

Pastoral Research Online

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The ACCPR comes to Canberra



Members of the ACCPR and NCP Staff:

Back row L-R: Dr David Leary OFM, Mr Daniel Ang, Fr Brian Lucas, Bishop Michael McCarthy, Fr Stephen Hackett MSC.
Front row L-R: Dr Stephen Reid, Dr Trudy Dantis, Prof Gabrielle McMullen AM, Ms Leith Dudfield, Dr Joel Hodge, Dr Louise St Guillaume. Absent: Ms Danielle Cronin, Ms Sophy Morley

The Australian Catholic Council for Pastoral Research (ACCPR) convened on 18 May 2023 at the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference’s premises in Canberra and took the opportunity to welcome new members and meet with NCP staff. It was also the last meeting with the General Secretary, Fr Stephen Hackett, who is leaving the ACBC at the end of July 2023 to take up the position of Provincial Superior of the Society of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart (MSC). See page 6 for more.

Dear Readers,

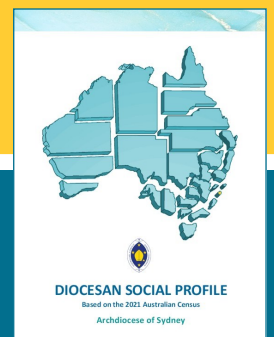
This bulletin brings much exciting news. Firstly, we have nearly completed our work on the 2021 Diocesan Social Profiles and look forward to their release next month. In the meantime, as a bit of a teaser, we bring you some highlights of the ‘Top five’ dioceses for a number of demographic indicators, as reported in the forthcoming Social Profiles. We also have professionally printed hard copies of the 2021 National Social Profile now available for purchase.

Secondly, the much-awaited ‘Instrumentum Laboris’—the preparatory document for the first assembly of the Synod of Bishops in October this year—has just been released. This issue brings you news on recent and upcoming Synod events and provides links to key resources.

In other news, we highlight recent research from the PM Glynn Institute, congratulate Dr Stephen Reid on his graduation and farewell Fr Stephen Hackett as he finishes his time with the ACCPR.

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2021 Diocesan Social Profiles: to be released in July

Once released, the documents can be accessed online and will be available for download from our website: www.ncpr.catholic.org.au

2021 Census: Top Five Dioceses

Catholic Population

According to the 2021 Census, the Archdiocese of Melbourne had the highest Catholic population in Australia, with over one million Catholics (1,038,276) living within the diocese's geographical boundaries (See Table 1). The Archdiocese of Brisbane followed in second place with 684,423 Catholics, while the Archdiocese of Sydney ranked third, with around 590,000 Catholics. There were 411,173 Catholics living in the Archdiocese of Perth and the Diocese of Parramatta had around 322,448 Catholics within its boundaries.

Table 1: Total Catholic Population

Rank	Diocese	Population
1	Melbourne	1,038,276
2	Brisbane	684,423
3	Sydney	590,175
4	Perth	411,173
5	Parramatta	322,448
	<i>Australia</i>	<i>5,075,910</i>

Table 2: Percent Catholic

Rank	Diocese	Population (%)
1	Wagga Wagga	26.5
2	Bathurst	25.3
3	Parramatta	24.7
4	Wilcannia-Forbes	23.9
5	Wollongong	23.7
	<i>Australia</i>	<i>20.0</i>

Table 2 shows the proportion of Catholics within the overall population of each diocese. The Diocese of Wagga Wagga had the highest proportion of Catholics in Australia in 2021, with Catholics making up 26.5 per cent of the population. Just over a quarter of the population in the Diocese of Bathurst was Catholic (25.3%), which ranked a close second. This was followed by the dioceses of Parramatta (24.7%), Wilcannia Forbes (23.9%) and lastly, Wollongong (23.7%). Nationally one in five Australians identified as Catholic in 2021.

Age

The Diocese of Lismore recorded the highest proportion of Catholics aged 65 and over, with 27.5 per cent of Catholics in this age group (See Table 3). The SA Diocese of Port Pirie ranked the second-highest, with just over a quarter of all Catholics (25.8%) aged 65 and over. The Archdiocese of Hobart (25.5%) and the Diocese of Bunbury (24.3%), ranked third and fourth, while the Archdiocese of Adelaide, was fifth-ranked, with 23.7 per cent of all Catholics aged 65 and over. Nationally around one in five Australians were in this age group.

Table 3: Percentage of Catholics aged 65 and over

Rank	Diocese	Per cent aged 65+
1	Lismore	27.5
2	Port Pirie	25.8
3	Hobart	25.5
4	Bunbury	24.3
5	Adelaide	23.7
	<i>Australia</i>	<i>19.9</i>

Table 4: Percentage of Catholics aged under 15

Rank	Diocese	Per cent aged 0-14 years
1	Broome	24.4
2	Bathurst	20.7
3	Geraldton	20.6
4	Townsville	20.5
5	Rockhampton	20.3
	<i>Australia</i>	<i>17.9</i>

In contrast to an older age profile, a number of rural and regional dioceses had the highest proportion of Catholics aged under 15 in 2021 (See Table 4). Around 24 per cent of Catholics in the Diocese of Broome fell within this group. The Diocese of Bathurst ranked second highest with just over one in five Catholics (20.7%) aged under 15. The next three dioceses had similar proportions, with the Diocese of Geraldton at 20.6 per cent, and the dioceses of Townsville and Rockhampton with 20.5 and 20.3 per cent respectively. Overall in Australia, around 18 per cent of all Catholics were aged under 15 years.

2021 Census: Top Five Dioceses

Ethnicity

As Australia continues to increase in ethnic diversity, there are many dioceses for whom multiculturalism is the norm. Table 5 shows the Top Five dioceses with the percentage of Catholics born in non-English-speaking countries (NESC). NESC countries are defined by the Australian Bureau of Statistics as all countries other than Australia, New Zealand, United Kingdom, Ireland, United States, Canada and South Africa. As Table 5 shows, the Archdiocese of Sydney had the highest proportion (33.5%) of NESC-born Catholics. Coming in second is the Diocese of Parramatta at around 29 per cent. The Archdioceses of Melbourne and Perth reported figures of 27.6 and 25.9 per cent each, while in the Diocese of Darwin just over a quarter of the Catholic population (25.4 %) were born in a NESC. Overall, 21.4 per cent of all Catholics were born in a NESC.

Table 5: Percentage of Catholics born in non-English-speaking countries (NESC)

Rank	Diocese	Per cent born in NESC
1	Sydney	33.5
2	Parramatta	29.2
3	Melbourne	27.6
4	Perth	25.9
5	Darwin	25.4
	<i>Australia</i>	<i>21.4</i>

Education

Table 6 shows the Top Five dioceses of Catholics who had a degree qualification or higher. The first and second ranked dioceses were the Diocese of Broken Bay and the Archdiocese of Sydney with figures of 31.4 and 31.1 percent respectively, well above the Australian average of 24.6 per cent. At third place was the Archdiocese of Melbourne at 27.6 per cent, followed closely by the Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn at 27.4 per cent. The Archdiocese of Perth ranked fifth with just over a quarter of all Catholics (26.5 %) qualified with a degree or higher.

Table 6: Percentage of Catholics with a degree or higher (aged 15+)

Rank	Diocese	Per cent with a degree of higher
1	Broken Bay	31.4
2	Sydney	31.1
3	Melbourne	27.6
4	Canberra & Goulburn	27.4
5	Perth	26.5
	<i>Australia</i>	<i>24.6</i>

Data Source: ABS Census of Population & Housing 2021 (data obtained as part of the National Catholic Census Project).

2021 National Social Profile for Sale



The 2021 Social Profile of the Catholic Community in Australia is now publicly available. The National Social Profile provides comprehensive information of those who identified themselves as Catholic in the 2021 Census. The electronic copy of the document can be downloaded from the NCPR website: <https://ncpr.catholic.org.au/> or a professionally printed hard copy can now be ordered from the ACBC Shop for \$22 including GST. Click on the link below to get your copy now:

<https://bit.ly/2021nationalsocialprofile>

Synod on Synodality Update

Instrumentum Laboris Released

On 20 June 2023, the *Instrumentum Laboris* (IL)—the working document for participants in the first session of the 16th Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops (4-29 October 2023)—was released.

The IL consists of a text and fifteen worksheets. Together, these highlight the characteristics of the synodal Church, which have emerged through the experience of the last two years. The document identifies three main priorities, which centre on the main themes of the Synod:

A communion that radiates: “How can we be more fully a sign and instrument of union with God and of the unity of all humanity?”

Co-responsibility in mission: “How can we better share gifts and tasks in the service of the Gospel?”

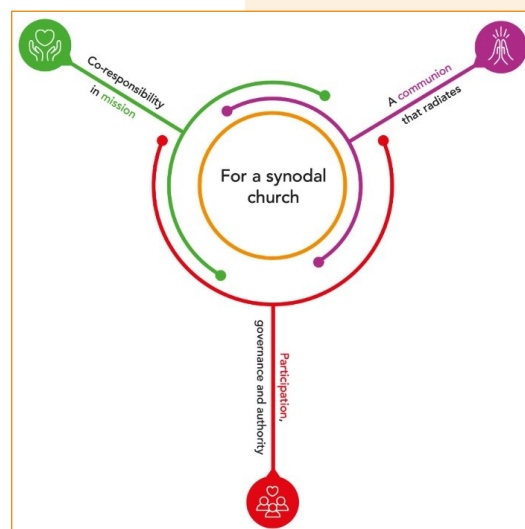
Participation, governance and authority: “What processes, structures and institutions are needed in a missionary synodal Church?”

Each of these priorities is explored further through a series of five worksheets aimed at supporting the discernment of the next steps for the Church to become more synodal.

The IL is mainly addressed to the participants of the first session of the XVI General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops. However, it is also a valuable tool for groups at parish, diocesan and national levels to continue their own journey of reflection and discernment on how to walk together as a Church; and carry out ecclesial initiatives.

Unlike the previous stages, each country is not being asked to consult nationally in relation to this document and provide a response. However, people are encouraged to connect with their diocese, parish or other interest groups and continue this synodal journey with them. The complete text of the IL is available at:

<https://www.synod.va/en/synodal-process/the-universal-phase/documents.html>

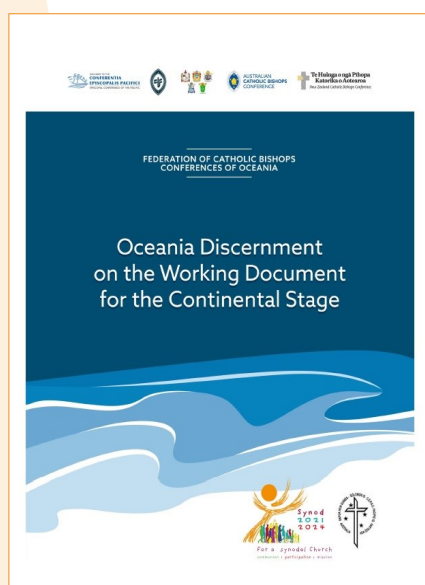


Continental Discernment Around the World

The Continental Stage of the synodal process came to an official end on Friday, 31 March 2023. This stage not only included the celebration of seven continental assemblies but also further listening and discernment by the people of God. The fruits of these discussions led to each continental assembly writing a Final Document.

The seven continental documents informed the *Instrumentum Laboris*, which has been produced by the Preparatory Commission, set up by the General Secretariat of the Synod. Archbishop Timothy Costelloe SDB is one of the members of the Commission.

The Oceania Discernment on the Working Document for the Continental Stage was published on Thursday, 13 April 2023 and is available at: <https://bit.ly/oceaniadiscernment>



The Final Documents of all seven continental assemblies are available through the Synod webpage at: https://www.synod.va/en/synodal-process/the-continental-stage/final_document.html

Synod on Synodality Update

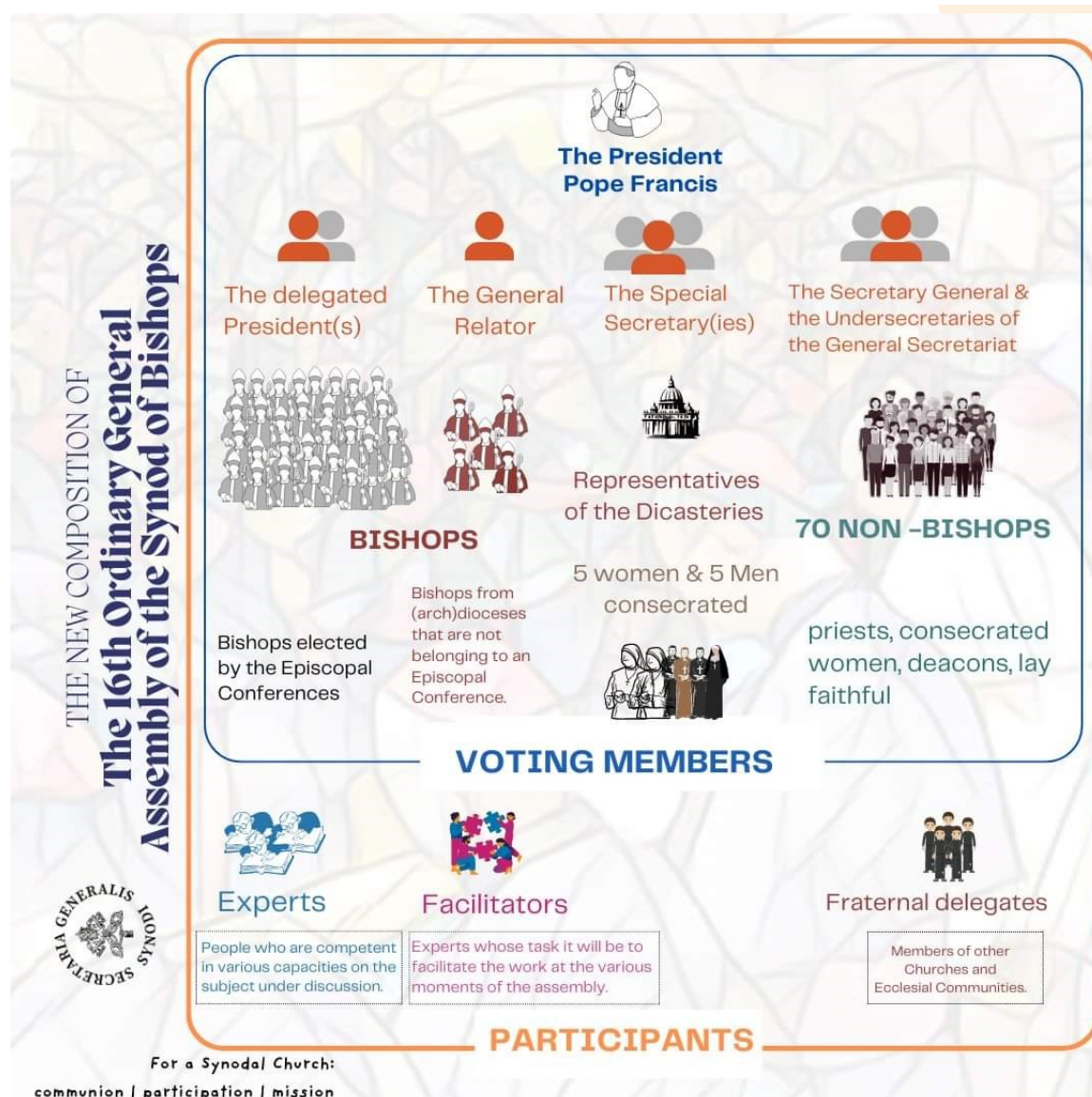


Figure 1. Infographic showing the new composition of the 16th Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops.

New Voting Members Announced for the Synod

On 26 April it was announced that Pope Francis had approved changes to the membership of the Synod that will allow women and lay people to be among the voting members for the first time. There will firstly be five religious women and five religious men to represent the religious orders. There will also be 70 non-bishop voting members representing “various groupings of the faithful of the People of God”, including priests, religious, deacons and lay members (see Figure 1 above).

Regional bishops’ conferences and assemblies of the Eastern Churches have been asked to submit 140 candidates for the Pope to choose from, and half of these must be women. The synod office has also asked that young people be included. In addition to the 70, Francis can nominate non-bishop members, including lay women and men, of his own.

The announcement of the 70 additional members for the Synod is expected at the end of June.

More information about this announcement is available at:

<https://www.synod.va/en/news/some-news-for-the-october-2023-assembly.html>



Synod on Synodality Update



Together, Gathering of the People of God – An Ecumenical Prayer Vigil

At a meeting on 10-11 May, the members of the 15th Ordinary Council of the General Secretariat of the Synod met in Rome to discuss the *Instrumentum Laboris*. At the same meeting, the members of the Council developed information for an Ecumenical Prayer Vigil on 30 September 2023, prior to the First Assembly of the Synod.

Young people aged between 18 and 35 from across Europe, from all Church backgrounds, are invited to Rome from Friday evening to Sunday afternoon and will be welcomed for a weekend of sharing, to journey together as the people of God. For more information, please visit: <https://together2023.net/>

Those who cannot participate in this manner are encouraged to organise prayer vigils on or around September 30 in different parts of the world as a sign of communion with those gathered in Rome and to pray for the synodal process beginning at that time. Rosyln Rajasingham, from Sydney, is coordinating a list of worldwide initiatives. Her contact details and more information is available at:

<https://together2023.net/info-page/prayers-elsewhere-in-the-world/>

To support preparations, there are also various liturgical resources on the *Together* website available for use. Each month new resources are added including prayers, songs, readings, suggestions for reflections and activities. These monthly offerings are available on the *Together* website under “Support Documents” at:

<https://together2023.net/info-page/monthly-support-documents/>

For Australian Synod resources and news, please visit: <https://www.catholic.org.au/synodalchurch>

The Australian Catholic Council for Pastoral Research

Farewell to Fr Stephen Hackett

Rev Dr Stephen Hackett MSC was elected as the provincial superior of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart in April, a position he will take up in July 2023. Fr Hackett has been an *ex-officio* member of the Australian Catholic Council for Pastoral Research (ACCPR) since 2016 when he took on the role of the General Secretary for the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference (ACBC). Through his years at the Conference he has been a strong supporter of the work of the Centre and has provided advice on numerous projects.



Above: Rev Dr Stephen Hackett MSC

Prior to joining the ACBC, Fr Hackett was involved in parish ministry as well as diocesan governance, secondary education, university chaplaincy, and the vocations apostolate. Along with completing studies in theology, culminating in a PhD in architecture and liturgy, he also received postgraduate awards in peace studies and education. He was awarded his doctorate from the University of New South Wales in 2011 for his thesis titled, *‘The architecture of liturgy: Liturgical ordering in church design; the Australian experience in perspective’*.

Fr Hackett’s last ACCPR meeting was in May 2023 where he was thanked for his service and presented with a book voucher to commemorate his time with the Council. We wish him all the best for the future.

National Research News

PM Glynn Survey on Hope, Trust and Belonging

The PM Glynn Institute at the Australian Catholic University has recently released key findings from their 2022 survey on hope, trust and belonging. The report provides comparisons with their 2018 survey which provides a fascinating comparison of life before and after the impact of COVID-19.



The specific survey topics examined in the 2022 survey were:

- the impact of COVID-19;
- human flourishing in 2022;
- attitudes towards religion;
- attitudes towards human rights;
- attitudes in relation to society, democracy, institutions, societal trends and what the future might hold;
- the current circumstances of Australians and their outlook on life and personal aspirations for the future;
- the values that are important to Australians in 2022.

Some of the findings of the survey revealed that:

- Four out of five Australians (79%) were worried about COVID-19's impact, and 70 per cent had been personally affected negatively by the disruptive changes to contain the virus.
- The survey showed Australians collectively have an overall flourishing score of 6.7 out of 10, according to the Harvard Flourishing Measure. Those who actively practise a religion had the highest scores (7.3) and the lowest scores were observed among doubters, agnostics and atheists (6.4).
- Respondents saw the values of caring and equality as the values that carried Australians through the pandemic. Values rated as extremely or very important included: Caring for family and friends (89%); Trying to be a good person (82%); Fairness and treating people equally (80%); and Social and environmental responsibility (62%).
- 70 per cent of those surveyed saw religion in Australia as being in decline, and 51 per cent believed that this decline was creating negative outcomes. However, the percentage of Australians who held religious beliefs (rather than called themselves "religious") was similar to that in 2018.
- The perceived decline in religion was seen by survey participants as being the result of a decline in religion's visibility and a decline in Australians' willingness to say that they follow a religion.
- Those surveyed indicated a high level of support, in principle, for the protection of basic human rights (86%). However, support for specific rights varied depended on a number of factors. Respondents were willing to balance rights against other benefits for society but expressed concerns based on the experience of the COVID-19 pandemic.

For more information on this project visit:

<https://www.acu.edu.au/about-acu/institutes-academies-and-centres/pm-glynn-institute/projects-and-programs/the-pm-glynn-survey-on-hope-trust-and-belonging>

If you would like to know more about how the NCPR can support your organisation, please contact us at ncpr@catholic.org.au

Staff News



Dr Stephen Reid at his graduation with his two supervisors
Left to Right: Rev Dr David Tyndall, Dr Stephen Reid, Rev Professor Philip Hughes

Congratulations to Dr Stephen Reid

On 13 May 2023, NCPR staff member Stephen Reid graduated with his Doctorate of Ministry from Alphacrucis University College. Stephen began working with the Centre in 2007, when it was formerly known as the Pastoral Projects Office.

The findings of Stephen's doctoral thesis, looking at Chaplaincy in Sport, were reported in the September 2022 Pastoral Research Online newsletter, and are the result of his studies on the topic since 2015. The NCPR staff wish him our most heartfelt congratulations on this wonderful achievement.

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