g. visit my MP, host an event etc.

- |                          |   |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| I have done this         | I have not done this, but would consider doing so | I would not do this      | Don't know/ Not sure     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

As the Catholic Church’s international aid and development agency, Caritas Australia carries out the following work. How important do you think each of these functions is? (Mark one box in EACH row)

49. Supporting long term development programs internationally

Not important

Quite important

Very important

Don't know/No opinion

50. Working with Indigenous Australians to support long term development programs

Not important

Quite important

Very important

Don't know/No opinion

51. Providing emergency aid and relief

Not important

Quite important

Very important

Don't know/No opinion

52. Educating Australians about the causes of poverty

Not important

Quite important

Very important

Don't know/No opinion

53. Being an advocate for social justice and fairer policies

Not important

Quite important

Very important

Don't know/No opinion

54. Caritas Australia strives to keep supporters involved with, and informed about, the good works of the Church delivered through Caritas' programs. How do you prefer to interact with Caritas? (Mark ALL that apply)

☐ Visiting the Caritas website

☐ Viewing updates on social media channels (e.g. Facebook)

☐ Reading stories, magazines and letters received in the mail

☐ Reading email newsletters

☐ Donating online

☐ Donating through the parish

☐ Not applicable - I don't support Caritas Australia

55. Catholic Mission is the Australian branch of the Pontifical Mission Societies, the Church's worldwide mission aid agency. Which of the works of Catholic Mission would you most likely support? (Mark ALL that apply)

☐ Assisting mission churches (Society for the Propagation of the Faith)

☐ Helping children in need (Society of Missionary Childhood)

☐ Educating clergy in mission countries (Society of St Peter the Apostle)

☐ Supporting remote communities in Australia (Home Mission Fund)

☐ Educating young Australians to talk about their faith

☐ Forming lay leaders to serve others and work for justice

☐ None of these

Social Issues

56. Do you support or oppose changing the legal definition of marriage to allow same-sex marriage?

☐ Strongly support

☐ Tend to support

☐ Mixed feelings/Neutral

☐ Tend to oppose

☐ Strongly oppose

☐ Don't know

57. Do you think that the presence of people from different countries makes life better in your local area?

☐ No, not at all

☐ Not often

☐ Sometimes

☐ Yes, definitely

☐ There are very few people from other countries in our area

☐ Don't know/Unsure

Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

58. Australia should increase the number of refugees it accepts

Strongly agree

Agree

Neutral/Unsure

Disagree

Strongly disagree

59. Mandatory detention of asylum seekers (that is, holding them in detention until their immigration status is decided) is compatible with Catholic Church teaching

Strongly agree

Agree

Neutral/Unsure

Disagree

Strongly disagree

60. Most asylum seekers are queue jumpers trying to get into Australia without going through the proper channels required of authentic migrants

Strongly agree

Agree

Neutral/Unsure

Disagree

Strongly disagree

61. Do you think Australia’s current system of welfare payments strikes an appropriate balance between providing support to those in need and encouraging self-reliance?

☐ Yes, the balance is about right

☐ No, because it provides too much incentive to remain on benefits and too little incentive for people to find work

☐ No, because it is too harsh on those in need and does not sufficiently acknowledge the difficulties they face

☐ Don't know/Not sure

62. Which one of the following statements describes your view of the balance between work and family life for most people in Australia?

☐ The current balance is about right

☐ Work gets too much priority, so that family life suffers

☐ Family life is given too much priority relative to work obligations

☐ Don't know/Not sure

63. Do you agree or disagree? 'It is becoming more difficult to find the right balance between work and family life'

Strongly agree

Agree

Neutral/Unsure

Disagree

Strongly disagree

64. Think back to the Federal election in July this year, when the Liberals were led by Mr Turnbull and Labor by Mr Shorten. Which party did you vote for in each house? (Mark one box in each column)

House of Representatives

Senate

Liberal/Nationals

Labor (ALP)

Greens

One Nation

Other (e.g. DLP)

Don't remember

Did not vote

☐

☐

☐

☐

☐

☐

☐

☐

☐

☐

☐

☐

☐

☐

65. In Federal elections, which party do you usually vote for in elections to the House of Representatives?

☐ Liberal/Nationals

☐ Labor (ALP)

☐ Greens

☐ One Nation

☐ Other (e.g. DLP)

☐ It has varied

☐ Don't remember

☐ I have not voted before

Thank you for your help today

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