



Final Report for Phase I: Listening and Dialogue

A Report to the Diocese of Port Pirie

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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

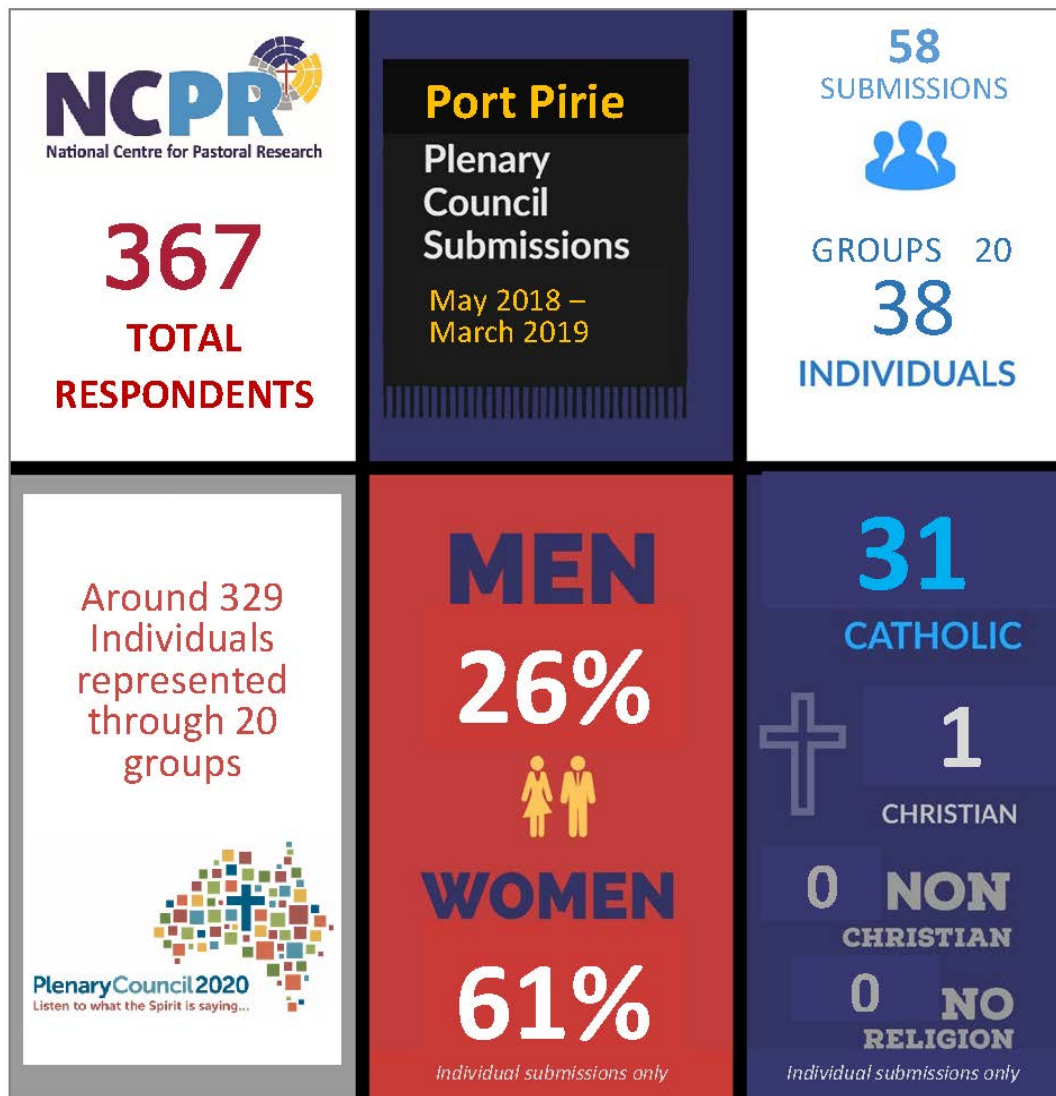
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Diocesan Submissions Summary Snapshot: May 2018—March 2019



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 – Port Pirie

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 Port Pirie, we received a total of 58 completed responses from May 2018 until 13 March 2019. Of these, 39 respondents had participated in a Listening and Dialogue Encounter, while another 9 were unsure if they had. About 10 respondents indicated that they had not participated in a Listening and Dialogue Encounter.

Of the 58 submissions, 20 submissions were from groups or organisations and 38 submissions were from individuals. There were 329 people represented through the 20 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 367.

Table 1: Number of Submissions	
Total number of submissions received	58
<i>Participated in Listening & Dialogue Encounter?</i>	
Yes	39
No	10
Not sure	9
Not stated	0
Total	58
Submissions received from groups or organisations	20
Submissions received from individuals	38
Total	58

INDIVIDUAL SUBMISSIONS

At the close of the survey on 13 March 2019, a total of 38 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 Port Pirie. Figure 1 is a graphical representation of the same table. About 66 per cent (25) were received from those aged 50 and over. The most number of submissions within this age range were received from the 70-74 years age group (6 responses).

At the close of submissions, there were no individual submissions received from those aged under 25.

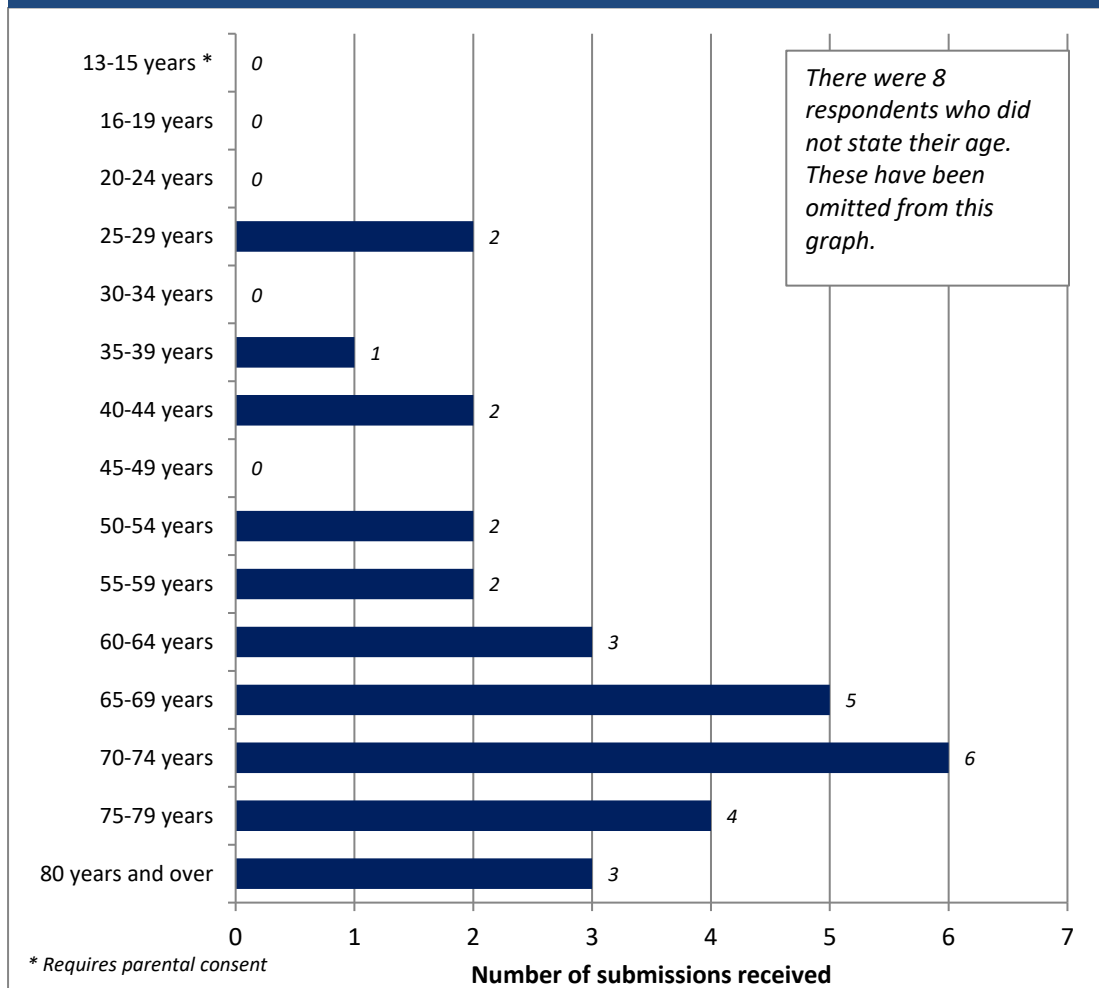
Participants aged 16-17 were encouraged to discuss the questionnaire with their parent or guardian. Many of these responses came from schools that sent in their responses through the online survey. As Table 2 shows, there were no individual submissions made from the 16-19 years age group in your diocese.

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 were no individual submissions made from this age group in your diocese.

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

13-15 years *	0
16-19 years	0
20-24 years	0
25-29 years	2
30-34 years	0
35-39 years	1
40-44 years	2
45-49 years	0
50-54 years	2
55-59 years	2
60-64 years	3
65-69 years	5
70-74 years	6
75-79 years	4
80 years and over	3
Not stated	8
Total	38

* Requires parental consent

Fig. 1: Age groups (individual responses only)

Sex of Respondents

More than half the number of all individual respondents from your diocese were female (61%), while a further 26 per cent were male. Table 3 shows that there were 10 men and 23 women who made submissions. One respondent preferred not to state their sex, while four respondents did not answer this question.

Table 3: Sex (individual responses only)

Female	23
Male	10
Prefer not to say	1
Not stated	4
Total	38

Countries of Birth

Table 4a shows the country of birth of individual respondents from your diocese. As expected, a large number of respondents (66%) were born in Australia. Just under 13 per cent came from other countries, while around 21 per cent did not state their birthplace. 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	25	65.8
Japan	1	2.6
Philippines	1	2.6
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	3	7.9
Not stated	8	21.1
Total	38	100.0

Table 4b: Country of birth - Summary (individual responses only)		
	N	%
Australia	25	65.8
Other English speaking country	3	7.9
Non-English speaking country	2	5.3
Not stated	8	21.1
Total	38	100.0

Table 4c: Mother's country of birth (individual responses only)		
	N	%
Australia	25	65.8
Other English speaking country	3	7.9
Non-English speaking country	2	5.3
Not stated	8	21.1
Total	38	100.0

Table 4d: Father's country of birth (individual responses only)		
	N	%
Australia	24	63.2
Other English speaking country	4	10.5
Non-English speaking country	1	2.6
Not stated	9	23.7
Total	38	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 no individuals identified themselves in this way.

Table 5: Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander (individual responses only)	
Yes	0
No	30
Not stated	8
Total	38

Religion of Respondents

The religion question was answered by individual respondents only. Of the total 38 individual submissions that were received from your diocese, 31 respondents (82%) were Catholic. One respondent was from another Christian denomination while there were none from non-Christian religions. A further six respondents did not state their religion and no respondents chose the 'no religion' response.

Table 6: Religion (individual responses only)		Person	Percent
Catholic		31	81.6
Other Christian:			
Other Christian		1	2.6
Non Christian:			
Other religion		0	0.0
No religion		0	0.0
Not stated		6	15.8
Total		38	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 26 respondents indicated that they went to Mass regularly and were involved in other church activities. There was one respondent who said they went to Mass and church activities sometimes. A further four 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	19	7	0	26
I am Catholic and go to Mass and church activities sometimes	1	0	0	1
I am Catholic, but I don't practise or get involved in anything	0	0	0	0
I consider myself Catholic but I am not sure what to think about the Catholic faith	0	0	0	0
Other	0	2	0	2
Not stated	1	0	1	2
Total	21	9	1	31

GROUP SUBMISSIONS

At the close of the survey on 13 March, there were a total of 20 group submissions made from your diocese. Around 329 individuals were represented through these groups. However, one group did not report their number of participating members, indicating that the total number of people represented through the group submissions may be higher.

While 16 group submissions provided a group name, four did not do so. Table 8 shows a list of the group submissions from the diocese with the number of members in each group. 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 St Mark's College, Port Pirie with around 101 members. There were also a number of other parish and school groups such as the Ltyentye Apurte Catholic School with 30 participants and Riverland Christian Women with 28 members. There were nine other groups with 10 members or more.

Table 8 : Group submissions from the diocese

Name of group	Group size
St Marks College, Port Pirie	101
Ltyentye Apurte Catholic School	30
Riverland Christian Women	28
Women from the Eyre Peninsula	25
Catholic Rural Women of the Port Pirie Diocese	20
Rural women of Yorke Peninsula	14
Knights of the Southern Cross	12
Catholic Parish of Whyalla	12
all Saints Catholic Church	11
Alpha Leaders Group, Catholic Parish of Whyalla, South Australia	10
SRC of Ltyentye Apurte Catholic School	10
Cummins CWL	10
Tumby Bay church	9
Monas Group	6
CWL	6
Good Sam Sisters SN/NT	5

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 50-69 years age group was the largest group represented with 117 members. This was followed by the group aged 70 and over with 104 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	13
20 - 29 years	28
30 - 49 years	62
50 - 69 years	117
70 and over	104
Unknown	0
Total	324

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

Of the total 324 group members whose sex was reported, 73 per cent (235) were female and 28 per cent (89) 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	235
Male	89
Total	324

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:

- Leadership and Church Governance
- Sacraments
- Social Justice and the Environment
- Love God, Love Neighbour

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

- Leadership and Church Governance (Chapter 7)
 - *Greater role for women* (p. 83)
 - *Greater involvement of the laity* (p. 84)
 - *Working together in unity* (p. 95)
- Sacraments (Chapter 6)
 - *Holy Orders—Ordination of women* (p. 69)
 - *Holy Orders—Ending celibacy / allowing priests to marry* (p. 66)
 - *Restoring the Third Rite of Reconciliation* (p.75)
- Social Justice and the Environment (Chapter 9)
 - *Greater inclusion of all* (p. 108)
 - *Ending discrimination of LGBTI* (p. 110)
 - *Greater inclusion of all* (p. 108)
 - *Emphasis on: Inclusion of people with disability* (p. 109)
- Love God, Love Neighbour (Chapter 4)
 - *Care for neighbour* (p. 36)
 - *Better faith formation* (p. 38)
 - *Greater focus on the Word of God* (p. 31)
 - *Remain faithful to Church teaching* (p. 32)

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

- *Better teachers in Catholic schools* (p. 148)
- *Modernise Church teachings* (p. 169)
- *Better implementation of Royal Commission recommendations* (p. 103)
- *Greater concern for victims and survivors* (p. 101)
- *Focus on ecumenism* (p. 129)

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 31 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.

For a community who is welcoming of all, where the hierarchical structures have been dismantled, the community is respected for the gifts, talents and opinions they bring to God's mission. There is a team approach and decisions are made for the good of the whole community and the actions are sincere and transparent to all.

Renewal of the Church. Connection to deep spirituality.

Holiness, commitment, and a very good knowledge of what we believe and the skills to defend our beliefs because many Catholics have been, by devious and often untrue means, drawn out of the Catholic Church and joined their faiths.

How do we as a Church continue to be able to move forward following on from the Royal Commission's findings and outcomes? Can we be confident as a Church that those recommendations and outcomes will be acted on and assist us to remain positive about the future of the Church?

1. To remember God said to love one another as I have loved you.
2. Bring the Church into the 21st century to make it more relevant to people.
3. A lot of people have left the Church and are angry and/or hurting due to Church attitudes and decisions to their situation (Canon Law).
4. Asking the Church and its leaders to be more humble and approachable.
5. The need to adapt to meet the demands of less number of priests and other religious (male and female).

To be a part of a faith community, and especially to reach out and hold to the love of God and neighbour as key. To develop a stronger love for the Church so that it is vibrant and alive and that it would attract young people to be a part of the Church, and to become involved in the Community. To pray more; individually in families and groups to deepen our personal relationship with God. To be grounded in scripture and our faith tradition and to participate more fully in our faith formation. To reach out to others in need. To be strong and fearless when we are being challenged, especially via the media. To capture the 'generation' that is missing from our churches, and to explore ways of doing that. To acknowledge the strong faith of our older people. To be more inclusive of everyone—to be loving and not to be 'judge and jury'. To encourage our priests to connect more with people in their everyday lives. To be more open to exploring the role of priesthood in our Church.

To listen to the Spirit, faithfulness to Christ: Openness to all and to be more inclusive especially of women.

A listening Church: To be less clerical and patriarchal.

A Church of ALL the baptised: A Church that is responsive to the recommendations of the Royal Commission. Following the example of Jesus and living the values of Christ to love God and neighbour.

A Church of the poor and marginalised: With social justice as an important part of our lives.

A Church that is welcoming, joyful, compassionate, hopeful, humble, and contrite.

A Church that has a strong connection and a sense of responsibility to all of Creation, which is a means of God's revelation to us.

A Church where there is ongoing faith formation for and beyond the sacraments of initiation, especially scripture, theology and spirituality.

To return to the basics of Christian living: a healing, humble and unified Church.

A Church where smaller country faith communities are better resourced e.g. with trained laity and access to appropriate free online resources for formation.

God is asking for his Church in Australia to 'Get its house in order' to be a Church for and by the people. He is asking that we come together across this vast country and put our heads together and get past the issues of the past, not hide them, own them and to be transparent to the community. He is asking us to go forth as Christians and take His word to as many as possible, to do good things for and in our communities and to welcome others, refugees, people of other cultures into our fold.

God is asking for the whole Church to come together to be able to address issues and to reconnect with Him. We are His Church, we have a responsibility to God to renew, refresh and reinvigorate our relationship with Him and to once again listen to what it is He wants and expects from us, His people.

1. The hierarchical and monarchical structure of the Church is no longer helpful to the whole Church; it was once, but no longer. The people of God have outgrown this model and it is time to discuss new and more creative ways to be Church now. The Bishops of Australia

no longer speak on behalf of the people of God but rather from their own point of view, this was all too obvious in the recent vote on same sex marriage where the position of most Bishops was to vote no, while the majority of people and Catholic people voted yes! The method of selection of Bishops, leaders, doesn't have any real input from the people of God, but is dominated by fellow Bishops and clergy. The whole process of selection of Bishops must be more representative and transparency must occur if the position of Bishop is to have any true meaning for future generations.

2. The Priesthood—has become a boys' club, with all the bad things that go with this title. Our younger priests don't have respect for the women who work with them. They are also not open to listening to the advice of their senior priests, let alone taking the advice and considering it. I am not sure if this is the product of the seminary, the type of student presenting for priesthood these days, or the current generations of people that age. I tend to think the first and second as I know many young people and they are far more open and liberal than our current young priests. How well is the psychological and psychosexual analysis being applied before seminary acceptance and during formation? Or are we going to develop a new group of priests who abuse people, maybe not sexually, but certainly mentally!

Finally Liturgy—The Mass when celebrated well is an amazing spiritual experience for people but it has become so regimental and so controlled that the true life of The Mass has been sucked away and lost. Too many priests and bishops worried about how they hold their hands and if there is enough lace on their vestments, rather than being concerned as to how involved are people in the Mass, how much have they really participated in the celebration or has it all been turned into a movie where they sit and watch? Our New Translation is deplorable and has not been reviewed as was promised when it was introduced. Another broken promise from the Church hierarchy.

Transparency and openness trust in the people of God, you are asking us now but we get no say again in the outcome of the Plenary! I seriously doubt it will be of any true value to the Church unless the people of God are able to sit at the same table, albeit a very big one, as the Bishops, priests, religious and have a vote on the issues present and a vote that is in greater numbers to the Bishops. The Clergy need to let go of this process, so far all I see and hear is discussion which will be discarded by the Bishops because they don't want to hear what the people are telling them. I hope the Spirit moves in and does her job!

A softening heart. Servant Leadership. Joyful acceptance of difference. Grassroots' connections and responses to scandals and topical challenges.

In a time where Christianity is seen as a relic and marginalised by many in the Western world, the Church needs to be seen as relevant and accessible to all. In Australia, through the Plenary Council, we have been given this unique opportunity to really make significant advances in the way we Catholics see ourselves and how we see others. I believe that a Church with a future focus must build on the strengths of its inheritance, adapt to a changing and challenging world we live

<p>in, and be brave. The hierarchical structure of power and influence needs to be addressed: too many have little or no real voice—women, LGBTQ, divorced come to mind. There is a critical shortage of priests and yet the laity still have very little real input. There seem to be a ‘battening down of the hatches’, hanging on to a fundamentalist attitude that everything must stay as it is to be ‘authentic.’ I believe God is giving us an amazing opportunity to redefine ourselves as Christians and in particular, as Catholics. If we are brave, trusting in the grace and love of God this could bring about a renaissance in the Church. We need to look beyond the pulpit and the building as the definition of being Catholic. We need to listen with an open mind to the thousands of Australian Catholics who no longer see the Mass as relevant in their lives. We need to make real change, take risks, have faith, be uncomfortable, to be able to move into a more complete expression of Christ’s witnesses in our world.</p>
<p>To be more responsive to others.</p>
<p>To be aware of our cultural changes. To embrace other Christian denominations (we are post-Vatican II) in rural areas and city parishes, come together to pray, to hold conferences with guest speakers and to ultimately examine what we have in common, then to consider the differences and what they mean to our Christian daily lives. In our Catholic faith, welcome with discernment our Charismatic movement. Use the NET team to raise up leadership within our youth—involving parents at some level. Join with Pentecostal and other mainline Churches to witness to youth. Ecumenism at a practical level with the charismatic Catholics is needed to re-invigorate our Church. A renewal of this blend has the power to ensure Catholic people once again prioritize faith first. Currently every effort to gather small groups has failed because our people are ‘time poor’. In our evolving Australian Culture, people of other spiritual/cultural beliefs where their commitment is ‘first cause’ is likely in time to be the more dominant influence. This would find the Christian faith which has been the base for our country’s wonderfully sound and democratic establishment and positive development—take a minor position, possibly at best.</p>
<p>God is asking us to find ways to reinvigorate and renew enthusiasm in the Catholic Church. God is asking us to be evangelisers—to spread the good news—in our country communities, but we need support in terms of further education in faith and scripture. God is also asking us to reach out to those in need, to support our neighbour and to give the Church (we are the Church) the grace to recognise Jesus as a companion on the road. God is asking the Church to be more inclusive of the lonely, the housebound, women, other Christians who come to our church for special occasions, the divorced and remarried. God is asking us to respect the belief of others. God is asking us to talk with people living a different lifestyle (LGBTQ) and to listen to their needs and to see how we can walk with them rather than to shut them out.</p>
<p>To understand the teachings of Jesus, participate in the sacraments regularly, and try to be the person I think that Jesus would want me to be.</p>
<p>To be more inclusive and invigorate the Church.</p>
<p>That we need to SHOW and COMMIT to forgiveness and restitution to the abused victims and their families in our Australian society. (Money cannot solve everything—it must be more than that). That the Church must move into the 21st Century:</p>

-Leadership by the Laity and a share in the governance of the Church

-Consider the issues around inclusiveness of everyone e.g. the divorced and re-married, LGBTQI—
That the Church must move to censure those members (especially clergy) who have abused others and those who cover up or deny the abuse. Mandatory reporting is essential and the person reporting needs support.

-Birth control

-Optional celibacy and married priests

-Priests that have left the Church —should not be ostracised. We are missing out on wonderful service

-Women in ordained ministry

-People with intellectual disability—that they have equal rights within the Church, especially to receive the sacraments. Clergy have no right to deny the sacraments to them.

Plan for the next 15-20 years.

There are three things that last - Faith, Hope and Love (2nd Reading - 4th Sunday in Ordinary time – Year C)

•Australian Catholic Bishops Conference and the Australian Catholic Laity Conference. Apologise to abuse victims, support them, ask them what would help? Money isn't the only answer.

When recruiting persons to the priesthood, male or female, ensure they are in their twenties before training/seminary. Careful interview to try and ensure they are joining for the correct reasons. Allow them to be married, if they choose.

•Get back to The Beatitudes

•10 Commandments. They were good rules to live by, many of us have spent 60/70/80 + years trying to live by them

There are lots of awful things happening in the world today and I think God is asking us to be people of hope ... a people that embraces our neighbours and shows an example of good living, striving for justice, kindness, etc.

*To be inclusive of the God given talents of all in our Church

*To listen and discern the voice of the clergy, laity and all religious

*To be cohesive in bringing our Church together as ONE

*To come out from our Church buildings out into the world

*To be non-judgemental

*To embrace peoples of ALL faiths

*To be grateful for the ministries that are available to us

*To be supportive to our clergy and to each other

<p>*To embrace all those who are separated in any way from our Church</p> <p>*Let us be a Church IN the world</p> <p>*Ask "WHAT WOULD JESUS DO"?</p>
<p>God is asking for a deeper commitment from each of us. God is asking us to seek holiness as Vatican 2 invited. We need to get back to employing practicing Catholics in our schools. We need to stop relying on government hand-outs and raise our own capital. It won't be easy at the start but it will be worth it. Schools are principally not for academics but supporting young people in the faith. That is the Catholic ethos yet Catholic schools employ non-practicing Catholics, non-Christian and even openly gay teachers. That makes no sense whatsoever.</p>
<p>God is asking us to be a welcoming, ecumenical Church, listening to the laity, including our indigenous and CALD people. Being hands on like Jesus. How do we support our young people? Where is women's role in the bigger Church?</p>
<p>Explore new ways in which young people and families can form a relationship with God that faithfully engages them in the life of the Church.</p>
<p>Priesthood: vow of celibacy should be optional or taken for a limited period. The title "Father" turns us all into children. Women's Ordination and a married priesthood, male and female are absolutely essential. Reinstate the 3rd rite of Confession (reconciliation). Marriage: Everyone makes mistakes, and the process of annulment is demeaning. And, why should the marriage be "annulled" before divorced and remarried are permitted to receive the Sacraments. Please, please listen to the voice of women and their role in leadership. Is not the Spirit leading us in that direction? Look at the stats for women working in the Church...they are holding everything together.</p>
<p>That all churches supporting the Christian faith join together and worship as one.</p>
<p>To pray and be strong in our faith. To ask questions of the Church—what does it stand for, and how will it deal with challenges now, and in the future. To plan for the future Church that will consist of lower numbers of people, but still filled with people of a strong faith that want to meet together and pray.</p>
<p>God is asking us to review how Catholic priests practice their ministry. A priesthood is something to be shared. The emphasis of priestly practice should be on building a faith community with the priest taking a role like an AFL coach. I have been a practicing Catholic in the parish of [-] for 45 years under 4 Bishops and numerous parish and [religious] priests. Apart from two who were paedophiles, all the priests practiced their priesthood in the same way a doctor practices medicine. In other words they took their role seriously and shouldered the responsibility for ministering the sacraments wherever they were needed. They were educated men and a source of authentic theology. But as the saying goes, "Priests are like Moreton Bay figs. Nothing grows under them". It would be unfair not to give an explanation of how that saying refers to priests. The Moreton Bay fig is a giant of a tree. It can only be grown in a municipal garden. It stands out in the landscape. Its branches give shelter to all creatures. But in so doing, the branches exclude the light and nothing is able to grow under this huge generous tree. It seems obvious to me that if the Church is to grow then the branches must let some light shine through. The priesthood is not for</p>

one particular individual, it is something to be shared. If the main aim of the priest is to grow a faith community then his attitude will change and he will see himself not as part of an exclusive brotherhood, but as a genuine leader and coach. In doing this he should take advantage of any opportunities that present themselves. For example, Communion rounds would see the formation of a communion round team. Visiting the sick would be the same. The Mass would be orientated to relate directly to the community with prayers of the faithful reflecting local issues. Young people would be asked to take on roles within the community and so on. I am not suggesting that the role of the priest should be diminished in any way. I certainly disagree with ending celibacy. I do think there is a role for nuns who belong to a recognised order and who have the necessary educational qualifications to be ordained or approved to administer the sacraments. Finally, thank you for allowing me to submit my comments.

Our group came up with the following: 1. 'To simplify our lives, increasing spiritual nourishment, with less institutionalised demands'. "All Martha and not enough Mary" resulted in agreement there was a feeling of guilt for not participating in all charitable and fund raising works. This in turn resulted in feeling tired. We are called to live in freedom through Christ. Guilt and shame are not our burdens.

The Church needs to open its doors in terms of its administration. There needs to be real dialogue and listening by those in power. They need to act and make changes to all aspects of the Church. The time for talking has ceased. The celebration of weekend Masses also needs change. Long homilies that provide a series of do's and don'ts are antiquated. We need contextualised celebrations that speak to the heart—not lectures. Shorter liturgies are needed. We are all time poor.

God is asking us to respectfully discuss ideas of change to the way the Church is run in Australia to ensure the continuation of the Church for generations to come. To do this we must pray for guidance by the Holy Spirit.

The Church interacts with the local culture. One needs to be more involved in Mass and School culture, be happy and remain faithful. Don't judge others, listen, be transparent, and persevere for the peace in the community. Listen to the Spirit and listen to each other. Interaction between Church and the Culture. Need to be involved - other ways for young people - culturally acceptable ways. Discipleship: Remain faithful in Christian Service, Live the faith, persevere in the face of challenge. Acceptance and Inclusivity: Move forward not making the same mistakes, accept the difference, listen to each other and don't judge the other. Participation: Keep involved, active in faith, strive for peace in the community.

To acknowledge that we are living in End Times (only have to read Revelations), and that we must be prepared to be counted and stand by God and His teachings. Not to accept watered down teachings.

To listen and connect with young people, reconcile actions and show faith through action. Listen to all and give women equal rights/power. Rejuvenate and connect of rail. Revisit traditional views and a discussion of how Church teaching should be applied today. To be inclusive regardless of the circumstances. Tell the story of the Gospel so that it connects to 21st Century. An apology is needed for the Sexual Abuse. To actively work for sustainability. To support and guide families in

need. To acknowledge same-sex couples equally. To rebrand or re-contextualise to the world that we live in. To lead the world towards peace. To revisit medieval doctrine made by a patriarchal society.

-All newly trained priests to be taught the Extraordinary Form of the Mass so that when the faithful request this form (according to Summorum Pontificum) the Mass will be provided.

-More widespread and regular usage of the Extraordinary Form of the Mass.

-A reform of the New Order of the Mass which has at its heart the Mass as a sacrifice: The priest to be encouraged to say Mass ad orientum, or at the very least, not discouraged; treatment of the Blessed Sacrament with due reverence and respect in every possible manner; the faithful to be encouraged to receive communion on the tongue and kneeling at a prie dieu, or at the very least not discouraged or disallowed; return to beautiful music (chant, polyphony and traditional hymns); the removal of Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion or any other person or practice which can put the Blessed Sacrament at risk; beautiful altar linens, candles, vestments, proper placement of the tabernacle etc.; male only altar servers; women and un-necessary lay people out of the sanctuary; silence in Churches.

-For the Church to set itself apart from the world, not to accommodate itself to the world or make compromises. People want to join something that is extraordinary (c.f. the growth of traditional religious orders versus those which have capitulated to the world).

-For the Church to spend the next several years committed to penance (prayer, fasting) for all the evils it has committed, tolerated or allowed, especially those against the Blessed Sacrament and those against the most vulnerable members of the Church (i.e. victims of abuse).

-A refocus on the liturgical life of the Church: the feast days, the old customs and traditions, the old hymns, processions, blessings. There is so much richness in the Church which people are slowly starting to rediscover. Centuries of customs which put us in touch with our tradition and our ancestors. To do away with these, which has been done, is to do away with the life of the Church.

-A refocus on Our Lady—rosary, Marian feasts, Marian devotions, are an emphasis on asking for Our Lady's intercession.

-For an end to the 'women's role in the Church' narrative. Women are being told that they need more roles, responsibilities and power. Women have enough to do. They contribute so much, and should be happy with their contribution which is made in so many and varied ways; as a woman I am completely content with my role in the Church and I know I can offer so much just by my example as a wife, mother and contributor at a local parish level in many ways. Let us look to our Lady's example of humility, generosity and obedience.

-Let Lent be Lent, Easter be Easter, Advent be Advent and Christmas be Christmas. Can the Church at least adhere to those liturgical seasons and prevent celebrating and feasting in times of penance and waiting for mere practical reasons (i.e. [One church's] Christmas concert is held in Advent).

-For Catholic schools to be fewer and purer.

God is asking us to reflect on the way forward in re-engaging with the modern world in a meaningful way and how we can do that. Imperatively how do we urgently administer to the sexually abused in extending genuine love/concern and financial restitution, before we can move on.



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. How will anything change whilst there is hierarchical clericalism?
2. Why can't women be ordained as deacons?
3. Children attend Catholic schools and are taught religion but are they being taught about being a Catholic?
4. The lay-led liturgies of the word with Holy Communion are vital in maintaining the life of the Community. Why do some priests not permit these lay-led liturgies in their parishes?
5. How can we take the priesthood of the faithful seriously?
6. As it is a human need to have companionship, is there any indication that in the future, priests would be able to marry?
7. How can the Church be strengthened so that we can stand up for the truth of our faith—in any situation?
8. Where is the leadership in our Church when we are being challenged, attacked and even persecuted?
9. How do we create and maintain a strong sense of welcome and belonging in our Catholic communities?
10. Will the Australian Church restore the practice of the third form of the Rite of Reconciliation?
11. Will the Church give consideration to accepting the divorced and remarried back into the faith community without the necessity of an annulment?
12. How can the Church live more the spirit of Vatican II which emphasised the priesthood of all the baptised and the universal call to holiness?
13. How can men who have left the priesthood in order to marry, be welcomed back to priestly ministry?
14. Could celibacy be optional for diocesan clergy?
15. Could the Church reconsider the commandments of the Church in the light of contemporary living?
16. How do we maintain a Church presence in our rural and remote areas, with our declining populations?
17. How can the Church be less clerical and patriarchal in its practice?
18. How can the Church be more inclusive, for example of LGBT people in our midst?
19. When will we stop killing priests and bishops with the idea that they must work until they drop dead?

20. How many bishops and priests have professional mentoring as part of their regular life?
21. Is the Catholic Church of the future best equipped to address the causes of child sexual abuse and the rehabilitation of offenders?
22. At what point will the Church take up the Ecumenical change needed as identified in Vatican II?
23. Is this a time in history, in our country where we strengthen our Christian future by standing aloof from other followers of Jesus Christ?
24. A decade or two ago, there was a movement to more fully recognize the role of women in the Church. What were the outcomes of this?
25. Is the me first current culture of the young Australians from our western culture the reason we are relying on leadership from other cultures?
26. Is there discussion regarding priests being able to marry, as pre the 15th century?
27. How will our Church not only engage with women but given them a voice, a voice with authority?
28. What does the Church see as the role of youth and young people in the community going forward?
29. Can we ordain women?
30. Could we consider new directions in Mass and liturgy to engage with all people?
31. Is Jesus' message still being heard by the Church today?
32. Do we want our Catholic schools to be Catholic?
33. Is the Church going to accept that there will be a period of very little Mass attendance and faith generally and look at what continues to draw in people during this time?
34. Is the Church going to admit that the experiment of the last 50 or so years has failed?



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 31 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.

There is a parish with a very fundamentalist [parish priest] to the extent that he continually puts on devotions that suit his pious devotions. They are never brought to the Parish Pastoral Council meetings, nor are the congregation asked how or what they would mark such an occasion. No wonder the seats are emptying in this church as people become disconnected with this kind of worship/prayer.

When I was five years old, I was hit by a truck and the doctor declared that there was no hope and that a coffin should be purchased. But my mother had a certainty of faith that I would survive (against the doctor's prognostications)(and she even purchased two quite expensive presents for me, she was so sure) and every practising Catholic and non-Catholic in my home town prayed for me.....and I survived without any long term damage to my body or mind.

As a group, many of us are involved in other Church outreach programs. In our Catholic [parish] of [-] (South Australia), many of us are involved in the [-] (hot meals once a week for the needy), Vinnies, and Alpha to name just a few. But we are hopeless as an organisation in blowing our trumpets, so that the community can know that Catholic Christians are out there in their midst doing good works for all.

In our Catholic parish of [-] (South Australia) our Alpha group formed in December 2017. We have undertaken our first Alpha course with plans to run two in 2019. This is an excellent form of evangelising to active and non-active Catholics as well as those seeking God in their lives who currently do not have any formal faith. It is such an excellent tool that as a Church we need to embrace these non-threatening and very heartfelt ways of encouraging people to join us.

The last 10 years of my life have been very challenging, and I use that word carefully because too often it is used to cover up or hide the truth of a situation or the need for someone to speak honestly about how they feel or what they think, but for me I have been challenged in so many aspects of life that the word is accurate. My search for my family has taken me around the world literally and across a lot of Australia. It has been a journey of sadness and great joy and relief at finding and meeting my brothers and extended family. They have not always been whom or what I thought they may be but I suppose I may not have been what they had hoped or expected either. The story began 10 years ago when my biological mother found me and the story has found a comfortable conclusion in the last months with me travelling around the world to meet my half-brothers and their families. A wonderful experience but [not] always what I was

expecting. Both good and struggling people or family who were willing to meet and discover something of their family that they knew nothing about until last year. Amid lies and deception, tall tales and unsettling truths to story of my extended family came to light. No blame or condemnation was put on anyone but only the telling of the story. Now after having found them, spoken with them, laughed and cried with them, I have a greater sense of who I am and the life I wish to lead as a result. The other beautiful revelation that was revealed to me in my travels and reflections was that my parents were wonderful, loving, kind people who were fantastic parents, not perfect but fantastic. And the second is that I wish I had told them that more often than I did!

My first parish priest left the priesthood quietly one Tuesday afternoon and has practised his faith with his wife ever since....nearly 40 years. He had no farewell or thanks for 24 years of wonderful pastoral care of so many. My assistant priest 20 years later fell in love (it didn't last) and left the priesthood, but was able to tell the parishioners at Sunday Mass of his intentions and was applauded for his words. Neither are welcome back as priests unless someone is near death and Again the Abuse situation has highlighted that our sexual morality standards are wobbly. The denying of sexual drive, the avoidance of naming the homosexual predominance in upper Church life and leadership cannot survive in today's skin shedding culture. We have been exposed and are still ducking and weaving with only the over 60's still hanging onto Sunday Worship. We are largely irrelevant, which isn't such a bad spot to be in, but why do we still show signs of infallibility?

I was one of 8 children brought up in a loving and committed Catholic family. I have 4 adult children who grew up with a Catholic education and a shared Christian faith; their father, my husband, being a practising Anglican. We have been deeply involved in both the Catholic and Anglican parishes for 38 years; alternating Sunday Masses. I participate fully in the celebration of the Mass with the Anglican congregation, and feel deeply grieved that my husband is not deemed worthy to receive communion with me and our Catholic congregation. Having a connection to both churches has been very influential in my faith formation. It has helped me to look through superficial differences and to grow in the knowledge that God is present 'WHEREVER two or more are gathered' in His name.

My introduction to the Catholic Church came about by friends challenging me to think about what I was protesting about—being a member of the Uniting Church at the time. A two year journey with special moments like an Ecumenical Call to Prayer Conference, A meet Jesus in Mark bible study (With Fr. [-]) later to become [-]'s Bishop, answered many questions, further enlightenment came from an ecumenical Lenten Study in our small rural town. The strong feeling of being 'at home' was the turning point of being received into the Catholic Church. This was further enhanced by a wonderful ecumenical conference organised by Archbishop [-] in [-] some years ago. The calibre of speakers he arranged were inspiring and re-inspiring. People were excited about a vision for the future, shared by overseas speakers, and leaders among our Australian Bishops. No doubt it was costly. No doubt it worked. This is the way forward for the Church I have been chosen to become part of.

I have been a practising Catholic from birth but in particular since making a commitment to our faith as a family when our children started school. This only happened through a particularly charismatic priest working in partnership with the Josephite nuns at the local school. This isn't

happening as the school has taken on an elitist attitude where academia is more important than knowing and trusting Jesus. Most importantly my faith was underpinned by being in small groups where I could learn and share my faith journey.
[-] of South Australia. We have lived in this area for 45 years. For almost 54 years the local Christian churches have worked together to support the local Nursing Home/Hostel annual fundraiser. Each church undertook to organise one stall, i.e. Catholics - Biscuit Stall; Anglicans - Cake Stall; etc. Serving morning tea/Lunches, local Catholic students clearing the tables and their choir providing entertainment. In addition they meet once a year in the middle of the year to have lunch together. A Carols [-] event in December for the local community. This was/is Ecumenism before it was a popular word. We share the same values
I find it saddening that the Church is like business. Devout people having to pay big money for annulments, certificates for important wedding anniversaries etc.....I see that as taking advantage of Church members.....and it is those devout ones that are weekly contributing to the Church.....
I want nothing more than to be surrounded by people of faith, trusting in the Lord to live each day in joy facing challenges and joys knowing that the Lord is with me. This has been my experience for 75 years. As well as receiving regular faith filled opportunities, Mass, Sacraments, Retreats, Discussion Groups, Local, Diocesan and National representation, I have been blessed to reach out and minister to others not only in my Catholic faith as a Pastoral Care provider but also to those who come into my daily life. Every day brings challenges - every day brings joy, sadness overseen by thankfulness for the faith I have—yes influenced by my parents, grandparents but in the end chosen by ME.
I spent a few years in the seminary. It was wonderful. While I never became a priest I don't regret any of it. More should be done to support vocations but you rarely hear about it ever.
All I would like to share is that I was not brought up Catholic , but came from very strong Christian background from a young age. was part of an ecumenical group when I did my nursing training, joined the Church after the birth of our 2nd child, as I believed children should be brought up in a happy family of one faith.. I have always enjoyed being part of a parish and very involved in parish life, Catholic Women's League, liturgy, St Vincent De Paul, but have been led by my conscience with many things in church, that I do not feel comfortable with. The child protection issues in the Church have hurt our churches , and I still believe Church has a long way to go embracing change especially in higher levels and accepting they have big problems. That absence of action and arguments tradition over law is not in a 21st century Church.
The Parish Pastoral Council is often a platform for the parish priest to get what he wants endorsed and items submitted by the laity (and can I suggest WOMEN) are ignored. Many things that then happen have not even been mentioned at the Parish Pastoral Council meeting, e.g. Holy Week/ Easter celebrations, the authority needs to be given to the laity, they are the ones who sit in the church
I know several women who have suffered terrible domestic violence, divorced and remarried but the process of annulment is too much for them.
We have a priest who is a canon lawyer who says one thing and the other priest do not agree.

I would like to share the discussions I have had over the past 10 months or so with the average Mass-going Catholics in our parishes. I have been most surprised by people's reaction to the Plenary process. Many people and priests have not bothered to fill in an online form or to go to a Plenary listening session in our diocese and in other dioceses around Australia, with whom I have had a chance to speak to. One of the reasons for this is that they believe that nothing is going to change! "We have done all this before" they say and nothing ever seems to change, at least not the things we have been asking for for so long. Even priests that I have spoken with have said they can't be bothered running sessions or filling in the online form themselves for the very same reason. Many of the people that I have spoken with are saying, "This is the Church hierarchy's last chance!" If nothing changes this time then I will be walking away from the Church FOREVER. This has come from people who are active in their community and parish, have a deep faith and a love for their priest etc. but are fed up with the way the Church is governed and desperately wants to see change. The court case for George Pell has not helped the situation but rather brought this question of governance change into extreme focus. The idea that the bishops would ask the people of Australia for what God is asking of the Church in Australia today and then completely leave them out of the decision-making process is at very best a joke, at worst the most arrogant and demeaning statement about the "people of God" that they have ever witnessed. The idea of gathering the Church of Australia together at this time is a wonderful idea but to continue to fall back on outdated rules to prevent the people of God from truly shaping the Church that they want to be a part of is a tragedy of gigantic proportions. I too love the Church but if this 2020 process doesn't lead to at least one significant change in the governance of the Church in Australia then I too may be the one who considers leaving the Church, something that would make me very sad and desperately disappointed, for the 20 or more years of my life that I have committed to the Church will have been wasted, because a small group of selfish people think they know better than the whole of the people of God. I hope and pray that the Plenary (should been called something else) will be successful but right now I just don't know!

The Church has shaped me throughout my entire life. It provides me with a framework for how I live my life. It has also provided me with an amazing community of support. I have particularly benefitted from this in the two times I have moved away by myself. One time, I moved interstate, and the other time, I moved to a country town. On both occasions, I was able to build a big sense of community through the Church. This was essential to help make these new places to be home, so that I felt safe and welcomed. The Church community played a huge role to ensure that my moves were successful. I also think that youth initiatives in the Church have been vital in building and maintaining my faith. As a teenager, the National Evangelisation Team (NET) visited my parish, and supported the formation of a youth group. This helped me to form a strong friendship group, filled with people that I'm still friends with today. As above, it helped me build a sense of community in my church, but also grow in my faith and love of Jesus. Last year, the Missionaries of God's Love (MGL) team visited my diocese as a part of the Year of Youth. It wasn't until they were here that I realised how much I needed a revitalisation of my faith. The team helped me to build a stronger relationship with God, and bring a new understanding of my faith in adulthood. From this experience, my faith has been shaped and strengthened for the future challenges of the

church. From these experiences, I have had several personal experiences that have reaffirmed my faith. These experiences emphasise for me the importance of youth initiatives in the Church.

The loss of a child, the miracle of a teenager surviving (even though we were told he would live 3 days) and 10 years working in Palliative Care. Whilst praying to Our Lady (who was with her son when he died) I asked her to intercede for me. She came to my bedside, held out her arms and rocked me. Against all medical advice, he survived. I was very fortunate to be taught the sacraments by a Priest and so was taught well.

By the grace of God I remained Catholic during my teenage years, despite living in rural [-] (which we like to describe as a spiritual desert), not having any Catholic friends, and attending a State School. I was given excellent formation by my parents, and a prayerful and joyful example of living a Catholic life. A significant factor, which has certainly shaped my faith, was my introduction to the Extraordinary Form of the Mass, and then continued regular attendance of that form. Over the years I have seen Latin Mass communities growing, and bursting at the seams with young families, teenagers, uni-students, older families and older people. The demographic diversity is remarkable. I am not going to detail this experience; it speaks for itself when people attend and can switch off their preconceptions about 'traditionalists' and can drop the baggage they amassed in the 'days before the Council'. Truth is, the majority of people attending the EF Mass these days weren't alive before the Council and so this experience of Traditionalism is our own new experience and it is very positive and joyful, and has evidently learnt from the past. This is where the Church is growing and I hope the Plenary Council can acknowledge this.

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.



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