



Plenary Council 2020
Listen to what the Spirit is saying...

Final Report for Phase I: Listening and Dialogue

A Report to the Diocese of Cairns

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About this Report

The ACBC National Centre for Pastoral Research is pleased to provide you with this report on the Plenary Council project.

The findings in this report are a summary of submissions that were received from your diocese in Phase One of the Plenary Council process called 'Listening and Dialogue'. The National Centre for Pastoral Research was granted ethics approval for the data analysis of this stage in November 2018 through the Human Research Ethics Committee of the Christian Research Association.

The online process for submissions in Phase One opened on 20 May 2018 and ran until 6 March 2019. Due to the high response rate in the last two months, this deadline was extended to 13 March 2019.

The findings in this report include data from all submissions from your diocese that were received online, along with those received via email or in hard copy format, such as letters, books and submissions made through the 2018 Christmas card campaign.

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 examined in the report are age, sex, country of birth, location and religion. This analysis was done using Microsoft Excel and SPSS statistical software.

The report also includes a list of themes that were discussed by participants in their submissions related to the question: *What do you think God is asking of us in Australia at this time?* A complete list of themes that were discussed nationally can be found in the report *Listen To What The Spirit Is Saying: Final Report for the Plenary Council Phase I: Listening and Dialogue*. This analysis was done using NVivo software.

Along with the list of themes, we have also included in this report the submissions of participants who consented to have their submission made public as well as released to their diocese. These submissions (made in response to Question 1: *What do you think God is asking of us in Australia at this time?*) are published in full but have been de-identified in keeping with ethical protocols. Several participants made their submission through uploaded documents, while others uploaded additional material as part of their submission. These documents have been provided to the bishop of your diocese in electronic format.

The latter sections of this report contain a sample list of questions received from your diocese in response to Question 2: *What questions about the future of the Church in Australia would you like the Plenary Council to consider?* Along with this, a number of stories of faith or Church are shared, which were submitted by participants 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?*

We hope you find this report insightful and helpful as we continue our work on the project.

Trudy Dantis

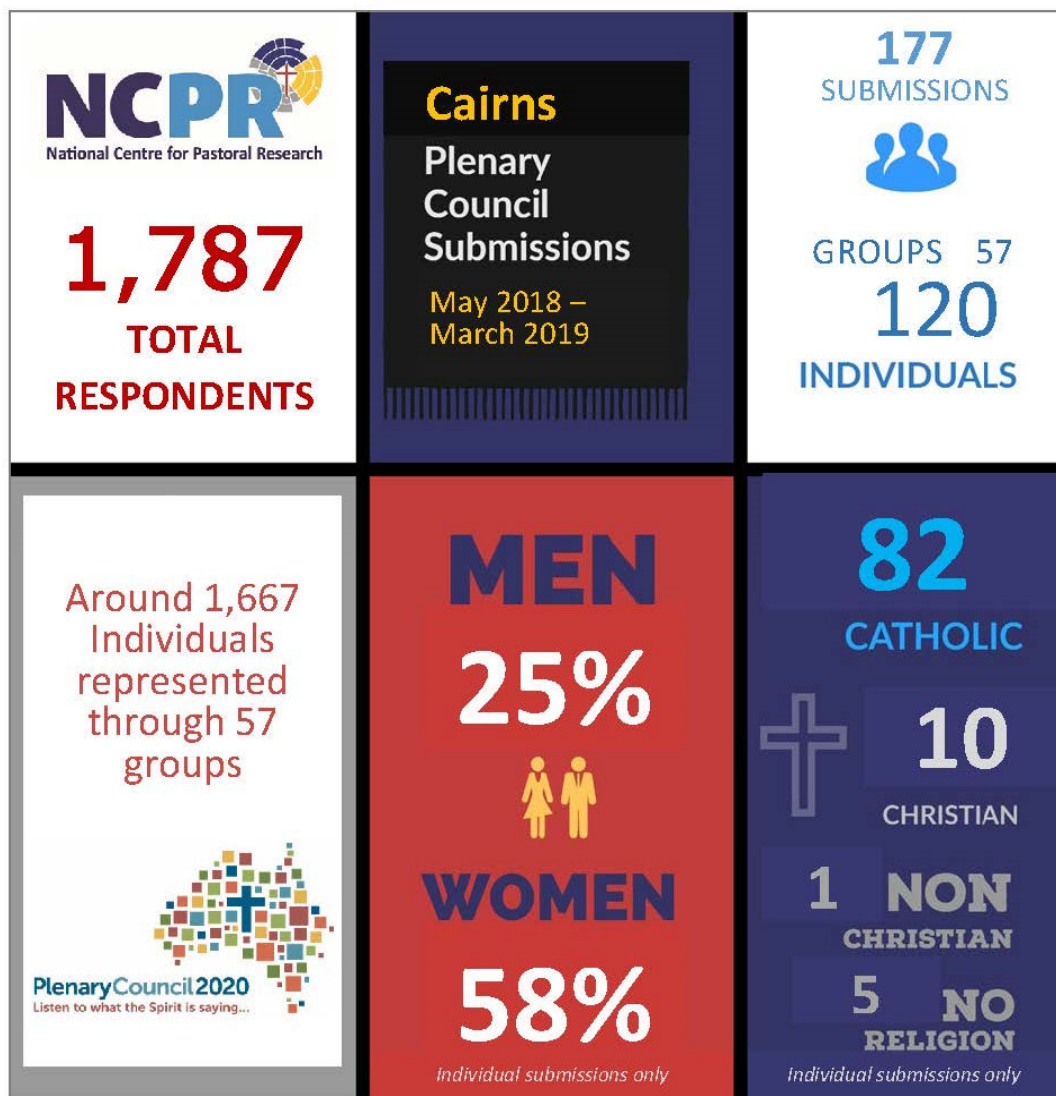
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Diocesan Submissions Summary Snapshot: May 2018—March 2019



Number of Submissions Received - all Australia

Across Australia, we received a total of 17,457 completed submissions from May 2018 until 13 March 2019. Of these, 9,690 respondents had participated in a Listening and Dialogue encounter. Another 2,113 were unsure if they had, so we presume they had not. Less than 26 per cent of the total number of respondents (4,402) indicated that they had not participated in a Listening and Dialogue Encounter.

Of the 17,457 submissions, 4,699 were from groups or organisations and 12,758 submissions were from individuals. There were over 209,170 people represented through the 4,699 groups, bringing the total number of participants in the “Listening and Dialogue” process to over 222,000.

Number of Submissions Received - Cairns

The Plenary Council questionnaire did not ask respondents for the diocese in which they were located. However, it asked participants to type in their postcode. These postcodes were used as a basis for this analysis.

From the Diocese of Cairns, we received a total of 177 completed responses from May 2018 until 13 March 2019. Of these, 108 respondents had participated in a Listening and Dialogue Encounter, while another 22 were unsure if they had. About 40 respondents indicated that they had not participated in a Listening and Dialogue Encounter.

Of the 177 submissions, 57 submissions were from groups or organisations and 120 submissions were from individuals. There were 1,667 people represented through the 57 groups. It is important to note, however, that not all groups completed this question, so total group numbers may be under-represented.

Overall, the total number of respondents from your diocese was 1,787.

Table 1: Number of Submissions	
Total number of submissions received	177
<i>Participated in Listening & Dialogue Encounter?</i>	
Yes	108
No	40
Not sure	22
Not stated	7
Total	177
Submissions received from groups or organisations	57
Submissions received from individuals	120
Total	177

INDIVIDUAL SUBMISSIONS

At the close of the survey on 13 March 2019, a total of 120 individual submissions had been received from your diocese. Most of the individual submissions were made online. However, a number were also received through letters, emails and the Christmas card campaign.

Age of Respondents

Table 2 shows the ages of individual respondents from Cairns. Figure 1 is a graphical representation of the same table. About 58 per cent (69) were received from those aged 50 and over. The most number of submissions within this age range were received from the 50-54 years age group (15 responses).

At the close of submissions, there were only seven individual submissions received from those aged under 25.

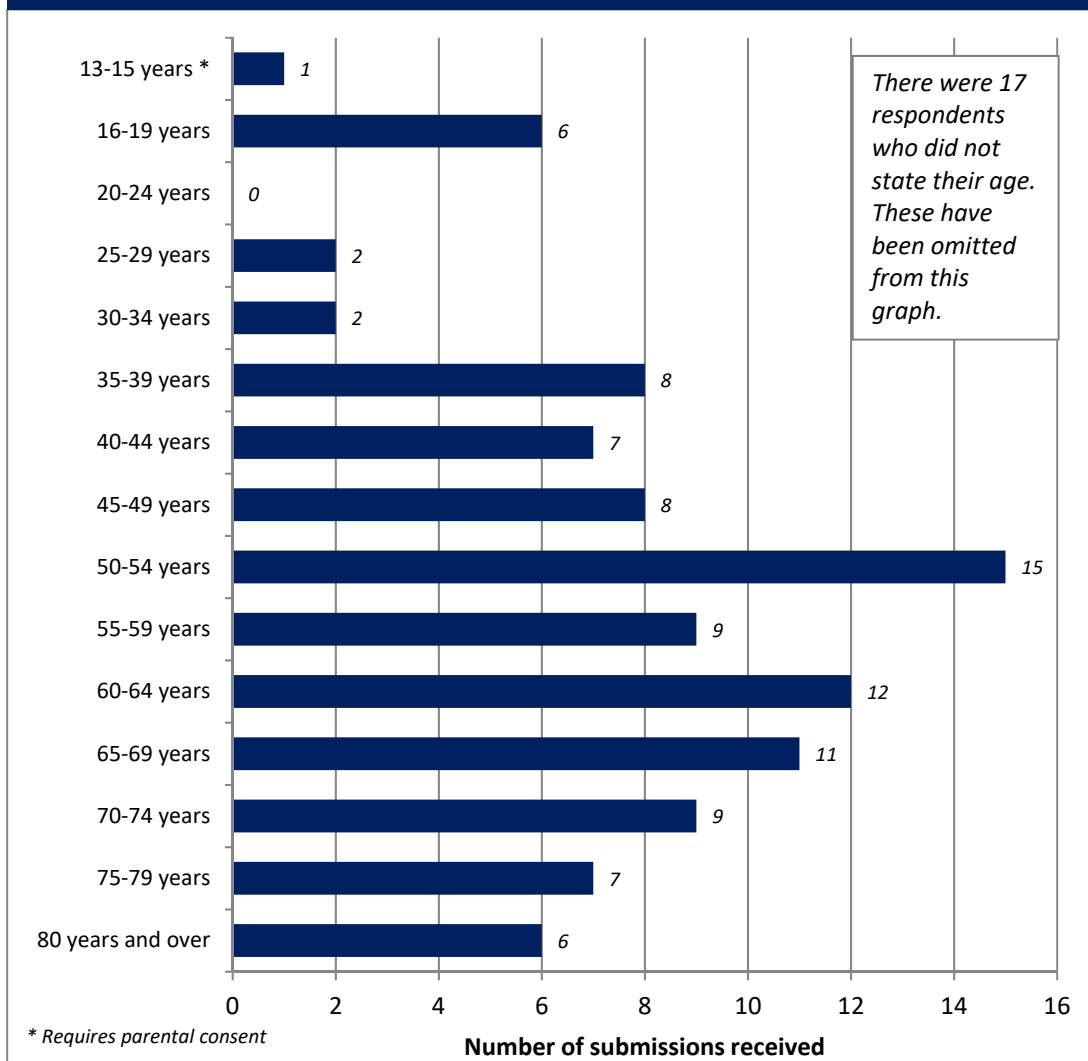
Participants aged 16-17 were encouraged to discuss the questionnaire with their parent or guardian. Many of these responses came from schools that sent in their responses through the online survey. As Table 2 shows, there were six individual submissions made from the 16-19 years age group in your diocese.

Participants aged 13-15 years were prompted to provide their parent or guardian's email address. An email was then automatically sent to seek consent for their child to participate in the study. There was one individual submission made from this age group in your diocese.

Table 2: Age groups (*individual responses only*)

13-15 years *	1
16-19 years	6
20-24 years	0
25-29 years	2
30-34 years	2
35-39 years	8
40-44 years	7
45-49 years	8
50-54 years	15
55-59 years	9
60-64 years	12
65-69 years	11
70-74 years	9
75-79 years	7
80 years and over	6
Not stated	17
Total	120

** Requires parental consent*

Fig. 1: Age groups (individual responses only)

Sex of Respondents

A little over half the number of all individual respondents from your diocese were female (58%), while a further 25 per cent were male. Table 3 shows that there were 30 men and 70 women who made submissions. One respondent preferred not to state their sex, while 19 respondents did not answer this question.

Table 3: Sex (individual responses only)

Female	70
Male	30
Prefer not to say	1
Not stated	19
Total	120

Countries of Birth

Table 4a shows the country of birth of individual respondents from your diocese. As expected, a large number of respondents (72%) were born in Australia. Just over 12 per cent came from other countries, while around 16 per cent did not state their birthplace. See *Appendix 1* for the full list of countries of birth. Table 4b provides a summary of the countries of birth by English-speaking and non-English-speaking countries*, while Tables 4c and 4d indicate the countries of birth of the respondent's mother and father respectively.

Table 4a: Countries of birth (individual responses only)		
	N	%
Australia	86	71.7
New Zealand	2	1.7
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	2	1.7
Other Countries	11	9.2
Not stated	19	15.8
Total	120	100.0

Table 4b: Country of birth - Summary (individual responses only)		
	N	%
Australia	86	71.7
Other English-speaking country	5	4.2
Non-English-speaking country	10	8.3
Not stated	19	15.8
Total	120	100.0

Table 4c: Mother's country of birth (individual responses only)		
	N	%
Australia	65	54.2
Other English speaking country	7	5.8
Non-English speaking country	22	18.3
Not stated	26	21.7
Total	120	100.0

Table 4d: Father's country of birth (individual responses only)		
	N	%
Australia	62	51.7
Other English-speaking country	11	9.2
Non-English-speaking country	20	16.7
Not stated	27	22.5
Total	120	100.0

* Other than Australia, English-speaking countries refer to New Zealand, United Kingdom, Ireland, United States, Canada and South Africa. All other countries are designated as non-English-speaking countries.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

Table 5 shows the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders from your diocese who made submissions. At the close of submissions there was one individual who identified themselves in this way, representing just under one per cent of all individual respondents.

Table 5: Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander (individual responses only)	
Yes	1
No	95
Not stated	24
Total	120

Religion of Respondents

The religion question was answered by individual respondents only. Of the total 120 individual submissions that were received from your diocese, 82 respondents (68%) were Catholic. Ten respondents were from other Christian denominations while there was one from a non-Christian religion. A further 22 respondents did not state their religion and five respondents chose the 'no religion' response.

Table 6: Religion (individual responses only)	Person	Percent
Catholic	82	68.3
Other Christian:		
Anglican	3	2.5
Baptist	1	0.8
Churches of Christ	1	0.8
Pentecostal	1	0.8
Uniting Church	2	1.7
Other Christian	2	1.7
Non Christian:		
Hinduism	1	0.8
Other religion	0	0.0
No religion	5	4.2
Not stated	22	18.3
Total	120	100

For those who indicated that they were Catholic, a further question asked them to describe their participation in church activities. Their responses are shown in Table 7. A total of 57 respondents indicated that they went to Mass regularly and were involved in other church activities. There were 13 respondents who said they went to Mass and church activities sometimes, while six respondents considered themselves Catholic but were not involved or described their participation in other terms. A further six respondents described themselves in another way or did not answer the question.

Table 7: Religious description (for those who answered 'Catholic' to previous question)	Female	Male	Not stated	Total
I am Catholic and regularly attend Mass and other church activities	31	26	0	57
I am Catholic and go to Mass and church activities sometimes	13	0	0	13
I am Catholic, but I don't practise or get involved in anything	1	0	0	1
I consider myself Catholic but I am not sure what to think about the Catholic faith	5	0	0	5
Other	5	0	0	5
Not stated	1	0	0	1
Total	56	26	0	82

GROUP SUBMISSIONS

At the close of the survey on 13 March, there were a total of 57 group submissions made from your diocese. Around 1,667 individuals were represented through these groups. However, four groups did not report their number of participating members, indicating that the total number of people represented through the group submissions may be higher.

While 44 group submissions provided a group name, 13 did not do so. Table 8 shows a list of the Top 20 group submissions from the diocese with the number of members in each group. A complete list of groups is provided as *Appendix 2*. Groups that did not provide a name were omitted from this table. The number of participating members was provided by the person submitting the group response. These figures could not be checked for accuracy.

Prominent among the largest groups was North Queensland Catholic Clergy Abuse Reference Group with around 790 members. There were also a number of other parish and school groups such as the Catholic Diocese of Cairns - Christmas Postcard Campaign with 350 participants and Staff of St Stephen's Catholic College with 88 members. There were nine other groups with 11 members or more.

Table 8 : Group submissions from the diocese	
Name of group	Group size
North Queensland Catholic Clergy Abuse Reference Group	790
Catholic Diocese of Cairns - Christmas Postcard Campaign	350
Staff of St Stephen's Catholic College	88
Cairns Catholic Education – Education Leaders	60
St Michael's School	50
St Joseph's School Parramatta Park	33
Southern Deanery, Cairns Diocese	27
Catholics in Action (CIA), Mt Isa	18
St. Clare's Parish Tully Wld	15
St Michael's School	14
St. Vicent de Paul Society	11
Mother of Good Counsel Parish Pastoral Council	11
Mother of Good Counsel Parish	8
Good Shepherd Catholic College	8
Synod Permanent Committee	7
Jimenez/Rumble Family	7
some Parishioners of Northern Beaches Parish Cairns	7
Cairns Northern Deanery Plenary Workshop	7
Marist Association	7
St Michael's Parish Group	7

Age and Sex of Group Members

On 5 November 2018, a question was added to the survey asking group respondents to estimate the ages and sex of members represented in their group. Not all groups answered this question. Therefore, the results presented here reflect only the submissions of those groups which provided information to this question between 5 November 2018 and 13 March 2019. Table 9 shows the ages of group members for those submissions.

The 30-49 years age group was the largest group represented with 215 members. This was followed by the group aged 50-69 with 111 members. There was no age provided for around 335 group members.

Table 9: Estimates of ages of people in group submissions	
<i>(group responses - for submissions received after 04 November 2018 only)</i>	
Under 20 years	23
20 - 29 years	51
30 - 49 years	215
50 - 69 years	111
70 and over	28
Unknown	335
Total	763

Totals in tables 9 & 10 will not always agree due to submission errors.

Of the total 1,667 group members whose sex was reported, 64 per cent (487) were female and 36 per cent (276) were male.

Table 10: Estimates of sex of people in group submissions	
<i>(group responses - for submissions received after 04 November 2018 only)</i>	
Female	487
Male	276
Total	763

Totals in tables 9 & 10 will not always agree due to submission errors.



RESPONSES TO QUESTION 1

*What do you think God is
asking of us
in Australia at this time?*

THEMES DISCUSSED IN RESPONSE TO QUESTION 1

A number of themes emerged nationally in Phase One of the Plenary Council project. These are described in the national report titled, *Listen to What the Spirit is Saying: Final Report for the Plenary Council Phase I: Listening and Dialogue* published in July 2019.

A wide range of themes were discussed in the submissions from groups and individuals in your dioceses. The most prominent ones are listed below. For a detailed analysis of each of these themes please refer to the **national report**. We have provided references to the report by way of chapter and page numbers for this purpose.

The top four topics discussed by participants from your diocese were:

- Social Justice and the Environment
- Love God, Love neighbour
- Sacraments
- Leadership and Church governance

Within each of these four areas, the most widely discussed themes were as follows:

- Social Justice and the Environment (Chapter 9)
 - *Greater Inclusion of all* (p. 108)
 - *Fighting for human rights issues* (p. 110)
 - *Care for the environment* (p. 112)
 - *Care for the family* (p. 115)
 - *Reducing margins between rich and poor* (p. 112)
- Love God, Love neighbour (Chapter 4)
 - *Greater focus on Jesus Christ* (p. 30)
 - *Greater trust, faith and hope in God* (p. 29)
 - *Care for neighbour* (p. 36)
 - *Remaining faithful to Church teaching* (p. 32)
 - *Greater focus on the Word of God* (p. 31)
- Sacraments (Chapter 6)
 - *Holy Orders - Ordination of women* (p. 69)
 - *Holy Orders - Ending celibacy/ allowing priests to marry* (p. 66)
 - *Greater emphasis on prayer and sacraments* (p. 64)
- Leadership and Church governance (Chapter 7)
 - *Greater role for women* (p. 83)
 - *New leadership and governance model*
 - *Greater leadership from bishops* (p. 87)
 - *Ending clericalism* (p. 80)
 - *Greater involvement of the laity* (p. 84)
 - *Greater leadership from priests* (p. 88)
 - *Greater role for women* (p. 83)
 - *Emphasis on: Women deacons* (p. 84)

Other main themes that emerged from the responses from your diocese included:

- *Outreach to youth (p. 124)*
- *More transparency and accountability regarding clergy sexual abuse (p. 102)*
- *Sharing the faith with others (p. 128)*
- *Modernising Church teachings (p. 169)*
- *Call to repentance for clergy sexual abuse (p. 100)*
- *Radical change, a new order, inverted pyramid (p. 172)*
- *Stronger parish communities (p. 156)*
- *Mass to be appealing to youth and children (p. 54)*
- *Listen to one another more (p. 136)*

SUBMISSIONS MADE IN RESPONSE TO QUESTION 1

The submissions in this section were made in response to the first question: *What do you think God is asking of us in Australia at this time?*

In keeping with ethics guidelines of the online survey, the privacy of each participant was protected under the Privacy Act 1988. Due to the personal and detailed nature of the submissions, consent was sought to conduct any follow-up consultation and for publishing of the findings.

Care was taken, therefore, to obtain informed consent from each participant or group/organisation in three distinct areas. Firstly, whether they wished to have a member of the Plenary Council team contact them about their submission. Secondly, consent was obtained for the publishing of their de-identified submission online, via the Plenary Council website or through social media. De-identification is the process used to prevent a person's identity from being revealed. In this survey, this meant that all names, locations and other identifying information were removed prior to the response being used. Finally, consent was also sought for sharing their de-identified submission with their diocese.

In keeping with these guidelines therefore, the submissions that follow are only from those individuals or groups who consented to having their submission being made public and being shared with their diocese. About 49 per cent of all responses did not have consent for one or both of these criteria and therefore, their submissions have not been included here.

1. That the power and control hierarchy for the Church as institution be decoupled from the sacramental powers of the priesthood. The power and control hierarchy of the Church as institution has been publicly discredited, not only by the Royal Commission but also in other places across the world, as corrupt and self-serving rather than furthering the mission to which Christ has entrusted His Church, a mission which is first and foremost spiritual and pastoral, and not concerned at all with administration and protection of the material goods of the Church. Presently, the whole power structure of the Church has been overlaid on the key sacramental powers of the priesthood, namely to celebrate the Eucharist and to forgive sins. In my view this arrangement hasn't been properly serving the mission of the Church for a long time and should not be allowed to continue.
2. That the Church needs to recognise that around 90% of baptised Catholics are not engaged in the everyday life of the Church and reach out to these people in an intentional and well thought out way. We need to recognise that these Catholics each have a spirituality. At the moment, however, because of the priestly cult so powerful and present in our Church, it seems that the only thing that matters is whether people attend Mass on Sundays and we also stress about liturgical minutiae which in the end make very little difference. There is a very rich treasure of Catholic spiritualities, some centuries old, which are left 'hidden in the field' and are never preached or offered. These have the capacity to engage different types of personalities and to nurture faith formation every day.
3. That the priesthood should be opened up to married men ('viri probati') and at least the diaconate should be opened up to women.

4. That the ACBC collectively do an act of public penance for the sins committed by their brother bishops and by priests over the past decades in relation to child abuse and associated cover ups. Something in Martin Place perhaps, a week of genuine prayer and fasting on the street? This would show true leadership and repentance and possibly allow a level of healing to occur... It may also spark similar acts of penitence and repentance elsewhere.

5. That the Church intentionally moves from maintenance mode (with more than an air of desperation in some cases: (e.g. reliance on foreign priests who are barely understandable or suitable, merging of parishes etc.) to a prayerfully discerned 'mission mode' which should always be our primary focus.

Our Lady has been appearing since 1830 telling us EXACTLY what God wants from us. Many of these apparitions are formally approved by the Church. Yet the Magisterium has stubbornly refused to heed what Our Lady has been telling us. Now we are in a mess. That is what happens when you ignore the Mother of God! It's not rocket science. We simply lack the courage to do what she has asked us to do numerous times over.

I believe that God is asking us to provide better formation for ordained ministers to ensure that they can work collaboratively with lay people.

A dominant depressant for growth in our Church is clericalism. Two aspects of clericalism in the Church are: Father knows all and father knows best. Parishioners think that everything is Father's responsibility. Church systems must change if the gospel message is to be lived in our communities. Systems must be developed so the message of Christ and the missionary thrust reigns. We need to "get out of the boat." If we didn't have a top down autocracy and a quarter of the bishops and priests were women would we be suffering the shame of the findings of the Royal Commission that is ripping our Church to pieces? There is an urgent need to change the governance of our Church with bishops and priests at the top of the pyramid to governance where the laity are also present at the top. In other words, invert the governance pyramid. It is only by changing Church authority structures can authentic listening take place. An authentic listening where everyone learns and participates.

* Come back to the basic teachings of the Catholic Faith and utilise these principles to address the modern life issues of today.

* Put the Tabernacle back in its rightful position.

* Let the house of God be His domain and not be used for moneymaking ventures.

* Look at the poor state of vocations especially to the PRIESTHOOD and religious.

* Respecting the Sacrament of Marriage and RESPECT FOR LIFE.

* Teach the true Catholic Faith to the young generation which is our future.

I think God is asking me to connect with the words of Jesus to the woman at the well. "A time is coming when worshippers of the Father will worship neither on this mountain nor in the temple, but true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth." While not wanting to throw the baby out with the bathwater, I think the Catholic Church must shut down completely, particularly in name, and allow the flowering of something new and fresh and expansive. I believe

the time has come for the word "Catholic" to be allowed its true meaning of "all things to all" and be ridded of the rigid, tightness that the Roman Catholic Church has caused the meaning of the word to become.

I think God is asking the Church to stop "teaching" "right from wrong" and drop the word "sin" in the way it has always been understood by the Church as it has been taught by the CHURCH. The gospel tells us very clearly what sin is, and if we are encouraged by the CHURCH to study the gospels we will come to our own conclusions which might in turn give us some idea of forgiveness and reconciliation. I think that the Sacrament of Reconciliation in its formality should be abandoned. One hopes for forgiveness after missing the mark by gospel standards and might proceed to do something about it, not saving it up to tell a priest in Confession as the only way God will hear and forgive. That would also help outsiders, (and insiders) who seem to believe that crime is being covered up by anyone they see going to Confession...

I would like to comment how in my life-time of nearly 100 years the Church has taught mainly that God is dangerous and if you want to avoid hell for all eternity you have to always be looking sharply to make sure you are not in an occasion of sin! Also, for those in real danger of not being saved by not believing that here is a God, exercises in activities like Apologia debates have gone on in which QED like Mathematics it could be proved that God exists. Let the New Church, the "Elouisia" teach that God is love. That is what St John was inspired to tell us. If God is to be a teaching point, let us make sure, if we want proof to measure by love not fear. Fear of God is really love of ourselves. Love of God is our giving away of ourselves to others. For the early Christians such activity brought the response, "See how these Christians love one another." The Image of the Invisible God told us that he had come to call sinners, not the virtuous. The Church has not exactly done that. It has feted the virtuous and expelled the sinners—banished to hell, so to speak and I emphasise in particular the priests who have brought the current scandal to the church. Do we want to love them back or leave them out in exterior darkness? Love you from [-].

I think God is saying to the Church in Australia that it has completely forgotten the "Sign of the invisible God who was the Word made flesh in Jesus." Jesus was all about compassion, love and mercy, and seeking out sinners to heal and welcome them in. The Church of Australia is cold and heartless and only seeks the virtuous and expels any others. How welcome at our Masses are priests who have served prison sentences for child abuse. They are denied forgiveness and disallowed to repent and forge a new life, BY EVERY BISHOP I KNOW! So when we un-hook ourselves from the various Governments, we might be able to look once more at the gospel. It is not failed priests that upset me as much as mean bishops. I have no bishop in my life that is a model man for me. I only ever hear them in private being mean and unforgiving or in public saying the opposite to what they say in private ... So I have a lot of forgiving to do ... My idea is not to condemn them but to love them into some kind of visible kindly beings. They are becoming to look like the God who has scared millions into submission.

I think that God is saying, "Review priesthood". I see 'priest' to mean something much wider than the narrowness it seems to have been reduced to. It seems only relevant to where Catholics are so

they can have Mass and receive Holy Communion! From my understanding this wasn't the case in the beginnings of the Church. I think both laity and the priests have become obsessed about priests. I am sure that there are quite enough of them, and I ask them what they think their calling actually is? If the Hebrew Scripture idea is quoted at me, it will bring the response of "I rest my case your Honour". Let us bring 'priest' into the context of the age we live in and see what comes up. Love you from [-].

I think God is asking us to give up the name THE CATHOLIC CHURCH FOR A Catholic Church. The word "Catholic" has been rather destroyed, and the Church depicted as anything but Catholic. Just a Club surrounding itself within a tight set of regulations and exclusive teachings. Welcoming has changed to restricting, and compassion and forgiveness replaced by cleansing and condemnation. Fear is the driving motivation behind the "clean up" regarding the child abuse scandal. Our Church is not very forgiving.

I have just been watching on YouTube and listening to Paul Gurr singing the songs he has composed and wondering what he would have to give up if he became a bishop of a diocese. "Love is His word".

To challenge a dominant culture of corporate greed that places profit before people. To be relevant to the needs of young people struggling to find an authentic identity in a secular, technology driven society that promotes a false image of what it means to be human, resulting in declining national levels of mental health, declining resilience, superficial relationships and disconnection resulting in spiritual malaise.

God is asking us to be relevant in the 21st Century. Through our discussion we came up with following examples: 1. Leaders and role models (e.g. athletes) that acknowledge their faith in public thereby showing that faith is not confined to sitting in a church on Sunday. 2. Service opportunities that allow people (especially our youth) to serve people less fortunate and by doing so, get to experience their life like Jesus.

God is asking us to Love and Serve. For all people, not just the ordained. To be a prophetic Church that goes out to people with inspiring words and actions.

God is asking us to re-connect with each other and with the Church.

To enable a Church that is synodal with all being able to participate and where bishops are not the sole representatives and speakers on behalf of the Church.

To find our effective place in our pluralistic, secular society and thereby become relevant leaders and positive contributors in our Australian context. This needs to happen through adult education to promote understanding by employing the best means methods of communication via social media and mass media to reach all areas of society.

To rediscover our role as a missionary Church, with each baptised person rediscovering what it means to be baptised and thereby practising the faith through prayer, the Mass and the Sacraments. This will result in communicating the Gospel by our way of life through word and example to those with whom we connect with in our ordinary daily lives, and bring them to know,

love and serve God.
That care to be taken with architecture and the building of our Church places of worship so that their construction, furnishings, statues and images promote liturgy, community, gospel values, and our Church identity.
To develop a personal prayer life to foster our relationship with God, and thereby to allow God to work through us effectively as genuine instruments in bringing his love and the gospel to those we encounter on a day-to-day basis.
To be more accepting of diversity in particular ethnic minorities, refugees, people with disabilities and mental illness.
Dignity for ALL human persons.
To be stewards of our unique flora and fauna.
To care for our unique environment with all of the flora and fauna largely only found in Australia. If we do not become stewards of the earth, respecting nature, we will inevitably struggle to exist.
Trust and honesty are human values that are becoming scarce in our world. Some people have been untrusting of teachers, priests etc. in the past and now we need to reassess our values and work on getting more trust back.
We believe that God would like Australians to improve the well-being and mental health of all Australians and especially that of youth. Some major issues of concern are drugs, suicides, disconnection from family and society, loss of cultural identity, social media influence and gender stereotypes.
That the Church takes a leading role in the treatment and welfare of refugees.
Global economic equality, with a focus overcoming poverty. Constant culture of consumerism—sweatshops and the people who work in them. The negative effects on economy, environment and psychology from consumer culture.
To treat others with compassion, equality and be open to change. This involves integrating the Catholic Social Teachings into our lives and building community. Without community, there is no connection.
To find a way to engage young people as equals in one Church, giving them the opportunity to have a larger voice, ownership of the Church and participation.
Embrace all without discrimination. Love one another and deliver God's message.
God is asking us for a purpose. Without purpose, we have no clear pathway and are unable to reflect on our direction in life.
To accept all—Love one another.
To ask the right questions. If you do not ask the right questions, you will not get the right answers!

Power sharing is what we are being called to do. The patriarchal model is not useful in modern Australia where we have an egalitarian society that is full to the brim with highly educated people who know their own mind, and will not tolerate ignorant, power hungry, people of any stripe running the show.

We need to open the treasures of our Catholic tradition to the faith community. The Divine Office and chant are 2 areas which I would like provided to more than the vowed and ordained. This treasure trove should be broken open for the benefit of all.

The current model of leadership and power sharing of ordained ministers within the Catholic faith community is enshrined in Canon Law. Any shift in power sharing will necessarily need a rewrite of Canon Law before power sharing can happen in a legitimate way.

The safeguarding of children is very important. Until the Catholic Church addresses the reasons for the abuse, it cannot be taken seriously. No amount of highly paid executives or facilitators, government lobbying, political appointments, advertising or media and communication officers will be able to change the attitudes of the Australian population. Clerical sexual abuse is a symptom of the dysfunctional Church institution. Bishops worldwide have established a place where they are unaccountable to the population or laity. For example, in the Dallas Charter, the Bishops wrote themselves out of being accountable for clerical sex abuse and in Australia they have refused to meet with survivors of clerical abuse (even at the request of Pope Francis prior to the February 2019 sex abuse summit). As Marie Collins says the 'toxic culture of clericalism is "embedded in its fabric", and "those in leadership often chosen because of their titles or contacts rather than their skills or expertise."' Unpaid laity, many more educated than the Church leaders (or their specially appointed compliant highly paid executives or former politicians), are exhausted as they speak out strongly for change. The sham process of inequity and 'selected voters' on the Plenary Council has made it a joke. The significant power of the Church as Australia's largest employer, significant landholder and recipient of billions in significant Federal and State Government funding as it hides under the Australian Not for Profit And Religious Charities Act 2012 giving it secrecy provisions. Not any Church or religious institution with membership convicted of clerical abuse have been penalised by ACNC Commissioner Grey. Unlike a small Alice Springs Aboriginal not for profit school which was publically shamed for its failure in accounting. Australians see the injustice and inequity as the Church uses former politicians to lobby for a larger share of the taxpayer funding as it pays no tax. The inertia of the Church to implement the recommendations of the Royal Commission is astounding. The failure of the Bishops to demand uniform mandatory reporting. The failure to quickly enact change to protect children and vulnerable adults is horrific. In contrast, each Bishop promotes his lavish lifestyles on twitter or in the Church controlled internal media as they jet off to Rome, Panama, cricket and so forth. Not an ounce of concern for the victims of clerical abuse. My children state if the Church acted to help the poor and homeless they would consider returning. They watch the statement of Archbishop [-] in Rome crying tears and saying 'sorry to victims on the Vatican stage'. When the Archbishop returns to Australia ... nothing. No social housing for the victims of clerical abuse. No care. No

engagement! Nothing. We watch Archbishop [-] fail to meet with survivors of clerical abuse prior to jetting off to Rome in Feb.
God is asking us to be at one with others in our communities, love one another reach out and share our resources. God is asking us to make the most of our world in a sustainable way, looking to the future and choosing a preferred future over one that is negative for all. One that is full of life, and diversity of life. God asks us to be in kinship with nature and each other particularly our Indigenous brothers and sisters. God asks us to continue to search and hope for and work towards a positive alternative to the selfish consumeristic culture which has become the norm. God asks us to open our borders to welcome the stranger. Above all God invites us into a life of love, one that we are asked to share with others. This is a life of hope and equity for all, with breaking down of stereotypes and negative biases. God asks each of us to pledge our lives for love, being positive role models and sharing our faith and deep understandings. God asks us to see in each other 'God' and to learn from each other, promoting listening and peace, in dialogue and growth. God especially asks us to be open to all.
1/ To re-contextualise: Making the message of the Gospels relevant to all ages in contemporary society and giving realistic action. 2/ To rethink certain traditional practices such as Confession—Let's enable third rite 3/ Let's offer more accessibility to the scriptures broken open in the Three Worlds of the Text so that the truth of the Gospel can be more fully understood and actioned today, e.g. using social media, publications etc.
I think God is asking us to use our free will for the betterment of ourselves and for others.
We need to rejuvenate and re-energise the Church in a way that inspires and motivates people—let go of rigid doctrines that alienate/scare people—less focus on sin and more on love. To be inclusive of all—It's all about love—gay marriage, divorced and remarried Catholics—to defer judgement on the basis of worthiness to receive God's sacraments according to gender and marital status.
I think God is asking us in Australia to actively work towards ensuring that we have a government and a community which values all human dignity and the right to a decent quality of life. Refugee Policies: I am particularly appalled by the way Australia as a nation is treating refugees who ask for our help. Instead of welcoming them with care and compassion, we imprison them offshore without hope for years at a time. Australia is a wealthy country in comparison to many others, yet we subject often already traumatised people to further trauma, so that they become seriously mentally and physically ill instead of becoming productive members of our communities. Housing Affordability: Surely God wants us to ensure that people have shelter. However, many people are struggling financially and or homeless, including many women and children as they are unable to afford private rental costs. The division between the have and the have nots is now greater than in the past. Many of our social problems could be addressed if immensely wealthy individuals and corporations paid their fair share of tax. Profit seems to be a goal to aspire to at all costs rather than ensuring that we have a spiritually, socially, emotionally, physically healthy nation of people. Australia is now a nation, which appears to have hardened its heart.
How are we caring for His people? How are we being like Jesus? How are we caring for His creation? We are living such complex lives, how are we slowing down and recognising what is

important? Selfish nature and different family values. How are we showing love in your family and community?

To modernise the Church. To be accepting of ALL people. To be engaging (humorous, humility, humanity and empathy of all people. To have more links between what happens in schools and in the Church to encourage participation in church, use songs learnt at school that students are familiar with, have uplifting services (celebrations) that are fun and inspiring. Encourage school students to participate in services, modernise the music, teens and young adults from the parish involved with the message being delivered in a fun and interactive way.

To engage with people where they are.

I believe God is asking us to really think about relationships and looking after creation. With relationships, the Bible tells the message we are all made in the image of God. We should move towards having female priests and refreshing the rules of priesthood (i.e. Allowing priests to marry). If the Church was more open to these things, which are elements of real everyday life, I think attendance to church would increase. I'm not Catholic but work as a teacher in a Catholic primary and have done for more than 10 years. Many families do not attend church, yet send their children to Catholic schools. This should tell you something...people believe in their faith values but aren't drawn to be active in their church and local parish. If priesthood involved marriage and including females, I think it would immediately send a message of inclusivity and loving others. My understanding is this is what Jesus taught people to do in the world! I also strongly believe Australia needs to focus on looking after God's creation so much more. For example, why are we not placing greater focus on recycling in the community? How can we care for God's creations if the infrastructure in our country does not support effective recycling systems at home i.e. more than 2 bins and local facilities to take rubbish to recycle conveniently...not a local dump. Many countries overseas such as Ireland and Denmark have at least 4 bins per household, and have done for more than 10 years. Very soon Australia will be sitting upon huge landfills. I'm sure God doesn't like seeing this waste and destruction of creation. Come on Australia and the Catholic Church ... let's do this together!

For his children to stand up to the truth with courage, even if we become the minority. For us to call what is right, "right" and not just accept change because the majority of the world asks for it.

Submission to the Plenary Council by [-]. It is over a hundred years since Our Lady first appeared to three children at Fatima. In subsequent appearances she taught them to pray the rosary and she told them who she was and what she wanted. They asked for a sign so that people would believe them. The sign was provided and called "the miracle of the sun", witnessed by 70,000 people on a rainy day. Although the two younger children died at an early age, Our Lady further appeared to Sr. Lucy, who wrote down what she had been told. On one occasion Sr. Lucy said that Mary had told her that the devil was in the mood for engaging in a decisive battle against the Virgin Mary. From now on; we must choose sides; either we are for God or for the devil. There is no other possibility. Since that time it is apparent that Satan has had several victories; to name a few, the flood of abortions, increasing euthanasia, the world-wide abuse of children by some of the clergy, same-sex marriage etc. It would seem that all of Mary's requests have not been met and that Satan has invaded the Vatican as prophesied by Pope Paul I. I hope and pray that an

examination of all of Our Lady's requests is made and complied with by the Church. In the book "The Devil's Final Battle", published in 2002, Fr. Paul Kramer describes what has happened in the last hundred years. Sr. Lucy died in 2005. There is no evidence that the situation has improved. Rather, it has worsened. I pray that all of the members of the Church will offer rosaries to Our Lady and begin a worldwide Rosary Crusade to fulfil Our Lady's wishes.

Be kind, be thoughtful, listening to each other is listening and hearing me.

God is asking for a Church that is more in line with modern Australian thinking such as a Church that is accepting of all. The Church needs to be inclusive of all and not be so hung up on sexuality. Jesus did not get hung up on sexuality, he was inclusive of all—single, married, male, female, those who were shunned or different and those not accepted. Unsure why we can't have a Church that accepts married clergy, female priests and people who are gay. Religion is about worship of God and caring for others. Unsure why the Church has to get so hung up on excluding people because of their sexuality whether it be sexual preferences (gay) or be their sex (females not being priests) or their lifestyle (not allowing priests to marry). Jesus' mission was about loving God and loving others not about being hung-up on who could become priests. In the age of Jesus women were treated far differently than they are today so we can't compare. The argument that Jesus was an unmarried male so priests should be like that is utter rubbish.

That the Church creates a joyful, inclusive and welcoming environment including in the celebration of the Mass that would attract the youth and draw back those that have drifted away.

I think we need to live out the Gospel message. Jesus was an inclusive and loving figure. As a teacher, I see that the Catholic perspective on societal issues such as gender identity and sexuality can be polarising for many of our young people. I believe that the gospel message was to include, not discriminate. This is also evident in the words that Pope Francis often uses to reach out to today's society. It is time, once again, to open the windows of the Church and let some fresh air in. Our society is changing and some of the ideals of the Church are alienating members of society and are not reflective of the message that Jesus was trying to share through the Gospels. Love one another as I have loved you—this should be the foundation of how we move forward as a Church. This is the true message of the gospel.

God is asking ask to live and communicate the love and values of Christ in the world around us with joy and respecting everyone including whom those people that think and act different than us.

They are asking to work as one.

Over a number of years parishes and clergy have struggled to remain relevant in a rapidly changing context. Our society has become increasingly secular and pluralist with this becoming our new reality. Many parishes are bereft of young people and families and are struggling to operate with an increasingly aging congregation unable to give back as they did in the past. This is in stark contrast to strong enrolment in Catholic schools although this has dipped (nationally) in the last two years—have we peaked? Many ecumenical and Pentecostal Christian churches appear to have strong numbers. Our struggle with our clergy who are capable of spreading the Good News of the Gospel is getting worse. Our solution in recent years is to look overseas, but

many of these priests struggle to cope with our context. A different approach is needed. Our society has lost faith with our Church—A result of the sexual and physical abuse that has occurred over many years. While this has been perpetrated by a minority, the handling of this has been nothing short of incompetent and negligent and as a result has allowed events that should never happen to appear as though they are part of a systemic culture. The cry is for the Gospel, the answers are there just as they were 2000 years ago. They are still relevant to us today, challenging us, making us feel uncomfortable with the status quo, bringing us closer to God as a faith community united on our individual journeys of faith.

God is asking us to help others, listen to others, be there for others just like his son Jesus did. Jesus was a great example of how we should behave, communicate and interact. Model and be examples and spread his word to our young generation who will need God more than ever now with the increasing anxiety in our children and increasing stress in our society.

God is asking us to love everyone, care for everyone and believe in everyone's potential good. God sees no 'gender' or race—he loves all people (yes even those who choose the homosexual lifestyle!). He loves his children and wants us to be happy and loving and kind. Especially kind to those who are different to us or going through tough times. God is asking us to connect with a neighbour who needs help—he is throwing weather challenges our way to help us appreciate the basic things and love our neighbours (no matter what faith they are).

To be considerate of others—race, religion, beliefs etc. and to remember why we are here—to be stewards of his creation.

God is asking us to:

- Show more compassion, tolerance and acceptance towards those on the margins, such as refugees, the homeless, migrants, homosexuals
- Be custodians of our natural environment
- Be real examples of Jesus by living in a way that is respectful of all
- Trust that young people have a social conscience and a sense of justice that is more developed than previous generations because they know so much more about social justice issues and are connected
- Tighten accountability with regards to misuse of power and authority
- Share our gifts, wealth and blessings
- Be more actively involved in global aid
- Consider how we can help meet the needs of Australians in crisis, such as the mentally ill, homeless, elderly, disabled, those affected by drought
- Hold onto our faith in changing and challenging times
- Honour traditions whilst recognizing and reflecting societal change in order to allow the Christian faith to grow
- Be actively involved in the Church

- Give women formal leadership roles in the Church, whether that be as deacons or priests
- Allow priests to marry
- Make Mass accessible to all
- Bring the youth into the Church
- Open our hearts to others and God
- Take action to stop the growing inequality between the poor and wealthy as well as the escalating effects of climate change
- Modernise, change with the times, and encourage a new generation of Catholics back to the Church and to worship
- Live as a community
- Promote Catholic education as accessible to all
- Reconnect with each other
- Show humility and remorse with regards to the cover up of child abuse and actively seek forgiveness
- Uphold the dignity of our Indigenous people
- Eliminate divisions between faiths and dialogue together
- Provide opportunities for young people in rural settings to have access to formation and fellowship with like-minded people
- Welcome and love young people where they are and understand the issues faced by young people, which challenge the formation of their identity and spiritual welfare
- Promote the gospel
- Dispel myths about Church teaching e.g. Science and religion can go hand in hand
- Reconsider the use of contraception and fertility treatment

To move forward and be proud of the good in our Catholic heritage. To evangelise more. To promote Catholic ethos more in Catholic schools. To become unified under the Catholic umbrella. For priest to do more pastoral care and to lead by example. To admit that the past has not always been good, but show that Catholics as a whole have learnt from them and taken measures to prevent reoccurrences and to safeguard the vulnerable and work towards the true values especially “to love one another as God has loved you”.

To meet young people where they are at.

For parish leadership to better engage and benefit from the gifts of all members of our parish communities.

For the Church to be more transparent in all aspects of its leadership and administration, including financial administration.

To provide opportunities when the Mass is more accessible to people who don't understand what's going on in the liturgy.
To be examples of peace (inclusive of kindness, compassion, love, forgiveness). To be more neighbourly and embracing of others, particularly those experiencing marginalisation or hardship (especially refugees, homosexuals). To increase our help to the poor, refugees, and persecuted Christians. To live more Christ-like lives. To strengthen our Christian practises (e.g. values, commandments, sacraments, traditions). To strengthen our prayer habits. To become a more evangelising Church. To increase our children's and youth ministry efforts. To live in gratitude for God's goodness. To repent and learn from historical abuse of children by clergy and religious. To allow married priests. To be a more joyful Church. To become more proactive in caring for our environment. To allow female priests. To enhance our ministry to Indigenous Australians. To enhance our ministry to the elderly. To enhance the delivery of Catholic catechesis.
God is asking us to stand up for our faith against all the political correctness, the push for euthanasia, abortion, and the dismissal of the recognition of gender. In addition, we need to recognise that not all Catholics believe in climate change and they should not be vilified by members of the Church for their belief.
To unite as Christians—not to make out that Catholics are better than Anglicans etc. Unite as stronger Christian faith. There is so much bad happening, we need numbers! Relax on 'rules' this is why the Church is losing young ones, they are made to feel bad that they are doing wrong—they're not, they're living! God is asking us to unite, to be role models, to bring our youth back to Christianity; to the love, faith and hope that is God.
To build healthy Church communities that are welcoming, meeting surrounding community needs, encourage parish ownership in pastoral and liturgical areas, have pastoral authority, have active lay ministries and lay leaders and live with passion
<p>* Be an inclusive Church where clericalism and gender are not the focus.</p> <p>* Be people of hope and joy - removing exclusion and allowing youth and the marginalised a greater voice.</p>
I think God is asking us to focus on the Spirit of the Law rather than the Letter of the Law; to listen more and judge less; be open to new ways of addressing the lack of priests (e.g. married priests, lay people administering parishes); reach out to our young people and meet them where they are at instead of telling them what they should do; be a place of reconciliation, unity and acceptance for each other; stop putting clergy on a pedestal.
I think he is asking us to be open and honest and humble after the Pell outcome. The Catholic Church can only heal with sincere apologies and open dialogue about what has happened and how things will never go back. We need to do this to keep the Catholic Church strong.
To love one another. Love our neighbours as we love ourselves. To treat others as we would like to be treated. To welcome everyone in. To help those less fortunate than ourselves.

I believe we're being asked to look at our past practices and review them with fresh eyes—just as Jesus challenged the Jews of his time to review their practices. I believe we're also being asked to find ways to engage our youth with their faith, to bring them home—not continuing to do what we've always done. I believe that our priests are being asked to look at their practices—how are they inviting people home, how is their personality stopping some from coming home—to be reflective of their role and is they've contributed to the current climate the Church is facing. I believe our laity are being challenged to step up also, to consider what more they could be doing to alter the perception of others.

Remember that salvation is only through Jesus Christ. Always remain with the truth of the Bible. Be aware of false doctrine—make sure it always lines up with the Bible.

Make ourselves relevant and make our relevance better understood than it has been in a time of great change.

Look after the less fortunate, be kind, and act for those that are unwilling to stand up for themselves.

God is calling us to do what Jesus did. To act as Jesus acted and to challenge not only individuals but also our Church structures which exclude rather than include; that give power only to a select few. If we look at the Gospel of Matthew, those who are healed are not those who were in the right place at the right time, but those who had faith and their disability/ailment excluded them from worship. The structures of the Jewish Church had become so rigid that the adherence to the law was more important than the care for one created in God's image. Are we in the same place? What would Jesus think if he arrived today? While tradition is important, why does the governance of the Church need to be in the hands of the ordained taking them away from their fundamental purpose and strengths? Recent events have shown that the Church in Australia needs to be governed by competent and formed representatives of the faithful and not just the ordained or religious. If we are to remain relevant, then we need to listen to all voices especially the youth, but not just listened to but they need to be part of the decision-making structures of the Church. Even the language we use, for example in the Eucharistic prayer we first pray for the pope, bishop, priest and the faithful. Aren't we all the faithful? So let's pray for all the faithful including the pope, bishop, priests and religious.

He is testing our faith.

I think that God is asking us to have faith and to focus on the people in the world who are doing good work. He is asking us to question those who have power in the Church and to speak up against injustice. He is asking us to focus on the bravery of those who are speaking up against the atrocities of a few corrupt and abhorrent clergy members.

God, as always, is asking us to live out our faith, and be seen to be living our faith. Our Church must be a beacon of Faith, Hope and Love in the present world. We must be courageous and be seen to be different; radically Christian, in the world, but not of the world. Lay people, bishops, priests, nuns, brothers, singles, marrieds, young and old should be living the faith and others should "Know we are Christians by our Love." Love for each other, our friends, enemies, refugees, unborn children, those in danger of Euthanasia, the poor and marginalized, lonely and suffering

etc. I believe God would want us to have vibrant, alive, caring parishes where our faith is nurtured and supported. Like a family that others want to join. A parish centred on the Eucharist, the sacraments and prayer. We must be parishes "on mission". That is why Jesus gave the Church to the world. We must accept and acknowledge our failings as a Church and do what we can to reconcile with society. Our Catholic Church in the world has been humbled by scandal, rightly so! We can't continue to wait for the next bad headline. We must bring all the wrong doings from the past to light, acknowledge them, make recompense and humbly go forward. As Pope Francis says, we must acknowledge that we are sinners. Let's show everyone that our faith is still important, real and relevant. Let's not forget about the rights of the unborn, the sanctity of marriage, the right of the elderly and frail to die with dignity and not be threatened by euthanasia. Let's not waste this opportunity. We can't go on as a lukewarm Church!

God is asking us to discern and re-examine the institutional traditions of the Catholic Church, which may be holding it back to connect to people and the culture of modern day society in Australia. In line with the changing role of women in society, women need to play a greater role and women need to be afforded the opportunity of equality in the Church, e.g. Women Priests and Women Deacons and Parish Committees etc. or apostolic positions. The clericalism of the Church is concerning and we need to hand the power over to the people. No one is special but we are unique. We think God is asking us evaluate how the traditions of the Church can at times prevent us from connecting with people where they are. We need to meet people where they are on their journey. We need to look at Doctrines which make people feel excluded. If people don't connect to the Mass, they go to 'Harvest' churches. People don't have the knowledge to connect, maybe the Mass needs to be explained more.

God is asking us to respond to this Council.

God is asking us to participate in this survey.

The Bible speaks often about God's acceptance of us and how we should be accepting of others. When Jesus walked on earth, He was our perfect example of accepting others, no matter their sin or choices. Jesus extended grace and forgiveness to all and we are commanded to do the same! The Church MUST follow God's commandments and accept EVERYONE, regardless of gender or sexuality. In the 21st Century, the Church MUST change if the good news is to be spread to younger generations—that is for the Church to survive.

To include all peoples in a communion of ideas. To include women as priests. To change from the historical hierarchy of our Church to one which recognizes the sovereignty of our local communities of people.

The time is now, and it's really all in the basics. It seems like many are moving forward, while the structure and fundamentals pretend that it is not. The group all heartily agreed when they spoke of the spirit alive and working among them gathered, in a way that was calling on them in their own lives, but felt that this was not always working through the Church. The common sense was a longing for peace and goodwill, with some understanding of teaching and growth in faith while engaging in the community.

A reimagining of our faith which can be found in the heart stuff! Fall in love with God. Bring back the Passion. Evangelise—bringing others to Christ through action, way of life, word of God. Being relatable. Encouraging and inviting youth to know and experience God. Being stewards of our environment for generations to come. Teaching from the heart to head. Accepting differences.

The Reading for Thursday, week one, of the morning Hour of Lauds from Isaiah 66:1-2, I found to be a thought that could be put before the panel that might be forgetting the difference between Church, and church. The upper and lower case being of importance, thus says the Lord, "With heaven my throne and earth my footstool, what house could you build me? What place could you make for me? All of this was made by my hand, and all of this is mine. It is the Lord who speaks, But my eyes are drawn to the man of humbled and contrite spirit who trembles at my word". Catholics up until at least 1960 were forbidden to read the Bible. So perhaps there are a few young Bishops who were in that age group. God said some very revealing things about himself in its passages.

God is asking us to return to him; to turn our backs on consumerism and the ways of the world—to love one another as Jesus does. This message should be the primary message of all families and definitely the message of our Catholic schools. This message must be up front and centre. We must counter Satan's hold on ourselves and our children through our rampant consumerism.

I think that we should stop saying prayers and begin to pray. I say this in particular about the two main traditional prayers known as the Our Father and the Hail Mary... And in particular at this time of hysteria when THE CHURCH is trying to clear ITSELF of the topical "scandals", the line in the Our Father which is usually scrambled at the speed of light is: 'forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us', which I am sure really should only be uttered with deep thorough, not as an incantation, as: "Forgive us Our trespasses, as WE forgive those who trespass against US". What I am experiencing at the moment is a Church that is fighting against me and my upbringing both from my family and the Gospel of mercy, compassion and forgiveness. In any conversation that comes up with regard to "child abuse" those who opt for mercy and compassion and forgiveness are seen as one of the perpetrators. I see my values disappearing from the Church rapidly and to quote Richard Rohr, "All you can do is cry". So more and more I see the Catholic Church as having no place in it for the likes of me, St Francis or Pope Francis. We just aren't like the current trend and don't want to be. Take a hug from me whoever you are and know you are loved no matter what. What have we done with Jesus' words as he was being nailed to the cross, "Father forgive them, they know not what they do"? And finally do we ever ask ourselves why we don't do the kind of things that criminals do? And how do we answer that? Do we constantly have to resist the temptations to kill or destroy? I have never been tempted to do that because it is not in me. Things like that repel me and so I am kept safe. I often wonder just how I would go if I were tempted in that way. How would I get on? Those who condemn aren't thinking this aspect through.

Proposed material for submission to plenary council topic: "Wake up our sense of community." God is asking us to address the following challenges/ actions in order to "wake up our sense of community." To move away from individualism and self-indulgence and rediscover love of God (John 3.16) and neighbour. The world is filled with me, me, me. What is in it for me? We must satisfy our own interests before considering others. Need to involve God in our daily lives. Wake

up to Jesus and the Gospels. Stop being trendy, copycatting: Be yourself. Give everyone a fair go. Look after life with great care. Everyone has the right to celebrate a birthday. Keep the Sabbath in our community. Continually discern the sign of the times. Don't lie down and die. Build the kingdom of God here on earth. Leadership in our Church must remember that it is part of the community it leads. Leadership cannot exist without community and its role does not make sense without community. Our leadership must listen and care for the community and act on the concerns of community. Concentrate on the *sensus fidelium* of the people, democracy and quest for the common good in community building, not on political correctness and self-identity. Exemplary communities can only flourish with learning by mutual listening. The governance of a healthy community is based on a flipped over pyramid model with the hierarchy at the bottom of the pyramid and the people at the top. We must have the courage to discern a place for God's voice and pragmatic co-operation in all Churches and in the public square. Question for the pastoral council: what attitudes, structures and formation will the Church propagate to address these challenges?

I think God is asking us how we can bring people back to actively participate in their faith, e.g. through attending Mass. There are many men absent at Mass on Sundays, as well as young people. It seems as if God has lost his relevance. So how can we re-engage with people particularly those two groups, so that God is of relevance to them?

[-] CATHOLIC CHURCH PLENARY COUNCIL SUBMISSION 15-01-2019 TOPICS PRESENTED: What do you think God is asking of us in Australia at this time? God wants us to build a Church of invitation. Come and see. God wants us to make Jesus real for our youth. We need to love God by loving one another. Show that we care. Where is the Spirit of Joy? Where is there Joy during the Mass? Reflect constantly on God's word. Wake up and live life in Community. MAIN TOPIC FOR OUR GROUP. MAKING JESUS REAL FOR OUR YOUTH. Families come in droves to School Masses. We need to rekindle this experience in the ordinary Sunday Masses. The Spirit is alive at Secondary School Retreats. Rekindle this experience. Technology is taking over conversation. Youth need to experience face-to-face interaction in the Church. Youth need role models for living the faith. We need to stop just talking about what we believe and concentrate on how we live the Gospels. The challenge is setting up a favourable environment for youth engagement. Adults need to be actively involved in the Sacramental Program. Banners, games, morning tea, music, lively children's involvement in the Mass. Capture Joy, Live with Joy, Joy filled kids. Adopt "Alpha for Youth" in the Parish. Get our Youth involved in Pilgrimages. Local Pilgrimages, National Pilgrimages ... These are ideas for making Jesus real for youth. QUESTION: How will we build the attitudes, structures and ways to bring these ideas to fruition?

Engaging all in the community equally, of Australia to participate in meaningful activities to build awareness of Christian values.

I think that God is asking us to be inclusive in the every changing times. We need to focus on appealing to people of all ages and youths. Many religions have changed their mind set to help youths find God and rely on him. Most youths are like little creatures in the wild lost and trying to find their way back home. I feel that making some Masses informal to appeal to youths will make the numbers higher and in turn will increase the growth in the Catholic faith.

Less about self, more about "one faith". A return to the basics of God and faith. What God is about, not the interpretations we as humans put on it. Acceptance and tolerance. Provided the guiding ethos is positive (one that supports and strengthens a person and society), to accept, understand and celebrate the faith of other people and cultures regardless of how that is practiced or the form God may take for them. Christian or otherwise, whether Catholic, CoE, Buddhist or one of the myriad other religions we all essentially believe in a good, kind, higher power who helps guide us on our life journey. God is accepting of all. He does not want us to have a bigoted or have a self-righteous attitude. I consider God wants us to ask questions. He is about belief, although not blind acceptance. That we make the choice to believe, rather than it being an obligation with threats attached. True faith can only be achieved through questioning, choosing to believe and choosing to act in a spirit of empathy + generously while allowing everyone to maintain their dignity.



RESPONSES TO QUESTION 2

*What questions about the future of
the Church in Australia
would you like the
Plenary Council to consider?*

QUESTIONS FOR PLENARY COUNCIL

Participants were also asked to submit questions about the future of the Church in Australia for the Plenary Council to consider. The question put to participants was:

What questions about the future of the Church in Australia would you like the Plenary Council to consider?

Responses to this question were examined for consent both for the publishing of their de-identified submission online and for sharing their de-identified submission with their diocese. Questions were also checked for comprehension and duplicate questions were identified. From this, a sample list of questions indicative of the submissions from your diocese was developed. This list is as follows:

1. Given a crisis of leadership worldwide and within the Church, how can the structure of the Church be changed to engage with a postmodern world?
2. What has Vatican II to offer in a postmodern world?
3. What are the challenges for the Church in addressing the recommendations of the Royal Commission?
4. How can the Church regain its moral and spiritual relevance compromised by failure to address sexual and spiritual abuse?
5. How can we make the Church more accessible and inclusive, especially for the younger generation without watering down the word of faith [or] without marginalising anyone?
6. What can be done to help the older members of the community change their mindset about diversity and inclusion?
7. How is the Church going to re-brand itself to engage youth given that there is a dis-connect in society?
8. With the ageing population of our priests, what is the Church going to forward plan for the future? Will women be allowed to become priests / deacons? Will men be allowed to marry and experience family life with all of its joys and struggles?
9. Why do the younger generation finish their Catholic education and then disappear from church activities?
10. The model for the Plenary Council is itself a conundrum. How can we chart the journey forward when the power is still in the hands of the clerical male few?
11. Where are our resources liturgically and musically being directed?
12. Is the authority of the Australian Catholic faith community such that change can happen under the current Canons of Church Law?
13. How can the Catholic Church grow in reshaping and re-imagining itself - particularly in the life of the Eucharist to become a joyful, life giving sharing of community to all?
14. How can women in the Church play key leadership roles in helping to reshape the future, sharing and celebrate their gifts within the Catholic community?
15. In what ways can our Catholic community do more to smash the gap between the haves and have-nots in our society?
16. How can the Catholic identity embrace all with greater authenticity towards healing and reconciliation of our Indigenous brothers and sisters?
17. What place does the Catholic Church have in our future if there is no shift in some traditions, which inhibit growth and positive experiences within our communities?
18. How will the Australian Church action a plan for the decrease in the number of priests?

19. How will the Australian Church prepare parish communities to lead themselves in prayer?
20. How does the Australian Church intend to view the role of women in taking a leading role in the Church alongside men?
21. What is going to happen in the future when so few young men and women are becoming priests and nuns?
22. Will the Catholic Church support practical action, e.g. Decent recycling procedures and resources in Australia, to protect and care for God's creations?
23. How is the council and the leaders of the Catholic Church going to get more people in to the Church?
24. In Far North Queensland where it is so hot, why is there no a/c [in some churches]?
25. As a woman under 40 with children, I want to know when the Catholic Church of Australia will pick up their act and make attending Mass interesting and fun for all ages?
26. How can we live and communicate the love and values of Christ in the world around us in the modern time?
27. Can we be the Church for others by going out into the world and being the Church for those who want to learn about Jesus?
28. I would like to know how you can preach, "God Loves everyone" when you put conditions on that to suit yourselves?
29. How can the Church play a greater role in combatting domestic violence?
30. When will other Christian denominations be able to partake in communion in the Catholic Church?
31. How can young people be encouraged to be more actively involved in the Church?
32. How can the Church become more attractive to and welcoming of young families?
33. With church attendance numbers dwindling, how does the Catholic Church fund schools and charitable projects in the future?
34. How can the Church be more transparent in its leadership and processes?
35. What is the Church doing to reconnect with the broader community and rebuild its trust?
36. Will the Church begin to accept changing social norms such as gay marriage and fluid sexuality?
37. How will the Church include/involve those from other religions?
38. When will the attitude about divorce change?
39. Why do Catholic schools not embrace the Catholic religion, including grace before eating, etc.?
40. How can we promote how wonderful our faith is and evangelise more for others to join us?
41. How can we change the culture of a Church that has operated one way for so long?
42. What strategies can we implement to free-up our priests, better allowing them to carry out their pastoral duties?
43. What strategies can we put in place to take advantage of the men and women in our parishes who can work alongside our priests in parish management, administration and the like?
44. What strategies can be implemented to allow the laity to know and understand how their financial contributions are spent?
45. Who will perform Masses when priests are no longer available in small communities?
46. Much of society in Australia no longer views women as inferior; they are also made in the image of God; why can they not be ordained as well?

47. Our Catholic schools are full and yet our church services are empty of young people. What changes is the Church willing to make to invite young people to connect with our faith?
48. Is the Church actually looking at renewing itself, or is it just going to find a new face to the same reality and experience for its members?
49. Who are the leaders, and will they really change/listen?
50. What new ways can we re-engage with those people who have walked away from the Church?
51. How can we stop young people from walking away?
52. How can the Church reach out to all Australians of whatever culture, sexuality, economic base they come from?



RESPONSES 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?*

STORIES OF FAITH OR CHURCH SHARED IN RESPONSE TO QUESTION 3

The stories in this section were shared in response to the third question: *Would you like to share a story about your experience of faith or of the Church in Australia that has shaped you?*

In keeping with the guidelines of consent explained earlier in the report, these stories are only from those individuals or groups from your diocese who consented to having their submission being made public and being shared with their diocese. About 49 per cent of all responses did not have consent for one or both of these criteria and therefore, their stories have not been included here.

When I was young my mother had great faith and ensured we went to Catholic schools. But I wandered away from the Church during my youth. And a local so called "priest" was responsible for that. I can still remember sitting in front of him and telling him that I was leaving because of him. That very day I walked away from the Church and did not come back for more than twenty years when I met another woman of great faith, to whom I am now married. Together, we wanted to give our children a "Catholic" education. What a joke! We spent tens of thousands of dollars and got nothing! Their education would have been more Christian if they had gone to our local State School. We know this because we sent one of our children there for a short time. We eventually took our remaining two children out of the Catholic education system after our daughter started cutting herself and wanting to commit suicide by jumping [in front] of a car, because of the way she was being treated at school. Worst of all, the school hid it from us. But then the Catholic Church is good at doing things like that! You are a bunch of gutless bastards and all you care about is keeping the money flowing in. Addit: Since my response to your questionnaire and in the wake of the abuse scandal; two people I know who were fervent Church going Catholics have left the Church because of the attitude of the hierarchy of the Church to this scandal. Others I know who had already left will not return. My wife will not attend with me because of the way the Church has treated us. As a consequence my children do not attend and I go alone. I choose to stay for the Eucharist. I yearn to find a priest who treats the Body of Christ with the reverence and respect it is due.

People are appalled at the gutless, heartless, self-serving attitude of the so called "magisterium" to a scandal they created and by what they have done to God's children.

I have been working in a Church environment for many years. A lot of my work meant that I saw many older clergy who had gone through the old seminary 'priest is the king of the castle' model. I had accepted that that mentality was in effect the fault of poor formation in the past. I continued to hope that the newer ordained men would be the recipients of a much more rigorous and sociological mature process. I have been very disappointed to experience on 3 occasions in recent months a newly ordained priest (less than 3 years) who exhibits all the attributes of those older clergy (above critique, disrespectful to myself as a lay person and my position). Something is not meshing in the formation program when new priests are already steeped in clericalism straight from the seminary. Equally important is that as a lay person I am not given the freedom or safe working environment

to speak my opinion as I would to any other adult when the priest has the 'power' to take offense at something he doesn't like and verbalise that but I don't have the same option available.

I was born to practising Catholic parents who believed and raised my siblings and myself in the Catholic Faith where the Holy Mass and Blessed Sacrament were the CENTRE of the Church and the faithful respected its Divine presence by PRAYER and SILENCE. We were taught that God loved us but we had to return HIS love by living a good life with the help and observance of the TEN COMMANDMENTS, the Sacraments with CONFESSION should we fail to keep His command because of human frailty. S I M P L E !!!! It is from striving to be perfect that we are then able to show mercy, kindness, love etc. to our brothers and sisters and to the community at large. SIN can NOT be tolerated and accepted by the Catholic Church even though the law legalises these such as: same sex marriages, homosexuality, LGBTQ, living together, abortion etc. I depended on our priests and religious to help me on this journey. However, sadly to say, this has been taken away from me where I feel angry, disillusioned, disappointed and DISTRUST of the clergy, Church hierarchies and the Pope. The COVER-UPS of these abuses by these so called shepherds with the ruin of young lives, seminarians, priests etc. have shaken my faith, the one thing I always lived for. My faith might be shaken but I know I will cling to it for dear life knowing these people will get their just rewards in the next life.

I was born in [-] in 1934. There were no priests or Religious; no churches or Mass; no Catholic school. My family were Catholics and I was baptised as a baby. I lived until I was 12 years old in a bush shack in virgin karri forest. My favourite place to play was under the bracken ferns. My non Catholic mother introduced me very early to a loving God and I remember thinking, as a baby, how much God must have loved 'under the bracken ferns with me. I have loved God since I can't remember. When I was 12 we went to Perth and I went to a Catholic school and was taught a very different distant God, who only put fear into little girls I met there. Now, at 84 years of age I still find myself clashing with other baptised Catholics with regard to my belief about God, and am thrilled to bits that my perverse thinking matches Vatican II and Pope Francis very well, and modern day teachers like Richard Rohr. [-]

For twenty years I was a point and a place of refuge for unwanted children, aka Street Kids in Brisbane. My close neighbours were thorough Catholics and great activists in the anti-abortion people and a mainstay in their groups. And while the "Kids"" and I got it fairly tough from most of our neighbours, the ones who made it hardest for us in body, mind and spirit were my anti-abortion neighbours. When they weren't picketing abortion clinics they were making sure that unwanted teenagers were anywhere but near them. We faced eviction every day from them. The anarchists up the road were our friends and benefactors. As Jesus would ask, "Who was neighbour to unwanted children out of the two sets?" Perhaps unintentionally the Roman Catholic Church tends to be two faced. Is that what 'legal' really means. Say one thing and mean another. And that certainly goes for Canon LAW. Or is that just mean through and through. I know of a Bishop who quotes its harshness to fallen priests who might need some mercy, and writes virtual love letters to love magazines. In the immortal words of Lleyton Hewitt, "C,MO -O-O-O-N".

I have always considered being "A Catholic" as an accident of birth. I have always been a Catholic from Infant Baptism, but it was not from the Church that I learned about God. I believe that God is to be found anywhere and no matter what Faith I had been born into I would have come up with the same idea of a loving God. And a loving God is not presented by the Catholic Church. It has been presented by those in it who out of love became enemies of the Church and were excommunicated, and most of the canonised saints were persecuted by it. I believe the Catholic Church to be a remnant of the Church of the Pharisees that Jesus criticised so profoundly. But a church it is and a place I call home. I would not 'throw the baby out with the bath water' But a lot needs a clean rinse or even consigned to the wheelie bin. And love and compassion need to be brought up and deepened. I see nothing Gospel at all about what the leaders of the Church prescribe as points of membership. I am not a "member", I am a follower of Christ. Like my non Catholic mother was. The bosses should just be there to guide and encourage us, not waiting their chance to dispatch us when we sin. And I have one other question. How on earth are any of our observations going to get before the panel? Would anyone's question be recognisable or just mishmashed into a general sort of whatever might have been entered on the topic. I have really no faith whatsoever that anything I am writing will ever be seen.

A priest who had to face sexual abuse charges and willingly faced them and did his sentence in prison returned to his former parish and took up his position in the parish church pew for Sunday Mass. Before the commencement of the Mass he was approached by the parish priest and told to leave. I felt that I did not belong in the Church of that parish priest. I cannot put any faith, either in bishops who would make you weep in the way they preach love of one another and yet with the code of Canon (cannon) Law go after reforming priests like threatening prowlers. Priesthood has turned most of them into heartless monsters—and I am not talking about those who have caused the open scandal that we are working with.

My faith has developed out of an Irish Catholic tradition that was at times harsh, legalistic and guilt driven but also instilled gospel values and spiritual awareness and connection that have guided my life and relationships to experience love, hope and meaning in a rapidly changing world.

We have all been touched by "Marist" experiences. Involvement in the Marist community.

The recent response of the Catholic Church to the Royal Commission into child sexual abuse did not involve any open dialogue and the Bishops, and I presume some advisors, spoke on our behalf as if they know it all. It is now because of their failures as well that they are constantly talking about it and using this as a forum to cleanse their consciences.

A group member shared a story about Fr [-] who she met many years ago in a rural North Queensland parish. A parishioner there had a very unfortunate experience with the Church back in Italy before migrating to Australia as a young man, and his alienation from the Church and his harsh criticism of it continued. Fr [-] came to know the man, and over a lifetime of prayer, holiness and example Fr [-] was able to establish a relationship with the man and gradually led this man, on his deathbed, back to God. God can work much

through us if we maintain our relationship with Him and endeavour to be an effective instrument as our Baptism calls us to do.
My son has Autism and struggled to attend church without disturbing those around him. Our parish priest told me that Jesus was a child once and to bring him along.
We are increasingly concerned about the number of unnecessary killings and deaths of wildlife in Australia and around the world.
There are many double standards of people in positions of leadership within the Church.
When a parish priest is reluctant to wear his priest collar in public for fear of being abused, something is very wrong in our world. Teachers have lost all respect from parents. We are the first to be targeted for deficits in student learning, yet are lumped with ever increasing parental responsibilities including psychological repair.
I have experienced the judgement of teachers who are unmarried and them being judged and their job being on the line. Annulment process needs to be streamlined to take less than three plus years.
Something happened in the middle east about 2000 years ago that changed human interactions. Direct proof is difficult faith is required but there is a failure of generations to accept this. Why?
I lived in a parish in the mid 1970's. The priest has been long dead so I will mention his name. He was Monsignor [-], simply known as "father", and that is what he was. Beyond saying Mass there was absolutely nothing about him that marked him out from the rest of us. His idea of leadership was to leave us to ourselves to do our services in the name of the parish, but if anything went wrong and the question had to be asked by another power or authority, "Who is in charge?" Then he considered he was the one who had to put his hand up. My memories of living in that parish bear great resemblance to what Jesus gave the impression that the Kingdom of God would be about.
Any organisation full to the brim with criminals would not give the power to direct the faith community to them. Why are ordained ministers not de-frocked and banned from serving as ordained ministers of the faith community? The scandal worldwide is breathtaking in the scale of the abuse of power. The most vulnerable in our faith community serving the insatiable power and sexual needs of ordained ministers. Pope Francis needs to act decisively, and act now. The credibility of all members of the faith community is in the full glare of the headlights of the Australian Society. The speed of action is worse than glacial.
The [-] Community of Nuns at [-] is an outstanding example of a community of women who have done the hard yards of coming out of papal enclosure to constitutional enclosure. They share their charism with many oblates, have a retreat program that is spot on, and serve the Australian Church and the [-] Diocese through text, chant, ritual song, hospitality, service of the greater faith community, and a lively engagement with the world in whatever form they encounter it. They have an interesting conversation between Sr [-] and Abbess [-] on their website about the Plenary Council which would be rewarding for the Australian Church to draw benefit from a measured and prayerful response to power, women, prayer, the future.

As a 67 year old I have experienced the good and the bad of the current model. My comments are not directed at any individual as we are merely living with an outdated model. The Catholic faith community is a rich tapestry and we are not giving ourselves the opportunity to draw on that richness for the management of our life as a faith community. Power and money need to be superseded by service of the faith community. Pomp and circumstance is not really necessary when it comes down to it. The cathedrals and bishop's residences in Australia could be sold to finance the stranger, the widow, the orphan, and to give the servants of the faith community a more real life in the community. We do not need Princes of the Church who live in palaces! Or even cathedrals that showcase the great and the good! Don't get me wrong—I love the cathedrals and the bishop's residences as buildings, places of worship, sacredness in the midst of our secular world, but when we walk into the tent of meeting do we really need to showcase such luxury, such opulence, such power and prestige? As an Irish/Australian, I have experienced blatant discrimination as a child. Newspapers advertised jobs with a caveat that Catholics need not apply. Protestants and Catholics lived lives totally separate to each other in the same small community of [-]. It was wildly impossible for me to walk to school with my brothers without the Nuns being rung by some old biddy complaining about Catholic girls mixing with Catholic boys. The world has changed for the better, but what treasures are we opening for our children in the faith community? If they are not the treasure, who will live the faith in the future? The community needs to concentrate on the real life of the faith community, and change the structures accordingly or we will crumble, and fragment, with a few threads hanging down from a damaged and old, and tired garment. Many people of faith are meditating together, sharing the richness of prayer—ecumenical, interfaith, no faith, living through the pain and troubles of this world, and sharing truth and beauty through their shared action together in Jesus name. A space, a chair, a prayer stool, a prayer cushion.....simple, powerful, peaceful time to meditate on God and the goodness, kindness and compassion of Emmanuel—God with us. Liturgical action of the faith community needs to accommodate the richness of the tradition and the needs of those in and out of the Catholic faith community. Eucharist—are we heading for a time when we will not be a Eucharistic people any longer because we have no more ordained male ministers left? How are we going to manage the future for our faith community, and our children coming into the future. The faith community is the only reality, Canon Law needs to reflect, not direct our discernment. The behaviour of ordained ministers needs to be as servants of the faith community. Who are the ordained ministers of the future?

I would but I do not trust this process.

Our lives are interwoven by our threads of experience that work to shape the miracle of who we are. Unpacking who I am, who you are and how we are together is a key aspect of understanding the mystery of life. Our creativity and passion for and search for answers is a huge driver of many of our advancements. For all these advancements that we have we are still seeking meaning. The answer is and always has been right in front of us. In our very being, in those around us and our world. May we close our eyes to see the great glory and experience the depth of faith that brings our hearts to life in a way that makes our light shine. May we treat the joys, pleasures, the burdens, the worries and anxieties

that we have as gifts to guide us to God. Lord provide us with shared sense of the sacred, of purpose of inspiration based in love and fellowship that enrich and imbue all that we do. Our every breath is a gift, may we cherish it always and support each other through our journey. Love, love, love and never give up on love.
I was baptised Catholic and attended Catholic school and Catholic university and have worked in Catholic Education for many years. The foundation of my faith has always been a mixture of being inspired by the faith of those around me and the opportunity to hear/engage with theology that I can reach e.g. through study or through experiences such as the LA Congress. I count myself lucky to have these experiences, which is why I think we need to provide the same to more people either through different media outlets and publications. More the facts through story, just as Jesus himself did.
I have been a member of the school and parish community for many years, however as I am an Anglican I have not been able to receive Holy Communion. This has caused me much pain and considerable feelings of "not fully belonging" to the school and parish. I am welcome and included in all other areas of school, prayer, witness and parish life. I would like the council to consider this during their discernment.
My father was a stoic Catholic going to church during the week etc. - he married my mother in a registry office - a divorced COE with a baby - and had four more children - he went to confession when I was 14 yrs of age as he wanted to receive the sacrament of communion - the priest told him he should leave his family as he was not married in the eyes of the Church ## So many Catholic people I come into contact with (including my own children) refuse to go to Mass as they see the Catholic Church as an outdated institution that likes to wag its fingers at sinners (which can be normal human frailty), exclude loving people such as gays and divorced Catholics and puts far too much energy into its doctrines rather than living God's word of love and tenderness
Mary Mackillop as a role model. Social Justice organisations like St. Vincent's. Those that are helping struggling in Australia indigenous communities, & low socio-economic.
Older priests are very rigid and not accepting of people who then don't feel encouraged to attend church.
When I was in upper secondary school and at university, I had opportunities to attend weekend retreats which helped me to have a personal encounter with God and Jesus. This has been a cornerstone of my faith journey.
I am not yet a Catholic but am deeply spiritual. I grew up in one of the most beautiful places in Australia, [-]. I loved going to primary school in [-]. To date my favourite location for sensing the awe of God's creations is Ubirr Rock. I can't describe it....but there is a powerful positive energy in that particular place. There is definitely a presence there and that's where I feel closest to a higher power. If you haven't been to Kakadu before I highly recommend it! The local Aboriginals know it and we can learn from them to care for and promote special places that God created such as this.

BORING, DRAB AND NOT EXCITING Mass services are turning people away. My family and I have been turned off attending Mass as it is so judgmental and dull.

The Church has many rich traditions and customs that have formed me over time but I feel it is becoming harder to maintain these traditions.

I have had cancer and was lifted and carried in prayer and have needed God to be in my life and constantly do need Him close to me.

... sorry... but church services are so boring! I went to a Churches of Christ service last month... it was exciting, entertaining, they were asking "what would Jesus have tweeted today" they linked into popular culture and make it relevant to PEOPLE!

Lived remote for over 22 years and appreciated the effect that priests did to enable Mass to be done. Also, Cursillo is a great movement which stops Catholics from being so isolated. I love the fact that you can go to a Catholic mass anywhere in the world and know that it is the same as the one in your own parish, with the homily being directed at the people attending.

When I was a teen and young adult in the 90's and early 2000's, there were 3 things that I desperately wished our local parishes would improve: homilies, hospitality and hymns. I'm now 38 and these three key elements of Catholic culture are sorely lacking. Where the true beauty of the Catholic Church remains hidden to the naked eye. Working in the Church has taught me that many parishioners and their priests are doing great things behind the scenes, but this is not evident to a young person, or any newcomer for that matter. Little effort is put into bringing the liturgy alive with community. In my ideal parish, events would exist outside of the Mass in which parishioners could get to know each other and also journey in their faith together. Then and only then could the Mass come alive with the different personalities of the community and also more investment of people's individual gifts. The culture of parishes at Sunday Mass is incongruous with the life and energy that young people are attracted to. It's trying to fit a square peg into a round hole. It does young people a disservice to think that all they want is a rock band and shorter homilies at Mass. What a young person needs is to see worship on the faces of friends at Mass. Worship facilitated by music that is well executed and preaching that speaks into their lives. Also, the old lady with purple hair that frowns at my 15 yr old daughter's shorts at Mass... we need less of that. Getting her to come to Mass is hard enough without such disapproval.

I have had countless experiences of asking parish priests to promote different initiatives (e.g. youth ministry, diocesan Synod, Plenary Council engagement), only to be met with weariness, apathy, inactivity or disinterest on their part. This is so frustrating, because if the parish priest doesn't okay it, it just doesn't get done! Surely as the leader of a community, the parish priest should have some accountability to that community! If parish leadership were shared between priest and key lay people, parishes would be more collaborative and life-giving.

##My story is the weekly struggle to take my 4 daughters to Mass each week (3 of whom are teenagers), to a Mass where the 'bit in the middle' is soooo wordy that they completely

zone out. Honestly, I love the Mass, but it is truly difficult to stay focused on those Eucharistic prayers! Jesus doesn't require set magic words to be present to us.

A friend who was cooking a chicken decided she would give it to the priests in the parish even though a voice inside kept telling her that she needed it more. The very next day, she received a cooked chicken from someone else and then another cooked chicken on the following day. She shared this story with me and reminded me of the scripture that says that if you give and it will be given back to you pressed down and overflowing, for the measure you give out is the measure you get back. This story changed my attitude to giving and as a consequence, the next week, I gave a punnet of strawberries to a nun. An hour later, as I was passing a neighbour's place, they invited me in to share a bowl of strawberries and cream. A short time later, I told the nun what had happened and she said that it was strange because I had left her, she had knelt down and prayed that the Lord would send me more strawberries. I often share this story and some people say that it was just coincidence, what do you say?

I currently am involved with a youth group and our young people are yearning for meaning and purpose in their lives. We are all responsible to make the Church a place of welcome, unity, acceptance and peace for all. I can only survive this extremely challenging time for our Church by keeping my eyes focus on Jesus and his message to the world.

I was baptised Catholic. I attended Catholic schools. I made the Sacraments of Reconciliation, First Eucharist and Confirmation. I was married in a Catholic Church and I have had my three children baptised and they all attend a Catholic school. I am an Assistant Principal Religious Education in a large P-12 school. I am an active member of my parish, I volunteer to welcome and set up, I read, I am a Eucharistic Minister, my family do offertory and collections, I organise the Children's Liturgy group. I work with children preparing for their sacraments. I am live a faith filled life. I feel that the structure of the Catholic Church is outdated in terms of gender. I think that Women should be able to be priests and deacons. I think that priests should be able to marry. I think that we should welcome everyone to church and all be treated as equals.

I attended a Catholic boarding school, a Catholic teacher's college and have taught in a Catholic school for the past 37 years. I boast that the Catholic Church raised me! I'm proud of my Catholic linkage—I have become a better person, a better parent, a better wife, colleague simply through the challenges, the faith formation provided to me. I have met some truly humble people who have encouraged me not to accept bullying from the males in this organisation. I would love this to be the experience of all other Catholics. Something that leaves them proud to announce they're Catholic and not to be fearful of standing up to others.

Even though I always had a love for God at a very young age, my life changed when a Catholic priest who was born-again came to our high-school way back in the 1970's. He made Jesus come to life when he spoke. He really did have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

My faith and devotion to God through the Catholic tradition has been shaped by many people but the common factor that all of these people have is the fact that they preach the gospel first in action and then in word and the two are consistent most of the time.

I am new to the Church.
<p>1. A parent at the school said in a Baptism meeting that 'Harvest Church is a good church?' Why??????? What are they doing that we are not as the Catholic Church. On the point of 'church shopping' and the importance of the priest who is the leader of the church. Also, this is another good reason to have women leaders. Ensure sermons are related to the gospel and then related to real life. Recontextualise to current society and location.</p> <p>2. Catholic school parents are not wanting to go into the Catholic church at a school event, a disconnect????</p> <p>3. Altar serving—Very uplifting how change has happened in this area where now young girls not of the Catholic Faith denomination can altar serve.</p> <p>4. Students who are growing in love and faith in the school context but there is a feeling in their home world that they are not welcome in the Church or transferred on to parents. The parents don't feel like it is their world. The world of a Catholic Parish and the world of the student's families are polar opposites, and the child in the Catholic school is caught in the middle.</p>
I have taken part many years ago in two different third rites and the experience was very moving and the feeling of reconciliation was incredible. I do not go to reconciliation but would always take part in a third rite.
This particular group had just come back from three weeks travelling through the United States of America and some of Central America. Overall, there was a sense of joy and life that could be found in the Church all throughout the world as they were engaging with life's struggles and joys. Even in comparison with the small town of [-], it was the same Christ I live there as celebrating with the pope among 1.4 million people. This bore testament to the Church alive among the young.
World Youth Day experience has shaped the way our staff, one in particular, see the world around them and their call to be holy. We are all called to be saints!
The great faith transformation at the moment despite the scandals that the Church is enveloped by is the fact that people of other faiths and denominations are wanting to join the Catholic faith. They do so because they see the solidity of the faith journey in our church and the joy of knowing the Jesus' story. My wife and I have been involved with the RCIA programme for quite a number of years and we have seen the desires of people to know about Jesus and what He is asking of all of us. They are not daunted by His requests and in my words see it as a step further in their life's journey. Why that message and story does not resonate with our youth and even in our 40+ year olds who put their children through the Sacraments but don't attend Mass baffles me. A terrible analogy, but are we selling Jesus and his story enough. Maybe a Catholic story app?
Although I am Catholic and went to Catholic school, I was away from the Church for decades, but my wife and I reverted back our faith through some dramatic spiritual experiences back in 2008 and 2009. I have progressed from there and am now a Deacon! When I started going back to Mass again, I was shocked at how few men were present, and also young people. It's as if the faith had skipped a whole generation. I think we can

re-engage with the people who are absent, and the younger folk, but it's a huge job. As a Deacon in secular employment, I see my role as somehow playing a part in that task, although it is difficult as the secular workplace can be a difficult place to express one's faith. But I see people are still searching for something beyond themselves; many of my colleagues consider themselves 'spiritual' but not necessary believing in God. That's at least something we can work with.

Preparing music for whole of school Masses and then realising music in the Mass has reached out and affected everyone present.

I was of another faith and started working at a Marist School. I changed religions and am confirmed. I do feel that God is active but needs to be more appealing.

Great sermons from some great priests.

CONCLUSION

This report presented a summary of submissions that were received from your diocese in Phase One of the Plenary Council process called 'Listening and Dialogue'. The findings are in response to three main questions:

Question 1: What do you think God is asking of us in Australia at this time?

Question 2: What questions about the future of the Church in Australia would you like the Plenary Council to consider?

Question 3: Would you like to share a story about your experience of faith or of the Church in Australia that has shaped you?

Phase Two of the Plenary Council: *Listening and Discernment* is already underway and will continue until early 2020. The purpose of this stage is to listen deeply to what the Spirit is saying through the responses that have been submitted in Phase One and to understand and connect with the sense of faith that has been shared by the people of God across Australia.

We hope this report helps you in continuing to lead and encourage the engagement of many people in your diocese in this second phase as we discern together how God is calling us to be a Christ-centred Church that is:

- Missionary and evangelising,
- Inclusive, participatory and synodal,
- Prayerful and Eucharistic,
- Humble, healing and merciful,
- A joyful, hope-filled and servant community, and
- Open to conversion, renewal and reform.

The National Centre for Pastoral Research sincerely thanks all the people from your diocese who participated in the Listening and Dialogue phase and those who continue to be engaged in the preparations towards Plenary Council 2020. We wish you and your diocese all the very best for the journey ahead.

APPENDIX 1: COMPLETE LIST OF COUNTRIES OF BIRTH (Individual responses only)

The table below is the full list of individual respondents' countries of birth from the Diocese of Cairns.

Country	Number of respondents
Australia	86
Colombia	1
France	1
Germany	1
India	1
Mauritius	1
Netherlands	1
New Zealand	2
Philippines	1
Singapore	1
South Africa	1
Sri Lanka	1
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	2
Zimbabwe	1
Not stated	19
Total	120

APPENDIX 2: COMPLETE LIST OF GROUPS FROM YOUR DIOCESE

This is a complete list of group submissions from the Diocese of Cairns. Groups that did not provide a name were omitted from this table.

Name of group	Group size
North Queensland Catholic Clergy Abuse Reference Group	790
Catholic Diocese of Cairns - Christmas Postcard Campaign	350
Staff of St Stephen's Catholic College	88
Cairns Catholic Education – Education Leaders	60
St Michael's School	50
St Joseph's School Parramatta Park	33
Southern Deanery, Cairns Diocese	27
Catholics in Action (CIA), Mt Isa	18
St. Clare's Parish Tully Wld	15
St Michael's School	14
St. Vicent de Paul Society	11
Mother of Good Counsel Parish Pastoral Council	11
Mother of Good Counsel Parish	8
Good Shepherd Catholic College	8
Synod Permanent Committee	7
Jimenez/Rumble Family	7
some Parishioners of Northern Beaches Parish Cairns	7
Cairns Northern Deanery Plenary Workshop	7
Marist Association	7
St Michael's Parish Group	7
Ravenshoe Parish - Bible Study Group	6
Mary and friends	6
Marist Association of Australia - Far North Queensland	6
Marist Association	6
Good Shepherd Catholic College	6
Malanda Parish PC group	6
Parish Plenary Group	6
Catholic Youth Ministry Reference Group	5
Holy Spirit Church Mission Beach 5853	5
Holy Crew	5
GSCC	5
Good Shepherd Catholic College	5
St Michael's Parish Group Gordonvale	5
Four members of St Francis Xavier's Parish, Cairns	4

Name of group	Group size
St John's School	4
Holy Cross Primary School	3
Holy Cross School	3
Teachers	3
Mackillop College	3
Holy Cross	2
Holy Cross School	2
Board of Justice & Care Diocese of Cairns	Not Stated
St. Clare of Montefelco Church Tully Parish	Not Stated
Individual Cards	Not Stated

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